NPD05 / Emerging Trends in Public Policy Education for the Global South

Topic : Pedagogy

Chair : Sugandh Aggarwal (Indian Institute of Management, Indore (India))

Second Chair : Ajit Phadnis (Indian Institute of Management Indore)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Public policy education in the global south has seen rapid developments in the past few decades. However, studies examining the nuances of this growth and its implications for policy praxis in the global south remain limited, compared to western contexts such as for US (El-Taliawi et al., 2021; He et al., 2016; Phadnis et al., 2025; Wu et al., 2012). Existing studies have primarily focussed on the evolution and growth drivers of policy education, comparative analyses of policy schools/programs and qualitative assessments of graduate career trajectories.

As policy education models in the global south continue to evolve, especially in large countries such as India, understanding micro developments surrounding these models becomes pertinent. The interdisciplinary nature of policy education creates unique pedagogical challenges even as policy schools walk a tight rope between ‘internationalization’ i.e adopting established western models and ‘contextualization’ to address local challenges. The impact of these distinctive approaches on graduate employability and institutional legitimacy also remains underexplored.

Hence, there is a need for studies examining deeper nuances of curriculum design and implementation, institutional capacity in terms of teaching and research expertise, experiential learning and pedagogical agility to meet the dynamic needs of developing economies. Longitudinal studies on policy careers are also notably scarce, limiting our understanding of opportunities available to policy graduates.

These insights can inform the institutional abilities, challenges and opportunities facing policy schools in training professionals to meet the unique demands of public policy praxis in global south. Ultimately, bridging these research gaps can strengthen the feedback loop between education and practice to better serve the governance challenges of the global south while creating aspirational career pathways across the public service spectrum.

Through this panel we would like to invite theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions addressing the following research questions (but not limited to):

1. How is public policy in the global south being taught that makes it distinct from standard western approaches to teaching public policy?
2. How do programmes balance generalist teaching and sectoral depth?
3. What pedagogical innovations and experiential learning models are being used to prepare policy students for the unique governance challenges of developing economies?
4. What are the employment outcomes and career trajectories of policy graduates in the global south, and what contextual factors explain these differences?
5. What competencies and skills do employers in the global south value most in policy graduates, and how well do current programs address these expectations?

Brief Biographies

Sugandh Aggarwal

Sugandh Aggarwal is a PhD candidate in Economics area at the Indian Institute of Management Indore, India. She has been involved in various state and national level policy projects including India’s First Government Skill University. Prior to her career in public policy, she worked as a petroleum engineer in Oil and Gas sector. Her research interests lie in industrial policy, structural transformation, and public policy education. She recently co-authored a paper on "Evolution of public policy education in the global South: The case of India", published in Journal of Public Affairs Education, https://doi.org/10.1080/15236803.2024.2398360.

Dr. Ajit Phadnis

Ajit Phadnis, Ph.D is an Associate Professor in the Humanities and Social Sciences Area at the Indian Institute of Management Indore. His research interest lies at the intersection of politics and public policy, policy process and public policy education. He has a Ph.D in Public Policy from the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore.

CALL FOR PAPERS

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