

# T01P05 / Taking Stock of Policy Entrepreneurship: Current Trajectories and Future Directions

**Topic :** T01 / POLICY PROCESS THEORIES

**Chair :** Evangelia Petridou (NTNU Social Research and Mid Sweden University)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The concepts of policy entrepreneurship and the political entrepreneurs, first explored by Ostrom (1965) and further integrated in the policy process theory of multiple streams by Kingdon (1984/2003) and Zahariadis (see, for example, 2007 and 2014) is not new. In a seminal article published 10 year prior to ICPP4 convening, Mintrom and Norman (2009) outlined a set of directions for the scholarship of policy entrepreneurship, noting that “[f]urther work to integrate policy entrepreneurship into mainstream theorizations of policy change holds the potential of changing our notions of the mainstream itself” (p. 663

A lot has happened since then. Petridou (2014) concluded that policy entrepreneurship is a stand-alone lens which can be used to understand policy change. It has been used in various policy sectors (see for example, David, 2015; Olsson and Hysing, 2012; Petridou and Sparf, 2018) in non-western environments (Hammond, 2013; Meydani, 2015) and in conjunction with social network analysis (Christopoulos, 2006; Christopoulos and Ingold, 2015).

The advancement and maturity of the literature on policy entrepreneurship, ten years after the publication of the Mintrom and Norman article, necessitates taking stock and setting an updated research agenda for the future. First, perhaps more attention to policy entrepreneurship as a theoretical framework rather vis-à-vis the policy entrepreneur is needed. Additionally, the conceptual interrelations of entrepreneurship and leadership are not yet exhaustively theorized. What is more, more theoretical work is needed to integrate theories of leadership with those of policy entrepreneurship. A fruitful trajectory along these lines is work on entrepreneurial teams. Making use of formal social network analysis would go a long way towards this especially if the team were large enough spanning a number of organizations.

A related trajectory is that of the relationship between policy entrepreneurship on the one hand and power and legitimacy on the other. In conjunction with research at the micro level in the motives of policy entrepreneurs and the kind of profit they seek we stand to gain normative insights the role of entrepreneurial agency as an instrument of political power.

What is more, though there has been research regarding supra-national organizations, how can we better understand collective actors as entrepreneurs and what are the mechanisms that foster policy entrepreneurship at the supra-national level?

Additionally, the call by Mintrom and Norman (2009) for cross-country research is still relevant. However, what kind of methodological hurdles does this entail?

Finally, so far research on entrepreneurship has been gender blind. A particularly fruitful future research agenda would be to interrogate gender aspects of policy entrepreneurship. A few questions that emerge are: are women as likely to behave entrepreneurially as men? Are there certain contextual factors that might hinder or foster policy entrepreneurship among women? Do women policy entrepreneurs employ different strategies, behave differently in networks or have different positions than their male counterparts? What is more, there is room for a feminist analysis of political entrepreneurship. So far and on the face of it, the discourse is quite masculine, especially earlier research of the lone entrepreneur, the larger-than-life figure. How would a gender angle influence the discussion on entrepreneurship and leadership?

To paraphrase Mintrom and Norman (2009), if you want to make a splash in the study of policy entrepreneurship, innovative work in the fields of leadership, power, legitimacy and gender would be a great place to continue (Petridou, 2017).

## CALL FOR PAPERS

See the General Objectives

The topics listed above exemplify papers sought in the context of this panel, though the list is merely

indicative.

Papers that further the policy entrepreneurship scholarship from a theoretical or empirical perspective, comparative research as well as research into innovative methodologies are particularly welcome.

# T01P05 / Taking Stock of Policy Entrepreneurship: Current Trajectories and Future Directions

Chair : Evangelia Petridou (NTNU Social Research and Mid Sweden University)

## Session 1

Wednesday, June 26th 14:00 to 16:00 (MB 2.435)

### Discussants

Jamie Falcon (Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC))

### **A Darwinian perspective on entrepreneurship: A better way to make public policy for entrepreneurship**

Jacques Baronet (Universite de Sherbrooke)

As Henrekson and Stenkula (2009) observed, most public policies shifted their focus from SME policy to entrepreneurship policy. In general, these public policies, even though they might not aim directly at increasing employment, still suffer from a technocratic «one best way» approach in trying to determine in advance so-called winners in an entrepreneurship lottery, or more precisely productive entrepreneurial endeavors in an economic context.

