P04 / Resilience, Adaptability and Transformability in Public Policies and the Co-evolving Dynamics of Organizations

Topic : POLICY DESIGN, POLICY ANALYSIS, EXPERTISE AND EVALUATION

Chair : Romulo Pinheiro (University of Agder)

Second Chair : Mitchell Young (Charles University)

Third Chair : Maria Laura Frigotto (Dept. of Economics and Management, University of Trento)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

In the last decade or so, there has been a growing awareness among policy makers and academics alike about the importance of investigating the role that complex, adaptive systems play in policy processes (Room 2011, Morcöl 2012, Geyer and Cairney 2015). Applying a complex systems model to policy requires going beyond the macro and understanding also the dynamics of the actors and organizations that receive, (re-)produce and translate policy. Systems theorists have long argued that analytical reductionism has led to a simplification of how social, technological, cultural and ecological systems interact in non-linear ways to produce unpredicted events that cause societal disruption and turmoil, what some have termed ‘black swans’, as well as ‘wicked problems’ that confound simple, temporal or spatially bounded solutions.

Given recent turbulent events and uncertainty-raising problems such as the global financial crisis, Brexit, social media’s legitimacy issues, the EU’s migration crisis and the rise of political populism and post-truth politics, it is thus timely to inquire about the degree to which policy making and policy makers take into account the complex foundations of both the problems and policy solutions, as well as the co-evolutionary nature of the self-organising systems and the organizations that compose them (e.g. in the realms of health, education, finance, environment, media) from within which these events incubate.

Disruptive events call for change in public policies and in the actors producing and receiving public policies (e.g. organizations, communities, individuals), in terms of anticipating, reshaping and overcoming the effects emanating from these events. On the reverse side of the same coin, disruptive events also threaten society and the survival of the institutions (order, logics, behaviour) that ground it. Hence, they also suggest a need for supporting societal robustness and uninterrupted functioning.

In a systems’ thinking perspective, this call for change and persistence can be understood in terms of resilience. Resilience is the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize while undergoing change so as to still retain functioning and guarantee survival. Within a resilience framework, change can take the form of adaptability or transformability depending on the scope and the impact of change. Adaptability is the capacity to modify and adjust the system to respond to disturbances, while transformability is the capacity to change the system into a different one if disturbances make the current one unsustainable. Both these strategies allow the system to survive, however, they impact very differently on the society and the organizations, individuals and communities within it.

This panel will investigate how policy can directly and indirectly (though metagovernance of institutional and individual actors) combine and remain open to adaptability, transformability and resilience. The overarching hypothesis has two parts: one, the prevailing linear models of public policy are not adequate to deal with the complex nature of contemporary policy problems and the organizations and systems in which they arise; and two, that by drawing on complex systems theory (in this case through the concept of resilience) new insights and models of policymaking can be developed that more effectively address those shortcomings.

We envision addressing the following thee aspects of this challenge in the panel’s sessions:

- Focusing on the macro level, and exploring adaptability, transformability and resilience within policy frameworks and the policy making process;
- Exploring the conceptual and theoretical tools available to social scientists to both assess and comprehend the phenomena of adaptability, transformability and resilience (as well as the complex interplay between the three) at the macro (policy), meso (organisations) and micro (individual agents) levels;
- Investigating the empirical manifestations (evidence) of the tripartite phenomenon of adaptability-transformability-resilience at the macro, meso and/or micro levels.

The panel addresses recent calls to bring together a multiplicity of scholarly communities (inter-disciplinary dialogue) in addressing complex problems facing contemporary societies.

References

Geyer, R., and Cairney, P. (2015). Handbook on complexity and public policy: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Morçöl, G. (2013). A Complexity Theory for Public Policy, New York & London: Taylor & Francis.

Room, G. (2011). Complexity, Institutions and Public Policy: Agile Decision-making in a Turbulent World, Cheltenham and Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

CALL FOR PAPERS

In the last decade or so, there has been a growing awareness among policy makers and academics alike about the importance of investigating the role that complex, adaptive systems play in policy processes (Room 2011, Morcöl 2012, Geyer and Cairney 2015). Applying a complex systems model to policy requires going beyond the macro and understanding also the dynamics of the actors and organizations that receive, (re-)produce and translate policy.

