W03 / Analyzing and conceptualizing international public policies: towards a sociology of the policy process approach

Topic : Policy Process, Policy Making

Chair : Patrick Hassenteufel (Université Paris-Saclay)

Second Chair : Nina SAHRAOUI

CALL FOR PAPERS

The making of public policy in a context of globalization is subject to circulations, transfers and adaptations according to dominant accounts of 'best practices'. While the intensification of these flows is widely acknowledged and studies of global public policies have been developed, relatively less attention is being paid to the analysis and conceptualization of international public policy-making. This is why this workshop is focused on the analysis of international public policies, combining public policy and international relations perspectives. Even if the difference and boundaries with global public policies is not always clear and the overlaps are important, the notion of international public policy is more specifically focused on the role of international (intergovernmental) organizations in the tackling of policy issues, historically developed at local and national levels. Our specific objective is to foreground sociological analyses of international policy-making and policy processes (notably issue framing, agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making and implementation).

In international relations perspectives the role of international organizations has been notably analyzed with the notion of “international regimes” (Krasner, 1983), which has been adapted to public policies issues (especially international trade) and not only to issues linked to war and peace. The starting point of this workshop is the analysis of the shaping and development of international public policy regimes combining the four dimensions of a public policy (Hassenteufel, 2021):

-a dominant orientation, based on the framing of the key policy issues, in relation with the use of knowledge and values;

-international and transnational actors structured around these issues: international organizations, NGOs, think tanks, multinational companies, foundations, epistemic communities…;

-institutionalized rules of interactions between international, national and transnational policy actors;

-policy instruments: not only regulatory also financial, fiscal, economic…

In this workshop we want to discuss methodological and conceptual issues related to international public policy regimes with papers analyzing various policy fields such as health, migrations, environment, food and agriculture, trade, energy, economic development, education, social policies, financial and monetary regulation…

From a methodological point of view, the focus is on the sociological analysis of these international and transnational policy actors at the different stages of international public policy processes. We welcome papers raising methodological issues such as:

-the internal analysis of international organizations and of transnational actors with qualitative methods (ethnography, observation…), used in public administration and international relations (Ege, Bauer, 2013), also in sociology of mobilization and sociology of interest groups perspectives;

-the interactions between the different policy actors acting in international arenas (also between international organizations which often compete on the same policy issues, between states with different political and geopolitical orientations, between transnational actors who are often structured in coalitions…) by using qualitative (interviews, observation…) and quantitative methods (especially network analysis);

-the empirical analysis of the implementation of international policy instruments at national and local levels.

Overall, the aim of this workshop is to go a step further in the conceptualization of the development of international public policies by combining different analytical perspectives analyzing sociologically international relations and policy processes in different policy fields.

ABSTRACT

This workshop is focused on the analysis of international public policies, combining public policy and international relations perspectives. Even if the difference and boundaries with global public policies is not always clear and the overlaps are important, the notion of international public policy is more specifically focused on the role of international (intergovernmental) organizations in the tackling of policy issues, historically developed at local and national levels. Our specific objective is to foreground sociological analyses of international policy-making and policy processes (notably issue framing, agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making and implementation).

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W03 / Analyzing and conceptualizing international public policies: towards a sociology of the policy process approach

Chair : Patrick Hassenteufel (Université Paris-Saclay)

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Session 1Introduction

Wednesday, June 26th 10:15 to 12:00 (AULA 18)

Discussants

Luis Rivera Velez (Center for Mexican and Central American Studies CEMCA)

sofia wickberg (University of Amsterdam)

Analyzing International Public Policies in a sociological policy process perspective

Patrick Hassenteufel (Université Paris-Saclay)

Nina SAHRAOUI

Since the 1990s the attention of public policy scholars has increasingly shifted from the national (and European) level to the international and global levels of public policy (Knill and Tosun, 2013: 223). With the second globalization, associated to growing economic and technological interdependency between states, so as to the acceleration of international transport and communication possibilities, public policies are more and more analyzed beyond the Nation State.

