# P07 / Transformative policy research, policy-making, policy analysis and policy evaluation

**Topic :** OTHER

**Chair :** Christian Hui (Toronto Metropolitan University (Canada))

**Second Chair :** Ayesha Umme-Jihad (Toronto Metropolitan University)

**Third Chair :** Bryanna Hines (Ryerson Polytechnic University)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Unlike dominant policy approaches that are rooted in western neo-colonial and neo-liberal ideals, the transformative paradigm is principled on social justice and aims to create systemic and structural changes against oppressive systems and power structures in society.

Transformative policy research, policy-making and policy evaluation seek to advance epistemic and policy justice through reflexive praxis, the centering of the living experiences and needs of the target community, and the use of appropriate theories and methodologies.

As the world faces greater uncertainties and instability as a result of the global shocks from the COVID-19 pandemic, economic downturn, rising rates of inflation, global climate change, wars and humanitarian crises, a deepening of social polarization, and a rise in populism, the need for transformative policy is greater than ever.

This interdisciplinary policy panel focuses on the use of the transformative paradigm to support policy research, policy-making and policy evaluation. The objectives of this panel are:

-To showcase diverse examples of transformative policy in research, policy-making, policy analysis, and policy evaluation from across the world;
-To create a platform for scholarly researchers, policy practitioners, decision-makers, students and the public to engage in dialogue on transformative policy;
-To promote reciprocal knowledge exchange in innovations in transformative policy research, policy-making, policy analysis and policy monitoring and evaluation approaches;
-To provide networking opportunities for conference delegates interested in engaging in transformative policy.

The first two-hour panel will provide a space for policy scholars, researchers, policy practitioners, decision-makers, students and the public to learn about various theoretical, methodological, or empirical research related to transformative policy topics, as well as the authors behind such work.

The second two-hour panel will provide attendees reciprocal learning opportunities to:

1) engage in groups to engage in deeper discussions with presenters (45 minutes) and

2) on topical subjects relevant to transformative policies (45 minutes).

Each group discussion will close with a larger report back to promote knowledge exchange amongst participants.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

As an interdisciplinary panel, we would welcome submissions that exemplify policy approaches that are rooted within the transformative paradigm, and are principled on social justice with aims to create systemic and structural changes against dominant and oppressive systems and power structures in society.

Our panel would welcome submissions from the following:

For the first panel:

- Theoretical or conceptual frameworks on transformative policy research, policy-making or policy evaluation
- Methodological approaches to engaging in transformative policy research, policy praxis, or evaluation
- Normative or empirical research related to transformative policy-making, policy analysis, or policy

evaluation
- Indigenous, anti-colonial or decolonized approaches to transformative policy research, policy-making, policy analysis, or policy evaluation
- Transformative policy research in policy-making, policy analysis, or policy evaluations impacting historically oppressed communities (e.g. BIPOC, 2SLGBTIQ+, people living with (dis)abilities, migrants, etc.)
- Scholarly, research or creative project that have led to transformative change(s) within the policy sphere or broader community

For the second panel:

Proposals for group break-out discussion topics and reciprocal learning activities related to transformative policy research, policy-making, policy analysis or policy evaluation (person submitting the proposal should be willing to facilitate the proposed activities).

Submission proposals should be made in English and in 250 words or less.

All submissions should have titles of less than 150 characters.

Submissions for the first panel should have clear headings.

For theoretical or methodological abstracts, only four elements from the following:

- Rationale
- Summary of Literature review
- Theoretical/Conceptual or Methodological Approach
- Case example of application
- Conclusion/Recommendation

For policy research, policy-analysis or policy evaluation abstracts, the format should be:

- Background/Problem
- Method
- Result
- Conclusion/Implication

For proposals for the second panel:

- Names of Facilitator(s)

- Background
- Proposed Activity
- Learning Objectives
- Materials required (laptop for presentation, flip chart, markers, notepads, pens)

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## Session 1Transformative paradigm - Theory and Practice

Tuesday, June 27th 15:50 to 17:50 (POD372)

