P06 / Politics of Street-Level Organizations: Between Market, Mobilizations and the State

Topic : POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Chair : Jonathan Miaz (University of Lausanne)

Second Chair : Sule Tomkinson (Université Laval)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Michael Lipsky's street-level bureaucracy theory, and the following research tradition that examined the role of implementation agents, transformed the way policy scholars examine public organizations (Portillo and Rudes, 2014). Research in diverse policy domains illustrated the importance of these agents' discretion, judgment, power and autonomy for policy implementation contrary to the lowest level policy space they are considered to occupy (Brodkin, 1997; 2011; Brodkin and Marston, 2013; Chiarello, 2015; Dubois, 1999; Evans, 2010; Hill, Hupe and Buffat 2015; Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2003; Miaz, 2017a; Spire, 2007; Tomkinson, 2018; Watkins-Haye, 2009; Zacka, 2017).

While the street-level bureaucracy theory continues to point out to the political consequences of administrative discretion in an empirically grounded manner (Brodkin, 2012) theoretical and political transformations raise some questions regarding its explanatory power. First, some authors argue that the focus on the discretionary power of implementation agents limits the scope of analysis to the individual level and perpetuates the attention on agents' control (Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2003 and 2012; Maynard-Moody and Portillo, 2010). Instead they suggest focusing on institutional norms, reframing of agents' judgments and actions through agency and pragmatic improvisation.

Second, with new modes of governance, non-profit and market actors have also gained the role of implementation agents (Fyall, 2017). However, as Brodkin states it well, "the world that gave rise to street-level bureaucracies has been transformed. The public sector no longer dominates policy delivery as it once did. Contracting and privatization have reshaped the organizational landscape, creating new, mixed forms of provision and complex delivery arrangements. Today, policy delivery occurs not only through public bureaucracies, but also through nonprofit organizations, for-profit firms, and mixed public–private arrangements." (Brodkin 2012, 944) Taking into account this transformation, Brodkin proposes to broaden our approach to analyze what she calls "street-level organizations" to take into account the increasing number of non-State actors are now involved in policy implementation. For instance, non-profit or activist organizations can have a policy-making role and work like street-level organizations through their participation in the process of selecting the beneficiaries of public action (Weill 2014) or through their own selecting practices in providing legal help to migrants and asylum seekers (Miaz 2017b; Pette 2014). These actors may be auxiliaries of the state to which this latter has delegated implementation tasks, but they may also be actors replacing or complementing the state (receiving funds for their action), or even contesting state practices, for example in providing legal help to claim or protect their rights.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

This panel welcomes papers analyzing the role of street-level (but non-state) organizations in policy implementation and in policymaking, as well as in social change. These organizations and their implementation actors can have different status and relations to the state: state can delegate them tasks, they can receive state funds for their activities, they can participate in an administrative procedure, they can act as an autonomous complement to the state action, or they can contest state practices, with law, for example. In our approach, legal mobilizations contesting policy with law can play a role in the access to social delivery, to justice, or to individual rights. To that extent, they are involved in policy implementation. As a consequence, we would like to gather papers not only on SLOs directly involved in policy implementation (by delegation or mandate), but also on activist or charity organizations that have more ambiguous relationships to the State actors, because their action is constructed against, complementary to state action. For example, some associations’ action aims at filling a lack of public policies or even at “fighting” social problems arising because of certain policies. The common point of the papers gathered in this panel is that these organizations’ action is characterized by direct relationships with their target public in policy delivery. This panel welcomes papers addressing questions regarding the role, practices and the broader impact of these SLOs’ action.

This panel welcomes papers addressing questions regarding the role, practices and the broader impacts of these SLOs’ action:

- First, we are interested in the role and functioning of these SLOs. This first axis also questions how these organizations came to choose to commit themselves in certain tasks or action modes, in reference to their repertoire of contention (Tilly, 1995).

- Second, we are interested in the concrete practices of SLOs and their effects on policy delivery, the access to justice and rights. How do they select those who can benefit from their services? How do these concrete practices shape the access to the specific services or goods that these SLOs provide?

Finally, the panel intends to question the broader effects of SLOs’ action on public policy, the state, law and policy-making as well as social change. How and to what extent SLOs have a policy-making role?

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Session 1Street-level organizations and politics of asylum and visas

Thursday, June 27th 10:30 to 12:30 (MB S1.401)

Discussants

Sule Tomkinson (Université Laval)

Jonathan Miaz (University of Lausanne)

(Un)making public policy in a regime of enclosure: Street-level organizations and the negotiation of asylum reception In Switzerland

Camilla Alberti (University of Neuchatel)

Enquiring Schengen visa industry at the street level : the case of Algiers

Juliette Dupont (Université de Montreal)

Volunteer interpreters in association: intermediary's actors in the implementation of asylum policies?

Maureen Clappe (Sciences Po Grenoble - Université Grenoble Alpes - Laboratoire Pacte UMR 5194)

The policy role of law intermediaries: legal defense services for asylum seekers between legal activism and street-level organizations

Jonathan Miaz (University of Lausanne)

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Session 2Street-level organizations and the politics of health care, welfare and urban agriculture

Thursday, June 27th 16:30 to 18:30 (MB S1.401)

Discussants

Jonathan Miaz (University of Lausanne)

Sule Tomkinson (Université Laval)

Understanding the roles of street-level bureaucrats in the delivery of home and community care services for older adults in Ontario, Canada: A comparative perspective of state and non-state organizations

Julia Ho

Fiona Miller (University of Toronto)

Karen Spalding (Ryerson University)

Kerry Kuluski (Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute, Sinai Health System and Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation, University of Toronto)

Trust, identity, and practices of street-level bureaucrats

Maayan Davidovitz (Tel Aviv University)

Nissim Cohen (University of Haifa)

Roles of Street-level Organizations in the Obama Presidential Center Community Benefits Agreement (CBA)

Melean Weiner Davis Tadeo (School of Social Service Administration)

Collective action and the disarray between planning and policy implementation for Urban Agriculture in the south of Sao Paulo

Lya Cynthia Porto de Oliveira (HEC-Montreal)

Zilma Borges (Getulio Vargas Foundation)

Katia Abreu (Fundacao Getulio Vargas)