This shift of the attention from national (and local) levels to supranational levels has triggered two evolutions in the literature. The first one is the development of “global policies” studies, as the creation of journals dedicated to these new policy levels illustrates (Global Policy, Global Social Policy…). Global public policies can be defined as: “the processes of transnational cooperation and conflict, involving both state and non-state (domestic and international) agents, by which policies are produced to problems related to the global scale” (Porto de Oliveira, 2022: 63). The focus is on the role of transnational actors and interactions in the global circulation of policy ideas and policy instruments. It encompasses different supranational dimensions of a public policy.

The making of public policy in a context of globalization is subject to circulations, transfers and adaptations according to dominant accounts of 'best practices'. While the intensification of these flows is widely acknowledged and public policy and administration studies have developed sound comparative approaches, relatively less attention is being paid to the analysis and conceptualization of international public policy-making by states but also international public administrations and their bureaucracies, transnational corporations and their forms of transnational mobilization, as well as transnational NGOs and citizen grassroots organizations and their transnational reach.

This is why this paper is focused on the second perspective: the analysis of international public policies, combining public policy and international relations perspectives. Even if the difference and boundaries with global public policies is not always clear and the overlaps are important, the notion of international public policy is more specifically focused on the role of international (intergovernmental) organizations in the tackling of policy issues historically developed at local and national levels. Our specific objective is to foreground sociological analyses of international policy-making and policy processes (notably issue framing, agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making and implementation).

Beyond Borders: Multilateral diplomacy shaping the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration

Itziri Gonzalez Barcenas (Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS))

Against the backdrop of unprecedented levels of displacement due to ongoing conflicts, climate change, and persecution, the need for a comprehensive approach to migration became clear. The 2018 United Nations Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (hereafter 'The Compact') is a ground breaking intergovernmental agreement aimed at addressing the multifaceted and interconnected challenges posed by global migration. This paper will delve into the complex negotiation process of The Compact, while also highlighting its unique challenges and lessons learned for future policies. In terms of methodology, I will be looking at political discourse (e.g. social media, interviews, press releases), national migration policies, academic articles, and interviewing several migration experts (i.e. academics/researchers at universities, NGOs, and United Nations specialized agencies) to shed light on both the conceptualization of this international agreement and the implementation challenges given its non-compulsory nature. The paper will pay particular attention to the role of international and transnational actors, relating it directly to the workshop's stated objectives. The Compact came as a result of extensive negotiations and consultations of a diverse range of stakeholders including states, civil society, international organizations, and NGOs. A key consideration for The Compact was an understanding that international collaboration was needed to properly address the complexities around contemporary migration/mobility. The Compact, despite its shortcomings, reflects a new approach to migration that is more cooperative, transcending state borders. This paper will aim to explore the following research question: What were the key challenges and compromises faced by the different stakeholders (states, international organizations/NGOs, civil society, etc.) in formulating – and now implementing – the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration? In analyzing this negotiation process, we will be able to see how states navigated unbalanced power relations, conflicting national interests, and difficult compromises to achieve this agreement. Furthermore, balancing safe, orderly, and regular migration while ensuring that the rights of migrants are safeguarded proved to be challenging in light of conflicting interests. Despite this tension, the participation of advocacy groups and NGOs in the negotiation process meant that a human-rights based approach was at the forefront. Therefore, this paper will dive into the ways in which human rights principles have been upheld and where they fall short. In conclusion, this paper will offer an analysis of the making of the 2018 UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular. By examining the intricate dynamics of shaping The Compact, this paper contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexities around crafting international policies, particularly in the context of addressing global issues like migration. At this time, I prefer to present onsite. However, I am open to presenting online too.

