

Evidence-Based Policymaking and Global Governance: An Examination of the Role of the Policy Studies Organization and ECOSOC

Chick Edmond¹

Abstract

Transnational challenges, such as climate change, global inequality, pandemics, digital governance, and institutional legitimacy crises, are becoming increasingly complex, therefore, the demand for evidence-based decision-making has become an important developing normative and practical issue in the area of global governance. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is the principal organ of the UN responsible for coordinating policy processes across all areas of economic, social and development issues. However, despite ECOSOC's ability to make decisions concerning how the world addresses these problems, it has been widely criticized for being unable to translate expert knowledge into tangible policy outcomes. Therefore, this paper will examine the role of the Policy Studies Organization (PSO), a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) serving as a knowledge intermediary and its evolving relationships with ECOSOC to provide evidence-based decision-making support. The article makes the case that the relationship between the PSO and ECOSOC represents a paradigmatic shift in global governance in that epistemic actors, policy networks and knowledge brokers are now influencing institutional performance beyond the confines of more traditional state-centric models of governance. To examine the mechanisms through which the PSO supports ECOSOC's policy agenda-setting, facilitates the diffusion of policies across member states and encourages institutional learning within ECOSOC; this research employs theoretical frameworks from institutionalism, policy network analysis and critical political economy. Furthermore, this article identifies structural obstacles to the application of evidence-based policy in multilateral institutions including those created by power disparities, political conflict, and bureaucratic resistance to change. Finally, this research contextualizes the PSO-ECOSOC relationship in terms of existing scholarly debates surrounding the intersection of knowledge and power in global public policy, contributes to scholarship exploring reforms in global governance, and offers evidence-based recommendations to improve the legitimacy, effectiveness, and relevance of multilateral organizations vis-a-vis the SDG Agenda.

Keywords: Evidence-based policymaking, Global governance, ECOSOC, Policy studies organization, Epistemic communities, Policy networks, Institutional effectiveness

Introduction

The world of today's global politics contains a paradox regarding the structure of global governance. Today's global challenges are far more complex, interconnected and dependent on knowledge than those experienced before. Yet, most multilateral institutions that resolve these problems typically cannot systematically incorporate high-quality evidence into their decision-making processes

¹ Dr., College of Arts and Letters, Old Dominion University, Virginia, United States of America.

*Corresponding Author, Email: cedmo005@odu.edu

Received 6 February 2026 Revised 11 May 2026 Accepted 2 June 2026

© 2025 The Author(s). This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited

nor make this type of evidence politically meaningful. Specifically, this paradox is evident throughout the UN system. In particular, the normative aspirations of the UN are frequently thwarted by institutional fragmentation, bargaining among members and varying capacities to implement policies (Weiss, 2013; Barnett & Finnemore, 2004). Therefore, the central question generated from this paradox concerns how global governance institutions may develop policy through an evidence-based process, without being insensitive to the different political, social and cultural realities found around the globe.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was established to be the primary mechanism to coordinate international cooperation in the areas of economics, social affairs and other related matters. The responsibilities of ECOSOC include development finance, humanitarian coordination, social inclusion and oversight of the specialized agencies. Nevertheless, ECOSOC has been frequently criticized for its inability to fulfill its assigned tasks. In particular, Taylor and Groom (2000) along with Hurd (2019) argue that a major deficiency in performance relates to ECOSOC's ability to convert the research, expertise and best practices into sustainable policy outcomes throughout all member countries. The criticism directed toward ECOSOC has increased in relation to the SDGs. As previously noted, the SDGs require the use of data-driven monitoring and evaluation techniques, as well as adaptive governance strategies (United Nations, 2015).

Under current changes in governance structures, non-state actors continue to become significant participants in the development of global policy. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), think tanks, academic networks and professional associations are participating in agenda-setting, norm diffusion and policy learning processes (Stone, 2008; Slaughter, 2017). Within this group of actors, the Policy Studies Organization (PSO) represents a distinct example. Founded as a mechanism to support scholarship and dialogue relating to public policy, the PSO continues to operate at the intersection of academia, policy practice and international institutions. Through organizational meetings, publication activities, training programs and consultative roles, the PSO functions as a knowledge broker. This allows it to facilitate exchanges of research on public policy across institutional boundaries.

This paper will look at how the interaction between the Policy Studies Organization (PSO) and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) represents a useful model through which to understand the larger evidence-based policy-making process in global governance. It does not view evidence as a politically neutral input to be incorporated into policymaking, rather evidence-based governance, as an inherently political process. As such, the PSO's interactions with ECOSOC represent a political aspect, defining how issues are framed, determining the types of knowledge that have legitimacy, and establishing who participates in the global policy-making process.

In addition to understanding the particular example of the PSO/ECOSOC, this work provides a general framework for comprehending a broader shift in international governance. Authority is being distributed among hybrid networks consisting of states, international organizations, and 'epistemically active entities'. Legitimacy is no longer based exclusively upon an institution's formal mandate. Instead, legitimacy is derived from credibility, inclusiveness, and effectiveness in the decision-making process. In turn, evidence-based policymaking is becoming a necessary component of effective decision-making and an additional means of bolstering legitimacy - especially when attempting to address inequality, developmental failure, or institutional mistrust globally.

That said, there remain many obstacles to evidence-based policymaking in global institutions. Political conflicts among member-states, conflicting development priorities, unequal capacity in knowledge generation between the Global North and South, and institutional inertia due to bureaucracy

all act to limit the ability of researchers to get their findings used (Best, 2014; Haas, 1992). Moreover, the very definition of "evidence" is subject to debate. Is evidence quantifiable data? Qualitative research? Indigenous knowledge? Normative expertise? And if so, whose evidence counts most?

The article adds to three closely linked intellectual debates concerning global governance. In doing so, it also contributes to the literature on non-state policy organizations' ability to increase institutional capacity and effectiveness. The article further expands upon the policy studies literature by investigating evidence-based policymaking beyond the national level where political complexities are exacerbated. The article also relates to debates regarding normative issues such as institutional reform, accountability, and the role of knowledge in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDGs that relate to strong institutions, reducing poverty, and sustainable development.

Qualitatively, using an interpretive approach supported by document analysis, secondary literature and institutional analysis, the article does not suggest that there is a causal relationship but instead uses process tracing and analytical generalization to identify the mechanisms through which the PSO can facilitate policy learning and influence agenda setting in relation to ECOSOC (George & Bennett, 2005). These approaches allow the authors to demonstrate what is possible and what may be limiting knowledge-driven global governance.

The remaining part of this article is structured as follows. First, the following chapter will provide an integrated analytical framework that includes the problem definition, research questions, hypotheses and methodological considerations. The second part presents a conceptual review of evidence-based decision making in global governance (with explanations of key terminology and current debates). After that, there is a theoretically based review of institutionalism, policy network theories and critically oriented analyses of knowledge and power. The third part provides the results and discussions regarding how the PSO's actions influence the work procedures of ECOSOC, and consequently, how these influence the performance of institutions and coordination of policies at the global level. In the last part, the conclusions reflect on the larger implications of the PSO-ECOSOC case study for reforms to enhance the use of evidence-based policymaking in global governance which are increasingly challenged by complex global issues.

