

Social Workers' Views on Implementing Evidence-Based Practice

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Implementation of EBP in the human services

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Research Design



What is Evidence-Based Practice?

The use of current, best research evidence to inform interventions for individual clients, families, groups and communities

Interpretations of EBP

Research informed clinical decision making

- *Individual* practitioner focus

Research informed practice guidelines

- *Organisational* policy & procedure focus

Empirically supported standard interventions

- *Intervention* fidelity focus

EBP = Clinical decision-making



Eileen Gambrill

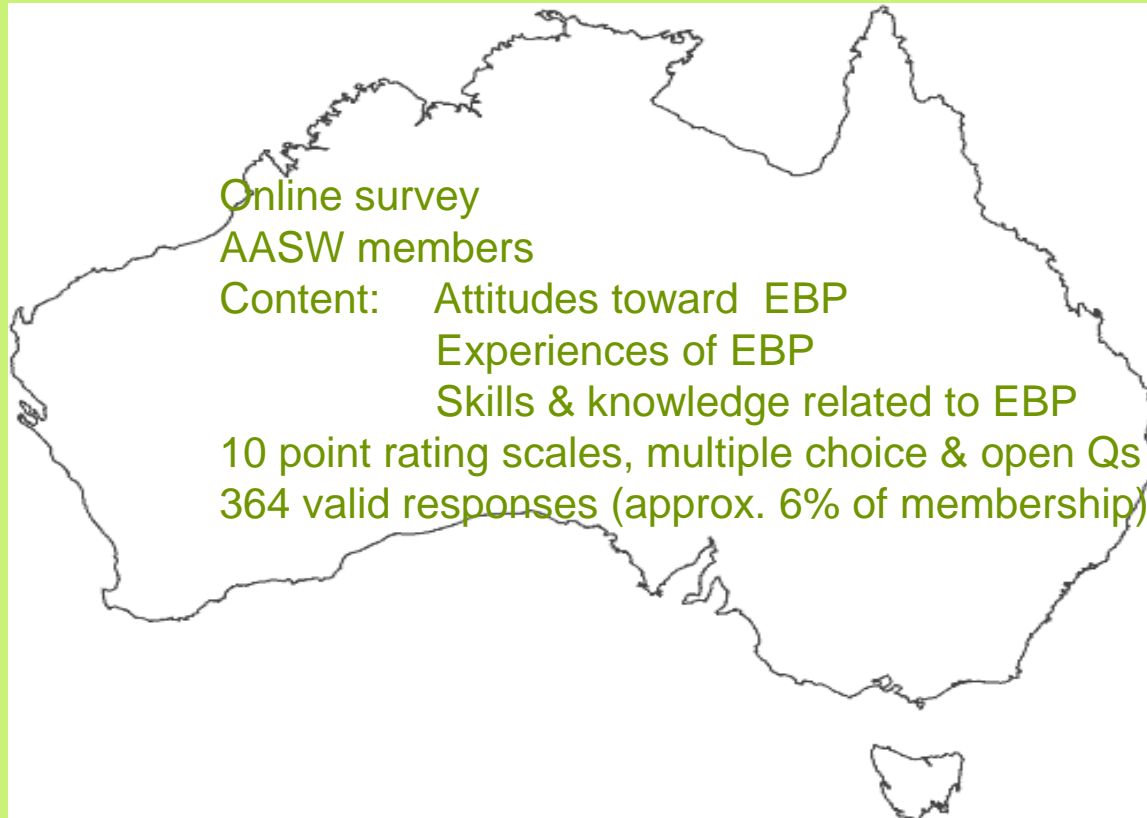
Key findings from Newcastle research

Strong support for EBP

Changes in practice due to research

Organisational barriers to EBP
implementation

National survey of social workers



Support for EBP

Question	Strong support (1-4 on 10 point scale) % (n=364)
How would you describe your attitude toward EBP?	80%
How would you describe the attitude of your colleagues toward EBP?	61%
How useful are research findings in your day-to-day work?	82%
Implementing EBP improves client care	85%
EBP is of limited use to social work (reverse scored)	76%