This technocratic approach can even be observed in many private and public attempts at helping future entrepreneurs through incubators and accelerators. Formally or informally, these incubators/accelerators believe in some formula for success and try to apply it to their clients-entrepreneurs.

However, recent studies (Frangioni, 2015; Lehmann et al., 2015; and Frangioni and Baronet, 2017, 2018, in press, for example) have observed the limits of such top-down perspectives. Indeed, entrepreneurship, in terms of intentions and recent startup activities, seem to prosper more in undirected serendipitous environments, environments where coworking spaces are created freely without public policy intervention. One such study using a multidimensional scaling analysis observed the relative closeness of coworking spaces with entrepreneurial intentions and new firm creations whereas incubators and accelerators, whose purpose or mission is officially to help entrepreneurs, were not as close to actual entrepreneurship. Thus, coworking spaces are full of people who spontaneously created their own jobs without a top-down grand plan and found a complex infrastructure of support within their walls.

Indeed, this might be a reflection on the basic nature of entrepreneurial activities (commercial, social, technological or intrapreneurial). In fact, Kerr et al. (2014) observed that each entrepreneurial action should be perceived as an experimentation with an unknown beforehand result. Entrepreneurs are in fact encouraged to make multiple trial and errors before defining the right product for the right market at the right time (Ries, 2011) and to change (pivot) their business model constantly according to what customers want, the availability of resources and distribution channels (Ostervalder and Pigneur, 2010). Furthermore, Simonton (1999) showed that creativity might also follow a Darwinian approach through blind variation and retention of creative ideas.

This presentation will argue for a more Darwinian perspective to public policy for entrepreneurship, a more respectful way for entrepreneurs and their firms.

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## **From entrepreneurs to entrepreneurship in policy dynamics: a focus on activities**

Maria Tullia Galanti (Università degli Studi di Milano)

Since the seminal work of Kingdon (1995), “policy entrepreneur” is one of the most used agency concepts in the theories of the policy process. Yet its use is often residual and vaguely conceptualized, while it is prone to conceptual overstretching as any individual actor with some empirically evident role is assimilated to it, without any distinction of types of activities and endless lists of features. So, despite the work of Mintrom and Vergari (1996) who advocated for a composite policy entrepreneurship theory, most scholars in public policy tend to focus on the entrepreneurial role of individuals or organizations rather than on the functions and the goals of entrepreneurship as a form of collective endeavor (Capano and Galanti 2018).

Our paper critically reviews the uses of the concept of policy entrepreneur in public policy starting from a close consideration of the main frameworks and in particular of risks of conceptual overlaps in the Multiple Stream Approach and in the Advocacy Coalition Framework, or of the understatement of policy entrepreneurship in the Punctuated Equilibrium Theory. We build on existing studies in policy analysis to propose a unique definition of policy entrepreneurship as a distinct set of activities in policy dynamics and we point to the main differences with the (many) concepts of leadership in a policy perspective. The paper also discusses the empirical applications of the concepts of policy entrepreneurship and policy leadership as distinct activities in the policy dynamics.

Capano G., Galanti M.T. 2018. Policy dynamics and types of agency: From individual to collective patterns of action, *European Policy Analysis*, 4(1), 23-47.

Kingdon, J. W. 1995. *Agendas, Alternatives, And Public Policies*, 2nd Ed. New York: Harper Collins.

Mintrom, M., And Vergari, S. 1996. Advocacy Coalitions, Policy Entrepreneurs And Policy Change, *Policy Studies Journal*, 24(3), 420-434.

