P03 / The Design of Policy, Governance and Public Service

Topic : POLICY DESIGN, POLICY ANALYSIS, EXPERTISE AND EVALUATION

Chair : Arwin van Buuren (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

Second Chair : Jenny Lewis (University of Melbourne)

Third Chair : B. Guy Peters (University of Pittsburgh)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Shrinking resources, discontented electorates and complex problems of the last decade have prompted the public sector to look for new ways of governing, and developing and delivering public services. In this effort, design has been heralded as a central concept to innovate public policy, service delivery and its governance. Design is seen as a means to improve people- or user-centeredness, which in a co-productive or co-creative way bridges the gap between public policies, services and citizens' needs and expectations, and environmental challenges (Thorpe & Gamman, 2016; Thomas & Grace, 2008; Junginger, 2014; Mulgan, 2014, Sangiorgi, 2015).

To facilitate such a design approach, all kinds of 'learning-by-doing' methods (e.g. design experiments, living labs, and collaborative design sessions) are rapidly gaining popularity in public administration (Bason, 2017), in order to co-create value with involved stakeholders and in particular service users to strengthen the people-orientation in public policy and services and collectively solve complex challenges (Howlett, 2014).

Although the notion of public administration as a design science is certainly not new (Simon, 1971; Miller, 1984; Shangraw & Crow, 1997; Meyer, 2005), there is much that we do not know about the application of design-oriented methods to public policy, governance, management and services. Further, the contribution of design as a co-production strategy within public sector contexts needs further debate (Bason 2010, 2017). The rise of living labs, field labs and pilot programs in which all kinds of (participatory) design methods are applied, illustrates the increasing attention for this exploratory and experimental style of policy-making, governance and public service delivery. However the public context in which design-thinking is applied, also raises serious dilemmas and questions (Hillgren et al. 2011).

Hence, this panel is dedicated to exploring the principles, methodological underpinnings, challenges and practices of applying design-oriented approaches to the field of public policy and governance. In particular, the panel seeks to explore how design-led approaches contribute on the one hand, to policy and governance innovations (design of policy), and on the other hand, the extent to which a design approach is an effective way to generate more rigorous insights into practices of public policy and governance. The latter element embodies important questions about the effective application of design-thinking methods, their methodological rigor and their applicability as scientifically valid methods to enhance our empirical knowledge of real-world problems. .

Therefore, this panel seeks to contribute to the following questions:

- How can the methodological rigor and replicability of design methodologies in public management and policy environments be enhanced;
- What are theoretical and empirical conditions that support the effective application and integration of (collaborative) design-led approaches within public sector and government;
- What is the value (in terms of legitimacy, creativity and problem-solving capacity) and ultimately the impact of design-led approaches (e.g. policy labs; living labs and other innovative methods) to value creation in public policy and governance (health care, culture, education, social interventions, transportation, safety etc.);
- What limitations and routes for improvement of design-led approaches can be determined for the innovation of public policy and wider institutional change?

CALL FOR PAPERS

Lately, (co)design has been heralded as a central concept to innovate public policy, public service delivery

and its governance (Bason, 2017). Associated potential involves innovated policy (Blomkamp, 2018); integrated knowledge, generated from different stakeholders (Chindarkar et al. 2017); and more legitimate, user-centered public policy (Bailey and Lloyd, 2016).

However, the academic field of design in public administration and public policy is still relatively underdeveloped with a strong conceptual focus, rather than empirically validating whether the premise of design holds within the complex reality of public policy creation. This panel welcomes therefore papers that illustrate practices and potentials of design thinking or design approaches to solve governance issues. We also welcome conceptual reflections about the meaning and possible approaches of design thinking for governance and public policy. Concretely, this panel aims at:

- Enhancing the methodological rigor and relevance of design methodologies in public management and policy environments;
- Offering theoretical and empirical explorations of the conditions that support the effective application and integration of collaborative design-led approaches within public sector and government;
- Exploring and evaluate the value and impact of design-led approaches to value creation in policy making and public service delivery (health care, culture, education, social interventions, transportation, safety etc.);
- Identifying and discussing limitations and routes for improvement of design-led approaches for the innovation of public service provision and wider institutional change.

Besides traditional paper presentations, we welcome contributors who wish to demonstrate a working prototype illustrating how this was developed and tested.