**Mr**

Joseph Merrett (University of Guelph)

The landscape architecture profession is expected to possess the skillset and knowledge of the environment to mitigate Greenhouse Gas Emissions to minimize the devastating impacts from future climate events on human beings and the natural world. This research assesses the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects' (OALA) approach to integrating climate change in key decision-making policy documents and identifies strengths and gaps to addressing barriers to climate change. A review of grey and scholarly literature was undertaken of the governmental and professional landscape architectural climate-change policies to identify climate change action barriers. This research found that the OALA's policies on climate change may be inadequate in guiding landscape architecture practitioners' conduct towards addressing and overcoming identified barriers to climate change. This study focused on providing the OALA with insights and recommendations to afford a more influential voice in future climate change policy discussions.

**Eurocentricity of sustainability: Exploring understandings of climate change and sustainability discourses by diverse SME owners-managers through a Just Sustainabilities lens**

Saveena Patara

Despite being a global issue, sustainability is a construct that has largely been conceived through a Eurocentric lens, heavily influencing the construction, framing, and understanding of sustainability and sustainability issues. This often leads to ineffective responses, as the same mindset that created the problems is the same mindset used to solve them. Eurocentrism is an interpretation of the world through European/Western perspectives and values, which has been disseminated consciously and unconsciously by the West through science, religion, academia, and imperialism both as superior and as universal. Moreover, the Eurocentric approach to research encourages generalizing and theorizing phenomena whereby theories and knowledge created in one context are to be universally applied in all contexts. However, knowledge cannot be universalized as it is created by individuals influenced by their geography and worldviews, illuminating the importance of generating localized knowledge through a lens of plurality. Just Sustainabilities is a framework for pursuing sustainability through the inclusion of multiple and diverse perspectives with an emphasis on equity and justice.

Research on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and sustainability has primarily focused on environmentally proactive business owner-managers, predominately white and Western. Moreover, focus on the manufacturing industry has been limited despite being one of the highest polluters and GHG emitters. To address these gaps, this study applies a Just Sustainabilities lens to answer the question - how are sustainability and climate change discourses understood and perceived by diverse SME owners-managers? This paper presents the results of the interviews with diverse SME owner-managers in Ontario's manufacturing sector using discourse analysis. Preliminary findings indicate more nuanced understandings of sustainability, validating that the concept of sustainability is neither universal nor prescriptive, and thus, can offer valuable insights into policy implications and practice.

## Evaluating Education curriculum implementation and its transformative impact in Uganda and Kenya: A Comparative Analysis

Stephen Singo (University of Nairobi)

Phirista Nakato (University of Nairobi)

**Background:**

Uganda has been implementing a colonial education system until February 2020 when the Government of Uganda's National Curriculum Development Centre adjusted the curriculum under the 1973 act to suit the learners' skills training and advancement. The current pedagogy blends learners with critical thinking, creativity, collaboration or teamwork, communication, information literacy, ICT and flexibility. An evaluation was commissioned to assess implementation of the new curriculum. On its part, Kenya began implementation of a new education curriculum dubbed Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in 2017. The CBC has been hailed by its supporters as the best solution to an education system that for long has yearned for change. Its predecessor, the 8-4-4 curriculum was widely criticized for its focus on theoretical, examinations-based model of learning that only mass produced "unskilled" graduates.

**Method:**

The Evaluation adopted a cross sectional study design with qualitative techniques backed by desk review among key stakeholders at both national and subnational levels. For each case study, key informant interviews and focus group discussions were utilized in the evaluation as was review of reports from the ministries of education in both countries.

**Results:**

For Uganda, Results indicate that even though there is general policy acceptance as a means to solving Uganda's employment challenges, its implementation still meets considerable challenges including but not limited to the lack of sufficient resources to purchase books, equipment, and hire teachers; For Kenya, results show that while majority of citizens agree that CBC is a good curriculum, it has been hastily implemented with little or no public participation; it is expensive and discriminatory to low income earners. Numerous challenges have been identified that threaten to derail its success most notable the lack of trained teachers, lack of sufficient learning materials and the lack of enough infrastructure to implement it. In both countries, insufficient human and material resources represent a major threat to implementation of the newly introduced curricula.