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Session 2The role of Policy Communities

Wednesday, June 26th 14:00 to 17:15 (AULA 18)

Discussants

Ignacio Torres Justiniani (Universidad Virtual del Estado de Guanajuato)

Jason Camacho (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

(Virtual) Epistemic communities or communities of instruments? International food policies through the lens of expertise

Lise Cornilleau (Université Paris-Saclay)

Title: Epistemic communities or communities of instruments? International food policies through the lens of expertise

International food policies are structured around the global food security paradigm based on agricultural productivism and the defense of free trade (Fouilleux et al., 2017). This paradigm is the product of a "complex of regimes" dominated by international organizations in charge of trade, the latter having appropriated the food issue in the 1990s alongside the human rights regime, to the detriment of organizations in charge of undernourishment and malnutrition in place since the Second World War (Margulis, 2013). To what extent was this paradigm challenged by the price spike of 2007/2008, which coincided with the IPCC experts' questioning of the agricultural sector's responsibility for climate change? The article examines how this food and climate emergency was used by various stakeholders to form an alternative "epistemic community" challenging the established one. Following the methods classically associated with this concept (Haas, 1992; Hopkins, 1992), the research first focused on the transformation of knowledge production through an ethnographic and scientometric study. This study was complemented by a sociology of the main instruments of global food governance (statistics, models, expert reports, standards) aimed at relating the instruments defended by the alternative community to those of the established community. The instrumental approach - rather than the sole tracking of experts - is defended here because it overcomes several of the limitations of the epistemic community concept. Instruments, as tools of proof as much as of government, make it possible to evacuate the mechanical vision of influence on decision-making at work in the concept of epistemic community (Cross, 2013). This focus also makes it possible to go beyond P. Haas's reified vision of knowledge at work, to defend instead an STS perspective that considers the latter to be co-produced by political and scientific actors (Demortain, 2017; Haas, 2017): in so doing, it offers a more dynamic vision of change over the course of instruments. The analysis shows that an alternative community is being structured in the context of the food and climate crisis, but that it is weakly instrumented, which ultimately explains its low impact on decision-making.

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I consider presenting online.

(Virtual) Conceptualizing transnational policy communities: the case of the anti-corruption community and its role in defining corruption

sofia wickberg (University of Amsterdam)

The objective of this paper is to further conceptualise transnational policy communities, using the empirical case of the anti-corruption community. Diane Stone coined the term ‘transnational policy community’ (TPC), understood as “a cohesive and bounded groups of professionals from different countries who diffuse shared ideas and practices globally”.[1] Recent research on the transnationalisation of policy suggest that actors situated between sectors and levels of governance, operating at the interaction of states, IOs, public and private sectors, and circulating between them are becoming increasingly common and thus relevant for the study of public policymaking.[2] This makes it all the more important to further develop the concept of transnational policy community, to understand their role in the development of international public policy. Using documentary analysis, interviews with stakeholders and network analysis, this paper applies the concept to the field of international anti-corruption policy, studying the main actors and organisations involved in shaping anti-corruption policy at the international level as well as their interactions, to understand how they facilitate the spread of anti-corruption “best practices”. More than the emergence of isolated international policy brokers, the paper argue that it is their collaboration and exchanges that allowed the spread of anti-corruption instruments, for it created a form of anti-corruption paradigm and shaped the cognitive environment for international and national policy-making. It shows that international organisations and (transnational) actors involved in anti-corruption work perceive themselves as sharing a common understanding of corruption and as working together towards the same goal. Through their collaboration, practices and discourse, they built a policy community that divides labour among members and goes beyond the traditional boundaries of policy-making to include non-state actors operating at the transnational level. The existence of a transnational policy community composed of influential organisations with different mandates and memberships sharing core beliefs narrows down the conflictual space and makes international anti-corruption work largely paradigmatic. This community has progressively grown, through the circulation of actors, members’ efforts to reach out to new audiences and socialising them to a shared conception of corruption and anti-corruption work. In doing so, it even managed to integrate – and mollify – critical views. This has contributed to defuse outside criticism (from academia principally) by giving it a voice inside policy forums. The seeming unity of the policy community and the knowledge it produces contributes to legitimise the policy solutions it prescribed as consensually-agreed ‘good practices’. The selection of policy solutions to promote are however partly the result of unequal power distribution within the community and advocacy of policy pioneers who sought to convince others to emulate their model.

[1] STONE, Diane. Global Public Policy, Transnational Policy Communities, and Their Networks. Policy Studies Journal, Vol. 36, no 1, 2008, pp. 30-31.
[2] Hassenteufel, Patrick. Sociologie politique de l’action publique. 3e éd. [s.l.] : Armand Colin. 2021; STONE, Diane et Kim MOLONEY. The Oxford Handbook of Global Policy and Transnational Administration. Oxford University Press, 2019.

