

FORMATS OF RESEARCH-BASED RESOURCES USED IN SCHOOL DECISION MAKING

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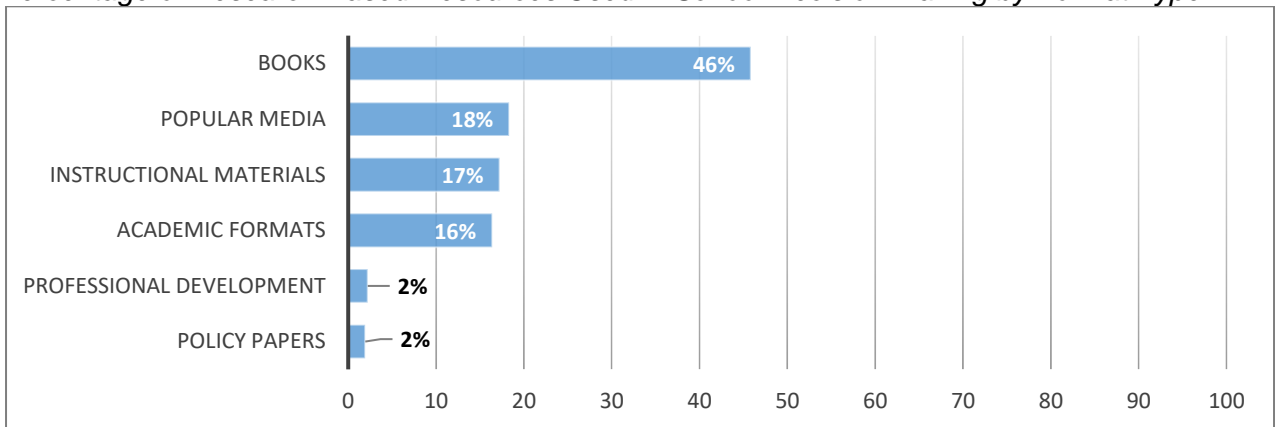


Insights from the Center for Research Use in Education

DATA POINTS

One long-documented barrier to the use of research in educational decision-making is lack of dissemination of research findings for policy and practice audiences. Methods researchers use to disseminate their findings tend to traditionally serve academic communities (e.g., conferences and peer-reviewed journal articles). However, we know from other fields that practitioners are less likely to search for evidence from these channels. As many funding agencies now require a plan outlining how results of research projects will be shared with knowledge users, we need a better picture of the resources educators actually use to inform decision-making. Early analyses from a nationally representative sample of schools provide some insight. School staff provided open ended answers about specific research-based resources that influenced an organizational decision. Of 1852 respondents (at time of analysis), 282 school-based practitioners provided information on 365 resources. These answers were categorized by format type. The figure below presents findings to date.

Percentage of Research-Based Resources Used in School Decision-Making by Format Type



Books: Books

Popular Media: News articles, blogs and other web-based articles, PowerPoint presentations, videos

Instructional Materials: Instructional programs or interventions, teaching guides


Academic Formats: Research articles, projects, summaries, and dissertations

Professional Development: University course, In-service professional development workshop

Policy Papers: Whitepaper, Policy

School-based practitioners were most likely to use books to inform organizational decisions. Traditional academic formats, including research articles, research projects, research summaries, and dissertations were less likely to be mentioned. These findings indicate that the traditional methods of dissemination do not link well with the needs and communication approaches that resonate with educators. Our data featured a number of books where research evidence was converted into consumable, actionable content for educators, such as [Best Practices at Tier 1: Daily Differentiation for Effective Instruction](#) and [Conscious Discipline: Building Resilient Classrooms](#).

The Center for Research Use in Education, CRUE, is currently conducting a parallel survey of education researchers. The findings from this parallel study will help us learn how education researchers are designing studies in ways that engage stakeholders and emphasize creative approaches to dissemination. In addition, CRUE is asking researchers about organizational incentives for dissemination in an effort to uncover how researchers are being supported in addressing the research-practice gap. By applying findings from this study, we hope that education research will no longer 'sit on the shelf' but will be increasingly used in school-based decision-making.

To learn more about CRUE and Research4Schools, find us: www.research4schools.org or at  @ Rsrch4Schls

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