## **The Policy Entrepreneur's Dilemma: The REDD+ Policy Cycle in Indonesia from 2007 to 2017**

Sébastien Jodoin (McGill University)

Michael Stone (McGill)

Much of the literature on policy entrepreneurship has tended to focus on the role that they can play in agenda-setting and policy formulation, while neglecting the implementation stage in a policy cycle. In this article, we consider whether and how different classic strategies adopted by policy entrepreneurs, such as reframing, forming new coalitions, piloting, or venue shifting demand greater consideration for understanding the implementation stage. We offer four propositions that comprise what we term as the 'policy entrepreneur's dilemma' – the very strategies that may enable you to set policy agendas and influence the formulation of policies may fail to work and even undermine efforts to effectively implement policies at a later stage. We analyse the roles and strategies of domestic policy entrepreneurs in the policy cycle associated with the operationalization of a climate finance mechanism that aims to channel multilateral, bilateral, and private funds to reduce carbon emissions from forest-based sources and enhance forest carbon sequestration in developing countries (known by its acronym REDD+). We focus our analysis on the REDD+ policy cycle in one case study country, Indonesia, which offers a rich empirical environment for studying the role and limitations of policy entrepreneurship. REDD+ was first championed in Indonesia by former President Yudhoyono in 2007, who sought to reframe forest governance in light of changing norms relating to efforts to combat climate change and pursue green forms of economic growth. Yudhoyono appointed a number of civil servants to a multi-sectoral taskforce that effectively sidelined the Ministry of Forestry, an institution committed to the policy status quo. These efforts resulted in the adoption of a National REDD+ Strategy in 2012 that outlined a radically new approach to forest policy and governance in Indonesia, moving away from a traditional focus on resource extraction towards greater emphasis on

sustainability and the empowerment of forest-dependent communities. However, the long-term impact of these strategies for policy change was hindered by a lack of bureaucratic buy-in. As a result, the pursuit of transformative policy change in the form of REDD+ in Indonesia has given way to a return to the status quo, due to the resistance of powerful lobbies representing the agricultural, timber, and mining industries that have traditionally dominated environmental policy and governance in the country. Disappointing results such as these have led scholars to consider to why REDD+ has failed to engender the broad policy change that had aroused enormous enthusiasm at its inception. Prior explanations have emphasized structural factors as well as flaws in the design of REDD+ as an instrument. Our answer to this question focuses instead on the limitations of the strategies that proved successful in the agenda-setting stages of the REDD+ policy cycle in Indonesia. This approach reveals the existence of a dilemma that has received little attention in previous research: does the utilization of policy windows allow for a good opportunity in the agenda setting phase but ultimately creates new weaknesses in the implementation phase? This paper uses this case study to consider if this important case is representative of a broader issue for policy windows and policy entrepreneurs and hypothesize about future steps for research in this area. Using in-depth qualitative research this article will utilize a process tracing approach to provide crucial insights to both the development and opposition to REDD+ in Indonesia and generate hypotheses about policy windows and policy entrepreneurs.

### **A research agenda for the study of the policy entrepreneur: three trajectories**

Evangelia Petridou (NTNU Social Research and Mid Sweden University)

Michael Mintrom (Monash University)

The concepts of policy entrepreneurship and the policy entrepreneur continue to be relevant in the public policy literature by shedding light on the nuances of agency and its relation to policy change. The advancement and maturity of the literature on policy entrepreneurship, ten years after the publication of the Mintrom and Norman article, necessitates taking stock and setting an updated research agenda for the future. It has been used in various substantive policy sectors, in non-western environments, in conjunction with social network analysis, whereas recent scholarship has looked at the conceptual relationship of the policy entrepreneur with other actors, such as the boundary spanner. In this paper we set out a future research agenda on ways to study the policy entrepreneur. We identify three broad but interrelated themes. First, the broadening of the applications of the concept has gone a long way towards theoretical precision but more work is needed on researching the policy entrepreneur in different levels of government and in more substantive policy sectors. For example, we believe that more work on entrepreneurship among public servants and the way they inform public policy would be fruitful. A second, related trajectory would investigate the policy entrepreneur in different stages of the policy process as well as in conjunction with other concepts of the public policy literature. Finally, methodological innovations have the potential to greatly contribute to understanding the policy entrepreneur. This would include experimental and quasi-experimental design, relational perspectives and qualitative approaches. These trajectories would facilitate a better understanding of the policy entrepreneur as an influential actor in policy change as well as the factors that foster their emergence.