Vaccine Hesitancy: Polysemic ideas, global expertise and understanding responses to health crisis

Adam Hannah (University of Queensland)

Katie Attwell (University of Western Australia)

Health policy is increasingly informed by the ideas, strategic plans, advice and data emanating from global health institutions and organisations. In this paper, we focus on a recently influential concept in global health that has yet to garner close attention from public policy scholars, that of ‘vaccine hesitancy’. The ‘hesitancy’ concept has been used in technical and policy circles over the last decade to explain declines in vaccine uptake, with the World Health Organization declaring vaccine hesitancy one of its top ten threats to human health in 2019. We contribute to aims of the workshop by tracing the knowledge contests and institutional factors that shaped its emergence under the auspices of the WHO and subsequent dissemination to domestic policymakers. We draw on in-depth interviews with global vaccination experts and analysis of documents and publications from a WHO working group that developed the concept between 2011 and 2014.

In one sense, we describe a case of an expert group meeting the moment by delineating a concept that has found widespread usage not only among vaccine social scientists, but also political leaders, media and citizens, especially since COVID-19. At the same time, hesitancy has been controversial. Critics have accused governments of using the concept to unfairly blame vulnerable citizens for slower than expected vaccine uptake, and have raised concerns about the inappropriate use of coercive instruments such as mandates in response to uptake issues.

We argue that these tensions can be traced in part to the initial elaboration of the concept. The working group defined hesitancy as something of a ‘polysemic’ catch-all for a range of drivers of non-vaccination, including uncertainty about safety and access barriers. This was done at the behest of key members of the working group, who – seeing a broader shift in the focus of global vaccination policy towards attitudes and behaviours – wanted to ensure that attention on structural barriers to vaccination remained. The broad framing helped to enable agreement and likely contributed to the successful dissemination of the concept – working group members were able to generate evidence that hesitancy was a globally significant health challenge. However, by being tethered to a concept that is most easily understood as being focused on individuals and their choices, structural barriers to vaccination are in some ways left ‘hiding in plain sight’. The case therefore highlights the challenges expert groups face in framing authoritative advice for domestic policymakers, especially where evidence is piecemeal and problems highly complex.

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Session 3The role of International Organizations

Thursday, June 27th 09:00 to 12:15 (AULA 18)

Discussants

Lise Cornilleau (Université Paris-Saclay)

Adam Hannah (University of Western Australia)

Keeping the window of opportunity open to international global climate action: the UN Secretary-General as policy entrepreneur

Luis Rivera Velez (Center for Mexican and Central American Studies CEMCA)

Despite scholar and media portraits stating the UN secretary-general as one of the most vocal voices in global climate governance, his role remains understudied and understood as having little formal authority and no material power in global policymaking. What is the real capacity of the SG to influence global policymaking and keep a policy agenda active? Through the study of the climate agendas of the last two UN Secretary-generals, Ban Ki-moon and António Guterres, this paper shows that the SG is a global policy entrepreneur capable of creating and seize the opportunities for climate action.

By tracing the secretary-general's practices on a particular policy sector, and through observations and interviews, we show that the SG uses both, political and bureaucratic strategies at every moment of the global policymaking process, from problem framing to policy evaluation. As a traditional policy entrepreneur, the SG uses its moral authority and symbolic traditional position as a 'norm entrepreneur' to frame the problems and his preferred solutions and encourage agenda setting and decision-making in multilateral arenas. As an innovative policy entrepreneur, however, the SG concretizes a material power when he plays with time and space by multiplying venues for action and precipitating political engagement for policy implementation and conducting evaluations when other UN organs are unable or unwilling to act. Our study concludes that more than a 'guardian' of the UN commitments the SG has the ability to influence global policymaking by keeping the window of opportunity open and hence inducing policy change and innovation.

Our research combines the "multiple streams" framework with the study of leadership and power in international arenas. It fits the workshop's main focus by analysing the shaping and development of one international policy (climate change) through the study of one of the influential but not powerful actors in the global governance (the UN secretary-general).

