W08 / How moral emotions affect the policy process

Topic : Policy Process, Policy Making

Chair : Zsolt Boda (ELTE Centre for Social Sciences)

Second Chair : Claudio Radaelli (European University Institute)

CALL FOR PAPERS

Emotions play a significant role in the public policy process, influencing agenda setting, decision-making, policy formulation, and implementation. Emotions often shape public opinion, mobilize support or opposition, interact with policy advise, affect the acceptance of implementation, in short, impact the overall policy landscape. This is especially true for policies on abortion, end-of-life decisions, LGBTQ+ issues, immigration, genetic engineering, climate change, just to name a few, which raise serious moral questions and may trigger strong emotions. The link with moral questions makes some issues controversial because of moral emotions. By this we mean emotions that one feels about the other or about a decision because that position or decision is morally correct or wrong. These emotions contribute to identity formation, thus creating constituencies for or against policies.

The workshop invites empirical papers with both quantitative and qualitative methods that investigate the nexus between moral emotions and the different stages of the public policy process. Listed below are some questions to illustrate possible topics for papers. These questions are not exhaustive or comprehensive, and we welcome any other lines of investigations that address emotional aspects of public policies.

- How do moral emotions affect public support for policies? What kind of policies are supported by specific emotions?

- How to measure the moral emotional valence of certain policies?

- What is the role of policy entrepreneurs in (moral) emotional framing of policies? What makes emotional framing successful?

- What is the role of populist and radical politics in the emotionalization of policy issues?

- How are emotions integrated into policy discourses and policy narratives?

- What is the role of moral emotions in public consultations? How to deal with emotions in these settings?

- How to reconcile value laden and emotionally loaded discourses with expert knowledge?

- How do technocratic discourses that mute emotions affect policy design?

- What is the role of moral emotions in public acceptance of policies and the success of implementation?

ABSTRACT

Emotions play a significant role in the public policy process, influencing agenda setting, decision-making, policy formulation, and implementation. Emotions often shape public opinion, mobilize support or opposition, interact with policy advise, affect the acceptance of implementation, in short, impact the overall policy landscape. This is especially true for policies on abortion, end-of-life decisions, LGBTQ+ issues, immigration, genetic engineering, climate change, just to name a few, which raise serious moral questions and may trigger strong emotions. The link with moral questions makes some issues controversial because of moral emotions. By this we mean emotions that one feels about the other or about a decision because that position or decision is morally correct or wrong. These emotions contribute to identity formation, thus creating constituencies for or against policies.

It is a real challenge for democratic governance to pursue deliberation on these issues and elaborate evidence-informed policy solutions while dealing with the clash of values, identities and (moral) emotions. Also, some political actors may capitalise on these issues and use them to whip up emotions and reinforce political identities. The policy practice of populist politicians and illiberal governments provide abundant examples, but the role and political use of emotions has been recognized in liberal democracies as well. At the same time, technocratic discourse point to muting emotions, burying them under the surface of “rational” decision-making.

The workshop addresses the topic under a wide angle and invite both conceptual and empirical papers, with

preference for empirical project. We wish to discuss both quantitative and qualitative work, that deals with the effect of emotions on the different stages of the policy process addressing questions like: How do emotional frames affect the public support of policies? What is the role of emotions in public consultations? How to reconcile emotionally loaded discourses with expert knowledge? How emotions affect policy design? Can technocratic discourse mute emotions? What is the role of emotions in public acceptance of policies and the success of implementation? A planned outcome of the workshop is a special issue proposal or an edited volume.