In both countries, findings therefore question the convertibility of the new curricula with the existing structural realities that should have been addressed as part of the implementation process.

**Conclusion/Implication:** Government of Uganda needs to review its education policy in consultation with multiple stakeholders to understand key hindrances to implementation of the new curriculum. The Government of Kenya should undertake public participation to bring everyone on board in the implementation of the CBC, it should reduce the number of subjects or merge others to cut costs for parents, while allocating sufficient resources to train and hire enough teachers, and to establish the infrastructure demanded by the new CBC curriculum.

***Mr. Singo and Ms. Nassali are PhD Students in Public Policy at the University of Nairobi**

## Pathways to inclusive communities for youth with disabilities

Keiko Shikako (McGill University)

Roberta Cardoso (McGill University Health Center)

Paul Yoo (The Hospital for Sick Children)

Background and Objectives:

Youth with disabilities face systemic discrimination reflected in health and social policy and programming. Factors like accessibility to public spaces, education, health, work and play are crucial to promote full citzenship and consideration for persons with disabilities, in particular those facing intersectionality such as children and youth with disabilities. Participatory research done with communities, civil society, families of children with disabilities and youth with disabilities themselves can be transformative in informing, influencing, and shaping multiple levels of policies and services. This project reports on a series of research-policy-community partnerships addressing barriers and proposing solutions to create healthy

inclusive communities for children and youth with disabilities in Canada. We propose a discussion on participatory research approaches with multiple stakeholders, including vulnerable groups, community grassroots, and the use of adaptive and inclusive research methods to promote true participation that informs policy.

Approach:

Adopting a participatory approach we conducted a series of rapid realist reviews, policy and best practices environmental scans, multiple interested parties panels, and constructive dialogues to identify barriers and evidence-based solutions, capture communities' tacit knowledge, and inform different policy processes related to community participation for youth with disabilities.

Results:

In the first case, we identified 12 instruments and frameworks supporting the creation of healthy inclusive communities that led to the creation of a comprehensive instrument, the CHILD Community Health and Inclusion Index, which can be applied by local programs and municipal, provincial, and federal governments, and informed a Quebec-wide child-friendly cities strategy. In the second case, we developed in partnership with a school district, educators, and children with disabilities and their families, a child-informed and evidence-based instrument for building inclusive play spaces that has been used by 5 municipalities in Quebec. In the third case, we identified 173 best practice recommendations to promote accessibility in focus areas such as built Environment, equipment, programs/services, staff, and policies that informed the accessibility strategic plan of one of the largest urban centers in Canada. In the fourth case, we identified best practices for youth employment including programs that support a successful transition from secondary school to inclusive workplaces, and identified community-based indicators to promote inclusive healthy livelihoods for this population.

Discussion:

Transformative research partnerships with community organizations, persons with lived experiences, and decision-makers at various levels can inform the creation of evidence-informed tools and recommendations for policy and programs that can lead to healthier inclusive communities. Evaluation of implementation is granted and should consider the level of engagement of different interested parties, the power and representation in these engagement processes, and the extent to which knowledge from different sources is equally considered through the processes.

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## Session 2Session 2: Transformation as a Response to Government Action and Inaction, and Policy Transformations Beyond Current Structures

Wednesday, June 28th 08:00 to 10:00 (POD372)

### The political activities of charitable organizations: Impacts of policy and implications for transformative practice

Ann De Shalit (Trent University)

Michael Orsini (University of Ottawa)

Rachel Laforest (School of Policy Studies, Queen's University)

In this presentation we draw on textual and interview (n=28) data to examine approaches and barriers to advocacy by charitable organizations in Ontario. Canada's registered charities have a long history of advocating for social justice. Advocacy was encouraged by the federal government until 1978, when a policy document banned political activities. With the 1985 Income Tax Act, charities became limited to using a maximum of 10 per cent of their resources on political activities. The lack of clarity on what constituted political activities led many charities to reduce their advocacy work. In Ontario, austerity measures under Mike Harris in the 1990s also acted to pump the breaks on political advocacy and structurally-oriented initiatives by charities. An already strained relationship was further eroded in 2012 when Stephen Harper invested $13 million in a political audit program. Then, the climate changed again when the 10 per cent rule of the Income Tax Act was dropped in 2018, enabling charities to pursue political activities with no predefined limit.