This panel will investigate how policy can directly and indirectly (though metagovernance of institutional and individual actors) combine and remain open to adaptability, transformability and resilience. We begin with the following overarching hypotheses: one, the prevailing linear models of public policy are not adequate to deal with the complex nature of contemporary policy problems and the organizations and systems in which they arise; and two, that by drawing on complex systems theory (in this case through the concept of resilience) new insights and models of policymaking can be developed that more effectively address those shortcomings.

Papers in this panel will address the ways in which the concepts of resilience, adaptability and transformability can be used to reshape public policy and the organizations that are governed by but also shape, challenge and (re-)produce these policies. We are interested in contributions from scholars of both public policy/administration and organizational theory. Papers may focus on different levels and/or aspects of this problematic, by taking:

- a systems or macro level approach, exploring adaptability, transformability and resilience within policy frameworks and the policy making process; papers may also deal with more specialized macro level systems (health, education, finance, environment, media, etc.)
- a conceptual and theoretical approach, exploring tools available to social scientists to both assess and comprehend the phenomena of adaptability, transformability and resilience (as well as the complex interplay between the three) at the macro (policy), meso (organisations) and micro (individual agents) levels;
- an empirical approach, investigating the manifestations (evidence) of the tripartite phenomenon of adaptability-transformability-resilience at the macro, meso and/or micro levels.

References

Geyer, R., and Cairney, P. (2015). Handbook on complexity and public policy: Edward Elgar Publishing.

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Session 1

Thursday, June 27th 10:30 to 12:30 (MB 3.285)

Every Which Way But Loose: Quantifying Institutional Resilience

Tony Casey (University College Dublin (UCD))

A global raft of ecological, economic and constitutional crises since 2008 has brought the “resilience thinking” of the crisis management, disaster recovery, social-ecological systems (SES) and “governance in areas of limited statehood” literatures to the forefront of the public administration practitioner debate. However, with a few exceptions, the academic discipline of public administration itself has arrived late to the resilience thinking and crisis management party. This is surprising not only because it is the discipline’s core subject matter of the administrative capacity of the State that is so uniquely qualified to coordinate complex public crises. It is surprising also because the extreme crucible of an unfolding crisis provides such a strong test for the explanatory and predictive power of the contemporary conceptual framework of the discipline of public administration. Nevertheless, whilst a nascent public administration crisis management literature has emerged it sill tends to import unresolved theoretical and conceptual flaws from the systems and network literature of the past. Consequently, instead of using the more common system or network-based governance conceptual frameworks, I will make the case for modelling the management of an unfolding crisis as a ‘declarative process’ using the quantifiable properties of edgeless Case Management Model and Notation (CMMN) graphs. By this means and using the EU’s Common Foreign & Security Policy (CFSP) crisis management process as a case study I will develop several information-theoretic metrics of institutional resilience.

Organizational strategy in complex policy systems: the case of higher education

Mitchell Young (Charles University)

Romulo Pinheiro (University of Agder)

That a university should have a strategy has become virtually unquestioned in today’s age, and one is hard pressed to find a major research university in Europe without a strategic plan. Strategy-making has been promoted by policymakers and university leaders as a means by which higher education institutions can better develop, compete and position themselves in an increasingly demanding environment. However, little critical attention has been paid to the sort of strategy that universities are creating and the effects that it has on their resilience, adaptability and transformability. The aim of this paper is to answer the question: what is the relationship between organizational strategy and resilience?

This paper is organized in two parts: the first draws on the organizational management literature to explicate an array of strategy types. These are organized into a typology with axes defining, one, whether strategy is planned or emergent, and, two, whether strategy is driven by internal or external forces. A discussion follows about how these different strategy types affect the potential resilience, adaptability, and transformability of the institution following them. The second part of the paper looks empirically at both the policymaking demand for strategy and the university’s implementation of it through survey data and a document analysis of key policy initiatives and the actual strategic plans of universities in several Nordic countries. Three aspects of the plans which correspond to key elements in complex systems are investigated and used for the mapping exercise: one, how do the strategies depict cause and effect – is the assumption linear or non-linear; two, how do the strategies account for positioning – do they consider co-evolutionary dynamics; and three, how do the strategies understand the landscape on which they operate – is it a single peak or a fitness-type landscape? The paper concludes by reflecting on the ways that

university strategies are clustering and/or differentiating, and reflects on the ways this inhibits or fosters their resilience.

