

THE 'R VALUE' OF RESEARCH IN QUALITY GUIDANCE PROVISION

Lydia Lauder

24 February 2022



The Open
University

The R Value and a Researcher's Journey



Research



'A systematic approach to solving a problem and identifying new knowledge: it is about asking questions and arriving at some conclusions'

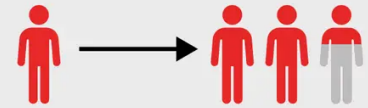
(Neary and Johnson, 2016).

The average number of people that one person with a virus infects, based on the R0 scale

COVID-19: 2–2.5

Infected person

Average people infected



H1N1: 1.2–1.6

Infected person

Average people infected



Ebola: 1.6–2

Infected person

Average people infected

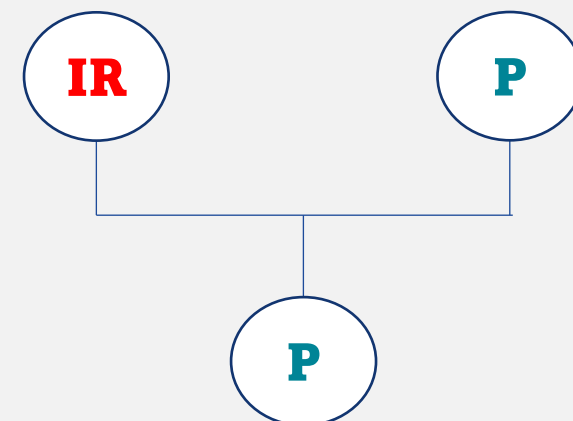


Outreach and Guidance Worker: Establishment of the JET Project.



IR

Information research (IR) leading to the development of services.



National Careers Service Prime Contractor Manager & Masters Student



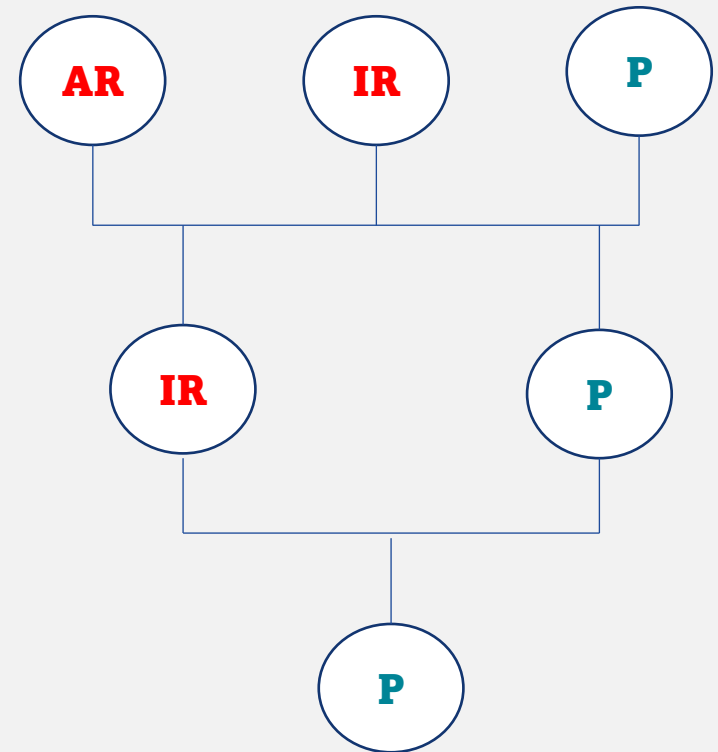
Action Research (AR) is a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by practitioners in social situations in order to improve the nationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out.

(Carr and Kemmis, 1986)

AR

Some outcomes of this research...

- ✓ Led to the development of a regional workforce development strategy.
- ✓ Provided a strong evidence base for supporting Ofsted Inspection (examining continuous improvement and staff development aspects).
- ✓ Intelligence to support the development of our observation framework.
- ✓ Publications of research papers – e.g. Lauder, L and Neary, S. (2020).
- ✓ Service continuous improvement strategy – independent business report produced on best practice as well as areas for improvement for future training programmes and workforce development activity.



*Research has so many catalytic effects! It carries practical applicability. It is contagious! It has the **R** factor!*

OU Careers and Employability Services: Applying An Evidence-Based Approach to Quality Systems

CES QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

Student Facing

Standards &
Processes

(One: One and
One: Many)

Faculty Facing

Standards &
Processes

Employer Engagement

- Students and Alumni
- Employers / Partners

Resources

- Website Content
- Printed publications

Continuous
Improvement
Framework

CES Quality Assurance Strategy

Key Activities to Achieve Strategic Aims



- Quality Assurance at CES follows an **organic approach** with responsibility of the **full professional community** of managers and practitioners.
- Quality is driven by an **evidence-based approach (EBA)** to practice.
- This is a form of research also. It is linked to **demonstrating the impact** that careers provision has.