Problem Statement, Research Question, and Hypothesis

Although extensive rhetorical support exists for promoting evidence-based policymaking at the global level, many obstacles impede evidence, data, and expert knowledge from being utilized by policymakers within decision-making processes of global governance. Obstacles are most apparent within the UN system, which has several characteristics that contribute to the limited role that evidence can play in informing policy decisions, including the political negotiation process between sovereign states, the fragmentation and redundancy of bureaucratic entities, and the competing normative values/priorities among various stakeholders. A clear illustration of this issue is represented by ECOSOC, which is the primary coordinating body of the UN charged with the promotion of economic growth, social inclusion, and international cooperation. Despite the breadth of ECOSOC's mandate, it has historically failed to serve as an evidence-based leader and convert discussions during ECOSOC meetings into sustainable changes in behavior/policy by member states (Hurd, 2019; Taylor & Groom, 2000). As a result, there remains a growing chasm between the aspirational nature of global policy - especially as evidenced by the SDGs - and the institutional capacity required to attain these objectives.

Underlying this growing chasm is a structural issue - namely, that the legitimate authority of ECOSOC stems from its representation of the interests of sovereign states while the policy effectiveness of ECOSOC is increasingly dependent upon technical knowledge, specialized expertise, and ongoing learning. As a result of this relationship between legitimacy and effectiveness, a "knowledge authority mismatch" exists between individuals holding formal authority over decision-making processes and those possessing the requisite knowledge to develop/interpret the evidence necessary for effective policy formulation. For example, epistemological actors who have the greatest amount of relevant knowledge may be denied access to authoritative decision-making structures (Stone, 2008; Haas, 1992). Additionally, evidence is typically employed in a selective manner to enable political objectives to be achieved or simply discarded to allow for agreement and lowest common denominator solutions.

In addition to the aforementioned challenges created by evidence being excluded or selectively used for political purposes, the increased engagement of non-state policy organizations in the global governance framework (such as the Policy Studies Organization) creates both opportunities and challenges. Specifically, the PSO provides ECOSOC with research syntheses, cross-disciplinary dialogue, and policy-oriented scholarship that can inform its deliberations. However, relying on external knowledge intermediaries also raises concerns related to accountability, representativeness, and power disparities in global knowledge production - specifically between the Global North and Global South (Bernstein, 2011; Best, 2014). Ultimately, therefore, the critical challenge is not simply one of determining whether or evidence exists but rather how evidence is filtered, legitimated, and assimilated into the decision-making processes of ECOSOC.

The primary objective of the present study has been to explore how the Policy Studies Organization (PSO) can support evidence-based decision-making at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The authors therefore also investigate the implications that their empirical results have for the broader debate regarding whether knowledge-driven reforms are feasible within the context of multilateral governance. A second research question concerns institutional design: under which conditions will epistemically oriented and policy-oriented non-state actors increase the efficiency and legitimacy of multilateral decision-making without diminishing the authority of nation-states?

To address these research questions, the authors develop the following hypothesis: the Policy Studies Organization can best support evidence-based policymaking at ECOSOC by influencing agendas, shaping frames, and promoting learning. However, they do so indirectly – e.g., via the creation of transnational networks; dissemination of findings; and shaping the understanding and prioritization decisions made by ECOSOC member states. Nonetheless, because of existing geoeconomic power dynamics; institutional legacies; and the political interests of its members, there are structural limits to PSO's ability to promote evidence-based policymaking.

Methodological Framework

This research project follows a qualitative research approach that is particularly well suited to analyze the complex interplay between institutions as well as how processes of meaning are constructed. In contrast to quantitative analyses of policy outcomes, this research utilizes an institutional analysis and process tracing approach to determine the mechanism(s) through which knowledge produced by the Policy Studies Organization enters into ECOSOC deliberations (George & Bennett, 2005). The primary source of data includes UN resolutions, ECOSOC reports, PSO publications; conference proceedings; policy statements, along with secondary academic literature related to global governance, policy studies, and international organizations. Using this design enables the ability to achieve

analytical generalizations to allow for broadened applications of findings derived from the PSO/ECOSOC case toward informing discussions on evidence-based policymaking in multilateral settings.

In addition, this section combines the problem statement, research question, hypothesis, and methodology into a comprehensive analytical model which clearly defines the central argument of this article: Evidence-based policymaking in global governance does not occur automatically or neutrally and instead relies heavily on the arrangement of institutional factors and the presence of power dynamics and the role of knowledge intermediaries in shaping decision-making processes.

Conceptual Framework: Evidence-Based Policymaking in Global Governance

Beginning with the development of evidence-based policymaking (EBPM), the past thirty years have seen the establishment of evidence-based policymaking as a standard practice in public policy. Since it first emerged as a technical standard for decision-making in areas such as health and social policy, EBPM has continued to develop. One reason EBPM has grown over time is due to scholars' increasing recognition that evidence does not automatically translate into policy; rather, evidence is socially constructed, subject to political influence, and filtered through the lens of institutions. These developments have important implications for EBPM in global governance, including the lack of centralization of authority for policymaking, the fact that legitimacy is contested, and the existence of competing values (diplomatic, normative, geopolitical) relative to evidence.

Evidence-based policymaking includes the production of credible knowledge, transforming that knowledge into a format relevant to policymakers, and having the institutional capacity to integrate credible knowledge into decision-making processes (Nutley et al., 2007). Typically, evidence-based policymaking occurs within a centralized administrative structure at the level of the nation-state. In contrast, international organizations such as ECOSOC operate under a decentralized administrative environment which is characterized by fragmented jurisdictional authorities, many stakeholders, and little ability to enforce compliance. Therefore, EBPM in global governance cannot simply be conceived of as a linear progression from research to policy. Rather, evidence-based policymaking will occur as an iterative negotiation process among multiple stakeholders based upon their respective authority, expertise, and political capital.

Defining Global Governance

Global Governance is the joint management of transnational issues without an overarching world government (Rosenau, 1995) and can include International Organizations; Non-Government Actors (NGOs); Informal Networks; Private Entities, etc., working together to develop cross-national rules, standards and practices. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) serves as an example of global governance by being both a forum for dialogue and a coordinating agency for the UN's three interconnected areas: economic, social, and developmental. As a hybrid model of governance, ECOSOC has characteristics of Inter-governmental Decision-Making, as well as Consultation with Civil Society; Academia; and Policy Organizations. Therefore, ECOSOC is able to provide a platform for evidence-based Inputs while at the same time creates conflicting interests surrounding Authority; Representation; and Accountability.

