W07 / Bringing policy actors back in. Relevance and prospects of actor-centered approaches in policy studies

Topic : Policy Process , Policy & Politics, Policymaking, Policy implentation

Chair : Jose Luis Mendez (El Colegio de México)

Second Chair : Patrick Hassenteufel (Université Paris-Saclay)

CALL FOR PAPERS

The comparison of dominant theories of the policy process (Sabatier/Weible 2017) shows that they mainly focus on the systemic level of analysis. Even if they take into account individual actors (for instance policy entrepreneurs in the multiple stream framework or policy brokers in the advocacy coalition approach) or collective agents (for instance interest groups and administrations in the punctuated equilibrium theory), they don't directly address two main issues this workshop would aim to tackle. The first one is the role of policy actors in the policy processes as compared to other factors, for instance institutions or junctures. In this regard, the workshop would address some questions rather neglected in the policy field, such as: What is the role of actors in the various theories of the policy process? What is the specific relevance of policy actors in policy-making? What are we referring to when focusing on actors, i.e. ideas, interests, strategies, resources or capacities? To what extent does their role depend on specific contexts? What should be considered as an actor: individuals, networks, groups? What is their relationship with stability and change? The second issue is the methodology for the analysis of policy actors, as the methodologies proposed by the main theories of the policy process do not aim directly at the analysis of agents: for instance the coding of hearings (advocacy coalition framework), of discourses (policy narrative approach) or of the content of policy agendas (punctuated equilibrium framework). A key question in this regard is therefore: What methodologies help to identify, characterize and understand the role of actors in the policy process?

The workshop will be organized around three topics:

1. Actors in approaches of the policy process. In this session we are interested in papers discussing the role assigned to actors in dominant theories of the policy process: neo-institutionalism, advocacy coalition framework, policy narratives, multiple stream framework, constructivism, punctuated equilibrium framework, etc., and/or proposing new frameworks based on policy actors.
2. Characteristics and role of actors in the policy process. For this more empirical session we are looking for contributions comparing different policy fields and taking into account the multi-level dimensions of the policy process and focused on the empirical study of the role of specific kind of actors in the policy actors: individual actors (policy brokers, policy entrepreneurs, political leaders, etc.) and/or collective actors (organized and institutionalized or more loosely structured around shared ideas, discourses and/or informal interpersonal links) in relation to the following questions: Are these actors involved in the whole policy process or only part of it? How is it possible to explain the role of these actors in the policy process? Are these actors favoring or limiting policy change? How far can policy actors be considered as an explaining factor of the policy process (or part of it)?
3. Methods for the analysis of policy actors. For this session we are interested in papers presenting and discussing the methods allowing to characterize and assess of the role of specific actors in the policy process.

ABSTRACT

The comparison of dominant theories of the policy process (Sabatier/Weible 2015) shows that they mainly focus on the systemic level of analysis. Even if they take into account individual actors (for instance policy entrepreneurs in the multiple stream framework or policy brokers in the advocacy coalition approach) or collective agents (for instance interest groups and administrations in the punctuated equilibrium theory), they don't directly address two main issues this workshop will aim to tackle. The first one is the role of policy actors in the policy processes as compared to other factors, for instance institutions or junctures. In this regard, the workshop would address some questions rather neglected in the policy field, such as: What is the relevance of actors in the policy process? What are we referring to when focusing on agents, i.e. ideas, interests, strategies, resources or capacities? To what extent does their role depend on specific contexts? What should be considered as an actor: individuals, networks, groups? What is their relationship with stability and change? The second issue is the methodology for the analysis of policy actors, as the

methodologies proposed by the main theories of the policy process do not aim directly at the analysis of agents: for instance the coding of hearings (advocacy coalition framework), of discourses (policy narrative approach) or of the content of policy agendas (punctuated equilibrium framework). A key question in this regard is therefore: What methodologies help to identify, characterize and understand the role of actors in the policy process? According to the previous discussion, the workshop will be organized around three topics, corresponding to the three workshop´s sessions: 1) The role of actors in approaches of the policy process. 2) Characteristics and role of agents in the policy process. And 3) Methods for the analysis of policy actors.