EBA

Key Drivers to assessing impact



INSTITUTIONAL - does the service provide value for money?

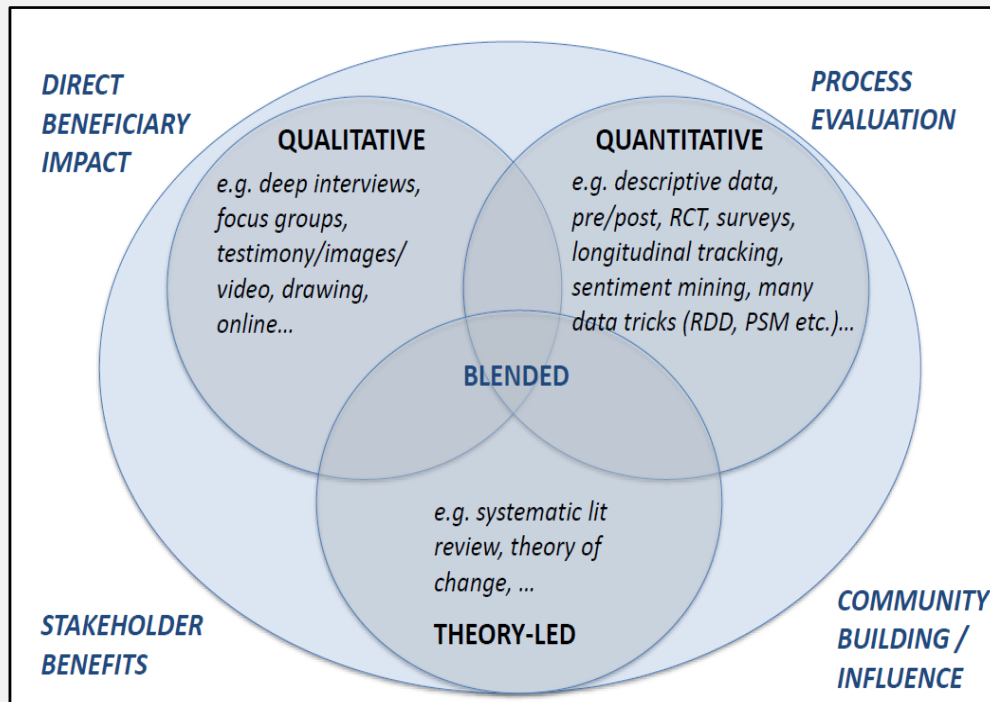


PROFESSIONAL – is what I do is meaningful and of value to students?



CLIENT – does using CES help the student in some way?

Using theories and research-based approaches to evidence impact.