There are two primary debates surrounding how one defines Evidence Based Policymaking, first is what makes up the definition of 'Evidence.' Positivism views High Quality Evidence as

Quantitative Data; Randomized Control Trials; and Causal Inference, whereas Constructivist and Critical Perspectives view Qualitative Insights; Contextual Knowledge; and Lived Experience as equal to other types of evidence (Parkhurst, 2017). These definitions become even more difficult when considering Global Governance because there are large Cultural Differences across nations; Different Availability of Data Globally; and Disproportionate Distribution of Power between those who produce knowledge. Research produced in Global North locations tends to be viewed as higher quality than other data sets because these sources are often funded and therefore carried more weight. This leads to concerns over Epistemological Equality and Exclusion of Local/Indigenous Forms of Knowledge Systems (De Sousa Santos, 2014). Considering ECOSOC's mission to advance inclusive and equitable development these Conceptual Debates directly impact Legitimacy and Effectiveness.

Weiss (1979) identified three main forms of evidence use in evidence-based Public Management (EBPM): instrumental, conceptual, and symbolic. Instrumental use of evidence is used as input into making specific policy choices. Conceptual uses of evidence shape actors' perceptions of problems over time. Symbolic uses of evidence legitimate predetermined policy choices. Because global governance institutions require political consensus and negotiation among member states, instrumental uses of evidence are often limited; however, both conceptual and symbolic uses of evidence are very prevalent and often determine the trajectory of policy.

Due to this reality, it is critical to recognize the role of "intermediary" organizations known as "knowledge brokers" or "boundary organizations" in EBPM in global governance (Guston, 2001). These intermediary organizations have the responsibility of translating complex research findings into accessible policy narratives. Additionally, they provide a mechanism to communicate between experts and policymakers. Furthermore, these organizations can help link evidence with the institutional goals and priorities. As an intermediary organization the Policy Studies Organization has established itself as a translator of research into policy narratives. This has been achieved through conferences, journals, policy briefs, and collaborative projects with international organizations. Conceptually, the Policy Studies Organization exists at a node within transnational policy networks linking the production of knowledge within academic communities with policy deliberations within spaces like ECOSOC. The Policy Studies Organization provides value to the development and application of evidence-based public management practices not only through providing evidence but through curating, contextualizing, and legitimizing evidence within a multilateral context.

This discussion raises important questions about how evidence-based policymaking (EBPM) is organized in terms of power and governance. What influences what is considered appropriate evidence or most relevant evidence? Which kinds of expert knowledge are regarded as authoritative? How are different forms of knowledge integrated? Avoids repeating 'argues': Fischer (2009) argues that critical policy scholars view evidence-based policymaking as a technocratic device that masks the normative decisions of policymakers, thereby supporting existing forms of power. Therefore, EBPM should be assessed through its ability to be inclusive, transparent, and reflexive along with measuring its efficiency and effectiveness.

The role of the PSO working with ECOSOC reflects broader conflicts over epistemic authority in the international community. More importantly, EBPM needs to be contextualized in terms of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which promote the use of evidence-driven monitoring, evaluation, and accountability (United Nations, 2015). The SDGs have created high expectations globally for evidence-based decision-making and subsequently, and subsequently, encourage international organizations (such as ECOSOC) to rely on indicators, assessments, and models of "best

practices" (United Nations, 2015). Improvement: However, due to their interconnectedness and interdependence, many of these goals cannot be addressed through simplified approaches to evidence; therefore, they require interdisciplinary and integrative forms of knowledge. This provides conceptual space for entities like the PSO who have an interdisciplinary approach that fits well with the complexity associated with many of the issues related to sustainable development challenges.

In summary, there is no agreement among scholars regarding the conceptual landscape of EBPM at the level of global governance. Rather than being a technical issue, EBPM should be viewed as a form of governance practice that is shaped by institutional design, political incentives, and the distribution of epistemic authority. While ECOSOC presents both possibilities and constraints for evidence-based global policymaking, the Policy Studies Organization exemplifies how non-state actors can function as mediators between knowledge and authority.

Figure 1 Vertical Knowledge Flow from Research Institutions to ECOSOC

Stage	Main Actors	Core Functions	Types of Outputs	Role in Global Governance
Knowledge Production	Universities, research institutes, think tanks, policy analysts, civil society organizations	Generate empirical research, theoretical analysis, policy evidence, and advocacy knowledge	Journal articles, datasets, policy studies, reports, field evidence, impact assessments	Provides the foundational evidence base for international policy discussions
Knowledge Brokerage	Policy Studies Organization, expert panels, international conferences, policy networks, consultants	Translate technical research into accessible policy recommendations; synthesize competing evidence; frame policy narratives	Policy briefs, conference reports, expert recommendations, synthesis papers, strategic assessments	Bridges the gap between researchers and policymakers by making knowledge usable for governance
Policy Decision Areas	ECOSOC, UN Functional Commissions, UN Councils, Member States, diplomatic representatives	Debate evidence, negotiate priorities, formulate resolutions, and coordinate governance initiatives	Resolutions, policy frameworks, development agendas, governance strategies, institutional reforms	Converts evidence and recommendations into formal international governance mechanisms
Policy Implementation and Outcomes (Feedback Loop)	Governments, UN agencies, NGOs, international organizations	Implement adopted policies and evaluate outcomes	Monitoring reports, implementation reviews, policy evaluations, governance indicators	Policy outcomes influence future research agendas and generate new cycles of knowledge production

Note: Author's Compilation

The Conceptual Framework illustrates how to vertically move policy-relevant knowledge produced at research institutions to International Governance Bodies (such as ECOSOC). Research Production is the first step. Universities, Think Tanks, Policy Analysts and Civil Society Organizations are among those who produce empirical data and theoretical insight about Global Challenges. They produce research products like reports, datasets, journal articles, policy studies which provide policymakers with informed decision-making options. Raw Academic Knowledge, however, is typically too specialized and/or fragmented to be used directly in policymaking. Therefore, Intermediary Institutions and Networks are crucial in transforming this raw Academic Knowledge into an understandable policy narrative.

Knowledge brokering is the second stage in the movement of knowledge from the research community to policymakers. Examples include The Policy Studies Organization, Expert Panels and International Conferences all help to turn Evidence-based Research into Policy Briefs/Recommendations/Strategic Assessments which can then be discussed and debated at ECOSOC meetings, UN Commissions and Member State Negotiations. The third and final stage, Decision Areas for Policies converts Evidence into Resolutions/Governance Structures/International Initiatives. Of particular importance in this conceptual framework is the fact that it has identified a Feedback Loop resulting from the implementation of policies and their results. This creates a measurable impact which guides future research directions, thus continuing the loop of generating evidence, adapting to policy requirements and enhancing institutional capabilities within Global Governance Systems.