We set out to learn about how charities were navigating federal and other guidelines and practices around political activities. We consulted 28 representatives from charities working in fields such as health, housing, substance use, immigration, family services, and gendered violence, amongst others. Charities varied in size of employees, and most operated locally, with a select few operating internationally. Empirical interview data and grey literature analysis were guided by Adele Clarke's (2005) situational analysis methodology, holding 'the situation' as the unit of analysis while seeking to identify the particular elements and relationalities that constitute it and change it at different points in time and space.

We found that charities engaged in two types of advocacy work: at the micro-level, under their organizational name, and at the broader meso-level, under the guise of collaborative networks and umbrella groups. Advocacy was conducted through a combination of direct, systemic, collaborative, and individual-level approaches. We also found that charities' efforts were not impeded so much by the federal limitations on charities; rather, the provincial political regime played a much larger role in fostering enduring hesitancy and fear, undermining organizational structure and capacity because of funding mechanisms.

Examining these facets of charitable advocacy opens us up to the diverse governmental and non-governmental elements shaping the advocacy situation so that we may know how and where to intervene to increase the impact of advocacy. It also makes space for consideration of how charities can more meaningfully achieve democratic and social justice aims while supporting grassroots and community-centred efforts that are already underway. In light of these insights, it is clear that charities will need to amplify their democratic role by recommitting to transformative pursuits that centre marginalized communities, offering immediate services and mutual aid while tackling entrenched systems of economic, social, and political exclusion.

## Power, politics and ideology: Analyzing the construction of the Muslim terrorist in the policy process

Sanaa Ali-Mohammed (Toronto Metropolitan University)

The War on Terror has seen national security agencies frame the threat of terrorism and radicalization in Canada as emanating mainly from Muslims and Islam (Monaghan & Molnar, 2016). Reinforced by media discourse, this framing has informed the development of national security policies and practices. This contributes to the racialization of Muslims and their exclusion across Canadian institutions (Silva, 2018; Akbar, 2015; Abu-Bakare, 2022). Yet as critical policy scholars suggest, the problematization of certain populations is indicative of policy actors' contexts, ideology and values (Stone, 1989; Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016; Scheider & Ingram, 1993). This paper aims to promote systemic and structural change by highlighting how Canadian national security policies and practices are informed by exclusionary and oppressive discourses and knowledge. We analyze post-9/11 security policies in Canada drawing upon theorizing by W.E.B Dubois (1925) and Abu-Bakare (2022), among others. Following Kronick & Rousseau (2014) and Van der Valk (2003), who explore the construction of racialized immigrant groups in parliamentary discourse, we apply critical discourse analysis to proceedings of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security (since its inception). This analysis allows us to uncover policy actors' contexts, power and ideology (Fairclough, 2013), illustrating how underlying politics produce radicalization, Muslimness, and Islam as interconnected policy problems to be addressed through Canada's national security infrastructure. By revealing oppressive and exclusionary discourses, systems and structures, this empirical study will highlight key areas of focus for transformative policy change. In this way, the study adds to the critical policy and security studies literature, theorizing the politics of knowledge production in the national security policymaking process.

## The role of the Pan-South African language Board in the implementation of the Use of Official Languages Act

Adrino Mazenda (University of Pretoria)

Abstract

Objectives

The paper examines the implementation of the "Use of Official Languages Act" (UOLA) to encourage the utilisation of South Africa's eleven official languages in South Africa's government departments. The paper also assesses the Pan South African Language Board's (PanSALB) position in monitoring the implementation of UOLA's.