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## Session 2

Wednesday, June 26th 16:30 to 18:30 (MB 2.435)

### Discussants

Sébastien Jodoin (McGill University)

### Entrepreneurial Bureaucrats: A Social Network Analysis of Lomma and Staffanstorp Municipalities, Sweden

Evangelia Petridou (NTNU Social Research and Mid Sweden University)

Per Becker (Lund University)

Jorgen Sparf

Policy (or political) entrepreneurship (PE) is an actor-based framework to examine and understand policy change. Rooted in Kingdon's (1984/2003) Multiple Streams approach (MSA), the policy entrepreneur is defined as "a special kind of actor, embedded in the sociopolitical fabric, who is alert to opportunities and acts upon them; he or she amasses coalitions for the purpose of effecting change in a substantive policy sector, political rules or in the provision of public goods" (Petridou, Narbutaitė Aflaki, and Miles, 2015, p. 1). Political entrepreneurship refers to the agentic capacity of political actors operationalized as (i) access to resources such as information and personal contacts; (ii) alertness to recognize opportunities and take advantage of them; (iii) the willingness to take risks, and (iv) leadership skills. The strategies these actors use to navigate the policymaking process are a function of their agentic capacity and the context in which they find themselves operating. Though considerable scholarship has been devoted to policy entrepreneurs in the policy formulation stage of the policy process, entrepreneurship in bureaucracies and especially at the municipal level becomes more opaque (Petridou, 2018; Petridou and Sparf, 2018). In this study, we conduct a structural analysis to compare the networks in two Swedish municipalities, Lomma and Staffanstorp in urban flood risk management (for a study on Lomma, see Becker, 2018). Our findings suggest that the actions of the policy entrepreneur in Lomma municipality is decisive for the policy decisions regarding flood risk mitigation.

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## **Training and the Policy Entrepreneurship Intention-Behavior Gap amongst Street Level Bureaucrats**

Neomi Frisch Aviram (University of Haifa)

ITAI BEERI (University of Haifa)

Nissim Cohen (University of Haifa)

Can policy entrepreneurship training affect the policy entrepreneurship intention-behavior gap amongst street level bureaucrats? If so, how and why? In the era of New Public Management and Post-New Public Management there is a call for reinventing government. Part of the expanding literature calls for new types of public employees, those who are entrepreneurial and innovative, who can address the rapidly changing needs of citizens, public goods and policy. Focusing on policy entrepreneurship (PE) is an important part in innovative policy making. PEs are innovative individuals from the private, public or third sectors who pursue opportunities to influence the formation and outcomes of policy beyond the resources they hold. A crucial task for PE researchers is to understand what interventions can actually impact the likelihood of PE behavior occurring amongst street level bureaucrats.

Specifically, Street Level Bureaucrats (SLB), such as nurses, teachers and social workers, are expected to voice out, and expand their role from the implementation stage of policy making, to the policy formation stage. This call is based on an assumption that bottom-up policy making can address some of the normative challenges of policy making, for example, the gap between policy formation and policy implementation. Nevertheless, despite the assumption that SLBs may have PE intentions and behaviors, the literature on PEs has a "street level blind-spot" as it focused mainly on heroes, rare and unique personalities who acted as PEs, and mainly in high level senior managers in bureaucracy.

In collaboration with the Israeli Health Ministry, we use a field experiment in which we train 120 public nurses in an eight-hour practical "hands-on" policy entrepreneurship workshop based on the action regulation theory. We measure the policy entrepreneurship intentions and behaviors of the participants in the beginning of the workshop (T1), and two months past the workshop (T2), offering a pretest-post-test control group design. Our findings demonstrate how policy entrepreneurship training can be used to foster policy entrepreneurship intentions and behaviors amongst street level bureaucrats.

## **Translating the National Community Water and Sanitation Programme into Practice: The Role of Traditional Leaders as Institutional Entrepreneurs**

Salomey Gyamfi Afrifa (International Institute of Social Studies )

The declaration of 1981-1990 as the water decade, and the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015) were efforts by International Development Organizations to ensure that nations gave priority to the development of the water sector. These initiatives played a central role in the water reforms in many developing countries including Ghana.

In the early 1990's , as part of its reforms in the water sector, Ghana decided to divide the sector into urban and rural sectors, with the view that such division will enable the government pay significant and equal attention to both sectors due to their unique circumstances. The split led to the development of the National Community Water and Sanitation Programme (NCWSP) to address the low coverage and unsustainability of existing water facilities in rural Ghana. Thus, the NCWSP was to ensure easy, efficient, and effective access to water, as well as provide sustainable management of the water systems.