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Session 1

Thursday, June 27th 16:30 to 18:30 (MB 9 EFG)

Discussants

Jenny Lewis (University of Melbourne)

Design thinking and policy making

Jenny Lewis (University of Melbourne)

McGann Michael (University of Melbourne)

Emma Blomkamp (University of Melbourne)

Responding to a rising focus on public sector innovation, governments have begun experimenting with design-led or ‘design thinking’ approaches as a way of reframing policy issues and generating and testing new solutions to public problems. Although seldom concretely defined, design thinking can be loosely understood as a ‘human-centred’ approach to innovation that draws from the processes used by industrial and product designers. Design thinking is increasingly being looked to by organisations who have a need to broaden their repertoire of strategies for addressing open-ended and complex challenges. This has in part been driven by a social turn within the field of industrial design, as designers have moved to broaden the application of their skills, inspired by participatory theorists of governance. Its proponents claim that it can help solve contemporary policy challenges in areas as diverse as health, climate change, and employment.

For many working in policy, design thinking constitutes a ‘bottom-up’ approach where the gap between designers and citizens is narrowed through decisions being informed and even sometimes driven by those who are affected by policies. This participatory focus of design draws from the democratic concept whereby all those ‘affected by design decisions should be involved in the process of making the decisions’. In this context, the extension of design thinking to policy – particularly participatory and co-design approaches – resonates with principles of network governance, participatory governance, or collaborative governance. However, design thinking has not been universally seen as aligned with increasing participation and democracy, with some arguing that it is inherently conservative, based on privileging the designer ahead of those who are meant to be served by the process. Design thinking potentially suffers from the same limitations of other policymaking approaches by protecting the powerful. This raises the question of what is different about design, and how well it aligns with policy processes.

Despite its growing popularity, there has not been much critical investigation into the impact of design thinking on policymaking. What is really new about design thinking in the public sector? How does it differ from other approaches to policymaking? Does it present a fundamental challenge to more traditional approaches, or can it complement them? And what impact, if any, does it have on the process of policymaking? In this paper, we aim to address these questions, by examining design thinking and comparing it to two alternative approaches to policymaking. We then empirically explore its impact on policymaking based on the experience of public sector innovation labs.

Understanding the US Policy Innovation Lab network

Adam Wellstead (Michigan Technological University)

Hongmei Lu (Michigan Technological University)

Policy innovation labs (PILs) have been described as purpose-driven "do tanks." They are, in part, derived from idea labs or spaces found in the private sector and their appeal is that they approach policy issues by producing new ‘governing methods’ through a creative, design, or user-oriented perspective and strive to organize experiments to test proposed policies. PILs are both the producer and facilitator of policy innovation by acting as physical spaces or ‘hubs’ serving to promote collaboration across organizations and discrete functions to test ideas and prototypes. PILs, some contend, are contributing to and leading a rapid turn to experimental approaches within government and in policy design (McGann et al 2018b). PILs can work for or within a government entity and contribute to the shaping or implementation of public policies Our paper examines US-based PILs. There has been little research on the nature and extent of a larger PIL network. Hyperlink network analysis, which utilizes the links between websites to map online communication structures, offers a methodology for studying the extent of PIL networks. Reasons for the methodology's appeal include the ability to utilize web crawlers to collect large amounts of data and the ability to apply quantitative and qualitative methods to examine network interactions. Some authors view hyperlinks as communication networks. A hyperlink network is seen as an extension of traditional communication networks in that it focuses on the structure of a social system based on the shared hyperlinks among websites. The domains of websites serve as nodes of a network, while any hyperlink pointing to an external domain creates a network edge. The particular context in which a hyperlink is embedded may vary greatly in content. However, group-specific network structures, linking patterns and dynamics may be observed when applying methods of social network analysis to a vast number of hyperlinks. Hyperlinks can perform five functions: information provision, network building or strengthening, identity/image building or branding, audience sharing, and message amplification. “Seed” URLs and key terms are into the VOSON webcrawler software with these URLs serving as the starting points for analyzing PIL networks. Formal social networks analysis (SNA) will be employed in order to examine networks identified by the webcrawl. This will include an internal PIL network (within the US) and an external PIL network that measures international influences on US PILs.