Influence of international courts on global public policies

Ignacio Torres Justiniani (Universidad Virtual del Estado de Guanajuato)

The main goal of this work is to analyze the effect of judicial resolutions from international courts on local public policies. The judicial system, through its exclusive powers as an agent that guarantees (in Western democracies) constitutional supremacy, has the power to veto, confirm or modify public policies submitted for consideration; At the international level, international courts, such as the Inter-American Court, the European Court of Human Rights, among others, have the power to impose resolutions on States, which can represent paradigm shifts in terms of the definition and construction of the public policies in the countries involved. The question that guides this work is: How does the judicial power from the international

level affect public policies? To answer this question, a methodology has been developed based on an analysis matrix, that allows quantifying the effects of judicial resolutions and thus determining the degree of influence in each of the stages of the policy cycle. This research is directly related to the study of global public policies, based on research focused on international courts as determining actors in the field of global public policies.

The presentation of the research would be in person.

Programmatic ideas from international organizations adopted through policy diffusion in the design of the Human Development Bonus in Ecuador

Santiago Albuja (FLACSO Ecuador)

Cash transfer programs (CTPs) emerged in the mid-nineties and spread across Latin America and the Caribbean, subsequently expanding globally. This paper explores the influence of international organizations (IOs) programmatic ideas on the proliferation of CTPs, focusing on the case of the "Human Development Bonus" (BDH) in Ecuador, during 1998-2003. The hypothesis posited is that IOs' programmatic ideas regarding CTPs, framed as instruments to combat poverty, permeate the national landscape, as instruments for supporting the most poor and vulnerable families, through mechanisms of coercion, emulation, and learning. From a deductive approach and the perspective of critical realism, this research employs sociological neoinstitutionalism to analyze public policy networks, aiming to elucidate the diffusion mechanisms involved by identifying actors and their interrelations, and measuring the behaviors of policy networks and their members. Document analysis and semi-structured interviews were applied.

Three diffusion mechanisms are delineated. Firstly, indirect coercion for the adoption of cash transfers stemming from the dominant influence of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank (WB), as structural adjustment reforms advocated in the Washington Consensus led to the inception of the Solidarity Bonus (BS). Secondly, learning, whereby the BDH draws from instruments of other governments such as "Identification and Selection System of Potential Beneficiaries of Social Programs" in Chile and "Bolsa Escola" (BE) in Brazil, adapted locally to enhance targeting via the "Identification and Selection System of Beneficiaries of Social Programs", and to promote school attendance through conditional cash transfers known as the "School Scholarship", respectly. Thirdly, direct coercion, supported by the authoritative influence of the WB and the Inter-American Development Bank, which facilitated the transformation of the BS into the BDH by imposing educational and healthcare conditionalities as prerequisites for loan disbursement, following the examples set by programs such as "Oportunidades" in Mexico and BE in Brazil. Emulation was not identified due to the influence of national contexts and technical capabilities in program design.

Although, the origin of the BDH is endogenous, since it began as a fiscal policy instrument in response to the political and economic situation of that time, subsequently, it transformed into a social policy instrument. This research shows how programmatic ideas can coexist and evolve over time. While initially BDH was conceived under the programmatic idea of "compensation for the poorest families," ideas such as "targeting" and "school attendance" were later integrated to enhance transfer delivery and ensure the educational engagement of minors, ultimately converging into the broader programmatic idea of "protection and enhancement of human, physical, and social capital".

This paper fits with the workshop research questions by providing insights into the spread of CTPs and the influence of international organizations' programmatic ideas. By examining the diffusion of CTPs towards the BDH through the lens of sociological neoinstitutionalism, which views policy networks as institutions shaping the actions of participating actors, we were able to identify the involved diffusion mechanisms, evolving relationships among actors, and their programmatic ideas. Analyzing public policy networks enabled us to characterize the connections between actors and assess the behavior of the network and its members, thus identifying key actors and intermediaries.

