# T08P04 / Theory and Practice of Deliberative Policy Analysis

**Topic :** T08 / Policy Discourse and Critical Policy Research

**Chair :** Ya Li (School of Public Administration, Beihang University)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Deliberative policy analysis (briefly DPA) might be one of the most prominent developments in the post-positivist policy movement (Fischer and Forester 1993; Fischer and Gottweis 2012). Since the early edited book of Hajer and Wagenaar (2003), DPA has made many progresses in theory development and pilot practice. However, it is still far to say that DPA has been widely recognized in the policy community (Li, 2015). Basing on the well-developed public deliberation techniques, DPA has the potential to grow into an influential alternative policy analysis mode. This proposed panel aims to revisit and reflect the theoretical and practical issues of DPA, outline the challenges ahead, and discuss its future directions. The panel invites papers relevant to the DPA approach, including but not limited to the following sub-topics:

(1) Theoretical foundations of deliberative policy analysis

(2) Relations between DPA, mainstream positivist policy analysis, and other post-posivist policy analysis approaches

(3) DPA and relevant fields, such as public deliberation and conflict resolution

(4) The roles of and interactions between policy experts, deliberative analysts, involved stakeholders, lay citizens, and policy makers

(5) Organizational issues and procedures of DPA

(6) DPA case study

(7) DPA development in a specific country or a region

(8) Review essays of DPA

(9) Theoretical or practical challenges of DPA

(10) Critical study of DPA

References:

Fischer, F., & Forester, J. (1993). The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fischer, F., & Gottweis, H. (2012). The Argumentative turn revisited: Public policy as communicative practice. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Hajer, M. A., & Wagenaar, H. (2003). Deliberative policy analysis: Understanding governance in the network society. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Li, Y. (2015). Think tank 2.0 for deliberative policy analysis. Policy Sciences, 48(1): 25-50.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

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The panel is open to diversified types of submissions. Theoretical, methodological, critical, and empirical approaches are all welcome.

References:

Fischer, F., & Forester, J. (1993). The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

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# T08P04 / Theory and Practice of Deliberative Policy Analysis

**Chair :** Ya Li (School of Public Administration, Beihang University)

## Session 1Theory and Practice of Deliberative Policy Analysis

Friday, June 30th 13:45 to 15:45 (Li Ka Shing LKS 1 - 2)

### Discussants

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### Unpacking forms of knowledge in policy deliberation: Analytical insights from policies coping with disasters in Thailand

Piyapong Boossabong (Chiang Mai University School of Public Policy)

The meaningful deliberation should not be expected without the condition that various forms of knowledge are welcome. The deliberative policy analysis approach, thus, pays special attention on the role of different modes of rationality in policy deliberation as it determines the critical perspective of the approach toward technocratic policy analysis. However, it is challenged elsewhere that experts and their scientific knowledge play hegemonic role in the policy deliberative forums. Laypeople and their local knowledge, on the other hand, are usually excluded from the considerations. Regarding this problematic deliberative practice, deliberative policy scholars and practitioners seek to learn from the deliberative forums that different forms of knowledge are recognised. This paper attempts to contribute to this by unpacking forms of knowledge in policy deliberation in the contexts of the Global South. It argues that policy deliberation by which both expert and local knowledge are considered can be found in this setting by illustrating the case of Thailand, where the modern and pre-modern conditions are co-existed. The analysis is on policies coping with disasters. It was found that different forms of knowledge were included in policy deliberation under the situations that were complex and uncertain. To arrange the sacred ceremony to pay respect to the god of the climate as cultural policy, which aimed to ask the god to stop the heavy rain and protect them, was agreed among policy makers and analysts as it could make a positive psychological effect to laypeople thought about physical and mental security. By deliberating the participatory warning system, the deliberative facilitators gathered and made available different forms of knowledge pertaining to flood levels from the City Water Draining Agency and local communities. The agency claimed that it opened the floodgate for two meters, but different local communities felt that the water level might be higher or lower than that. They could not provide a specific number, but prepared comparison related body height and housing dimensions. Some said that it was the same level of their shoulders and some said it was higher than their first floor window. This demonstrated that to open the floodgate by two meters led to different water levels in different areas. The translation of different forms of knowledge from one target to another, then, led to the creation of the warning system based on mutual understanding and cooperation. During floods, policy makers also legitimised the local knowledge on making and using locally made effective microorganisms to enhance household water quality after local people succeeded in convincing the usefulness of such local products. Aside from that, local herbal healthcare knowledge was promoted to co-function with modern healthcare services, whereas in the post-disaster period local seed collection methods were supported to help farmers whose agricultural products were damaged as an impact of the floods. This paper analyses that different forms of knowledge are recognised as they are able to comb the empirical data and normative assumptions along a deliberative spectrum.

### The promise and challenge of deliberative policy analysis

Ya Li (School of Public Administration, Beihang University)

Since the release of the edited book of Hajer and Wagenaar (2003), deliberative policy analysis (briefly DPA) has become one of the most prominent approaches of post-positivist policy inquiry (Fischer and Forester 1993; Fischer and Gottweis 2012). Fourteen years on, when we examine the development of the field of DPA, we can find that the status quo of this field is both inspiring and unsatisfying. It is time for

scholars and practitioners to revisit and reflect its theoretical advancement and practical attempts and explore the road ahead.

