

From academia to policy: what makes Nordic research citable in policy documents?

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Abstract

Academic research significantly impacts policymaking; however, the factors that increase the possibility of Nordic research being cited in policy documents remain unexplored. In this paper, we investigated the bibliometric characteristics associated with policy citations of Nordic research by examining the source quality, citation impact, research collaboration, publication type, access status, and disciplinary differences in policy-cited publications. We analyzed a 24-year dataset of Scopus-indexed publications with Nordic-affiliated researchers cited in policy documents. Publications were categorized into six disciplines based on the Fields of Research and Development classification. Policy citation data were obtained from SciVal and analyzed with custom R scripts. We found that Medical Sciences received the major share of policy citations, followed by Natural Sciences and Social Sciences. Publications in first-quartile sources, and those in the top tier of citation percentile (field-weighted) were more likely to be cited in policy, indicating a relationship between academic impact and policy relevance. Internationally collaborated publications were most cited in policies across disciplines, followed by national ones. Single-authored papers were common in Social Sciences and Humanities. Policy documents often cited non-open access publications, except in Medical Sciences. Articles were the most cited, while reviews ranked second, except in Engineering and Technology and Social Sciences, where conference proceedings and book chapters, respectively, surpassed reviews, highlighting discipline-specific preferences in how policy documents engage with research publications. Our findings demonstrate the importance of collaborative research in facilitating the transfer of knowledge from academia to policy. They also illustrate the impact of disciplinary norms on scholarly communication and policymaking.

Keywords: Policy Citations; Research Impact; International Collaboration; Open Access; Nordic Research.