P07 / The Impact of Public Policy on Political Participation: Comparing Evidence from around the World

Topic : POLICY, POLITICS AND POLITICAL REGIME

Chair : Maureen Donaghy (Rutgers University)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

How does public policy shape the political participation of those most affected by its implementation? We know that policy can often have feedback effects through which individuals may be motivated to advocate for the continuation, modification, or cancellation of the policy based on its effect on their lives. But we have very little evidence from around the world about what kinds of policies tend to motivate or depress participation towards other claims and how individuals choose to get involved in various contexts. This panel seeks to bring together researchers from diverse parts of the world to foster a comparative discussion on the effects of public policies on politics to enhance our understanding of the factors that generate participation, particularly among those who are the direct targets or beneficiaries of policies.

The concept of policy feedback gained traction in the 1980's and 90's as part of the wave to situate policy making and politics within the framework of historical institutionalism (Pierson 1993; 1994; Skocpol 1992; Weir, Orloff and Skocpol 1988). This framework brought in the dimension of time and how policies reshape politics, and then in turn politics reshape policies (Béland and Schlager 2019; Mettler and SoRelle 2014). The question of how policies impact the politics of beneficiaries has then been explored by a number of scholars in the United States (for example, Soss and Schram 2007; Mettler 2002, 2005; Campbell 2002, 2003, 2012) who find that the direction of attitudes and participation is very much conditioned by the type of policy. More recently research has expanded in a comparative direction, though like the United States more work is needed to identify how different types of policies shape political participation across diverse contexts.

The genesis for this panel comes not only from this previous literature but from the chair's research on how social programs shape the empowerment of beneficiaries to make further claims of the state across the Global North and South. The direction of the effects of policy on political participation are particularly important for social policies meant to reduce inequalities, contribute to poverty alleviation, and rectify structural discrimination. We want to know whether social policies are achieving the outcomes they are meant to produce. In other recent research, scholars have asked whether conditional cash transfer programs engender political loyalty to those most responsible for implementing the policy and under what circumstances that loyalty endures.

In this panel we seek additional examples of research on political preferences as well as the range of behavior from active claims-making to greater alienation that may result from the implementation of diverse social policies, in particular. However, other types of policy also have political effects, such as those involving climate change, immigration, and economic development and these papers are also quite welcome. For example, how might development policies that aim to prevent flooding shape the politics of those most directly at risk? Empirical evidence is needed to understand the broad political effects of such policies and the aim of this panel is to bring scholars together to further this effort.

For this panel I hope to bring together scholars of various thematic, academic, methodological, and geographic orientations. The call for papers is open to anyone who would like to contribute to our knowledge of the feedback effects of public policy on individuals' political preferences and engagement. Both in-person and virtual participation are welcome. Papers may explore issues areas including, but not limited to: housing, conditional cash transfers, climate change, immigration, healthcare, education, transportation, and infrastructure. All papers should reflect evidence-based research.

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Session 1

Thursday, July 3rd 08:00 to 10:00 (B7)

(Virtual) The Impact of Policy on Politics: How Self-Managed Housing Programs Shape the Political Perspectives of Residents

Maureen Donaghy (Rutgers University)

The Kafala (sponsorship) System and Expatriate Political Engagement in Smart Cities: Policy Feedback Effects in Dubai and Kuwait

Azin Moalej (Toronto Metropolitan University)

SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE NGQUSHWA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY BASED ON ARNSTEIN'S LADDER OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: A CITIZEN'S PERSPECTIVE

Tyanai Masiya (University of Pretoria)

IMPI KUHLENGISA (Nelson Mandela University)

Stellah Lubinga (University of Pretoria)

(Virtual) How Policy Tools Shape Participation: The Role of Narrativity and Interactivity in China's Moral Bank Initiative

Jasper Pinquan Jiang (Renmin University of China)