W08 / How moral emotions affect the policy process

Chair : Zsolt Boda (ELTE Centre for Social Sciences)

Second Chair : Claudio Radaelli (European University Institute)

Session 1

Wednesday, June 26th 10:15 to 12:00 (AULA 17)

Discussants

Francesca Vaghi (University of Glasgow)

Salvatore Sberna (Università di Pisa)

(Virtual) The emotional turn in public policy: A systematic review

Jonathan Kamkhaji (European University Institute)

Claudio Radaelli (European University Institute)

The emotional turn is prominent among the many turns which characterize policy research. A strong body of interdisciplinary research has put center-stage the homo emotionalis. Although research on emotions has spread to many different policy domains, such as migration, climate change, and civil rights, we still miss a systematic account of the literature exploring the emotions/policy nexus. Our review starts from 1300 items/scholarly contributions, then reduced to 300 after filtering for relevance. The key criterion for the retention of the entries is the presence of a clear link between emotions (also positive and negative emotions broadly construed) and policy. We analyze contributions which investigate: how emotions influence policy preferences and behavior; what specific emotions are mobilized in narratives and policy discourse; and the presence of emotions in policies that connect citizens and the bureaucracy, like filling forms and ‘red tape’. We also discuss the research methods, such as experiments and big data, in the corpus of 300 entries. Overall, this body of literature highlights noticeable theoretical and methodological eclecticism and alertness to technological innovation in data generation and analysis. Research for this paper is supported by the MORES project funded by the Horizon program.

(Virtual) Missing Areas in the Study of Emotional Entrepreneurs in Politics and Policy

Moshe Maor (Reichman University)

Emotional entrepreneurs— actors whose key goal is to manipulate emotions and emotional bonds, selectively or non-selectively, in the pursuit of their political and policy goals—are one of the fundamental factors behind fluctuations in politics and policy. Current literature still lacks clarity and consistency regarding how emotional entrepreneurs think, decide, and reason. Building on literature from political science and psychology, the paper outlines three missing areas in the study of emotional entrepreneurs, which were selected on the premise that emotional manipulation is an attempt at switching information dynamics away from information sensitivity related to the political candidate or policy being promoted, and toward information insensitivity regarding these objects. Put bluntly, emotional entrepreneurs are successful so long as the target population whose emotions have been manipulated make little or no effort to search and produce accurate information about the candidate or policy being promoted. The three areas include (i) skillful vs. conventional entrepreneurs; (ii) “textbook formula” vs. step-by-step strategic emotional manipulation; and (iii) the relationship between emotions and emotional entrepreneurs’ motivations, intentions, opportunity evaluation, behavior, memory and learning, and the relationship between emotional entrepreneurs and contextual factors. The paper develops a robust research agenda regarding the dynamics in each of these areas and encourages further research of its implications for the efficiency of emotional entrepreneurs in matching the intensity of their emotional manipulation tools to the challenge they face over the short or long run, their effectiveness, and the consequences for democratic politics and democratic resilience.

W08 / How moral emotions affect the policy process

Chair : Zsolt Boda (ELTE Centre for Social Sciences)

Second Chair : Claudio Radaelli (European University Institute)

Session 2Dominika Wojtowicz

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

Discussants

Anna Baczy?ska (Kozminski University, Poland)

Hannah Absalom (University of Birmingham)

Perils and Policies: Investigating the Impact of Criminal Violence on Public Emotions and Support for Policy Change

Salvatore Sberna (Università di Pisa)

In numerous countries, particularly in the Global South, violence perpetrated by criminal groups consistently shapes the social and political landscape (Magaloni et al. 2020). In Europe, nearly 20% of the population recognizes organized crime as the primary global concern for the continent's future (Eurobarometer 2021). Meanwhile, in Latin America, approximately 26 million individuals are impacted by organized crime groups (Lessing et al. 2019). Violence serves as a crucial tool for these groups to uphold the status quo by instilling fear and intimidation in both civil society and authorities (Moya 2018; Moya and Carter 2019). Through the strategic use of violence, criminal organizations establish dominance, deter resistance, and silence opposition. This atmosphere of fear ensures compliance within local communities, impedes witness cooperation with law enforcement, and undermines the effectiveness of legal institutions and policy changes aimed at curbing criminal activities. The impact of organized crime activities, marked by violent shocks, has been observed to influence distinctive traits within communities. This includes how individuals react to the fear and insecurity that inevitably ensue when organized crime groups establish themselves in the area (Justino 2012; Moya 2018;Rolla & Justino 2022). Additionally, it affects the inclination of individuals and families to invest in social capital, particularly directed towards individuals beyond their immediate group (Aghajanian et al. 2020; Rolla & Justino 2022).