While the reforms have substantially led to the development of a number of rural water systems, the management of these systems continue to be of concerns to all. A significant problem with the management is the failure of the NCWSP to examine community led institutions in the implementation of the reforms, leading to conflict and tension between community actors over control, ownership, and management of the systems over the years. Hence, effective management of water systems continues to be problematic, with beneficiaries bearing the brunt of the conflict and tension in the various communities.

In recent years, some community leaders have developed various mechanisms to attempt to address this problem. These leaders have become what the literature describes as Institutional Entrepreneurs (IEs), as they have come up with different initiatives to solve the conflicts and tensions among the different actors in order to achieve the objectives of the NCWSP. Focusing on theories of institutional entrepreneurs, this paper argues that community leaders will find solutions/ responds to challenges of implementing the NCWSP by introducing different strategies and innovations. Contrary to what some scholars argue that institutional entrepreneurs will invest their resources to promote policies they favor, this study however shows that IE in some circumstances use their resources to frustrate implementation of policies.

The essence of the paper is to show how community leaders continue to show entrepreneurial characteristics at the community level through strategic initiatives and practices, especially within their

respective communities in managing their water systems. To this end, this paper intends to examine the characteristics displayed by community leaders and the practices they engaged in to either frustrate or promote implementation of the NCWSP.

Using six communities that were purposively selected from the Central, Ashanti, and Northern Regions of Ghana, the study explores the differences between policies and practices and the consequences of IEs actions on users in relation to access and sustainability of the water systems. The research adopts a mixed method approach using interviews and survey as the data collection instrument.

## **Synthesizing Health Policy Entrepreneurship in Authoritarian China: A Comparative Case Studies**

Alex Jingwei He (The Education University of Hong Kong)

Policy studies in the past decades has sparked a growing body of literature on policy entrepreneurship. Defined by John Kingdon (1995) as individuals willing to invest their resources – time, energy, reputation and sometimes money – in return for future policies they favour, policy entrepreneurs have been thought to play a pivotal role in policy changes.<sup>1</sup> Representing a useful analytical framework for explaining policy changes, the study of policy entrepreneurship has offered numerous empirical investigations in various settings, and the framework is highly portable to multiple contexts (Hammond 2013; Mintrom and Norman 2009).

The recent years have witnessed revived scholarly interest in the studies of policy entrepreneurship, particularly in making theoretical development that strives to take the concept beyond a loose metaphor (Jones et al. 2016), as well as making methodological progress away from merely qualitative case studies (Hopkins 2016). One less recognized analytical mission, is, however, to pay close attention to the sectoral characteristics of policy entrepreneurship. In recognition of the limit of universal policy theories, policy entrepreneurship may manifest substantive differences in different policy sectors. Health care, for example, represents a typical arena plagued by “wicked problems”, “policy gridlocks”, vested interests, and ideological divide, all requiring determined entrepreneurial reforms (Roberts et al. 2005).

This study seeks to synthesize the knowledge in regard to policy entrepreneurship in the health care sector in China, an authoritarian state which is in the midst of an ambitious national healthcare reform. Recent studies on policy entrepreneurship have recognized that better theorization requires scholars to simultaneously pay attention to both structural institutional factors and individual action and to address how the former shapes the latter (Mintrom & Norman, 2009; Oborn, Barrett, & Exworthy, 2011; Hammond, 2013; He, 2018). In China’s unitary authoritarian system, characterized by a dominant ruling party but with a fragmented bureaucracy, the unique institutional setting offers ample room for entrepreneurial maneuver (Mertha, 2009; He, 2018). Researchers are thus in a favorable position to examine the interactional patterns between rigid structure and active agency, especially in the realm of healthcare, a sector characterized by breeds of tangible and intangible vested interests as well as structural barriers to reforms.

This study is an in-depth examination of three renowned local health policy innovations in China in the past decade or so, including a hospital privatization reform in Suqian City of Jiangsu Province, the internationally renowned systemic healthcare reform in Sanming City of Fujian Province, and an attempt of free universal healthcare reform in Shenmu County of Shaanxi Province. The relatively long timespan allows us to trace the longitudinal dynamics of the three representative cases, and to compare them in terms of processes, entrepreneurial strategies, inter-governmental relations as well as other structural factors, and reform outcomes. The analysis draws extensively from in-depth interviews and secondary data. The study seeks to synthesize knowledge that better explains health policy entrepreneurship in an authoritarian system.



