NPD08 / Public Policy Pedagogy in the Global South: Challenges, Innovation and Praxis

Topic : Pedagogy

Chair : DEVANSH SHRIVASTAVA (National Law School of India University)

Second Chair : Payal Dey (IIM Bodh Gaya)

Third Chair : Pragya Yadav (National Law School of India University)

Fourth Chair : Pratik Joshi (Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

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Abstract:

Public policy education in the Global South remains shaped largely by pedagogical models, theoretical frameworks, and curricular structures rooted in Global North epistemologies. Despite the interdisciplinary and praxis-oriented origins of the field, the pedagogical foundations of policy training in the Global South have received insufficient scholarly attention. This panel examines the urgent need to reform and reimagine public policy pedagogy to address the challenges of coherence, contextual relevance, and institutional capacity-building.

Historically, Harold Lasswell (1970) emphasized the training of “policy scientists” as essential to the policy sciences, advocating a pedagogy that integrates analytical, normative, and action-oriented knowledge. However, subsequent scholarships has noted a widening gap and disjuncture between research and teaching in public policy, particularly in regions outside North America (Zittoun & Peters, 2016; Durnova, Fischer, & Zittoun, 2016). In India, where public policy programs have proliferated since the 2000s, teaching practices remain disciplinary-fragmented, content-driven, and insufficiently responsive to indigenous socio-political contexts (El-Taliawi, Nair & van der Wal, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed structural inequities in teaching infrastructure, digital access, and student engagement, reinforcing the need for pedagogical reflection and reform.

The panel positions pedagogy as praxis, a site of negotiation between theory and context, drawing from interpretive, decolonial, feminist, and design-based approaches (Fischer & Forester, 1993). It seeks to foreground the pedagogical dilemmas and innovations emerging from classrooms, labs, partnerships, and policy projects across the Global South, with an emphasis on building coherent curricular frameworks that reflect the lived realities, institutional constraints, and knowledge traditions of the region.

The panel welcomes contributions that explore: historical trajectories of public policy teaching in India; multidisciplinary curriculum design; collective teaching models; community- and industry-based capstone experiences; market-facing pedagogical strategies; and critical approaches to teaching policy content and methods. Particular attention will be given to papers that move beyond descriptive case studies to offer conceptual clarity, methodological innovation, or practice-informed critique.

Research Questions: The panel would invite papers on the following indicative pedagogical questions

including:

1. What theories and concepts best reflect public policy education in the Global South?
2. How have policy education models evolved across institutions in India and the Global South? What practices have emerged in response to the theory-practice gap?
3. How are praxis-oriented pedagogies such as projects, industry partnerships, and community-driven capstones bridging the theory-practice gap?
4. How are policy instruments, tools and methodological frameworks peculiar to the Global South being incorporated into teaching for problem-solving and supporting applied learning?
5. What lessons can be drawn from innovations in concept-building, application and assessments for strengthening learning outcomes for future policy researchers and practitioners?
6. How do structural inequities exacerbated by digital divides and institutional asymmetries affect pedagogical delivery and learning outcomes in policy education, and what strategies are effective in addressing them?

References:

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CALL FOR PAPERS

This panel invites submissions that critically engage with the pedagogical foundations, institutional practices, and epistemological challenges of public policy education in the Global South. Despite the field’s interdisciplinary and practice-oriented origins, policy education in much of the region remains heavily influenced by Global North theories, frameworks, and curricular models. The panel aims to foster a scholarly dialogue on how public policy teaching can be reimagined to address structural inequities, bridge theory-practice gaps, and build contextually grounded, institutionally coherent pedagogical frameworks.

We particularly encourage papers that move beyond descriptive case studies to offer conceptual clarity, methodological innovation, or practice-informed critique. Contributions may focus on, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- Evolution: Themes including historical and institutional evolution of public policy education in India, including theories and concepts
- Theory-practice gaps : Addressing gaps in policy education: both intersectionality & critical pedagogy in public policy classrooms and multidisciplinary curriculum design and collective teaching models
- Policy learning: Interpretive, decolonial, feminist approaches as well as ‘Gordian Knots’ in policy and methods addressing complexity at the policy-pedagogy interface
- Praxis-oriented teaching : Integrating community and industry-linked capstone projects into the curriculum and promoting innovations and challenges through labs, projects & partnerships
- Careers in policy: a policy design approach for early-stage learners; industry-facing and market-oriented pedagogy, including both benefits and limitations
- Policy design: Conceptualizing 'policy content' as the disciplinary scope of public policy studies; pedagogical integration of policy tools and instruments for problem-solving and applied learning

We are especially interested in contributions that conceptualize pedagogy as praxis, a site where theory and context intersect and that engage with structural questions around digital inequity, institutional asymmetry, and the politics of curricular inclusion. The panel seeks to bring together scholars, educators, curriculum designers, and policy practitioners to build a collective vocabulary for public policy teaching that reflects the unique challenges and possibilities of the Global South.

We welcome submissions from diverse institutional, disciplinary, and regional perspectives, and invite early-career researchers as well as experienced educators to contribute.