By leveraging violence, criminal groups dramatically affect also policy response, by weaponizing negative emotions within the community, such as fear and insecurity, leading to people’s frustration, thereby making policy change less attractive to both stakeholders and citizens (Moya and Carter 2019). However, emotions triggered by violent events are still processed through cognitive mechanisms that might explain people’s acquiescence toward this status quo (Bandura et al. 1996; Sholtz 2008). Schedler (2016), for instance, found that framing criminal violence as a self-contained war among criminals ("bounded violence") can erode the attitudinal foundation of citizen solidarity and sympathy with the same victims, especially if they are wrongly perceived as colluded.

Utilizing a novel dataset encompassing assassination attempts on elected officials perpetrated by mafia groups at local and national levels between 1980 and 2010 in Italy, the study exploits the inherent unpredictability in the success or failure of such attempts to discern the repercussions of criminal violence on people’s support for antimafia policies and institutions. The analysis permits an assessment of the extent to which emotions triggered by political assassinations perpetrated by criminal groups are contingent on the framing of the targets, as colluded or not with mafias. This expands on studies that have already addressed the impact of moral emotions on policymaking, particularly Zahariadis (2015), by assessing under which conditions events triggering fear among the public lead to either policy continuity or change.

This research highlights criminal groups' role as contemporary catalysts for institutional change, contributes to the understanding of cognitive mechanisms that process people’s emotions, and underscores how seemingly minor, random events can significantly impact trajectories of policymaking and policy implementation.

From Compassion to Contention: Emotional Dynamics in Polish Public Sentiment Towards Ukrainian Refugees

Dominika Wojtowicz (Kozminski University)

Igor Lyubashenko (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities)

The Ukrainian crisis of 2022, resulting in one of the largest migration crises in Europe's recent history, placed Poland in an unprecedented situation. As a neighboring country, Poland became a haven for over 2.5 million Ukrainian refugees in the early months of the conflict. This paper aims to analyze the emotional journey of the Polish public and the government's response, from initial acts of massive aid to growing resentment and hostility. The paper examines the transformation of public sentiment in Poland towards Ukrainian refugees, from initial widespread support to increasing hostility. It explores the unique challenges posed by the sudden influx of over 2.5 million refugees in the wake of the Russian aggression against Ukraine in 2022 and the subsequent emotional and policy responses in Poland.

We conducted qualitative study based on interviews with Polish citizens, Ukrainians refugees, NGO representatives, and public officials. It analyzes the emotional responses to the refugee crisis, focusing on the evolution from initial empathy and enthusiasm to subsequent feelings of competition and hostility.

The research initially highlights the remarkable solidarity and compassion shown by Poles, who provided extensive support to refugees despite the absence of prior experience in handling such a crisis. It then delves into the emotional shift as the public began perceiving refugees as competitors for jobs, healthcare, and educational resources. This section discusses how these perceptions fed into a growing sense of hostility and the implications for public policy and social cohesion.

The study highlights the complex role of emotions in public policy, especially in the context of an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. It underscores the need for adaptive policy responses that consider the emotional dynamics of societies facing sudden demographic changes.

Our research provides an empirical examination of the role of emotions in public policy during a major humanitarian crisis. It offers insights into the emotional evolution of a society in response to a large-scale refugee influx, contributing to the understanding of how moral emotions influence policy support, formulation, and implementation in extraordinary circumstances.

(Virtual) Emotional Intelligence: A Key Driver of Managerial Engagement in Public Municipalities in Poland

Anna Baczy?ska (Kozminski University, Poland)

The research explores the crucial role of emotional intelligence in public administration managers and its impact on public policy-making. Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to identify, understand, and manage emotions, is vital in the emotionally driven sphere of public policy, particularly in areas eliciting strong moral emotions like social justice, public health, and environmental issues. This study focuses on public administration managers in Poland, examining how their emotional intelligence influences their approach to policy areas that are often at the center of emotional and moral debates.