Organizational resilience, lessons learnt from the Peruvian Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation’s response to El Niño 2015-2016 phenomenon

Guiselle Romero Lora (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú)

Juan Carlos Rivero Isla (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Peru)

Our research analyses the managerial practices undertaken by the Peruvian Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MINAGRI) within the context of El Niño (FEN), between 2015 and 2016. We conducted 30 in-depth interviews to senior and top public managers who were directly responsible for designing and implementing measures to tackle the effects of this climate phenomenon. Thus, our research question looks for the most important factors which facilitated and hindered the response of the MINAGRI to vision, take actions, recompose, before, during and after the cited phenomenon.

For this, our study revises the literature regarding the concept of organisational resilience, and it identifies the main characteristics attributable to resilient organisations. Within this theoretical framework, our study variables were divided into organisational processes (planning, organisation and coordination, knowledge management), and resources (information, human resources, technology and financial resources).

Then, the research reviews the legal and institutional framework regarding disaster management and public-sector operations management as well as written reports from MINAGRI to triangulate our findings. Our findings show that information and human resources account for the most important resources for a resilient organization facing a climate phenomenon, and more specifically the process of coordination and knowledge management have significant effects on preventing and mitigating a disaster, especially when a country has a multi-level structure of government such as Peru.

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Session 2

Thursday, June 27th 16:30 to 18:30 (MB 3.285)

Institutional Resilience and Adaptability at the Frontline: How City-Regions are Navigating the Crisis of Industrial Restructuring

Charles Conteh (Brock University)

The proposed paper will explore the phenomenon of local and regional polities as complex, adaptive mechanisms seeking to navigate the crisis of industrial restructuring that has necessitated a re-calibration of traditional platforms of governance. Amidst the socioeconomic perturbation facing advanced industrial democracies over the past two decades, cities and regions have emerged as critical sites of governance, often far beyond their traditional jurisdictional authority. The paper will focus on the phenomenon of institutional resilience and adaptability to explain how local and regional actors are building policy platforms that transcend not only formal scales of authority but also stretch the conventional lines of state-society relations. Attending this shift is the emergence of more open governance structures and pluralist processes in which a wider network of non-state actors are taking on ever more active policy roles. The term resilience in this proposed paper refers to the ability of a city-region to absorb major economic and social policy shocks. The concept of adaptability is closely related to resilience but differs in the sense that it refers to the ability of a city or region to transform its governance platform to fit the imperatives of seismic perturbation and change. Resilience thus places emphasis on a city-region's elasticity to cope with negative disturbances in the environment while adaptability points to the exploitation of new opportunities leading to positive transformation. Two key questions will be addressed in the paper: First, how have cities and regions navigated the inter-jurisdictional tensions and conflicts that emerge when various municipalities within a given geographic region align their resources to build shared policy platforms to address a common challenge or problem? Second, how have these institutional adaptations that stretch the conventional boundaries of state-society relations addressed problems of democratic deficit in which powerful and well-resourced non-state actors disproportionately drive regional priorities to serve their special interests? Answering these questions will advance our understanding of the nature and challenges of horizontal collaborative governance structures and processes as mechanisms of institutional resilience and adaptability. With an empirical focus on Canada's regional innovation policy over the past decade, the proposed paper will explore how city-regions, often consisting of constellations of distinct and sometimes competing municipalities, have developed pragmatic platforms of governance with constantly shifting lines of authority and legitimacy. The case study will serve as an empirical basis for making theoretical observations about the institutional tensions, adaptability and resilience of local governance systems in times of socioeconomic perturbation.

Policy design as a foundation for urban resilience implementation

Marie-Christine Therrien (École nationale d'administration publique, Université du Québec)

Julie-Maude Normandin (Ecole nationale d'administration publique)

Resilience as a policy objective and organizing paradigm can be seen as a radical break with the traditional Weberian approach to governance that uses command-and-control strategies to attain predetermined policy objectives in a relatively stable environment based on routines (Bourgon, 2009). In contrast, the resilience paradigm refers to ideal values such as "flexibility" and "responsiveness" — which helps explain its widespread appeal among administrators and policy makers — and might therefore require changes to policies, procedures, and administrative structures. The resilience paradigm also calls for network governance of the multiple stakeholders working with and within systems to prepare for shocks and alleviate

stresses. At local levels, a better understanding is needed of how adopting resilience, as a policy objective, changes the way in which cities are organized and urban governments conduct their policy-making activities. Comparing changes in cities' key organizational and policy-making parameters before they initiate planning and after implementation of resilience practices may enable a systematic assessment of the extent to which a resilience perspective actually produces new modes of governance. Without some degree of change, resilience might be considered a largely rhetorical commitment with few material impacts.