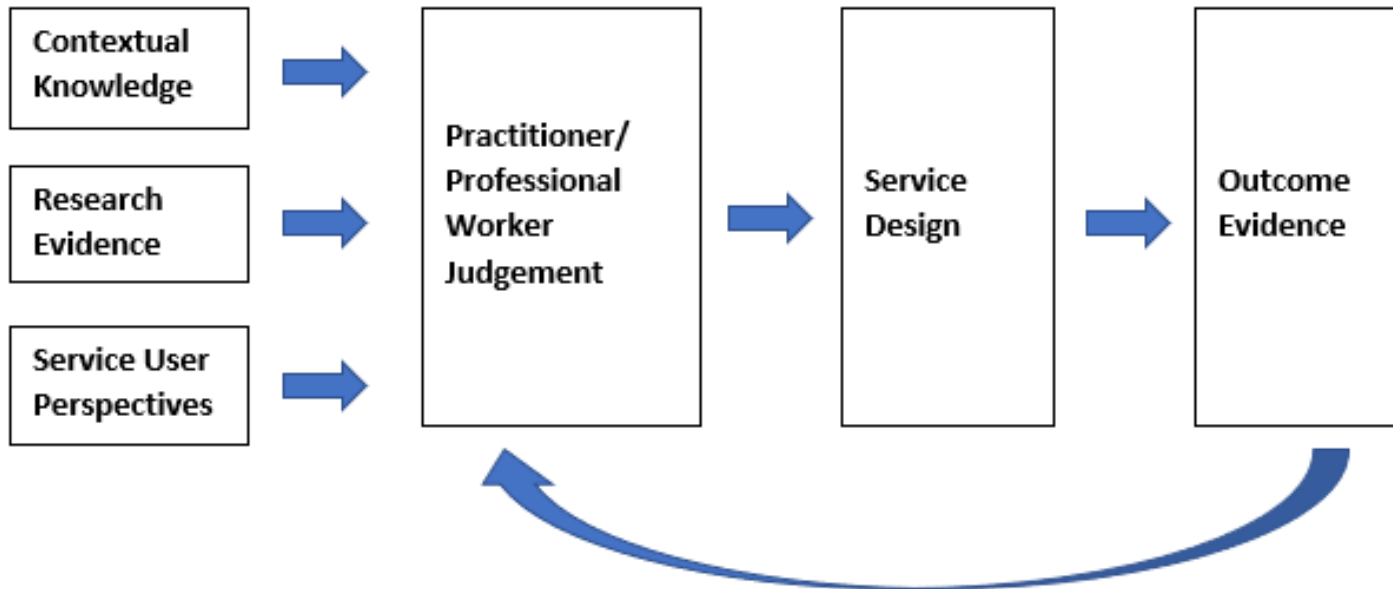
Theory of Change

‘The theory of change describes the steps that need to take place between what you do and the impact that you hope to achieve. It helps you to think about what you are doing and why. It also helps you to establish a framework for evaluation and quality assurance.’

(Hooley, 2018)

Blended Model, DMH Associates (2020)

An Integrated Model for Evidence Based Practice (Robertson, 2020)



WHY MUST WE USE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS?



2. BE DISCIPLINED, PROPORTIONATE, PRAGMATIC



Don't measure everything or what is easy, measure what is relevant.



Peer review and collaborate with colleagues.



Not all activities will require the same depth of analysis.

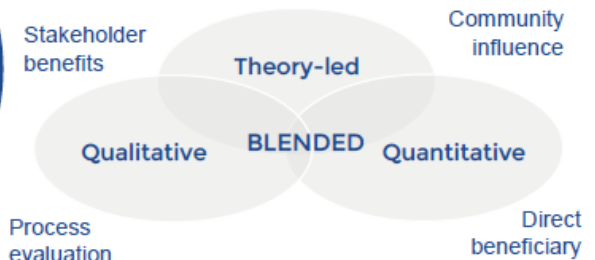


Adapt language, formats, and methodology to consider equality and diversity.



Not everything can or needs to be measured.

3. USE A BLENDED MODEL OF EVALUATION (DMH Associates, 2020)



Access internal and external data via [CES MI Share Point](#). For in-depth qualitative analysis use [CES Qualitative Evaluation Framework](#).

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE HELP?

Email Lydia.lauder@open.ac.uk

- [AGCAS \(2020\) Research Driven Practice](#)
- [OU \(2019\) Methods for Research and Scholarship](#)

1. BE PURPOSEFUL AND PLANNED



CLARIFY THE NEED

- Do we need to do this and why?
- What are we trying to achieve?
- What user need are we meeting?



RECYCLE PREVIOUS WORK

- What can be reused to avoid duplication?
- What can it link or connect with?



THEORY OF CHANGE

- How does this fit with Continuous Improvement Plan?
- Does everyone agree this is best?
- Do we anticipate barriers?
- Will there be larger impacts?
- What support is needed?
- When is best time?