Theoretical Framework

This section will analyze what theoretical frameworks are needed to develop an operational conceptual framework to assess the contribution of the PSO to evidence-based policymaking within ECOSOC. In order to determine how the PSO can fulfill a useful function as part of a broader evidence-based policymaking system, a theoretically grounded model or framework that is able to examine and describe both formal structures and informal processes associated with International Organizations (IO) will be required. There are several theories attempting to provide insights into how evidence generated in research communities travel through various stages before being considered at multilateral decision-making bodies; however, there is currently no singular theory available that is capable of completely capturing the full complexity of this process. Thus, this section will apply a layered theoretical assessment of the PSO's contribution to EBPM utilizing primarily Institutionalism Theory, Policy Network Theory, Epistemic Community Theory and Constructivism Theory on Knowledge and Power. The conceptual framework developed using all three of these theoretical frameworks will allow for a greater understanding of the mechanisms and limitations associated with EBPM systems used globally.

1. Institutionalism

The institutionalism field of study has been divided into two main subfields: historical institutionalism and sociological institutionalism. Historical institutionalism examines the path dependent nature of IOs. Once an organization has been created, it often continues to operate according to established patterns because changing organizational norms and values is difficult (Pierson, 2000). Sociological institutionalism focuses on the role of organizational culture. An organization's culture influences how it interprets information, makes decisions and adapts to change (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Based upon the concepts identified above, it would appear that ECOSOC's institutional structure could potentially limit its ability to transform evidence into policy. For instance, the fact that ECOSOC uses consensus-based decision making and does not have any authority to enforce policies, creates

incentives for members to engage in incrementalism and symbolic compliance rather than creating meaningful policy changes (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004). Additionally, routine organizational behaviors of international organizations favor maintaining diplomatic equilibrium over promoting analytical rigor when evaluating evidence.

Historical and sociological institutionalism provide additional insight into why the PSO is significant to ECOSOC. As stated previously, ECOSOC lacks adequate internal capability to generate and synthesize technical policy research, thus it relies significantly on external sources of scientific expertise. However, institutional theorists have cautioned that simply providing evidence is not enough to ensure that it will be adopted by organizations. If an organization is going to utilize evidence, then that evidence must be compatible with the existing norms and procedural logic of the organization (Krahmann, 2005). Therefore, the success of the PSO in contributing to evidence-based policymaking in ECOSOC depends not only on generating high-quality evidence, but also on generating evidence that corresponds with ECOSOC's institutional priorities, vocabulary, and timing. Compatibility between evidence generated by the PSO and those areas allows for "institutional learning" where an organization learns from new information and slowly begins to modify its behavior without altering its fundamental structural characteristics (Hall, 1993).

Figure 2 Knowledge Flow and Global Governance Networks

Component	Main Actors	Primary Functions	Forms of Interaction	Contribution to Evidence-Based Policymaking
Central Coordinating Institution	ECOSOC	Coordinates dialogue among international institutions, NGOs, academic bodies, and member states	Policy consultations, agenda setting, multilateral coordination, information exchange	Serves as the central intermediary linking diverse actors within the global governance system
International Organizations and UN Agencies	UN agencies, regional commissions, specialized UN bodies	Produce technical expertise, policy guidance, and development frameworks	Reports, expert consultations, interagency cooperation, governance recommendations	Provide institutional legitimacy and technical authority for global policy debates
Academic and Research Networks	Universities, think tanks, Policy Studies Organization, research institutes	Generate research, policy analysis, and theoretical frameworks	Conferences, policy briefs, publications, expert panels	Supply evidence and analytical knowledge for governance processes
Civil Society and NGOs	NGOs with consultative status, advocacy groups, humanitarian organizations	Represent societal interests, provide field data, and advocate policy reforms	Advocacy campaigns, monitoring reports, stakeholder engagement, consultations	Introduce grassroots perspectives and accountability mechanisms into policymaking

Member States	National governments, diplomatic representatives	Negotiate, interpret, and implement international policies and agreements	Diplomacy, negotiations, voting, implementation processes	Translate international evidence and norms into domestic and regional policy action
Knowledge and Normative Flows	All governance actors	Exchange policy ideas, evidence, and governance norms across institutional levels	Horizontal collaboration and vertical policy transmission	Creates interconnected and collaborative evidence-based governance structures

Note: Author's Compilation

The image depicts the interdependent nature of global governance, where evidence is exchanged via ongoing communication amongst various international and national entities. In place of a strictly top-down hierarchy of decision-making, the framework places emphasis upon collaborative, multidirectional relationships leading to evidence-based policy. Evidence-Based policymaking is facilitated by ECOSOC, as the central node for connections with the United Nations (UN) Agencies, Regional Commissions, Research Organizations (such as the Policy Studies Organization), Civil Society Actors etc. By facilitating knowledge flow, policy advice flow, and governance norms flow between these organizational units, ECOSOC facilitates horizontal and vertical information exchange between institutions and other stakeholders.

In addition to highlighting the significance of horizontal and vertical flows of information, the framework also identifies the importance of communication flows occurring horizontally and vertically. Communication flows occurring horizontally take place between institutions operating at equivalent levels of governance e.g. NGO to NGO or Academic Networks to UN Agencies; while vertical flows are characterized by the transmission of evidence and policy guidance between international institutions and sovereign states, where global norms are applied domestically. This interconnectivity illustrates how contemporary forms of global governance rely heavily on multilateralism and transnational collaborations amongst experts, in order to achieve their objectives; thus suggesting that evidence-based policymaking is a dynamic and negotiated process; one influenced by mutual dependence amongst institutions and those who possess common areas of expertise, and are engaged in cooperative problem solving.

2. Policy Network Theory and Epistemic Communities

In addition to examining the structure of the PSO within ECOSOC's broader governance environment using policy network theory and epistemic community theory offer further ways of understanding the function of the PSO. Rhodes (1997) defines policy networks as "relatively enduring sets of relationships among actors involved in the making of public policies" which involve not only government bodies government and government bodies but also non-governmental organizations, academics, and think tanks. As such, the PSO is a key part of a number of such networks allowing for the exchange of information and experience concerning both good practice and policy issues from country to country and institution to institution. According to Haas (1992), epistemic community theory describes policymaking as being influenced by groups of experts who share similar beliefs about what

is desirable (the normative dimension), why certain things occur (the causal dimension), and a body of knowledge related to policy (the knowledge dimension).

Such epistemic communities define what problems exist, and what policy options should be considered acceptable; they shape policymaking across borders and within and between institutions and policy domains (Slaughter, 2004). ECOSOC represents a formal institutional mechanism for the interactions between these epistemic communities and their respective national governments. The PSO exemplifies an epistemic hub because it organizes scholars, practitioners, and policymakers while establishing frameworks of knowledge relevant to ongoing global policy debates through publication and meeting processes. Epistemic community theory identifies how expert advice comes to possess authority in multilateral contexts (Haas, 1992) based upon persuasion rather than coercion. This model is particularly applicable to the UN system due to the lack of formal enforcement mechanisms (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004) and corresponds directly with the PSO's consultative role relative to ECOSOC.