The paper starts with a brief introduction of DPA, including the conceptions, its theoretical foundations, its difference from traditional policy approaches, and the potential roles of DPA in policymaking. The next section presents a critical review of the theoretical and practical development of DPA in the past 14 years.

Following the review of the progress, the paper outlines some challenges facing DPA. First, DPA still suffers from a low visibility in the community of policy research and education and the dominance of the discourse of traditional policy analysis is overwhelming. Second, it seems that DPA entrepreneurs or advocators have been putting their focus on "deliberation" and somewhat neglecting the aspect of "analysis", so it is often hard to differ the DPA in their mind from the existing public deliberation efforts. Third, operable processes and organizational solutions for practicing DPA are absent in many senses. Fourth, more well-designed DPA practices are expected.

The last part of the paper offers some thoughts for moving ahead: putting the priority on how the DPA activities get organized and exploring the possibility and design of deliberative think tanks, focusing more on the outputs generated during the "analysis" process of DPA efforts, and inventing a deliberation-oriented policy analysis curriculum as an educational alternative.

Keywords: deliberative policy analysis (DPA), deliberative think tank (DTT), challenges

References:

Fischer, F., & Forester, J. (1993). The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fischer, F., & Gottweis, H. (2012). The Argumentative turn revisited: Public policy as communicative practice. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

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## Deliberating Community Radio: Narratives of Policies and Praxis from South Asia

Preeti Raghunath (University of Sheffield)

A region unified by rich oral cultures and histories, South Asia is home to divergent experiences with community radio, which are localised oral-media run by and for communities. This paper adopts a critical policy studies approach to explore the policy trajectories that the process of advocating for community radio has taken, in four South Asian countries, namely, Sri Lanka, Nepal, India and Bangladesh. In doing so, the paper seeks to lay out the various actors (across the global-local spectrum) involved in the policy process for community radio in said countries, their rationalities and the complementary rhetoric deployed, norms and values espoused by them in making a case for community radio, and the contestation inherent to the policy process. Finally, using Grounded Theory, this empirical study seeks to add to existing theoretical knowledge on deliberative policy studies and analyses, making headway towards understanding community radios themselves as discursive venues, towards qualitative deliberative democracy in the countries under study.

## Three Frameworks for Integrating Interpretive Inquiry with Deliberative Policy Analysis

Jianzi He (Department of Political Science at the Ohio State University)

Ya Li (School of Public Administration, Beihang University)

Over 20 years, scholars in the post-positivist community (see Fisher & Forester, 1993; Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Fisher & Gottweis, 2012) have made headway in trying to transform the landscape of policy analysis through two general approaches: deliberative approach and interpretive approach. Derived from the deliberative turn in politics and government, the former tries to make ordinary people tell their own stories, describe the problem in their own languages, and discover potential solutions through an interactive process (Forester, 1999). The latter, by comparison, relies on various novel methods such as interpretive analysis (Yanow, 1999; Wagenaar, 2011), discourse analysis (Hajer, 1995; Dryzek, 2013), and narrative analysis (Roe, 1994) undertaken by interpretive researchers to understand the complexity of problem formation and policy process.

However, these two approaches face the challenges in making a greater impact on policy system.

Regarding deliberative approach, it is often highly conditional and uncertain whether such interaction can successfully elicit local wisdom from ordinary participants and generate unambiguous policy implications that policy makers would value. By comparison, interpretive approach may fail to justify its legitimacy by democratic and evidence-based standard, when involved in formal policy process. In short, due to the practical problems two approaches have, it is not very likely that policy makers would be willing to adopt either approach on a regular basis.

Instead of employing two approaches separately, we argue a joint framework to include both approaches and reframe the process of deliberative policy analysis so as to make deliberation more pragmatically productive and interpretive inquiry more politically legitimate. In this paper, we explore three potential frameworks that integrate interpretative inquiry with deliberation: (1) use interpretivist experts to represent stakeholders and engage in a deliberative process; (2) use interpretive analytic reports to inform stakeholders in deliberation; (3) assign interpretivist experts to support stakeholders in deliberation. Each framework has its pros and cons and institutional entrepreneurs may eventually carve out the niches for them in different contexts.

This paper will be organized in three parts. In the first part, we will briefly review the development of two approaches in the post-positivist stream. Next, we will examine the challenges facing these two approaches, respectively. Finally, three potential integration frameworks will be proposed and compared.

**Key Words:** Post-positivist Policy Analysis, Deliberative Policy Analysis, Interpretative Inquiry, Integrative Framework

**References:**

Dryzek, J. S. (2013). The politics of the earth: Environmental discourses. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fisher, F., & Forester, J. (1993). The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

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Roe, E. (1994). Narrative policy analysis: Theory and practice. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

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Yanow, D. (1999). Conducting interpretive policy analysis (Vol. 47). Sage Publications.