The relevance of emotional intelligence in public policy is rooted in its capacity to enhance interpersonal relationship management and self-regulation, elements critical in the realm of public administration. The research aims to assess the connection between the emotional intelligence of managers and their work engagement in the public sector, measuring factors such as Inclusion of Managers in Decision-Making; Degree to Which Managers Can Express Their Ideas and Suggestions; Ability of Managers to Define Their Work.

The PKIE questionnaire is employed for emotional intelligence assessment, coupled with engagement surveys to analyze the work engagement in the managerial domain.

Preliminary insights from the study indicate a promising correlation between high emotional intelligence and increased work engagement among managers, suggesting that emotional intelligence is a key predictor of professional success in various fields. This aligns with existing research, highlighting the potential of emotional intelligence in enhancing management practices and shaping public opinion in policy debates.

While awaiting more comprehensive results, the research recognizes the need for further studies with larger sample sizes to validate these findings fully. The study is expected to conclude that fostering emotional intelligence and social competencies in management, especially in the public administrative sector, is essential. This development is anticipated to improve not only individual managerial effectiveness but also

overall organizational performance, making a significant contribution to the understanding of emotional intelligence as a critical element in public administrative management. The study's implications extend to various sectors, underscoring the broad applications of emotional intelligence in public policy-making.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, work engagement, managers, public administrative sector.

W08 / How moral emotions affect the policy process

Chair : Zsolt Boda (ELTE Centre for Social Sciences)

Second Chair : Claudio Radaelli (European University Institute)

Session 3Magdalena Martinez, Zsolt Boda

Thursday, June 27th 09:00 to 12:15 (AULA 17)

Discussants

Francesca Vaghi (University of Glasgow)

Moshe Maor (Reichman University)

Charitable fundraising in the NHS: emotional appeals, crisis and scarcity in UK healthcare

Francesca Vaghi (University of Glasgow)

Ellen Stewart (University of Glasgow)

The National Health Service in the UK was envisaged and promoted by its creator as a moral project for the nation, not merely a healthcare delivery mechanism. Today, it retains an unusual cultural and affective salience, demonstrated in events that recently included a grassroots poster campaign of visible gratitude during the COVID-19 pandemic, and increasingly elaborate ‘birthday’ celebrations marking the NHS’s creation. It also, though, is frequently seen as ‘in crisis’ amidst this atmosphere of loyalty and gratitude. The political limitations of healthcare funding in a tax-based system imposes constant pressure on spending. Especially in periods of austerity, waiting lists grow and healthcare provision often becomes more basic and less person-centred.

This paper explores the way that fundraising appeals within the NHS navigate this, often contradictory, affective terrain. Pre-existing traditions of philanthropy in and around hospitals have endured over the decades of the NHS, and expanded into a substantial, though highly uneven, network of professionalised charitable organisations since the 1980s. The resulting NHS charities are a distinctive category of organisations which display hybrid ‘state’ and ‘charitable’ institutional logics (Stewart & Dodworth, 2023). Within these organisations, entrepreneurial staff have expanded the aims and scope of charitable fundraising, crafting emotional appeals to provide ‘add-ons’ or ‘extras’ not funded through government budgets, and, in some cases, to pay for medical equipment, buildings, and non-medical staff.

This paper draws on ethnographic research on three charitable fundraising appeals in the NHS, including participant observation, interviews with staff, fundraisers and volunteers, and document and web analysis. We explore the emotional repertoires used by charitable entrepreneurs in their efforts to expand fundraising appeals within the NHS, identifying how these have often emphasised the moral value of healthcare, via tropes that include the heroism of the workforce and the vulnerability and virtue of particular patient groups. However, not least due to the governance limitations of NHS charities, these appeals also mute other plausible responses to scarcity and pressure in the NHS; notably anger and activism. We argue that fundraising appeals thus contribute to a cultural intensification of the NHS as a discretionary moral project, more than as a public service, and reflect on the implications of this framing for the future of UK healthcare and health policy.