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Session 4The role of Policy Transfer

Thursday, June 27th 14:00 to 17:15 (AULA 18)

Discussants

Santiago Albuja (FLACSO Ecuador)

Carlos Moreno-Jaimes (ITESO)

The change in Mexico's urban policy through the transfer of policies from UN-Habitat and its international agenda

Jason Camacho (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

Despite nearly 50 years since urban planning was institutionalized in Mexico, it has had limited effectiveness in guiding cities to evolve according to their urban development plans, leading to deficiencies and contradictions in the processes of growth and change in Mexican cities (Castro, 2018; Rébora, 2017). These changes can be observed, particularly during moments such as the creation of the first General Law of Human Settlements, its reform in 2016, and more recently, the reform to replace the term "adequate and decent housing" with "adequate housing."

These shifts in urban policy share a common factor: the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat I, II, and III) and the creation of international instruments and agendas that transfer ideas and knowledge to national and subnational levels in various countries (Paulsen-Espinoza, 2023; Stren, 2021). This has generated a reliance on 'urban solutionism' (Montero, 2018), driven by international organizations which influences spatial governance and planning in countries and cities of the Global South (Blanc, Cotella, & D?browski, 2023).

In the case of Mexico, the country stands out for promoting significant changes in urban policy in light of the activities of UN-Habitat, aligning with processes of policy transfer. This transfer is understood as a "process by which knowledge of certain policies, administrative arrangements, institutions, and ideas in a political environment (past or present) is used for the development, administrative arrangements, institutions, and ideas in another political environment" (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000, p. 5). This transfer can occur between international organizations, countries, regions, cities, states, etc.

In this regard, this presentation aims to analyze the role of UN-Habitat in the changes to Mexican urban policy, questioning the nature of the policy transfer UN-Habitat makes to Mexico. The hypothesis is that this transfer process is voluntary, following the characterization of Dolowitz & Marsh (2000:13), where the transfer is driven by the need or desire for international acceptance. To this end, a minimalist process tracing (Beach & Pedersen, 2019) will be conducted to analyze diachronically the creation of the first General Law of Human Settlements in Mexico (1976) with its last reform (2016), to understand the mechanism that drove such change and the type of devolution to which the coalitions of each moment aligned themselves.

The moment is ripe for Mental Health Diplomacy: A multi-case study of four countries' approach to the WHO's Mental Health Action Plan (2013-2030)

Anaami Pandit-Haji (CPI)

The WHO’s Mental Health Action Plan (MHAP) provides a strategic framework to advance mental health at global and regional levels. Failing to meet the original 2020 goals, the MHAP was extended to 2030, with revised objectives and targets. Whilst the global mental health movement has significantly gained traction, multiple challenges continue to hinder progress including weak political will, fragmented policy processes and health systems, and insufficient data and financing.

This study examines how four WHO member-countries (Canada, Guyana, Cuba and USA) have adopted the MHAP and explores their contributions to the global mental health targets. This research employs a mixed-method, multi-case study approach. Given the global scope of the WHO’s state membership, the regional focus for this study is narrowed down to the Americas, where the global burden of NCDs is the highest. Quantitative data is acquired via the WHO’s Mental Health Atlas 2020 country data reports and relevant national policy documents. Qualitative interviews are conducted with subject matter experts, scholars, WHO/PAHO and national health ministry officials. The Shiffman and Smith framework on generation of political priority for global health issues is utilized to organize and assess qualitative data.

Findings show that whilst Guyana and Canada have achieved targets ahead of the MHAP’s 2030 goal, Cuba and USA have thus far made minimal contributions. Lessons include the power of political cohesion in implementing mental health policies and initiatives, as demonstrated by Guyana’s whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, presenting a learning opportunity in multi-polar policy innovation and adaptation for varying contexts and nations.

Key reflections include; the need for the emerging field of mental health diplomacy as an innovative cross-sectoral tool to advance global mental health; the role of neuroaesthetics in building economies, societies and cities centered for well-being, and for improved circulation of knowledge between Global South-South and Global South-North.

Transforming the Middle East: Innovative Strategies for Youth Deradicalization, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Mohamad Dayyan Ayoubi (Celal Bayar University)

Ramila Hasanpour (Gazi University Ankara)

Farzaneh Esmaeiliaminlouei (Dokuz Eylül University)

Abstract:

This paper presents a comprehensive analysis of strategies to combat extremism among youth and enhance women's rights in the Middle East, with a focus on how educational and policy reforms, as well as international cooperation, can lead to a more stable and equitable region. In the context of recent progressive reforms in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, this study explores pathways towards peace and mutual acceptance.