Designing Learning Agendas: Moving Beyond Compliance

Karol Olejniczak (SWPS University)

Kathryn Newcomer (George Washington University)

Nick Hart

In recent years there has been a renewed interest in the use of design approaches in public policy (Bason, 2017; Peters, 2018). Although the notion of policy as a design is not new (Simon, 1996; Shangraw & Crow, 2007), the application of highly collaborative and user-centered methods to develop useful policy solutions seems novel.

Many of current applications of policy design efforts deal with relatively simple services and tangible project solutions. However, many of the public policy issues that governments face are complex and multifaceted. Potential solutions may be met by politically divisive perspectives, and/or require cross-agency complex organizational and regulatory collaboration. Thus the design-led approaches to address more complex policy issues are still to be explored.

The proposed paper addressees the challenge of applying a design-led approach to a complex public management issue. It reports on the use of Learning Agendas to intentionally organize streams of evidence to promote learning within U.S. federal agencies. The development of Learning Agendas is a new legal requirement (Hart and Shaw, 2018). They consist of a set of questions aligned with evidence-building activities to be used by agency leadership for internal decision-making and improvement of agency's effectiveness (Nightingale et al. 2018; USAID, 2017). Given the compliance mentality and perfunctory responses of federal agency staff to many executive and legislative performance management requirements in the federal government over the last three decades (Hart and Newcomer, 2018), the question we address is: how might learning agendas be implemented to promote learning and real, meaningful performance improvements within public agencies?

The paper has four parts. First, we provide a brief history of recent performance and evidence-based policy initiatives in US federal government as background for the new formal requirement for federal agencies to formalize Learning Agendas. Second, drawing upon research on organizational learning, we articulate a theory of change underlying how learning agendas could work to promote evidence-building and learning within public agencies. Third, we explain how the federal requirements, along with guidance from the literature, were integrated into a prototype to develop a Learning Agenda. We then describe how the prototype was applied in the National Science Foundation. And finally, we offer broader guidance to help public agencies develop design-led Learning Agendas, provide effective integration of evidence streams, and promote a culture of organizational learning and continuous improvement.

The paper will be useful for both academics and practitioners. It will contribute to the discussion on the utility

of design-led approaches to address complex public policy and management issues. Notably, it will address the questions, put forward by this conference panel, on enhancing methodological rigor and relevance, limitations and ways to improve the use of design-led approaches. For practitioners, the paper will provide a case study of an innovative method to develop an agency-specific strategy for evidence building.

The paper will be accompanied by a presentation of the prototype that includes an iterative design procedure with tangible artifacts (designers' board, cards, and tokens), and the virtual platform for a follow-up work.

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Session 2

Friday, June 28th 08:00 to 10:00 (MB 9 EFG)

How to create value in public service delivery? Exploring the co-design approach

William Voorberg (Erasmus University Rotterdam The Netherlands)

Arwin van Buuren (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

It seems nowadays that design thinking is considered a beneficia way to generate value for service users. In doing so, design thinking (or to be more specific, co-design) is a way to fulfill the promise of New Public Governance, that is, in order to create legitimate public service delivery (i.e. value creation), service users should be involved in the fundamental aspects of the design and delivery of these services. However, in order to create value, as argued within the Service-Dominant Logic, the design approach needs to be ‘translated’ into an applicable framework, appropriate for the public domain. Our ambition in this paper is to make that translation. In order to do that, we first explore what kind of value is supposed to be generated within the public domain. Subsequently, by focusing on well-known contributions to the design literature, we review what can be learned from design approaches in terms of value creation. Then, we examine what kind of specific characteristics of the public domain needs to be taken into consideration, when applying a design-oriented approach for public service design. Ultimately, based on a synthesizing exercise, we conclude how the design approach, as put forward in the design literature, is to be translated, to become applicable within the public domain. In doing so, this paper aims to formulate a grab-hold for both academics and policy makers alike when interested in applying design approaches.

Policy Integration in Shrinking Society ---Strategies for Basic Municipalities in Japan---

Hisashi Okuda (Kanazawa University)

Recently, depopulation and aging are posing serious challenges for municipal management in Japan. For example, they threaten sustainable financial management, and municipalities may not provide public services universally in the long term. To deal with the problem, several strategies are discussed: promoting municipal merger, regional partnership led by major urban cities, or vertical integration by prefecture. A study-group led by MIC (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications) proposes some of these strategies.