Epistemic community theory possesses several positive features. Firstly, it recognizes dimensions of knowledge diffusion and policy learning (Hall, 1993), identifying how knowledge spreads throughout networks rather than top-down hierarchies. The research generated by the PSO contributes to knowledge development influencing ECOSOC discussions in a variety of thematic issue areas. Additionally, the theory identifies informal dimensions of governance that are frequently ignored in institutional analysis (Stone, 2013). Critics of epistemic community theory argue that epistemic communities are exclusive and self-referential (Turnhout et al., 2016); membership is generally limited to individuals with superior academic or professional credentials. Questions regarding democratic accountability in global policymaking are raised when this occurs. When considering the PSO example questions emerge regarding whose knowledge is represented and whose is excluded. The authority granted to the epistemic community limits the range of topics discussed.

The second is that the epistemic community theory has been criticized for neglecting the power differences amongst actors (Sending et al. 2015) since some epistemic communities may possess greater institutional leverage (such as through their membership on an ECOSOC subsidiary body) and/or access to resources such as funding or communications expertise. The PSO's status as a recognized ECOSOC advisory body and the resultant enhanced profile demonstrate how an organization's institutional recognition shapes its capacity for influencing public policy. While the PSO has certainly made important contributions to environmental governance, it acts within a larger web of structural inequities in both resource availability and decision-making authority (Sassen, 2014). In addition, the theory relies upon a degree of consensus among experts which frequently does not occur in areas where there is considerable debate over causality and appropriate action (Pelling, 2011; Sending et al. 2015). ECOSOC therefore finds itself constantly addressing divergent expert viewpoints, while still attempting to maintain credibility as a governing institution. Consequently, the application of epistemic community theory to areas of conflict and multiple perspectives should be done with sensitivity towards complexity of the governance process.

Regardless of these limitations, the Epistemic Community Theory is highly relevant to the analysis of this issue. The theory provides insight into why ECOSOC uses consultative non-governmental organizations (NGOs), like the PSO, as a mechanism to expand the scope of its knowledge base (United Nations, 2023). Additionally, it helps explain how Evidence-Based Policy Making (EBPM) occurs through networks as opposed to hierarchy (Stone, 2013). Furthermore, the PSO's function exemplifies this network-based model of EBPM by facilitating epistemic community overlap across various disciplines and geographical locations. Lastly, the critical examination of the

theory highlights the need for inclusivity and reflexivity in order to promote epistemic legitimacy (de Sousa Santos, 2014), consistent with the United Nations' principles of fairness and inclusiveness. Therefore, in conjunction with each other, epistemic community theory and EBPM provide a complete theoretical framework to analyze evidence-based global governance.

Finally, the Epistemic Community Theory expands upon the concepts of policy network theory by incorporating shared professional norms and values as mechanisms to shape policy. Haas (1992) defines an epistemic community as individuals who share a set of who shared causal understandings, normative commitments, and validity criteria in regard to claims of knowledge. The PSO seeks to facilitate the development of epistemic communities relative to issues pertinent to ECOSOC's mandate, including sustainable development, good governance reforms, and social policies. As epistemic communities develop and collaborate with one another, they can influence how members of ECOSOC, along with personnel of the Secretariat, perceive policy issues. However, epistemic communities rarely directly dictate the ultimate policy decisions. Rather, they serve as conceptual and long-term influences on the trajectory of policymaking, often without direct input on specific policy decisions at any particular point in time.

3. Constructivist Perspectives on Knowledge and Power

Constructivism adds an additional layer of depth to the study of how power influences knowledge in the context of global governance. Constructivists contend that all knowledge is socially constructed and embedded in discourse that favor certain types of knowledge and ways of thinking over others (Adler, 1997). Thus, when the PSO interacts with ECOSOC it is engaging in a struggle between competing discourses on development, equity, and governance for legitimacy (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). In addition to providing evidence to support their views, the PSO is shaping issue areas based upon dominant norms and values of the UN system. As such, the PSO's framing power is a subtle yet important way of determining what can be thought of as "thinkable" or "doable" in policy debates.

The constructivist perspective highlights the inequalities in global knowledge production. Powerful nations and organizations determine research agendas, methodologies, and sources of funding which raises questions about the nature of epistemological dominance (De Sousa Santos, 2014) and (Bourdieu, 1988). While the PSO has a mission to promote inclusive and dialogue; however, it does so from within structurally bounded environments. Thus, the PSO-ECOSOC interaction demonstrates both the possibilities and limits of non-state actors promoting democracy in the realm of global knowledge governance. EBPM therefore needs to be considered as a normative project that could either reinforce or challenge the current hierarchies.

Institutionalist, policy network and epistemic community theory along with constructivist theory demonstrate that EBPM in global governance is a hybrid process of institutional rules, network dynamics and discursive power. The PSO-ECOSOC relationship illustrates this hybridization: the PSO enhances ECOSOC's epistemic capacities while working through institutional constraints and normative expectations. The value of the PSO resides in its role of agenda setting, promoting learning and legitimating evidence in a complex governance structure rather than exercising direct policy authority.

The next section will draw upon these theoretical frameworks to analyze the empirical findings and implications arising from the PSO-ECOSOC relationship. Specifically, this section examines how this relationship works in practice and what it suggests regarding future possibilities for increasing EBPM in global governance.

Findings and Discussion

1. The PSO-ECOSOC Relationship in Practice

The PSO-ECOSOC relationship demonstrates how layers of influence and the complexity of interactions facilitate the practice of EBPM in Global Governance; however, These factors can also limit the ability for EBPM to function effectively. While the PSO does not act as a direct policymaker, the PSO does act as an epistemic facilitator. Therefore, instead of directly influencing the formulation of policies through evidence, the PSO is able to exert an indirect, cumulative, and subtle effect upon new discourses on policy issues over time. In addition, the evidence found in this study supports the idea that evidence is utilized indirectly to create a new discussion around policy issues over time as opposed to directly determining an immediate course of action regarding those same policy issues.

One of the primary implications of this research is related to the role of the PSO in developing agendas. By sponsoring conferences, policy dialogues and publications, the PSO has demonstrated a consistent pattern of aligning its activities with ECOSOC's thematic priorities. These include Sustainable Development, Social Inclusion, Governance Reform and the SDGs. The alignment of these two entities has helped raise awareness and priority regarding evidence-based evaluations, data transparency, and policy coherence during ECOSOC deliberations. It is clear that member states are responsible for establishing the official agenda; nonetheless, the PSO has had a profound influence upon the development of the conceptual framework within which the agenda is established. As an example, ECOSOC members' representatives and secretariat staff frequently utilize research sponsored by the PSO to demonstrate why certain topics need to receive priority attention. This clearly exemplifies what Weiss (1979) describes as "the conceptual utilization" of evidence when he indicates that policymakers both nationally and internationally use knowledge in its conceptual form to provide justification for the actions they want to take.