The primary research question investigates effective strategies for reducing extremism among youth and strengthening the status of women in Middle Eastern societies. The paper utilizes a multi-methodological approach, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This includes an extensive review of existing literature, expert interviews, case studies, and surveys conducted among young individuals across various Middle Eastern countries.

A key aspect of this research is the analysis of recent reforms in Saudi Arabia, which have shown significant progress in women's empowerment and a move towards moderating extremist ideologies. These reforms include allowing women to drive, increasing their participation in the workforce, and a general liberalization of some social norms. The paper evaluates the impact of these reforms on societal attitudes and their potential as a model for other Middle Eastern countries.

Moreover, the paper addresses the conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza as a representation of extremist ideologies among Middle Eastern youth. This conflict highlights the challenges posed by entrenched hostilities and the importance of developing strategies that not only counter extremism but also promote dialogue and understanding between conflicting parties.

The study suggests several strategies to prevent the youth in the Middle East from succumbing to extremist ideologies. These include:

Educational Initiatives: Developing curricula that emphasize critical thinking, human rights, and gender equality, to foster a more tolerant and open-minded youth populace.

Media Engagement: Utilizing media to challenge stereotypes and promote narratives of coexistence and mutual respect, particularly between genders and across cultural divides.

Economic Empowerment and Job Creation: Providing economic opportunities to both men and women, particularly in regions afflicted by conflict, to reduce the allure of extremist groups.

Legal and Policy Reforms: Advocating for laws and policies that uphold women's rights and promote gender

equality, thereby creating a more inclusive and fair society.

International Diplomacy and Peace Efforts: Encouraging international cooperation to resolve regional conflicts, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, thereby reducing one of the key drivers of extremism in the region.

By implementing these strategies, this paper argues that it is possible to create a future where young people in the Middle East respect women's positions, human rights, and embrace gender equality. Such a future would contribute to a stable and peaceful Middle East, where nations and peoples, including Israelis and Palestinians, live in harmony and mutual acceptance.

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Session 5Conclusion

Friday, June 28th 09:00 to 12:15 (AULA 18)

Discussants

Mohamad Dayyan Ayoubi (Celal Bayar University)

Anaami Pandit-Haji (CPI)

Ideological Divide and Binational Policymaking in Mexico and the United States

Carlos Moreno-Jaimes (ITESO)

There is growing evidence that severe polarization creates harmful consequences for democracy, such as an increase in support for extremist leaders (Iyengar et al., 2012), a reduction of electoral accountability (Pierson & Schickler, 2020), a deterioration in democratic quality (McCoy & Somer, 2019) and making governance more difficult (Levendusky, 2018). Consequently, we need to learn more about the effects of polarization on public policymaking, mainly when there is more than one country involved. In the case of Mexico and the United States, their relationship has been dominated by trade, immigration, and security issues. However, many other policy fields involve the two countries, such as environmental protection, water management, healthcare, and others. Our paper investigates the core beliefs and perceptions among future policy elites in Mexico and the United States since these might have wide-ranging, long-term policy implications regarding bilateral cooperation. It aims to fill a gap in the existing literature on political polarization by investigating to what extent the rising polarization levels in Mexico and the United States affect the perception of future policy elites of the neighboring country and become an obstacle for binational policy collaboration.

The paper is based on a survey conducted between September 2023 and January 2024 (n=515). Its target population is graduate students enrolled in academic programs that prepare them to influence the public sphere, such as public policy, global affairs, and public management in the United States' border states and Mexico. Data were collected through an online questionnaire with around 65 questions, including civic participation, discrimination and inequality, interpersonal and institutional trust, rule of law, government intervention and individual freedom, accountability and corruption, and views on the neighboring country's public affairs. We find that higher levels of polarization among respondents correlate with their willingness to increase collaboration between the US and Mexico, while simultaneously limiting the topics that collaboration is meant to cover. We find higher levels of partisan polarization in the US, while similar levels of partisan discontent are found in both countries.