# T01P05 / Taking Stock of Policy Entrepreneurship: Current Trajectories and Future Directions

Chair : Evangelia Petridou (NTNU Social Research and Mid Sweden University)

## Session 3

Thursday, June 27th 08:00 to 10:00 (MB 2.435)

### Discussants

Neomi Frisch Aviram (University of Haifa)

### Can the dual role of policy entrepreneur and policy implementer improve the success of vertical greening policy adoption? Case of Shanghai, China

Hongmei Lu (Michigan Technological University)

Adam Wellstead (Michigan Technological University)

Hongmei Lu<sup>1</sup>, Audrey L Mayer<sup>2</sup>, Adam Wellstead<sup>1</sup>, Shan Zhou<sup>1</sup>

1: Department of Social Science, Michigan Technological University, MI, USA

2: School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science, Michigan Technological University, MI, USA

hongmeil@mtu.edu almayer@mtu.edu awellste@mtu.edu shanzhou@mtu.edu

The compact city model of urbanization in China leads to intense land use conflict, which squeezes out necessary urban greenspace. In response, the Chinese Ministry of Construction launched a “National Garden City” campaign in 1992. One criteria of the campaign requires that a candidate city’s ground-level public greenspace area reaches 5 m<sup>2</sup> per capita at minimum; in 1993, Shanghai’s greenspace was only 1.15 m<sup>2</sup>. In the following years, the Shanghai government has strived to increase urban greenspace to meet the “Garden City” target. The Shanghai Green Committee (SGC), a department of the local greening authority, implements the city’s greenspace policies and advocates for vertical greening (VG), which includes green walls, green roofs, and other forms of above-ground greening measures to make up for the urban greenspace shortage. Shanghai is the first city in China to institutionalize VG into municipal law since 2015.

Policy entrepreneur has been regarded as a main explanation for agenda setting and policy change. The concept of policy entrepreneur has also been integrated into other theories including Kingdon’s multiple streams framework, which has been perceived as a useful lens for agenda setting. Research on policy entrepreneurs includes how they use various resources and strategies to advance their desirable solution to the policy agenda. Yet, little attention has been devoted to how the policy actor’s dual role of policy entrepreneur and policy implementer may impact on the agenda-setting process. The aim of this paper is to examine whether the SGC’s dual role of policy implementer and policy entrepreneur can improve the success of VG policy adoption. We use a qualitative case study approach to analyze the VG policymaking process in Shanghai (1992-2015). The SGC, as greenspace policy implementer, also acted as a de facto policy entrepreneur and skillfully employed an incremental strategy to push the VG policy agenda forward in three phases. Based on policy experimentation in phase 1, two correlated policy windows were identified in phase 2 & 3 respectively: “encouraging” VG in 2007 and “mandating” VG in the greening law in 2014. The SGC used tools like demonstration site development, policy experimentation, technology standards establishment, and media and public mobilization to push VG policies.

The dual role of both policy implementer and policy entrepreneur helped SGC receive feedback from each previous stage and detect potential barriers, including technology, finance, and value acceptability, in implementation, which paves the way for next-stage agenda setting. A dual role also pushes the SGC to take a problem-solving attitude and take full advantage of valuable resources, including internal political information and mass media, to capitalize on policy windows towards the end of policy adoption.

**Keywords:** vertical greening policy; policy entrepreneur; policy implementer; dual role; Shanghai; China

## **Synthesizing the Studies of Policy Entrepreneurship in Healthcare Reforms: Comparative Case Studies in Authoritarian China**

Alex Jingwei He (The Education University of Hong Kong)

Policy studies in the past decades has sparked a growing body of literature on policy entrepreneurship. Defined by John Kingdon (1995) as individuals willing to invest their resources – time, energy, reputation and sometimes money – in return for future policies they favour, policy entrepreneurs have been thought to play a pivotal role in policy changes.<sup>1</sup> Representing a useful analytical framework for explaining policy changes, the study of policy entrepreneurship has offered numerous empirical investigations in various settings, and the framework is highly portable to multiple contexts (Hammond 2013; Mintrom and Norman 2009).