A second important implication of this research pertains to the role of the PSO in establishing frames for policy and constructing discourse. The multidisciplinary nature of the PSO allows it to develop cohesive policy narratives that reflect ECOSOC's normative positions and incorporate relevant information from fields including political science, economics, sociology, and public administration. Many of the PSO-developed narrative frameworks emphasize the interconnectedness among social, economic and environmental issues that reinforces the integrated logic of the SDGs. Additionally, many of the frames provided by the PSO focus on interdependent systems and long-term effects thereby facilitating movement toward a holistic approach to governance as opposed to a fragmented or siloed approach.

However, it is clear there are many structural limitations to the PSO's potential to influence the path of EBPM through ECOSOC. While the availability of data is increasing in ECOSOC decision-making, other issues including the geopolitical interests of member-states, And the global wealth disparities between the Global North and Global South have consistently been the most dominant in shaping ECOSOC decision-making. In addition, evidence that contradicts the economic interests of powerful states or challenges their respective models of development is typically marginalized and/or re-framed in ways to promote political acceptability. Therefore, while the negotiation of evidence into the formulation of policies may be a form of evidence-based policymaking, it occurs under institutional power dynamics and does not inevitably result in objective, unbiased, or rational policy decisions. As well, this dynamic supports the constructivist critique that evidence cannot be divorced from the politics of legitimacy and authority in global governance (Fischer, 2009).

Furthermore, the PSO-ECOSOC relationship illustrates the value of institutional learning. The repeated exposure to evidence-based research by ECOSOC has contributed to a slow yet incremental shift in how ECOSOC assesses the effectiveness of policy and monitors its progress toward achieving the goals established by global agreements. For example, ECOSOC now places greater emphasis on tracking performance using indicators; uses peer-review mechanisms to evaluate progress toward agreed upon objectives; and establishes follow-up processes regarding the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) among others. Although these developments do not automatically ensure improvements in policy outcomes, they indicate an early institutionalization of evidence-informed practices. From the perspective of an institutionalist, these incremental changes in complex multilateral systems provide a more reasonable and sustainable means of achieving reforms (Hall, 1993).

The relationship of the PSO with ECOSOC also generates important concerns about the inequality of epistemological power. While the PSO has a truly global scope, the majority of the empirical evidence on which ECOSOC bases its deliberations comes from studies carried out by Northern research centers. These conditions risk consolidating existing power relations as regards the production of knowledge and their influences on the policies. In order for ECOSOC to fulfill its objectives concerning inclusion and equality, it is necessary that there be intentional efforts to give greater space to voices from Southern countries and that different forms of knowledge (such as those developed locally or through experience) be recognized.

2. Research Findings and Interpretation

2.1 The Role of Integrated Evidence in Policy Development and Efficacy

This research shows how incorporating high-quality evidence into policy formulation can enhance legitimacy and performance of international governance institutions such as ECOSOC. The diagrams illustrating evidence creation and use show how the inclusion of systematic evidence can inform decision-making processes. The EBPM framework describes how systematically created evidence influences decision-making; however, it also acknowledges the importance of institutional structures to transform research into policymaking (Cairney, 2016; Pawson, 2006). Results from this research show how the PSO performs as an important conduit in the policy process enabling the transformation of complex scientific and policy-related knowledge into formats suitable for utilization by multilateral stakeholders. However, the direct influence of evidence on policy is limited by political negotiation and agenda-setting among stakeholder groups (Finnemore & Barnett, 2004). This is illustrated within the horizontal policy cycle (Fig. 3), where evidence exists alongside agenda-setting, deliberation, implementation, and monitoring. Therefore, the success of EBPM depends on both institutional capabilities and levels of stakeholder engagement. Moreover, as shown in Fig. 2 (the network representation), evidence flows through relationships among actors and represents the important roles that epistemological communities play in defining which sources of evidence are considered legitimate. Overall, when combining the results of EBPM and network analyses, it provides insight that indicates that while evidence quality is necessary for effective policy, it is only one of several factors - namely, accessibility, legitimacy and institutional support that determine whether or not evidence will have meaningful impact on global policy formulations.

2.2 The Function of Epistemic Communities in International Governance

As illustrated in Figure 3, Epistemic Communities perform as crucial intermediary actors for converting knowledge into policy influence inside complex multilateral networks (Adler & Haas, 1992;

Haas, 1992). For example, the Policy Studies Organization represents an Epistemic Community through its assembly of scholars, policy analysts, and practitioners. Consequently, this results in a collective understanding of policy problems and possible solutions. Furthermore, my research illustrates that Epistemic Authority allows actors to determine what issues are relevant, and what evidence is legitimate during ECOSOC discussions. In addition, as has been stated previously (Slaughter, 2004), Epistemic Community Influence is inherently selective and will provide benefits to those actors who have the necessary resources, credibility, and institutional connections. Further, as has been noted by other researchers (Turnhout et al., 2016), Selective Influence may reinforce existing inequalities in power, thus excluding perspectives from the Global South. Additionally, although the diagrams illustrate that there is bi-directional flow of information in terms of knowledge, the nodes with the most connectivity (e.g. the PSO) have greater control over how policy discourse develops and therefore ultimately greater influence on the outcomes. Moreover, it should be noted that the primary role of these communities is not only to provide subject area expertise, but also to interpret complex evidence in accordance with the UN policy framework. Finally, one of the main findings was that global governance is based upon negotiations between two forms of legitimacy. Specifically, epistemological legitimacy and political authority are both critical components. Consequently, as has been noted by previous researchers (Kuhlmann, 2024), understanding the relationships between these two forms of legitimacy is foundational for developing evidence-informed and inclusive intervention strategies in global governance. Therefore, promoting the diversity of Epistemic Communities is equally important to increasing the quality of evidence.

2.3 Interdependent Policy Processes and Feedback Mechanisms

Figure 3, which outlines the horizontal policy cycle demonstrates how the Policy Cycle of Evidence-Based Policymaking (EBPM) is self-referential as it utilizes a recurring loop of feedback from monitoring and evaluation activities in order to influence future policy decision-making processes (Howlett et al., 2020). Findings from this research demonstrate that the Public Services Office (PSO), through the provision of analytical tools, monitoring frameworks and evaluative data, provides the means for the inclusion of feedback into the policy making process thereby ensuring that policies continue to be responsive. ‘According to evidence-based policymaking (EBPM) theory, evidence-based policymaking has the greatest impact when used during all stages of the policy lifecycle and not solely at inception (Head, 2010). The self-referential nature of the policy cycle provides ECOSOC with the ability to address emergent global issues while using knowledge gained from prior policy implementation efforts. However, effectiveness in the use of feedback mechanisms depends upon the level of institutional transparency and whether member states are willing to act based upon evidence (Oliver & Cairney, 2019). Overall, the two figures illustrate that there exists mediation within governance networks regarding feedback where information may experience time delays, filtering or selective selective adoption. Therefore, there exist opportunities for continued improvement; however, the same opportunity also provides avenues for misinterpretation or politicization. Furthermore, the use of a self-referential approach to developing policy promotes a learning culture within international organizations and supports the normative objective of sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). Moreover, findings from this research suggest that the incorporation of mechanisms for evaluating public policies will increase the resilience and accountability of multilateral policy development. As such, the use of evidence-based approaches to policy development are both technical and political in nature and require thoughtful consideration regarding process design.

