P11 / Advancing the Understanding of Evidence Use in Public Policymaking – Insights from Multiple Conceptual Approaches

Topic : POLICY DESIGN, POLICY ANALYSIS, EXPERTISE AND EVALUATION

Chair : Justin Parkhurst (London School of Economics and Political Science)

Second Chair : Kathryn Oliver (LSHTM)

Third Chair : Paul Cairney (University of Stirling)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The panel will gather papers that attempt to further our understanding of the processes, mechanisms, or normative concerns involved in the use of evidence to inform policymaking. It specifically will call on authors using novel conceptual or methodological approaches to the study of evidence use in policy making, rather than seeking additional case studies using existing methods.

The ideas of ‘evidence based’ or ‘evidence informed’ policymaking are now well established in most public policy sectors. Indeed, there has been a tremendous proliferation of work related to evidence use, including multiple international conferences focussed on evidence use now regularly held. Yet only a small percentage of work under this heading explicitly tries to apply concepts, theories, or methods from the social and political sciences to understand the nature of evidence use processes.

Those works which have studied evidence use from a more conceptually developed position have also taken a number of different approaches. Examples include application of: ideational theories to consider how evidence constructions link to policy ideas (Smith 2013); critical discourse analysis to see how evidence is constructed and framed in relation to political ideologies (Parkhurst 2012); cognitive psychological insights to consider bias in individuals’ understanding of evidence (Cairney 2016, Parkhurst 2017); bounded rationality concepts to consider policymaker choice realities (Cairney 2016); social network analysis to look at who is involved in evidence use and their relationsihps (Oliver and Faul 2018); institutional analysis to study the structures and rules that shape evidence use (Parkhurst, Ettelt, and Hawkins 2018); or Science and Technology Studies approaches considering the performative nature of science advice in shaping boundaries of science-policy interaction (Hoppe 2010).

We posit that there will likely be other ways to provide useful insights into the study of evidence use for policy which draw on these and other novel conceptual, theoretical or methodological approaches. This panel will thus aim to invite scholars who are trying to push the boundaries of knowledge around evidence use in one or more ways, informed by broader concepts and theories, or by applying new methods to the questions.

The panel will ultimately enable a discussion between scholars interested in this area to think about which approaches, theories, or methods are helpful for which questions in the realm of understating evidence use in public policymaking.

References:

Cairney, Paul. 2016. The politics of evidence-based policymaking. London: Palgrave Pivot.

Hoppe, Robert. 2010. "From “knowledge use” towards “boundary work”: sketch of an emerging new agenda for inquiry into science-policy interaction." In Knowledge democracy. Consequences for science, politics and media, edited by Roel in t Veld, 169-186. Heidelberg: Springer.

Oliver, Kathryn, and Moira V Faul. 2018. "Networks and network analysis in evidence, policy and practice." Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice no. 14 (3):369-379.

Parkhurst, Justin. 2017. The politics of evidence: from evidence based policy to the good governance of evidence. Abingdon: Routledge.

Parkhurst, Justin, Stefanie Ettelt, and Benjamin Hawkins, eds. 2018. Evidence use in health policy making: an international public policy perspective. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Parkhurst, Justin O. 2012. "Framing, ideology and evidence: Uganda's HIV success and the development of PEPFAR's 'ABC' policy for HIV prevention." Evidence and Policy no. 8 (1):19-38.

Smith, Katherine. 2013. Beyond evidence based policy in public health: The interplay of ideas. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

CALL FOR PAPERS

We invite papers that attempt to further our understanding of the processes, mechanisms, or normative concerns involved in the use of evidence to inform policymaking. We are specifically interested to hear from authors using novel conceptual or methodological approaches to the study of evidence use in policy making, rather than seeking additional descriptive case studies using well established methods. Our goal is to provide a forum to consider the important questions that remain unanswered in studies of evidence use for public policymaking, and to discuss the approaches, theories, or methods that are helpful for such questions.

The ideas of 'evidence based' or 'evidence informed' policymaking are now well established in most public policy sectors. Indeed, there has been a tremendous proliferation of work related to evidence use, including multiple international conferences focussed on evidence use now regularly held. Yet only a small percentage of work under this heading explicitly tries to apply concepts, theories, or methods from the social and political sciences to understand key questions and aspects of evidence use processes within policy settings.

Those works which have studied evidence use from a more conceptually developed position have also taken a number of different approaches. Examples include application of: ideational theories to consider how evidence constructions link to policy ideas (Smith 2013); critical discourse analysis to see how evidence is constructed and framed in relation to political ideologies (Parkhurst 2012); cognitive psychological insights to consider bias in individuals' understanding of evidence (Cairney 2016, Parkhurst 2017); bounded rationality concepts to consider policymaker choice realities (Cairney 2016); social network analysis to look at who is involved in evidence use and their relationsihps (Oliver and Faul 2018); institutional analysis to study the structures and rules that shape evidence use (Parkhurst, Ettelt, and Hawkins 2018); or Science and Technology Studies approaches considering the performative nature of science advice in shaping boundaries of science-policy interaction (Hoppe 2010).

We posit that there will likely be other ways to provide useful insights into the study of evidence use for policy which draw on these and other novel conceptual, theoretical or methodological approaches. This panel thus invites scholars who are trying to push the boundaries of knowledge around evidence use in one or more ways, informed by broader concepts and theories, or by applying new methods to these issues.

References:

Cairney, Paul. 2016. The politics of evidence-based policymaking. London: Palgrave Pivot.

Hoppe, Robert. 2010. "From "knowledge use" towards "boundary work": sketch of an emerging new agenda for inquiry into science-policy interaction." In Knowledge democracy. Consequences for science, politics and media, edited by Roel in t Veld, 169-186. Heidelberg: Springer.

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Session 1Studies of the use of evidence in policymaking

Friday, June 28th 08:00 to 10:00 (MB 1.301)

Discussants

Kathryn Oliver (LSHTM)

Justin Parkhurst (London School of Economics and Political Science)

Perspectives on 'evidence-based' practice in environmental policy making: A conceptual analysis

Hiroyuki Kano (Center for Research and Development Strategy, Japan Science and Technology Agency)

Takehiko Hayashi (National Institute for Environmental Studies)

Delving Deeper: Using interpretive repertoires to explore practitioner engagement with evidence

Nicholas Huntington (Victoria University of Wellington)

Jane Bryson (Victoria University of Wellington)

Amanda Wolf (Victoria University of Wellington)

Engineering expertise in policy-making: a case study of insider research in a UK ministry

Adam Cooper (UCL)

The complementary approach in Public Policy: Behavioral and Standard perspective of Law and Economics.

Enrique Garcia-Tejeda (Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM))

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Session 2Discussions of ways to understand the politics of EBPM

Friday, June 28th 10:30 to 12:30 (MB 1.301)

Discussants

Paul Cairney (University of Stirling)

Justin Parkhurst (London School of Economics and Political Science)

Theorising the political dimensions of policy context that influence the practices and processes of policymaking and evidence use at the local level.

Hannah Durrant (Wales Centre for Public Policy, Cardiff University)

Julie Barnett (University of Bath)

Emily Rempel (University of Bath)

THE POLITICIZATION OF TEEN PREGNANCY IN ZAMBIA: THE ONE SIDED VIEW

Timalizge Zgambo (Rhodes University)

Evidence-based policy? On systems thinking, anticipation and policy making

Alex Marsh (University of Bristol)

How can discourse help in understanding and critically reflecting on evidence-informed policy-making?

Eleanor MacKillop (Cardiff University)