Use of research evidence

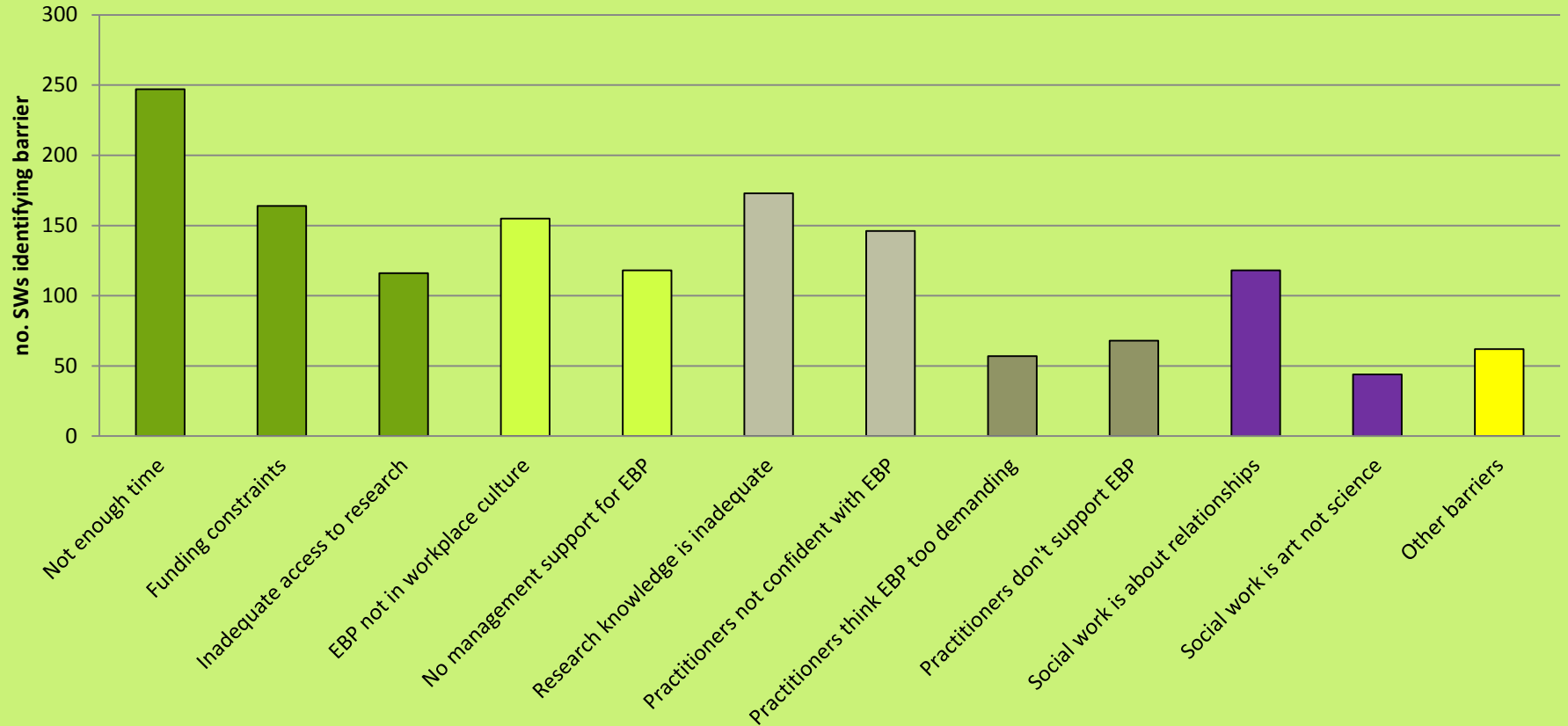
- 65% reported a change in practice in the past 2 years due to new knowledge obtained from research.
- Social workers in executive and management roles reported more changes in practice due to research (76%) than those in frontline roles (62%)

(Chi-square, $p=0.02$)