Imagining the home. the role of interdisciplinary insights in producing wellbeing in English social housing

Hannah Absalom (University of Birmingham)

There is increasing recognition that policy design and practice need to consider the role of emotions. However, the way emotions are expressed, understood, and valued continues to be dominated by

rationalistic perspectives on policy, human behaviour and technology. The English social housing sector exemplifies this paradox. It is amidst regulatory reform emphasising empowering tenants through tools such national league tables and complaints processes. Within the sector, there is interest in emotionally informed fields such as trauma-informed design informing practice. While commendable, more research is needed to explore emotionally informed concepts in social housing policy and practice.

This study investigates well-being conceptions by asking 'how can social landlords connect with tenants' understanding of home-based well-being?'. The paper employs an interdisciplinary framework weaving together insights from behavioural public policy and relational perspectives rooted in geographical studies of the home. The interdisciplinary framework has two aims: to disrupt landlords' conceptualisation of well-being as a social value that can be produced through bureaucratic processes and rational assumptions of human behaviour. Second, to explore how the framework can elucidate the nuanced ways in which tenants experience their homes, particularly with respect to emotional complexities, and how this may introduce an emotional accent to policy and practice around home-based well-being. The study includes 42 interviews and two focus groups with practitioners, consultants, and tenants. Additionally, the research draws on the author's autoethnographic reflections from her role as a consultant to the social housing sector.

The paper argues that an interdisciplinary framework, informed by rational and emotional insights, can produce a shared subjectivity between tenants and landlords that can underpin dialogue to reimagine home-based well-being. This contributes to the emotions in policy literature by exploring how emotional knowledge can shape the 'doings' of practice. This draws attention to the first workshop question: how do technocratic discourses that mute emotions affect policy design? The interdisciplinary framework has its roots in the scrutiny of behavioural public policy, a domain subject to significant critique for its inherent technocratic tendencies. I argue that there are compatibilities with some behavioural insights into the experience of poverty and relational perspectives grounded in an appreciation of the emotional complexity inherent in the concept and experiences of home. Drawing out the compatibilities between the technocratic and the emotional provides a new way of thinking about housing well-being and produces a foundational shared subjectivity for the redesign of services. Thus, this paper contributes to explorations of how emotions can contribute to reshaping policy and practice in housing while remaining sensitive to the cultural dominance of technocracy and the risks of pathologising tenants through practitioner preference to utilise insights to effect normative change rather than understand tenants' circumstances and collectively explore what an emotionally informed conception of well-being may look like in social housing.

I aim to deliver on-site. I am an early career researcher and am undertaking a second emotionally informed piece of research concerning how tenants and landlords encounter each other in the space of the tenants' home.

Positive Emotions: A Working Framework on Intellectual Humility and Policy Making

Magdalena Martinez (Rowan University)

Intellectual humility can be described as the recognition of one's own limitations, openness to new ideas, a tendency to low defensiveness, and recognizing the merits of others and their ideas (Porter et al, 2022). Research supports that idea that humility involves emotional features; an individual's sense of intellectual humility informs their reaction when confronted with information that is contrary to their beliefs. Social scientists and pundits lament the absence of intellectual humility among elected policymakers. Yet others find new entrants to policymaking spaces bring with them policy deliberative processes informed by intellectual humility that helps center and move to the top of the agenda key policy priorities (Martinez, 2023, 2022a, 2022b). The literature clearly suggests that policy deliberation is directly affected by the participants' willingness to keep an open mind (Barabas, 2004). Barabas also argues that diversity of messages "increases knowledge and altered opinions" (p. 687). What is key is that diversity of ideas and keeping an open mind are "hallmarks of democratic dialogue, [which] can help citizens transform potentially unreflective preferences into enlightened deliberative judgments" (p. 699).

