Pathways in Place

Co-Creating Community Capabilities

Development, structure and use of the *Resources' Attributes for evidence-informed Practice Tool* (RAPT)

Brief report

March 2024

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Co-Creating Community Capabilities

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CONTACT

If you want to use or test the tool, that is great! But, we'd like to know so please contact us at pathwaysinplace@vu.edu.au and visit our website www.pathwaysinplace.com.au/victoria university.

Pathways in Place: Co-Creating Community Capabilities is an innovative program of research and action that works closely with communities to achieve positive, sustainable, and systemic change.

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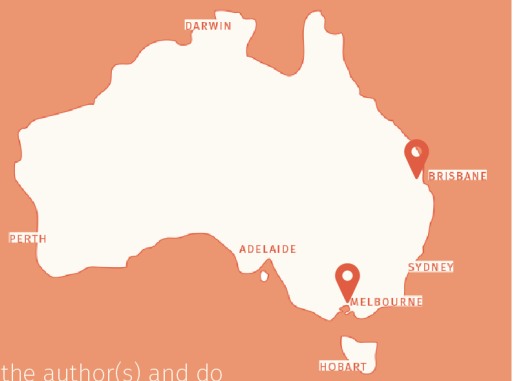

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Accessing the Resources' Attributes for evidence-informed Practice Tool

You can find the MS Excel version of the tool here.

If you would like to see the full list of items in the tool, you can find this here (under Supporting Information File S2) or check out the *What is the structure of the RAPT* section of this report.

Why do we need another tool?

In today's digital age, searching the Internet has become the go-to method for seeking solutions to our queries, making the Internet the largest library in the history of the world. While this virtual repository offers incredible opportunities, it can also present a challenge, with hundreds of resources to sort through, some of which are poor quality.

Practitioners, policymakers, community members and researchers rely on diverse resources to guide and inform their work, ranging from academic publications and reports, to implementation plans.

However, how can one discern the quality and reliability of these resources? In academic research, trusted allies to assist with assessing quality and reliability include a range of so-called *critical appraisal tools*. Critical appraisal tools offer guidance in assessing the quality, relevance, and methodological rigor of academic research.[1,2] Yet, when it comes to appraising other types of resources, such as reports or guides that are used in practice, the availability of tools is limited.

Despite the potential influence of practical, non-academic resources on public policy and practice, there is

> *'no tool to investigate the attributes of resources to successfully guide evidence-informed practice and determine their utility to practitioners or decision makers at the frontline of implementation'.*[4]

ABOUT US

Pathways in Place-Victoria University works with practitioners, policymakers, researchers and communities to:

- Develop theory, methods and evidence for place-based systems change approaches.
- Build capacity to support the design and implementation of effective place-based systems change approaches.
- Understand our impact on both advancing science and improving community outcomes.

Therefore, we, a team of researchers at Pathways in Place-Victoria University developed the *Resources' Attributes for evidence-informed Practice Tool* (RAPT) tool that can be used to:

- allow practitioners and decision-makers to investigate the attributes of existing resources designed to guide practice and decision-making, and
- guide those who develop resource in developing high-quality, practical resources relevant to practitioners and decision makers.

How did we develop it?

We conducted a rapid literature review. We realised there was no suitable tool to inform the development of practical resources or investigate the attributes of existing resources. So, we developed the RAPT in several iterative stages:

- *Assessment of existing tools:* We conducted a rapid literature review to identify and assess existing tools and identify their attributes.
- *First draft*: Based on the assessment of existing tools and their key attributes [1,2,5–15][i], a team member drafted the first version of the tool.
- *Testing and open discussion:* Several team members independently tested the first draft of the tool and provided feedback. The whole team had an open discussion about the first draft of the tool and the results of the testing.
- *Second draft*: Based on the feedback and discussion, one team member drafted the second version of the tool.
- *Testing and open discussion:* Several team members independently tested the second draft of the tool and provided feedback. The team had an open discussion about the second draft of the tool and the results of the testing.
- *Final version:* Based on the feedback and discussion, one team member developed the final version of the tool.

