T15P01 / How Do Governance Arrangements Change?

Topic : T15 / Democracy, Political Regime and Policy Process
Chair : Murray Fulton (Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan)
Second Chair : Jeremy Rayner (University of Saskatchewan)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

All definitions of governance refer, directly or indirectly, to formal and informal rules that determine the exercise of authority in the taking of collective decisions. Any given governance arrangement stipulates, more or less precisely, how various voices are heard, how decisions are made and how accounts are rendered; in short, who has the power to determine what. The working hypothesis of governance research is that some governance arrangements are better than others at solving the problems facing a society.

Given the emphasis on power and authority, the literature on governance contains a strong thread to the effect that changing governance arrangements is very difficult. Entrenched interests are created by and embedded in existing distributions of authority. Stability can be an advantage, but when governance arrangements are socially inefficient, foster corruption, impede economic growth and create permanent losers, all of which are currently on display in a wide range of countries around the world, how to make change becomes a pressing social and political question.

This panel will explore theoretically and empirically the mechanisms by which governance arrangements change. Papers will explore four themes.

First, can governance be changed by design to improve the quality of decision-making? Democracy has been defended on the grounds that it provides epistemic advantages, but the governance literature has yet to confront the question of why policy intelligence is lacking and in what ways, and whether improving intelligence should be as important a concern as say avoiding corruption.

Second, governance changes when the winners and losers of public policy unite to defend and attack the rules of competition and the distribution of decision-making authority. The relationships between governance and policy outcomes, which are often assumed, need to be explored to understand if and how policy has a lasting effect on governance. Are policy changes sufficient to bring about governance changes, or is something else needed?

Third, the stress given to rules and formal constitutional arrangements has deprived governance research of a full appreciation of how informal norms develop to support or undermine the prevailing structure. A case in point is the recent popularity of the concept of social licence, which its defenders argue is as important a requirement to meet as the satisfaction of legal rules and regulations. Another important area is that of identity, whether it is based on religion, class, or socio-economic status, which is increasingly being seen as a critical factor in determining who in society has the legitimacy to set the rules and to make change.

Fourth, no governance arrangement is entirely secure from the effects of exogenous change. Technologies, in particular, have disrupted not only industries but also the political interests that support them. Vested interests may be able to sustain counterclaims and critiques but yield to new technical solutions to persistent public policy problems. What is required for technological shocks to result in governance changes? Why are some shocks successful in this regard, while others are not? What is the mechanism by which technology changes result in governance changes?

CALL FOR PAPERS

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First, can governance be changed by design to improve the quality of decision-making? Democracy has been defended on the grounds that it provides epistemic advantages, but the governance literature has yet to examine why policy intelligence is lacking and in what ways, and whether improving intelligence should be as important a concern as say avoiding corruption.

Second, governance changes when the winners and losers of public policy unite to defend and attack the rules of competition and the distribution of decision-making authority. But the relationship between policy change and governance change is more complex than this. What is the nature of this relationship?

Third, the stress given to rules and formal constitutional arrangements has deprived governance research of a full appreciation of the role of informal norms. How, for example, do racial and religious identity, and the idea of social licence, support or undermine the prevailing governance structure, and how do changes in these norms come about?

Fourth, no governance arrangement, along with the political interests that support it, are secure from the effects of exogenous change. What is required for technological shocks to result in governance changes? Why are some shocks successful, while others are not? What is the mechanism by which governance changes?

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Session 1 Governance, Institutions and Change

Wednesday, June 28th 14:00 to 16:00 (Block B 5 - 5)

Discussants

Jeremy Rayner (University of Saskatchewan)

The Political Economy of Good Governance

Murray Fulton (Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan)

Evaluating Social Development Policies: an institutional interpretation of the Bolsa Familia Program in Brazil

Aline Hellmann (Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul - UFRGS)

Multiple accountabilities, institutional legacies and policy disruption: territorial governance controversies

Ania (Anna) Ankowska (Leeds Beckett University)

Pugalis Lee (Institute for Public Policy and Governance, University of Technology Sydney (UTS))

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Session 2Governance, Institutions and Change in Practice

Wednesday, June 28th 16:15 to 18:15 (Block B 5 - 5)

Discussants

Murray Fulton (Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan)

Did the Asian Financial Crisis 1997-98 make East Asia's growth more Reliant on Rule-based Institution? Evidence from Country Panel Data Analysis

Kee Hoon Chung (Korea University)

Governance change: innovation as a risky task and the need of safely breaking the chain of routine

Mattos Miguel (University of Brasília)

Governance Systems and Science: Engaging Across Disciplines and Sectors

Peggy Schmeiser (Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan)

Innovating the governance of drought and flood to transform the governance of climate change

Margot Hurlbert (University of Regina)