Methods

A qualitative case study research design was adopted, followed by a systematic literature and thematic synthesis of documents and reports from a keyword descriptor search.

Findings

The study revealed a somewhat lethargic approach towards implementing the UOLA due to a lack of political will and, inter alia, governance, institutional, and resource limitations. The study further revealed that PanSALB faces challenges in monitoring the implementation of UOLA. The identified challenges include weakened synergies between the non-functional organisational structures; lack of staff capacitation; budgetary constraints; and, more importantly, a lack of awareness of PanSALB language programmes. The study recommends that the state support its commitments to promote and utilise official languages and ensure that departments adhere to the stipulations of the 1996 Constitution and the UOLA. Furthermore, PanSALB is urged to organise awareness seminars which would have long-term advantages of a more diverse linguistic system for the departments and the persons they represent.

Contribution

This study was motivated by the continued marginalisation, underdevelopment and underutilisation of indigenous languages in government business. This has led to growing concerns about the UOLA and related public policy commitments towards promoting inclusive linguistic diversity to counter language monolingualism.

### (Virtual) Agoras of Action Research for Territorial Development as informal dialogue spaces to transform public policymaking: a case on economic development policy process.

Eva Sánchez-Cambra (Orkestra-Basque Institute of Competitiveness)

Naia Begiristain (Orkestra, Basque Institute of Competitiveness)

Policy literature proposes different spaces for public policymaking. One of them is action research agoras, which are formal and informal spaces for transformative dialogue. Our research questions are: Which is the role of agoras to transform public policymaking? What mechanisms are needed for informal and formal spaces to promote transformations in local public policymaking?

Social researchers within agoras focus on the analysis of formal spaces (WHO, 2015). Nonetheless, informal spaces have transformative power as well. By informal spaces we mean any extended dialogue beyond the formal agora: a corridor conversation, a phone call, or a meeting among a selected group of agora members. We delve into the action research agora, to explore the informal features of a space for social and technological innovation through transformative policymaking.

The Laboratory for Territorial Development (LTD) is an agora in progress since 2009. Orkestra-Basque Institute of Competitiveness facilitates the agora in collaboration with the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa and Local Development Agencies. The Laboratory for Territorial Development aims to promote collaborative governance using Action Research for Territorial Development (ARTD) (Karlsen and Larrea, 2015). ARTD's cogeneration model characterizes a physical arena driving collaborative transformation in public policymaking. The main outcomes to date have been confidence-based bonds between Local Development Agencies and the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa; and an agreement guiding the relationship between both actors. The agreement shapes the co-creation of regional public policies for local economic development.

We use thick description (Denzin, 2001) to dig into the last year and a half of the LTD process. Throughout that period of time, the policymaking process was in a halt until informal spaces started to make slow but steady moves towards action. The case is relevant to illustrate how transformative power does not only belong to formal spaces, and that facilitative actors can play a crucial role in bridging transformative forces from informal to formal spaces. This bridging enables forward moves towards transformation.

### (Virtual) Transformative Indigenous Justice Policy: Urban Kinship-Visiting Approach

Anna Corrigal Flaminio (Toronto Metropolitan University)

After more than 20 years, R. v. Gladue is not being properly implemented, or not implemented at all within the courts. We see the gap between policy and practice. Indigenous youth continue to be jailed and over-criminalized, without proper Gladue consideration. My research focuses on leaders in the field of Indigenous justice, including experts working at Aboriginal Legal Services in Toronto, Ontario.

The research shares site visits to the city of Toronto, Ontario to learn more about what is working and how we can bring that knowledge back to other cities within Canadian provinces. My case study include legal experts in the Toronto legal community, including those working with Aboriginal Legal Services and the former Aboriginal Youth Court.

The questions remain: how do we ensure policy supports the availability of both the workers required, including Gladue Writers/Aftercare Workers, and the proper funding commitments for community-based Indigenous restorative justice programs?

My research advocates for a viable urban Indigenous "kinship-visiting" approach that supports criminalized Indigenous folks to have access to cultural healing.