4. REPORTING



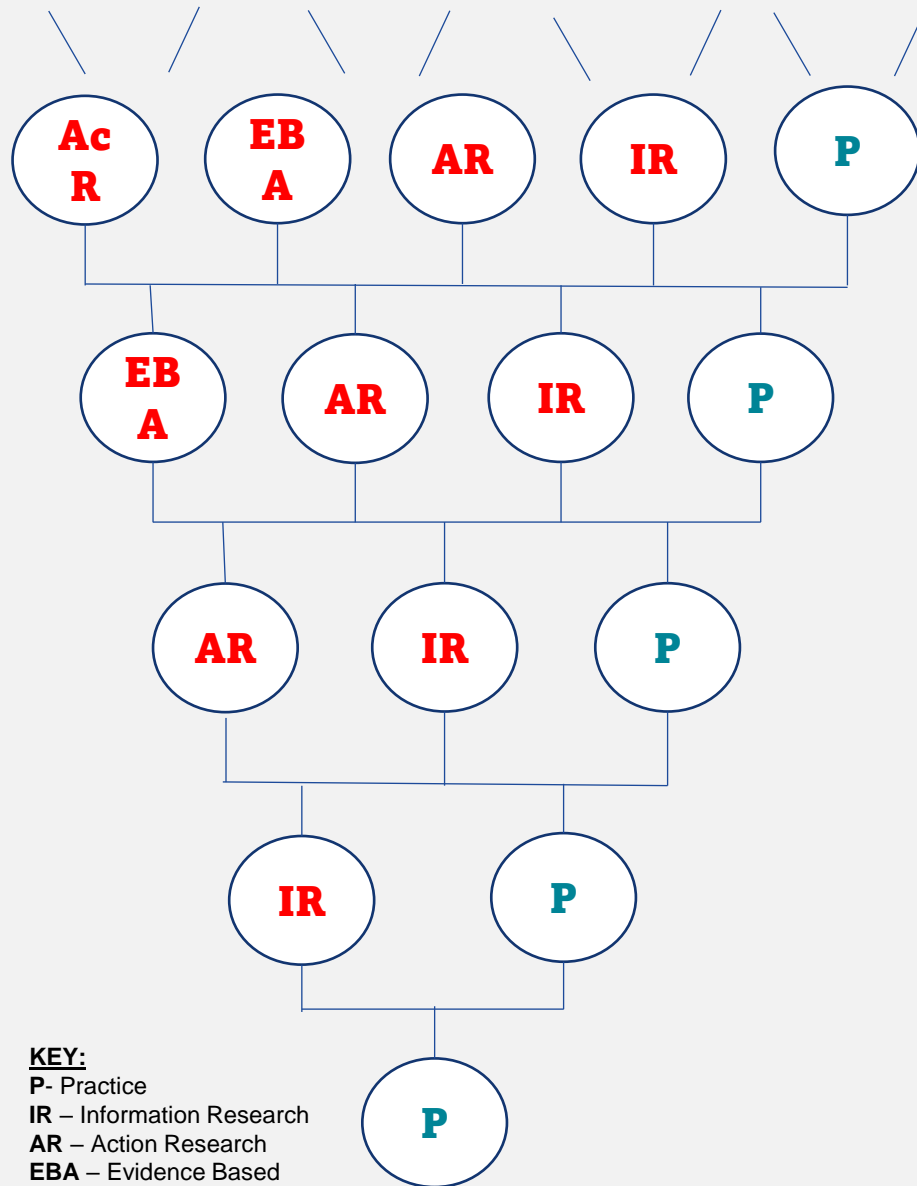
Findings can be reported via standard templates available

EXAMPLES:

- [User Testing: Your Career Planning Guide](#) (light, low analysis).
- [DVS podcasts](#) (wider analytics).
- [Student Voice](#) (In-depth, quantitative, [CES Qualitative Evaluation Framework](#)).

CES IMPACT ASSESSMENT GUIDE

Research has a high R value!



KEY:
P- Practice
IR – Information Research
AR – Action Research
EBA – Evidence Based Approach
ACR – Academic Research

- Research takes different guises – information gathering; action research; evidence-based approaches; academic publications.
- Research is not only academic, it is above all very pragmatic, of practical value.
- Research is an iterative process – and as you engage with research you will evolve as will your research!
- Research can be contagious! It's got the (good) R factor!
- Get involved!

References

- Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (1986). *Becoming Critical*. Lewes: Falmer
- DMH Associates (2020) *The Career Development Landscape: Evidence and Impact Assessment*. <https://dmhassociates.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/080920-The-career-development-landscape-webinar-FINAL-VERSION.pdf>
- Hooley, T., (2018) Evidence based practice and evaluation in career guidance. ADVENTURES IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT [Online]. Available at: <https://adventuresincareerdevelopment.wordpress.com/2018/11/24/7023/> (Accessed: 2 July, 2021)
- Lauder, L and Neary, S. (2020). 'The role and relevance of theory in careers professionalisation and practice'. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, pp. 1-16.
- Neary, S. and Johnson, J. (2016). *CPD for the Career Development Professional: A Handbook for Enhancing Practice*. Bath, Trotman Publishing, pp81-100
- Robertson P.J., (2020) Evidence-Based Practice for Career Development *In: The Oxford Handbook for Career Development*. Ed: P Robertson, P. J., Hooley, T., and McNash, P., Oxford University Press. Available at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dJgqJTO74GMNuugk_EfFG09FnOFSRdsP/view

Thank you!



"Nothing in life
is to be feared,
it is only to be
understood. Now
is the time to
understand more,
so that we may
fear less."
—Marie Curie

Lydia.Lauder@open.ac.uk