The recent years have witnessed revived scholarly interest in the studies of policy entrepreneurship, particularly in making theoretical development that strives to take the concept beyond a loose metaphor (Jones et al. 2016), as well as making methodological progress away from merely qualitative case studies (Hopkins 2016). One less recognized analytical mission, is, however, to pay close attention to the sectoral characteristics of policy entrepreneurship. In recognition of the limit of universal policy theories, policy entrepreneurship may manifest substantive differences in different policy sectors. Health care, for example, represents a typical arena plagued by “wicked problems”, “policy gridlocks”, vested interests, and ideological divide, all requiring determined entrepreneurial reforms (Roberts et al. 2005).

This study seeks to synthesize the knowledge in regard to policy entrepreneurship in the health care sector in China, an authoritarian state which is in the midst of an ambitious national healthcare reform. Recent studies on policy entrepreneurship have recognized that better theorization requires scholars to simultaneously pay attention to both structural institutional factors and individual action and to address how the former shapes the latter (Mintrom & Norman, 2009; Oborn, Barrett, & Exworthy, 2011; Hammond, 2013; He, 2018). In China’s unitary authoritarian system, characterized by a dominant ruling party but with a fragmented bureaucracy, the unique institutional setting offers ample room for entrepreneurial maneuver (Mertha, 2009; He, 2018). Researchers are thus in a favorable position to examine the interactional patterns between rigid structure and active agency, especially in the realm of healthcare, a sector characterized by breeds of tangible and intangible vested interests as well as structural barriers to reforms.

This study is an in-depth examination of three renowned local health policy innovations in China in the past decade or so, including a hospital privatization reform in Suqian City of Jiangsu Province, the internationally renowned systemic healthcare reform in Sanming City of Fujian Province, and an attempt of free universal healthcare reform in Shenmu County of Shaanxi Province. The relatively long timespan allows us to trace the longitudinal dynamics of the three representative cases, and to compare them in terms of processes, entrepreneurial strategies, inter-governmental relations as well as other structural factors, and reform outcomes. The analysis draws extensively from in-depth interviews and secondary data. The study seeks to synthesize knowledge that better explains health policy entrepreneurship in an authoritarian system.

## **The Women's Topless Movement in the United States: A Case Study of Policy Entrepreneurs Utilizing Federal Courts to Create Public Policy**

Jamie Falcon (Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC))

In the spring of 2018, a federal lawsuit was filed against the Town of Ocean City, Maryland for the purpose of nullifying a Town ordinance banning females from publicly displaying their breasts. The basis for the complaint is the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. The “topfreedom” movement is a relatively new, ongoing movement, aiming to utilize the federal judicial branch in lieu of legislative processes as a path to social policy formation. The goal of the movement is for women to have the right, equal to men, to be topless in public. The current strategy of the policy entrepreneurs is to use the federal court system to nullify local ordinances, such as the Ocean City ordinance, thereby making public female toplessness legal across the U.S. This research analyzes this strategy in the context of the major approaches of public policy theory. The hypothesis of this qualitative study is that policy formation through case law is different from the public policy formation approaches theorized around statutory law. The approaches analyzed include Kingdon's policy streams, bounded rationality, punctuated equilibrium, the argumentative approach, new institutionalism, policy instruments, the institutional analysis and design approach and the advocacy coalition framework. This case study of an ongoing movement is particularly valuable because the outcome is not yet known and a coalition of activists is not yet established. Selection bias may be an issue when case studies of successful advocacies are analyzed ex post. This ongoing movement may succeed or fail, so selection bias is not an element. Many of

the approaches to the study of public policy depend upon a cohesive advocacy seeking to favorably frame policy issues. This study shows that this advocacy is presently not cohesive and some advocates use markedly different tactics which may be counterproductive to the actions of other advocates. As it matures, this movement may become cohesive. It is also possible that cohesion will prove to be irrelevant to the movement's success or failure in policy formation. By analyzing this advocacy in process, the factors contributing to its success or failure are better illuminated than they are for ex post case studies. Since this is a study of an ongoing process, and advocates may become aware of the study, the potential for the study itself affecting the process is discussed.