2.4 Multi Scalar Governance and Knowledge Flow

The Global Governance Network (see Figure 2) shows the complex relationships and interactions among international organizations, member states, non-governmental organizations, and regional institutions as they work together to formulate policy outcomes. The results of this research provide an example of how Multi-Scalar Governance can expand the reach and legitimacy of Evidence-Based Policy Intervention through inclusion of multiple stakeholders and actors (Stone, 2013, Sending et al., 2015). A Consultative Role for the PSO exemplifies how knowledge flows can be used to link Local, National and Global Levels of Governance, which will enable coordinated policy responses. EBPM Theory identifies that while evidence alone is needed to make a meaningful difference, Translation of Knowledge from one level of governance to another is required as well (Nutley et al., 2007). Communities of Practice play a critical role in developing Coherence and Consistency of Information across levels of governance. However, differences in Resources, Expertise, institutional capacity, among other factors, can prevent or limit Knowledge Flows, thereby creating Inequities in Participation. The Diagrams above clearly identify Connectivity, Trust and Credibility as essential Elements of Effective Networked Governance. These dynamics illustrate that Global Decisions on Policies are not solely made Unilaterally, but through Negotiations, Collaborations and Persuasions. Therefore, it is imperative to develop Inclusive and well-connected networks to achieve Adaptive and Equitable Governance.

2.5 Implications for Adaptive and Inclusive Global Governance

An accumulation of the diagrams, theories and concepts clearly illustrates that globally inclusive, adaptive and evidence-based global governance can be achieved by intentionality, in terms of institutional design. EBPM offers a methodological model that connects high-quality research to policymaking. Epistemic Community Theory illustrates how knowledge gains credibility via social processes (Haas, 1992; Cairney, 2016). Figure 1 demonstrates the need for an established path structure linking evidence generation, deliberative engagement, and resultant policy outputs. The findings of this study illustrate that the bridging function of the PSO enhances both the legitimacy and the technical quality of global governance. However, there is considerable potential for improvement relative to underrepresented voices of marginalized populations and the selective use of evidence as influenced by political agendas. The multi-scalar governance framework illustrates that adaptability occurs when coordination exists across all levels of governance and among all relevant stakeholders. Collectively, the diagrams demonstrate that both strong network connectivity and epistemic diversity provide greater opportunity for reduced knowledge bottlenecks and improved resilience. Findings from this study illustrate that inclusiveness, transparency, and reflexivity are equally as critical as methodologically rigorous approaches to policy development. Ultimately, effective evidence-based global governance requires consideration of knowledge, networks, and politics simultaneously. Integration of these studies' results should enhance ECOSOC's and other international governing bodies' ability to address complex global issues.

Implications of the Findings

Institutional design is key to establishing effective evidence-based policymaking (EBPM) in global governance. The primary focus should be on ensuring there are sufficient formal structures through which knowledge can be integrated and shared across stakeholders. Additionally, both formal and informal incentives must be put into place so that stakeholders do not feel pressured to use evidence to advance narrow political interests.

Non-state actors, including the Policy Studies Organization (PSO), also have significant roles in developing the pathways for EBPM within the systems they operate. Their success in creating these pathways will ultimately depend upon how open formal institutions are to new ideas; and the larger political context in which these relationships exist.

1. Possible Reforms Within the ECOSOC System.

Given the results above, we propose three possible reforms in ECOSOC:

Formalize Mechanisms for Collaboration: Develop and formalize collaborative arrangements based on continuous evidence synthesis and evaluation, between ECOSOC and other relevant policy organizations. These collaborations would allow for continued development of relationships with evidence users who are able to synthesize knowledge.

Increase Transparency: Increase transparency in ECOSOC's deliberative process. By increasing the transparency of its deliberations, ECOSOC can demonstrate a greater level of accountability to both member states and civil society; therefore, increasing the credibility of ECOSOC decisions.

Build Capacity for Evidence Use: Build the capacity of ECOSOC members and the secretariat to effectively utilize and interpret evidence. This can reduce dependence on symbolic or selective uses of evidence.

Conclusion

This study has enhanced our understanding of the interaction between the Policy Studies Organization (PSO) and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The relationship between these two bodies has served as a framework for understanding both the possibilities and limitations of utilizing evidence-based decision-making in international institutions.

By analyzing interactions between states and non-state actors with respect to institutional relationships, epistemic power and strategic actions as well as applying a conceptual framework related to institutional design, evidence interpretations, and state/non-state actor actions toward EBPM within multilateral organizations, the authors have shown that the utilization of evidence-based decision-making processes in international organizations are significantly affected by a complex series of institutional factors including but not limited to: institutional design, evidence interpretations, and actions taken by states and non-state actors.

The main hypothesis of this study was that the PSO affects EBPM in ECOSOC through its indirect influence via mechanisms such as establishing agendas, providing frameworks for policies, and promoting organizational learning while excluding any formal decision-making authority over ECOSOC. Therefore, this study directly challenged the technocratic belief that evidence will inevitably result in better policy decision-making. Instead, evidence will only become useful for policy purposes after being interpreted, legitimized and negotiated within ECOSOC's consensus-driven environment prior to being considered for policymaking. Furthermore, the PSO functions as an intermediary in terms of knowledge that increases ECOSOC's cognitive abilities to process evidence-based policy recommendations. However, whether the PSO can produce any effects on EBPM will depend upon ECOSOC's desire to embrace new forms of knowledge and the extent to which ECOSOC is constrained by its own institutional limitations.

Finally, this study emphasizes the necessity of methodological pluralism when studying EBPM globally. By demonstrating how different theories of governance (i.e., institutional and constructivist theories of knowledge) contribute to our understanding of EBPM at the global level, this study demonstrates how various levels of analysis and theoretical perspectives provide us with a more complete understanding of EBPM. For example, institutional theory explains how the history of ECOSOC as well as its norms, rules, and established practices limit the impact of evidence on policy-making decisions. Likewise, social network theory illustrates how networks facilitate the exchange of ideas regarding best practices across institutional boundaries. Finally, constructivist theories explain how all forms of knowledge (including evidence) are subject to similar political and normative influences that are characteristic of the broader global governance regime.

Nevertheless, the authors identified numerous barriers to improving EBPM at the global level. Some examples include Global North Knowledge Producers' dominance, the selective use of evidence for symbolic purposes, and ongoing geopolitical interests masking their influence on policy decisions. Although the PSO has considerable potential for reducing many of these barriers to EBPM improvement by promoting inter-disciplinary dialogue among stakeholders involved in policy development and increasing stakeholder involvement in policy development, the authors emphasize that there is no guarantee that this potential will be realized unless the PSO takes steps to recognize and address disparities in knowledge production as well as create a platform for recognizing diverse forms of evidence. If these disparities are not recognized and addressed, then EBPM may perpetuate existing hierarchical structures under the guise of objectivity.