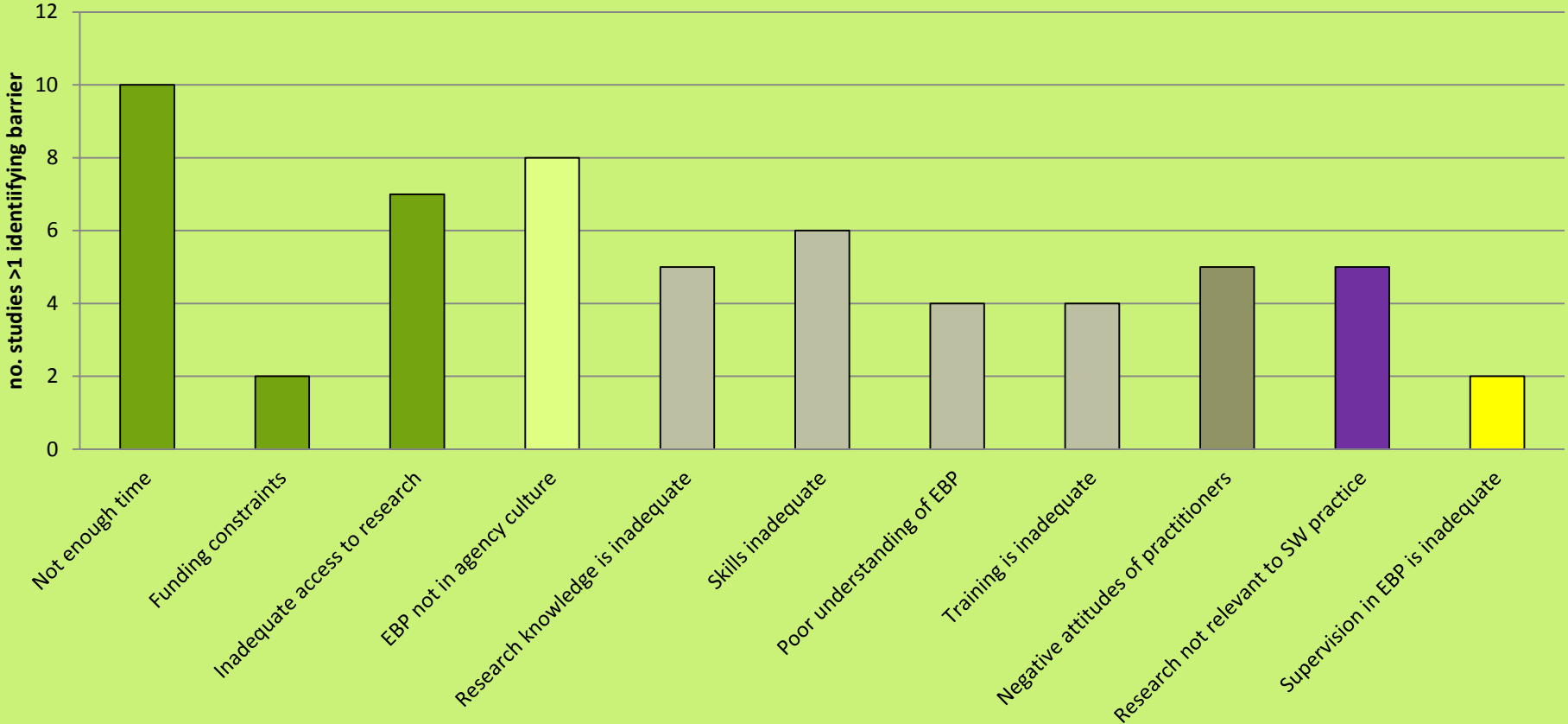
What EBP implementation looks like for SW

EBP Implementation method best for social work	n	%
Learn EBP search and appraisal skills	149	41%
Apply evidence-based summaries that give clinical 'bottom line'	50	14%
Use EBP guidelines and protocols developed by others	154	42%
None or not specified	11	3%
Total	364	100%

Barriers to EBP implementation – SW survey



EBP implementation barriers- review of prior research



Implications for EBP implementation

- Move beyond conceptualising EBP implementation solely as the responsibility of the individual practitioner
- Address organisational factors:
 - allocation of staff time
 - organisational culture
 - funding
 - leadership
 - access to research findings
 - supervision

Multiple implementation strategies



Questions & Comments