However, some criticize these proposals, because policy goals of the proposals seem set in view of the national government. Critics argue that the proposals are problematic in view of municipalities, because it ignores autonomy of citizens about local government reforms. According to them, the proposals are against autonomy of citizens and the principles of subsidiarity. Here, several possible policies and two policy goals are conflicting.

This thesis analyses the above policy circumstances through framework of “policy integration” approach (Howlett and Rayner 2007; 2013). First, it is useful framework to analyze several proposals involving organizational policy instruments, including reforms of local governments and governance (Howlett 2011). Second, policy integration helps to promote problem-solving in complex governance situations, such as coordination under multi-level governance, and dealing with policy traps in the long term (Howlett, Vince, and del Rio 2017; Nair and Howlett 2016). Third, policy integration approach gives three criteria to clearly evaluate complicated policy situations: goals, policies, and policy dimensions (Howlett and del Rio 2015). These three characteristics are suitable to analyze strategies and policy goals in governance arrangement in shrinking societies. Therefore, this thesis has important implications on the policy situation and debate about local governance reforms in Japan and the other shrinking societies.

Works Cited

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Going beyond quick fixes and compromises: what design enables when people tailor places to their needs in genuine collaboration

Terry van Dijk (University of Groningen)

After an era where technical rationality, capital and centralized power dominated the transformation of the cities and regions we live in, a new, process-centric ideal emerged in spatial planning: collaborative planning. It assumes that when all who have a stake in a certain problem get together, egalitarian and free deliberation among them will lead to good decisions.

We are critical to this paradigm. It takes more than talking and deliberating to create never-thought-of-solutions and beloved places. Many of our societal and spatial problems (e.g. energy transition, climate change adaptation, structural demographic changes) are not evident at first sight, and cannot be solved by quick solutions and negotiated compromises. They need technical, social and institutional innovations. Moreover, a landscape, whether urban or rural, has a logic of its own, and many interdependencies on various levels of scale. Making good places needs both an integral and long term view and careful detailing and implementation. We observed that in planning processes where designers collaborate with specialists and stakeholders, all multiple dimensions are openly explored and tailormade innovations and solutions emerge. We present Dutch cases of watermanagement and infrastructure design where smart structuration of process and coalition management delivered radically new and rich views on a place, resulting in high-quality places.

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Session 3

Friday, June 28th 10:30 to 12:30 (MB 9 EFG)

Retooling Governance for Improving Public Service Delivery: Case Study of Right to Public Services Commission Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Dr. Saif Ullah Khalid (National Institute of Public Policy, National School of Public Policy)

Every progressive society endeavours to implement good governance for effective and efficient service delivery. In most developed countries, the system of checks and balances have developed into core of good governance, whereas the developing countries are continuing to confront dysfunctional governance systems such as rent seeking and malfeasance, inefficient allocation of resources and revenue generation, and weak public services delivery. As a result, the public trust on state for the delivery of quality services considered not only weak but also declining. Administratively the decision making in Pakistan involves multi-layered bureaucratic channels, and are more elite centric than public focus. The politicians and bureaucrats are typically inclined to show greater interests in rent-seeking than delivering services wanted by their citizen, which results in inefficiency and tarnish the public trust on government. Nevertheless, there are persistent efforts going on in the country at national and provincial levels, and recently Right to Services Act (2014) has been passed in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to introduce the culture of ‘Good Governance’ in public entities. The purpose of enactment of this law was to improve public service delivery by: providing time bound public services; making public servants/functionaries liable to penalty if fail in services delivery; and provision of compensation to citizen for not receiving services on time. This research aims to analyse that “to what extent public service delivery has improved in the province, after the enactment of Right to Services Act in the province of KPK? What lessons can be learned for improved governance?” A case study approach has been adopted in this research, comprising primarily on qualitative tools of interviews and focus group discussions. This study concludes Right to Public Services Act and Commission, is indeed a right step toward ensuring good governance and public service delivery in the province. However, this is in its embryonic stage, and it is too premature to call it as ‘best model’ for other provinces or at national level. Nevertheless, it has improved the service delivery in notified services and has put a check on public sector departments’ vis-à-vis its performances and accountability.