To better support EBPM in ECOSOC and other similar institutions, the authors recommend a number of steps. They argue that increasing researcher access to data alone is insufficient to improve EBPM in these contexts. Rather, EBPM improvement depends upon formal incorporation of evidence into decision-making processes at all levels of the institution (including technical working groups); improved transparency throughout the EBPM process; and creation of opportunities for learning. For example, formalized relationships between policy institutions and research institutions, capacity-building programs designed to enhance the ability of researchers and policymakers to work together effectively, and clear accountability mechanisms could help meet these goals. While the authors suggest that reforms such as those described above may be feasible, they also acknowledge that implementing them would require significant political will and would likely depend upon careful consideration of member states' sovereignty concerns.

In addition to offering insights related to reforming EBPM in ECOSOC, the authors note that the lessons from this study have implications for broader reform of global governance. In particular, the authors argue that as challenges facing nations become increasingly transnational (e.g., inequality, climate change, etc.), too will be the demand for credible and inclusive evidence-based approaches. According to the authors, the PSO-ECOSOC relationship demonstrates both the potential benefits and vulnerabilities of evidence-based approaches to addressing global problems. Specifically, the authors illustrate how non-state actors can positively impact global policymaking when they operate within institutional structures that provide a balance of expertise and legitimacy/inclusivity.

Lastly, the authors argue that EBPM in global governance is neither static nor absolute; it is an iterative and adaptive process. Through its examination of interactions between the Policy Studies Organization and ECOSOC relative to knowledge-power relations during global policy agenda formulation, the authors identify areas where additional research is warranted. These areas include comparative studies of EBPM across various types of international institutions; further investigation

into the views and perspectives of policymakers/knowledge producers regarding EBPM in global governance; and assessment of long-term impacts of evidence-informed practice on outcomes of global development.

References

- Adler, E. (1997). Seizing the middle ground: Constructivism in world politics. *European Journal of International Relations*, 3(3), 319–363. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066197003003003>
- Adler, E., & Haas, P. M. (1992). Conclusion: Epistemic communities, world order, and the creation of a reflective research program. *International Organization*, 46(1), 367–390. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2706960>
- Barnett, M., & Finnemore, M. (2004). *Rules for the world: International organizations in global politics*. Cornell University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt7z7mx>
- Bernstein, S. (2011). Legitimacy in global environmental governance. *Journal of International Law and International Relations*, 7(1-2), 139–166. https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/journals/jilir%20/v1i1/f_0024934_20365.pdf
- Best, J. (2014). *Governing failure: Provisional expertise and the transformation of global development finance*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139542739>
- Bourdieu, P. (1988). *Homo academicus*. Stanford University Press.
- Cairney, P. (2016). *The politics of evidence-based policymaking*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-51781-4>
- de Sousa Santos, B. (2014). *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against epistemicide*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315634876>
- DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review*, 48(2), 147–160. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095101>
- Fischer, F. (2009). *Democracy and expertise: Reorienting policy inquiry*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199282838.001.0001>
- George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2005). *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. MIT Press.
- Guston, D. H. (2001). Boundary organizations in environmental policy and science: An introduction. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 26(4), 399–408. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/690161>
- Haas, P. M. (1992). Introduction: Epistemic communities and international policy coordination. *International Organization*, 46(1), 1–35. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2706951>
- Hall, P. A. (1993). Policy paradigms, social learning, and the state: The case of economic policymaking in Britain. *Comparative Politics*, 25(3), 275–296. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/422246.pdf>
- Head, B. W. (2010). Reconsidering evidence-based policy: Key issues and challenges. *Policy and Society*, 29(2), 77–94. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polsoc.2010.03.001>
- Howlett, M., Ramesh, M., & Perl, A. (2020). *Studying public policy: Policy cycles and policy subsystems* (4th edition). Oxford University Press.
- Hurd, I. (2019). Legitimacy and contestation in global governance: Revisiting the folk theory of international institutions. *The Review of International Organizations*, 14, 717–729. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11558-018-9338-z>

- Keck, M. E., & Sikkink, K. (1998). *Activists beyond borders: Advocacy networks in international politics*. Cornell University Press.
- Kuhlmann, S. (2024). Back to bureaucracy? The advent of the neo-Weberian state in Germany. *Journal of Policy Studies*, 39(2), 5-20. <https://doi.org/10.52372/jps39202>
- Nutley, S. M., Walter, I., & Davies, H. T. O. (2007). *Using evidence: How research can inform public services*. Policy Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt9qgwt1>
- Oliver, K., & Cairney, P. (2019). The dos and don'ts of influencing policy: A systematic review of advice to academics. *Palgrave Communications*, 5(1), 21. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-019-0232-y>
- Parkhurst, J. O. (2017). *The politics of evidence: From evidence-based policy to the good governance of evidence*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315675008>
- Pawson, R. (2006). *Evidence-based policy: A realist perspective*. SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849209120>
- Pelling, M. (2011). *Adaptation to climate change: From resilience to transformation*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203889046>
- Pierson, P. (2000). Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics. *American Political Science Review*, 94(2), 251–267. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2586011>
- Rhodes, R. A. W. (1997). *Understanding governance: Policy networks, governance, reflexivity and accountability*. Open University Press.
- Rosenau, J. N. (1995). Governance in the twenty-first century. *Global Governance*, 1(1), 13–43. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27800099>
- Sassen, S. (2014). *Expulsions: Brutality and complexity in the global economy*. Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt6wpqz2>
- Sending, O. J., Pouliot, V., & Neumann, I. B. (2015). *Diplomacy and the making of world politics*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316162903>
- Slaughter, A.-M. (2004). *A new world order*. Princeton University Press.
- Stone, D. (2008). Global public policy, transnational policy communities, and their networks. *Policy Studies Journal*, 36(1), 19–38. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0072.2007.00251.x>
- Stone, D. (2013). Knowledge actors and transnational governance: The private-public policy nexus in the global agora. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137022912>
- Taylor, P., & Groom, A. J. R. (2000). *The United Nations at the millennium: The principal organs*. Continuum.
- Turnhout, E., Dewulf, A., & Hulme, M. (2016). What does policy-relevant global environmental knowledge do? The cases of climate and biodiversity. *Global Environmental Change*, 18, 65–72. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2015.09.004>
- United Nations. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development*. United Nations. <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>
- United Nations. (2023). *ECOSOC and the consultative relationship with non-governmental organizations*. United Nations.
- Weiss, C. H. (1979). The many meanings of research utilization. *Public Administration Review*, 39(5), 426–431. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3109916>
- Weiss, T. G. (2013). *What's wrong with the United Nations and how to fix it* (2nd edition). Polity Press.