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Session 1Introduction: Actors in Policy Theories

Tuesday, June 26th 10:15 to 12:15 (Posvar Hall - 3301)

Discussants

Nils Bandelow (Technische Universität Carolo-Wilhelmina Braunschweig)

The Relevance of Actor-Centred Approaches to Effective Policy Formulation and Implementation

Chikowore Andrew Itai (ActionAid)

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Session 2Understanding the role of actors in the policy process

Tuesday, June 26th 13:45 to 17:00 (Posvar Hall - 3301)

Discussants

Jose Luis Mendez (El Colegio de México)

Understanding the Role of Advocacy Coalitions in Canada's Immigration Detention Policy

Vanessa C. Wachuku (Ryerson University)

Technology-related actors and policy design choices: the case of the Swiss renewable energy feed-in tariff

Leonore Haelg (ETH Zurich)

Tobias Schmidt (ETH Zurich)

Sebastian Sewerin (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich)

The Political Rigging Framework: A Research Agenda for Analyzing Who Influences Policy Decisions in the 21st Century, and How

Janine Wedel (George Mason University)

Dana Dolan (George Mason University, Schar School of Policy and Government)

Hussain Nazia (Center for Policy Research, United Nations University)

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Session 3Methodological issues

Wednesday, June 27th 09:00 to 12:15 (Posvar Hall - 3301)

Discussants

David Aubin (Université Catholique de Louvain)

Whom can you trust? Comparing policy positions from surveys or content analysis

Marlene Kammerer (Institute for Political Science)

Karin Ingold (University of Bern)

Frédéric Varone (University of Geneva)

Analyzing Programmatic actors: methodological challenges for the understanding of policy change

Patrick Hassenteufel (Université Paris-Saclay)

William Genieys (Sciencespo Paris- CEE - CNRS)

Media Representations of American Health Reforms: The Role of Policy Actors in Transmitting Policy Narratives in the Massachusetts and Utah Cases (2002-2011)

Brent Epperson (University of Alberta)

Psychological Perspectives on Individual Actors in the Policy Process

Johanna Hornung (University of Lausanne)

Nils Bandelow (Technische Universität Carolo-Wilhelmina Braunschweig)

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Session 4The role of policy elites

Wednesday, June 27th 13:45 to 17:00 (Posvar Hall - 3301)

Discussants

Renee Johnson (Rhodes College)

Explaining the role of civil servants in the policy process: Policy advice and learning dynamics

David Aubin (Université Catholique de Louvain)

Lev Lhommeau (Université catholique de Louvain)

Pierre Squevin (University of Oslo)

Policy Elites and Programmatic Actors : The Role of Custodians of State Policies in Health Care Policy change in the United States since the 1970s

William Genieys (Sciencespo Paris- CEE - CNRS)

Lawrence Brown (Columbia University in the city of New York)

The Programmatic Action Framework (PAF)

Nils Bandelow (Technische Universität Carolo-Wilhelmina Braunschweig)

Marc Smyrl (Université de Montpellier)

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Session 5The role of specific types of actors

Thursday, June 28th 09:00 to 12:15 (Posvar Hall - 3301)

Discussants

Patrick Hassenteufel (Université Paris-Saclay)

Intermediary actors in increasingly interdependent and complex policy processes

Ulrike Zeigermann (Universtity of Würzburg, Department for Political Science and Sociology)

Policy Entrepreneurs and Instrument Constituencies in EU Innovation Policy

Ceren Ark Yildirim (Istanbul University)

Marc Smyrl (Université de Montpellier)

Strategic Action and Policy Outcomes. The cases of Felipe Calderon and Enrique Peña in Mexico and Fernando Collor and Fernando Cardoso in Brazil

Jose Luis Mendez (El Colegio de México)

The Role of the President in the Development of U.S. Science and Technology Policy

Renee Johnson (Rhodes College)

Erin Dolgoy (Rhodes College)

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Session 6General discussion and next-steps planning

Thursday, June 28th 13:45 to 16:00 (Posvar Hall - 3301)

General discussion and next-steps planning

Jose Luis Mendez (El Colegio de México)

Patrick Hassenteufel (Université Paris-Saclay)