Our paper proposes a conceptual framework to analyze the transformation of multi-stakeholder urban governance to achieve urban resilience; in other words, how do public administrations accommodate the co-existence of strong procedural arrangements and capacities for responsiveness and flexibility within networks? This conceptual framework focuses on governance capacities needed to establish both policy goals and means.

As a policy objective and organizing principle, urban resilience proposes to develop the capacities of organizations to better adapt and manage a wide variety of events (shocks) and vulnerabilities (stress). As a policy objective, urban resilience policy relies on policy design, i.e. an “activity conducted by a number of policy actors in the hope of improving policy making and policy outcomes through the accurate anticipation of the consequences of government actions and the articulation of specific courses of action to be followed” (Howlett and Lejano, 2013, p. 358). Based on a qualitative and quantitative research we conducted on the governance of the interorganizational network for urban resilience and adaptation to climate change policies on the territory of Montreal (Therrien et al., 2019; Jutras et al., 2018), we investigate urban resilience implementation, with an emphasis on two aspects: 1) the implications of the resilience paradigm for urban governance in a network composed by public, private and community organizations, and 2) mechanisms to strengthen collaborative capacity to integrate resilience principles into urban governance.

Social innovation in health towards resilient communities: policy, process recommendations

Rita Gallardo (Senate of the Philippines)

Social innovation in health towards resilient communities: policy, process recommendations

Dr. Rita M. Gallardo, DPA[1]

The locus of the study is the social innovation for maternal health in Surigao del Sur, which is one of the three cases of the study by Gallardo[2] (2014). It is considered social innovation in health since according to Gallardo it went through stages and reached the Systemic Change Stage with feedback loops. Also there was presence of available metrics to judge whether social innovation works or not, involvement of various actors coming from various sectors of society, importance of enabling conditions and/or presence of drivers in the different stages; it originated from government although some social innovations were initiated in other sectors of society; there was provision of access to health service and program by social innovation, and social innovation resulted to better health outcomes.

The inspirations of the study are the seeming link between some facets of social innovation as well as the features of resilient communities and vice versa. Seeming link between social innovation and resilient communities are in the following:

· Systemic change stage of social innovation where interaction of many elements takes place allowing social innovation to strengthen social relations for resilient community.

· Feedback loops in social innovation as means for collaboration for resilient communities.

· Involvement of government, nongovernment and private sector in social innovation and resilient communities.

· Health status as factor of resilient communities.

With the seeming link this paper seeks to ask the following

· If systemic change stage (where interaction of many elements takes place) allows social innovation to strengthen social relations and feedback loops in social innovation as means for collaboration for resilient communities, what are the policy and process recommendations that can be drawn in the development of social innovation in health that will spur interaction of many elements for resilient communities?

· If health status is a factor of resilient communities, what are the contributions of the study by Gallardo (2014) on social innovation in health to one of the factors of resilient communities – particular level of health status?

Literature that weaves the two concepts are however limited hence the objective of this paper is to extract

variables that connect the two in order to come up with an initial conceptual framework that can be tested in the future. To answer the research questions, the researcher employed rapid appraisal approach. The researcher interviewed selected informants, collected some information in advance from local participants when the researcher gathered data for her study on social innovation, as well as reviewed secondary data.

[1] Adjunct-Professor of the Graduate School of Colegio de San Juan de Letran, Intramuros, Manila; and Consultant of the Office of Senator Francis N. Pangilinan in the Senate of the Philippines and Asiapro Multipurpose Cooperative.
[2] Gallardo's dissertation entitled, "Social Innovation and Access to Health Services and Programs: Case Studies Misamis Oriental, Surigao del Sur, and Albay (2006–2013)," was completed in 2014, at the National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG), University of the Philippines.