The heterogeneous landscape of policy-making spaces is currently undergoing a re-construction. Governments around the world are experiencing a more diverse composition of their official bodies. In 2019 Nevada became the first female-majority legislature in the United States. As the composition of these legislative bodies changes to become more inclusive and representative of its constituents, so do the experiences that officials bring to the table. These new individuals bring different interpretations and emotional responses from those studied before. Furthermore, they bring new meanings and meaning-making around the use of emotions, humility, and purpose to the policy-making process.

Researchers of policy analysis have argued that many analysts operate as if knowledge was generated in a vacuum, ignoring the subjectivity of their own experiences and the emotional landscape of these experiences. By turning a focus on a legislative community and their emotional responses, I examine how

meaning is systemically accepted or rejected within policy-making. The goal of this paper is to understand the role of emotions by examining how a female-majority legislative community embodied, through their discursive practices, an intellectually humble frame to policy making. Despite having a majority, power dynamics in legislative practices do not suddenly shift. The way in which legislators communicate is a key entry point to understanding the power dynamics, the use of emotions to legitimize or delegitimatize policy knowledge.

In analyzing how a female-majority legislature in Nevada operated, I posit that this community of legislators employed inclusive and positive emotion practices that emphasized the importance of a subjective experience, individual and community, throughout the policy-process. I argue that these important practices can be traced to intellectual humility in policymaking. In this paper, I present how the constructs of intellectual humility provide a comprehensive approach to the study of policy process. I propose five aspects: reflexivity, other directed, epistemic communities, micro and macro structures, and situational. I introduce a novel pragmatist approach strengthened by the literature of intellectual humility.

Barabas, J. (2004). How deliberation affects policy opinions. American political science review, 98(4), 687-701.

Martinez, M. (2023). Keeping the higher education “promise” in Nevada: Latina/o legislators policy ways of knowing. Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 22(1), 94-107.

Martinez, M. (2022a). US Black women state legislators: intersectional identities and education policies. Race Ethnicity and Education, 1-19.

Martínez, M. (2022b). " The Future is Latina": Feminist Borderlands and Latina Legislators. Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies, 43(2), 1-27.

Porter, T., Baldwin, C. R., Warren, M. T., Murray, E. D., Cotton Bronk, K., Forgeard, M. J., ... & Jayawickreme, E. (2022). Clarifying the content of intellectual humility: A systematic review and integrative framework. Journal of personality assessment, 104(5), 573-585.

Moral emotions and disruptive policy making under populist governance: the case of the Hungarian “child protection law”

Zsolt Boda (ELTE Centre for Social Sciences)

The paper seeks to make a contribution on better understanding the policy making characteristics of populist governance. The analytical framework of the analysis is provided by the model of populist policy making (developed by the author with his colleagues, see Bartha, A., Boda, Zs. and Szikra, D.: When populist leaders govern. Conceptualising populism in policy making. Politics and Governance, 2020 8 (3), 71-81), and more specifically, the dimension of emotionally loaded policy discourses of the model. Following the model, the paper argues that, first, the high emotionality of policy discourses is a typical feature of populist policy making and, second, that policy making is sometimes used as a means to spur strong political emotions in citizens. The paper suggests that the case when policy making has no instrumental goal in terms of solving or mitigating social problems, on the contrary, it aims at creating new ones, should be considered as a disruptive use of policies. The paper argues that this kind of policy making is present specifically in populist governance and illustrates the point through examining the case of the “child protection law” of Hungary. In 2022 the Hungarian Parliament passed a law on “child protection”. While it stipulates some new measures against paedophilia, the law’s most controversial parts aim at limiting the alleged “LGBTQ+ propaganda” and framing homosexuality as a potential threat to the development of children. Moreover, the law and its implementation use a somewhat vague language leaving stakeholders and authorities wonder what the law really meant. The argument of the paper is that this vagueness and the confusion stirred by the wording of the law and the accompanying political discourses are part of the disruptive policy practice, as they contribute to the normative framing of a new problem and regulating collective emotions related to the problem. In this case the new problem which is sought to be established in the society is the alleged influence of the “LGBTQ+ propaganda” on children, while the emotions linked to this threat are fear, disgust and anger.