[ii] In our review of the tools, we found that some of the attributes that resources need to have to support evidence-informed practice are: 'an identifiable author (i.e., person(s) responsible for intellectual content); an identifiable publishing body; a clearly stated date (e.g., date of publication, date of last update); consideration of how information is presented (e.g., user-friendliness, accessibility); references to evidence to support the claims made in the resource; clearly stated limitations; and implementation or 'how to' strategies and guidance about how the information can be applied in practice'.[4]

What is the structure of the RAPT?

The RAPT has four sections:

1. General information about the resource
2. References, evidence and citations
3. Implementation strategies
4. Usability, user friendliness, and recommendations for use

Section 1. General information about the resource; which includes a clearly identifiable date, author, funding/commissioning body, publisher, description, aim/purpose and target audience (see Table 1).

Table 1. Items and responses in Section 1

General information about the resource	Response
Does the resource have a clearly stated date(s) related to it (e.g. date of when it was first published)?	Yes No
Does the resource have a clearly identified author?	First published Last updated Both first published and last updated Unspecified
Does the resource have a clearly identified funding or commissioning body?	Yes No
Does the resource have a clearly identified publisher?	Yes No
Does the resource have a clear description of itself?	Yes No
Does the resource have its aim/purpose clearly stated?	Yes No

Section 2. References, evidence and citations; which includes information about whether the resource incorporates references and evidence (including what type of evidence) and whether it has been cited by others (see Table 2).

Table 2. Items and responses in Section 2

References, evidence and citations	Response
Does the resource include references?	Yes No
Does the resource include academic or peer reviewed evidence (i.e. evidence generated through systematic studies undertaken by universities or research organisations and reported in peer-reviewed articles, books, conference papers, and research summaries)?	Yes No
Does the resource include grey literature (e.g., reports, government documents, issues papers, briefing papers, policy briefs, white papers, other organisation's evaluations)?	Yes No
Does the resource include sociodemographic and/or socioeconomic data about the local community/target group (i.e. usually research conducted by an external entity such as the ABS, AIFS, AIHW, or other research institutes/universities)?	Yes No
Does the resource include community/target population preferences and/or values and/or opinions (i.e. usually research conducted internally by an organisation to determine the preferences of target group)?	Yes No
Does the resource include professional experience?	Yes No
Does the resource include own evaluations (i.e. internally or externally evaluated programs/initiatives/strategies by an organisation)?	Yes No
Has the resource been cited by others (check Google Scholar)?	Yes No
If yes, please type how many citations does the resource have?	Open ended

Section 3. Implementation strategies; which includes information on implementation strategies, i.e. 'how to' guidelines to support implementation of a specific approach/activity and characteristics of strategies (see Table 3).

Table 3. Items and responses in Section 3

Implementation strategies	Response
Does the resource discuss practical implementation strategies, i.e. 'how to' guidelines to support implementation of a specific approach/activity?	Yes No
If yes, indicate how you would assess *overall discussion on implementation strategies*?	1 = Week 2 = Good 3 = Excellent[ii]
If yes, indicate whether these implementation strategies have specified:	
Name/Definition (i.e. the implementation strategies are clearly named and/or defined)?	Yes No
Actors (i.e. it is indicated which actors are responsible for the implementation strategies)?	Yes No
Temporality (i.e. it is indicated when/in which situations the implementation strategies should be used)?	Yes No
Feasibility (i.e. the resource takes into account feasibility of the implementation strategies and discusses things such as budget, capacity necessary for implementation)?	Yes No
If these implementation strategies have specified feasibility, please indicate how would you assess the *overall discussion on feasibility* (e.g. capacity, skills, budget, resources) of implementation strategies?	1 = Week 2 = Good 3 = Excellent[iii]

[ii] 1 = weak, i.e. discussion on implementation strategies is vaguely mentioned; 2 = good, i.e. discussion on implementation strategies is briefly described but without elaboration; 3 = excellent, i.e. discussion on implementation strategies is very well described.

[iii] 1 = weak, i.e. discussion on feasibility of implementation strategies is vaguely mentioned; 2 = good, i.e. discussion on feasibility of implementation strategies is briefly described but without elaboration; 3 = excellent, i.e. discussion on feasibility of implementation strategies is very well described.

