HIA as a knowledge exchange tool in the policy arena: A conceptual framework

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International HIA Conference 2011
April 15, 2011
Granada, Spain
“There is nothing so practical as a good theory!” Kurt Lewis, 1951
- **Conceptual Framework:**
  To better understand how HIA leads decision makers to take health into account, and under which conditions.

- Framework will be used to:
  - document HIA project in Québec, Canada
  - evaluate knowledge utilization among decision makers in the context of this HIA.
What kind of HIA?

Decision-support model
(Harris-Roxas & Harris, 2010; Wismar, 2007);

Interactive model of HIA (Bekker, 2007).

Objective: To promote interaction between public health actors and policy makers.

Policy makers
(Determinants of health)

(Policy constraints)
Public health actors
Where our framework comes from:

“Boundary” theory

(Gieryn, 1983; Bekker, 2007)

• Rhetorical separation of science from non-science; distinction between different areas (scientific vs non-scientific) (Gieryn, 1983)

• Context of Interactive HIA: Boundaries are a way to recognize the different sectors/realities around the table (Bekker, 2007)

• HIA = Boundary work creates a “Common space”, “Trading zone” which allows for interaction and recognition of each party’s boundaries
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Boundary work (Gieryn, 1983, Bekker 2007)

HIA Process
- Engagement of partners
- Respect of roles and responsibilities
- Creation of scientifically credible and politically useful information

Boundary objects (Gieryn, 1983; Bekker, 2007)

HIA Tools
- Neutral
- Flexible
- Standardization of facts

Knowledge utilization – decision makers (Weiss, 1999; Wismar et al., 2007)
- Instrumental
- Conceptual
- Symbolic/Strategic

Context: Type of policy, Stage of policy proposal, Timing, Political constraints, Resources, etc.

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Boundary work: HIA process

HIA Process
- Engagement of partners
- Respect of roles and responsibilities
- Creation of scientifically credible and politically useful information

HIA Tools
- Without epistemic authority
- Flexible
- Standardization of facts

Boundary objects
(Gieryn, 1983; Bekker, 2007)

Context: Type of policy, Stage of policy proposal, Timing, Political constraints, Resources, etc.
Boundary objects: HIA tools

Boundary work
(Gieryn, 1983; Bekker 2007)

HIA Process
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Knowledge utilization among decision makers

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Applying the framework in Canada

Region of Montérégie, Québec
Potential implications of the study

• Make the theory implicit in the interactive model of HIA explicit
• Help us to understand what works, what doesn’t and why
• Shed light on HIA as a knowledge transfer/exchange activity
Muchas gracias!

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Florence Morestin and Julie Castonguay to this presentation.

Questions & Comments:

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