Physicians dissatisfaction with health reforms in Chile and the interpretation of their causes

Gustavo Rayo (Universidad de Talca)

The aim and approval of the second wave of reforms in the sphere of Chilean public action was to intervene in two particularly sensitive areas of sectoral state action, such as education and health. Thus, one of the sector reforms with the greatest impact at the beginning of the new millennium was the health reform, which established a system of explicit and enforceable guarantees in health and important institutional changes aimed at innovating in the health care model. The project of reform had to face the active resistance of the Medical Association and other unions of the sector, as well as the questioning of the emerging paradigm of some personalities of the Chilean scientific societies. My work hypothesis establishes that the opposition of the medical union to health reform, debated and finally approved as law in 2004, is explained by the fact that it was perceived as a "threat" that would contribute to reinforce those systemic tendencies that have been put in place. question the traditional deontology of the profession as well as certain essential attributes of medical practice as a liberal profession. After 13 years, the critical judgment of the medical establishment seems not to vary. Moreover, contrary to the perception of citizens in general and of the users of the system in particular, the judgment regarding the results of the reform is highly unsatisfactory for the medical body. However, it is possible to observe nuances in this critical judgment, closely related to the generational group of reference of the doctors consulted.

An experimental evaluation tool for the Public Innovation Lab of the Uruguayan government

Cristina Zurbriggen (Universidad de la Republica)

Lago Gonzalez (Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney)

In many parts of the world, governments are building new platforms and innovative experimental spaces to better respond to current complex problems. A multiplicity of experimental spaces -i.e., the laboratories more commonly known as ‘Labs’- have emerged to promote public innovation and social transformation (Bekkers et al 2011, Ansell and Torfing 2014, Agger et al 2014, Timeus and Gascó 2018, Tonurist et al. 2017, Puttick et al. 2014, Mulgan 2014, Bason 2010). Labs are conceived as ‘islands of experimentation’ (Tõnurist et al. 2017, 8) where creative methods are used ‘to change the way government operates’ (Bason 2014) involving ‘all stakeholders in the process’. In particular, public sector innovation Labs use experiment-oriented approaches to policy and service design to address the systemic nature of policy and social challenges (Fuller and Lochard 2016, Ansell and Bartenberger, 2017, McGann, Blomkamp, and Lewis 2018, Kimbell 2016).

Although involving citizens and other end users in collectively framing problems and ideating solutions may be an important normative ideal, there is little evidence that demonstrates whether this produces better policies and public service innovations (Voorberg et al. 2015, 1341). Therefore, the LAB required a different approach to evaluation rather than using the instrumental model that assumes change can be planned based on rational problem-solving procedures.

In this paper, we describe the process that led to the development of an experimental evaluation tool for public innovation as part of an action-research process in a laboratory within the Uruguayan Government. The pilot prototype, the ‘Roadmap’ as we named it, seeks to provide a timely and purposeful means to learn from the co-creation processes and be accountable to public authorities and society. To build this tool we draw primarily from the guides and principles of developmental evaluation (Westley, Patton and Zimmerman, 2006, Patton 2010, 2011), organizational learning (Argyris and Schön 1978; Stringer 2007), and reflexive monitoring (Arkesteijn et al. 2015, Van Mierlo et al. 2010 2011), social innovation evaluation (Antadze and Westley 2012) and systemic evaluation of learning (Midgley et al. 2002, Miyaguchi and Uitto 2017).The Roadmap, proposed and validated, highlights the importance of the learning process instead of focusing on output. Although for a long time the evaluations of result and learning were considered as antagonistic, recently a multiplicity of approaches have been developed that emphasise a systemic perspective in the assessment of learning that aims to analyse complex situations, involving non-linear processes of change with feedback loops and intertwined influence factors (Cabrera et al. 2008; Kurtz and Snowden 2003, Rogers 2008, Williams and Imam 2007).

This paper is structured in the following way: the first section introduces the case background, explaining the challenges of evaluation in public innovation and refers to key relevant literature on the topic. The second section presents the action-research process that led to the development of the Roadmap as an evaluation tool suitable to the specificities of the LAB Lastly, there is a discussion of the lessons learned to evaluation an experimental space in public sphere.