P194 / Alcohol and Violence: The Policy Intersect

Topic : Equity, Gender, Inclusion and the Diversity in Public Policy

Chair : Kristen Smith (University of Melbourne)

Second Chair : Marcia Langton (University of Melbourne)

Third Chair : Andrea Clarke (University of Melbourne)

Fourth Chair : Helen Jordan (University of Melbourne)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Alcohol remains a major global public policy challenge. While alcohol consumption is widely embedded within social, cultural, and economic life, it is also associated with a substantial burden of preventable harm, including injury, chronic disease, violence, family and domestic violence, road trauma, community safety concerns, and broader social and economic costs. Governments across jurisdictions continue to grapple with questions regarding the effectiveness, legitimacy, and unintended consequences of different policy responses, including population-level regulation, place-based interventions, treatment and prevention initiatives, industry regulation, and community-led approaches.

The relationship between alcohol and violence represents a particularly important area of policy inquiry. Alcohol-related violence occurs across diverse settings, including licensed venues, public spaces, homes, and communities, and disproportionately affects some populations. Despite significant investment in policy reforms and prevention initiatives, considerable debate remains regarding the most effective mechanisms for reducing alcohol-related harm and violence, as well as the role of evidence in informing policy development and implementation.

This panel seeks to explore contemporary alcohol policy through the lens of violence prevention, community safety, family and domestic violence, Indigenous health and wellbeing, and social justice. It aims to bring together researchers working across public health, criminology, anthropology, sociology, law, social policy, Indigenous policy, and governance to examine how evidence is produced, mobilised, contested, and translated within alcohol policy environments.

The panel will provide an opportunity to examine a range of questions, including: What forms of evidence are most influential in alcohol policy development? How have different jurisdictions responded to alcohol-related violence, and with what outcomes? What role do local communities, Indigenous organisations, governments, health systems, and regulatory agencies play in shaping policy responses? How can policymakers balance public health objectives with considerations of equity, self-determination, economic interests, and individual freedoms?

Contributors may explore competing hypotheses regarding the drivers of alcohol-related violence and the relative effectiveness of different policy approaches. These may include hypotheses concerning the role of availability and pricing controls, cultural and social determinants of drinking, place-based regulatory interventions, prevention and early intervention initiatives, community-led governance models, and structural factors that contribute to patterns of violence and harm. Through comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives, the panel seeks to advance understanding of one of the most enduring and contested challenges in contemporary public policy.

CALL FOR PAPERS

This panel invites papers examining the relationship between alcohol policy and violence across local, national, and international contexts. We welcome contributions that analyse the development, implementation, evaluation, and governance of policies intended to prevent or reduce alcohol-related harm.

Papers may address a broad range of issues, including but not limited to:

· Alcohol-related violence in public, domestic, family, or community settings.

· Family and domestic violence prevention and the role of alcohol within broader policy responses.

· The effectiveness of alcohol control measures, including pricing policies, taxation, restrictions on

availability, outlet density controls, trading-hour restrictions, and advertising or marketing regulation.

· Indigenous approaches to alcohol governance, community-led policy development, and questions of justice, self-determination, and wellbeing.

· Comparative analyses of alcohol policy across countries, regions, or jurisdictions.

· The role of evidence, data, monitoring, and evaluation in policy development and decision-making.

· Industry influence, political economy, and policy contestation within alcohol regulation.

· Community safety, policing, and criminal justice responses to alcohol-related harm.

· Qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods, and interdisciplinary approaches to understanding alcohol policy and violence.

· Emerging methodological approaches, including participatory, community-based, and Indigenous research methods.

The panel particularly welcomes papers that critically examine the assumptions underpinning contemporary policy approaches and explore how different forms of knowledge shape policy outcomes. Contributions may be empirical, theoretical, comparative, methodological, or policy-focused.

Researchers from public health, criminology, anthropology, sociology, Indigenous studies, law, social policy, political science, governance, and related fields are encouraged to submit proposals. The panel aims to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and international comparison, bringing together diverse perspectives on a policy issue of continuing global significance.

The panel also welcomes papers examining emerging challenges and future directions in alcohol and violence policy, including the use of linked administrative data, place-based approaches, Indigenous-led policy development, digital health interventions, regulatory innovation, and cross-sector collaboration. Contributions that consider the translation of research into policy and practice, or that reflect on methodological and ethical challenges in alcohol and violence research, are particularly encouraged.