P01 / Perceptions on Redistributive Policies, Justice and Inequalities

Topic : INEQUALITIES AND PUBLIC POLICY

Chair : Carolina Raquel Justo (Federal University of São Carlos - UFSCar (universidade Federal de São Carlos))

Second Chair : Camila De Mario (Universidade Candido Mendes)

Third Chair : Carla Tomazini (University of Warwick)

Fourth Chair : Osmany Porto de Oliveira (Universidade Federal de São Paulo)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

It is important to understand perceptions about inequalities and ways to combat them, since public policies are an important point of contact between the State, government and citizens, through which they inform and are informed about demands, preferences and political interests. Since the opinions expressed affect and are affected by the actions of the State, in a two-way street, they interfere in the social and substantive dimension of equality in democracy. And although voting is the main mechanism for representing interests and legitimizing the actions of the State in relation to the preferences of the majority of the population, the fact is that citizens do not choose policies, but rather politicians, and the decisions that they make, the measures and actions that they adopt, in terms of public policies, do not respond to preferences that could supposedly be homogeneous, of a majority, but to the first preference or, at most, sets of interests of larger minorities, as Dahl (1956) rightly warns in his argument in defense of the pluralist perspective. Hence the special interest in population perceptions in terms of their priorities in public policies, which cannot be inferred from electoral results. As Howlett (2000) adds, public opinion, whether generic or majority, cannot be considered the independent variable that defines the production of public policies (whether due to Dahl's justification above or due to the various political and institutional factors that affect decisions about their formulation and implementation); government actions, directly and intentionally or not, also influence public opinion, in a process that feeds back dialectically. Therefore, the interest in research on perceptions of social policies is justified, notably those aimed at combating hunger, poverty and inequality, to the extent that they have been affected, differently for different social groups, as they have expanded and contracted throughout history in different contexts.

CALL FOR PAPERS

What do social policies, combating hunger, poverty and inequality policies say about democracy? And what kind of support do they receive from citizens? What do the comparative analises say about the legitimacy bases for more egalitarian and redistributive policies implementation, following the social democratic lines of Welfare-State, in different countries? It matters to know the perceptions of different social groups about inequalities and ways to combat them, since public policies are an important point of contact between the State and citizens, through which both inform each other about demands, preferences and political interests. Since the expressed opinions affect and are affected by the State actions, they interfere with the social and substantive dimension of equality in democracy. Views and perceptions about poverty, justice, social inequalities, social assistance, conditional cash transfer policies and about their origins and justifications vary among social groups. Knowing them may help to understand how to improve democracy.

Comparative, qualitative and quantitative studies are welcome, including groups such as elites, street-level and high-ranking bureaucrats, policy beneficiaries and sociodemographic strata.
The analysis of public policies has benefited from cognitive approaches and the sociology of public action inspired by France, from which the notion of “State in Action” comes. Emphasizing the role of ideas, values, references, beliefs, knowledge and worldviews - and of action - such approaches dialogue with the theory of Political Culture, an approach that has been little explored. The panel aims to contribute to this debate. Papers may be concerned on: a) perspectives such as bureaucratic cultures, epistemic communities, advocacy coalitions, networks, the three “i”s (ideas, interests and institutions), historical and discursive neoinstitutionalism; b) objects such as councils, civil society, participatory, sectoral, intersectoral and intersectional policies; c) analyses of change, diffusion, implementation, the role of institutions, actors, social movements, political parties, bureaucracies at different levels; d) normative themes such as democracy,

citizenship, justice and political projects. Interdisciplinary in nature, the panel encompasses quantitative and empirical-qualitative methodologies: analysis of surveys and indicators, interviews, case and comparative studies, ethnographic studies, instrumentation studies, etc.

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Session 1Bureaucrats' Roles and Perceptions about Justice and Inequalities and Their Effects on Redistributive Policies

Friday, July 4th 08:00 to 10:00 (C2)

Discussants

Carla Tomazini (University of Warwick)

Camila De Mario (Universidade Candido Mendes)

From Bureaucrats to Beneficiaries? Justice, Inequalities and Income Transfer Policies Perceptions in Brazil

Carolina Raquel Justo (Federal University of São Carlos - UFSCar (universidade Federal de São Carlos))

Health Equity and Distributive Justice: Views of high-level African policymakers

Michelle Amri (University of British Columbia)

Retrenchment and Resilience: A comparative study of Brazil’s PES programs

Tomás Borges (Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro)

Ana Paula Santos (Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

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Session 2

Friday, July 4th 10:15 to 12:15 (C2)

Discussants

Carolina Raquel Justo (Federal University of São Carlos - UFSCar (universidade Federal de São Carlos))

Camila De Mario (Universidade Candido Mendes)

Bridging the Gap: How Youth Behaviors Influence the Density of Youth Nonprofits in U.S. Counties

Vernise Estorcien (Indiana University Indianapolis)

Technological Change, Public Opinion, and Inequality: The Fourth Industrial Revolution in South Africa

Zama Mthombeni (University of Pretoria)

IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL POLICIES: CHALLENGING OR GENERATING POVERTY AND INEQUALITY IN COLOMBIA?

Cristian Rodríguez Olaya (Universidad Nacional de Colombia)