Section 4: Usability, user friendliness, and recommendations for use; which includes information on whether the resource contains practical examples of how a specific approach has been applied/trialled in practice, overall user-friendliness of the resource, considerations and recommendations for use of the resource (see Table 4)

Table 4. Items and responses in Section 4

Usability, user friendliness, and recommendations for use	**Responses**
Indicate whether the resource contains practical examples of how specific approach has been applied/trialled in practice (e.g. approach to evaluation, planning, implementation…)?	Yes No
Please assess (from 1 to 5) the overall 'user friendliness' of the resource (e.g. contains hyperlinks for easier navigation, easy to read, user-friendly language, explanation of the abbreviations).	1 (not at all user-friendly) to 5 (extremely user-friendly)
Does the resource describe any considerations (or risks/limitations) for the use of the resource?	Yes No
Please indicate would you use this resource?	Yes No
If yes, please briefly explain for what purpose?	Open ended
If no, please briefly explain why not?	Open ended
Would you recommend this resource to others?	Yes No
If yes, please briefly state why?	Open ended
If no, please briefly state why?	Open ended

How did we use it?

We used RAPT to review the attributes of publications related to implementing place-based approaches. You can access the findings of our review[4] here.

Six experts reviewed each of the publications, including three researchers and three practitioners. Each publication was reviewed independently by two experts, one of which was a researcher and one of which was a practitioner.

Are there any indicators of the quality of the tool?

One way to examine the quality of a tool such as the RAPT is to assess its inter-rater reliability. Inter-rater reliability quantifies the amount of agreement between two or more people who apply the tool (i.e. the 'raters'). A high inter-rater reliability suggests consistency in a tool's application and interpretation across different raters.

Inter-rater reliability was calculated as the percent agreement between the raters (i.e. reviewers of resources). We calculated inter-rater reliability for sections 3 and 4 of the tool, because these sections contain 'subjective' items that have the potential to be interpreted differently by different raters.

Inter-rater reliability scores can be seen in Table 5. No fixed percentage universally defines acceptable inter-rater reliability because that can differ based on the context, field of research or other specific requirements. However, it is generally accepted that score 'above 75% is acceptable [16]. Scores from 60% to 79% indicate moderate agreement and scores from 80% and above high agreement. The inter-rater reliability for the RAPT is acceptable for the majority of items.

Table 5. Inter-rater reliability for selected items for the RAPT

Section/item	Response	Inter-rater Reliability %
Section 3. Implementation strategies		
Implementation strategies included	Yes No	94
Overall discussion on implementation strategies	1 = Week 2 = Good 3 = Excellent	61
Indicate whether the implementation strategy has specified:		
Name/definition	Yes No	100
Actors	Yes No	81
Temporality aspect	Yes No	70
Feasibility	Yes No	70
Overall discussion on feasibility of implementation strategies	1 = Week 2 = Good 3 = Excellent	63
Section 4. Usability, user friendliness, and recommendations for use		
Practical examples of how specific approach has been applied/trialled in practice included	Yes No	86
Overall user-friendliness of the resource	1 (not at all user-friendly) to 5 (extremely user-friendly)	44
Please indicate would you use this resource?	Yes No	78
Would you recommend this resource to others?	Yes No	85

What's next?

So far, we have used the tool to:

- inform the development of resources we are creating, and
- review the attributes of existing resources developed to guide practice and decision-making.

However, we are also planning to refine the tool further and test it for validity and additional indicators of reliability. We invite researchers, practitioners and others to:

- use the existing version of RAPT,
- provide their feedback on the RAPT (so we can improve it!) at pathwaysinplace@vu.edu.au
- modify or further test the tool. If you do modify or further test RAPT, please let us know at pathwaysinplace@vu.edu.au

If you would like to use the tool, please cite it as:
Klepac, B., Mowle, A., Riley, T., Craike, M (2023) Resources' Attributes for evidence-informed Practice Tool (RAPT). Pathways in Place-Victoria University. Available at: https://www.pathwaysinplace.com.au/s/RAPTool_Pathways-in-Place-VU_Final.xlsx

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