

T02P04 / Methodology for Comparative Policy Analysis

Topic : T02 / Comparative Public Policy sponsored by Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis

Chair : B. Guy Peters (University of Pittsburgh)

Second Chair : Guillaume Fontaine (FLACSO Ecuador)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

This panel will integrate methodological issues in comparative politics and comparative sociology with those used in policy analysis. We argue that if the promise of comparative policy analysis is to be fulfilled, then greater attention must be given to ways of linking comparative methods with policy, and likewise how to link methods associated with policy analysis to comparative cases. Too often these connections of research traditions are not made clearly and the resulting research may not contribute as much as it might, either to comparative studies or policy studies. As well as the substantive differences among these research traditions, there are marked differences between large-N and small-N traditions of research, especially in policy analysis. In this panel we would want to concentrate on the utility of the methods themselves more than on the application of the methods. That said, the methods should always be considered in light of how they can address policy problems.

As well as the intellectual developments we expect from this panel, we intend to use the papers as a major component of a Handbook for Methodology for Comparative Policy Analysis.

CALL FOR PAPERS

We envisage five sessions for this panel:

The first session will focus on the linkage of issues in comparative analysis, such as case selection and the relative utility of Most-Similar and Most-Different Systems Designs with policy analysis. Likewise, we will discuss the utility of policy analytic methods such as cost-benefit analysis and evaluation research in different cultural and political settings. This session will also include some general survey of existing research in comparative public policy to identify not only the accomplishments within this field but also the research agenda for enhancing the contributions of this field.

The second session will consider the role of qualitative methods such as case studies, discourse analysis, and combinatory analysis in comparative policy analysis. The complexity of the policy process and the numerous factors affecting policy outcomes may make qualitative analysis more viable and more effective than quantitative approaches. This session will explore those methods relevance for policy, as well as their constraints. And we will attempt to link these methods with some of dominant theoretical approaches in policy studies.

The third session will deal with the comparative method in political analysis. Special attention will be given to problems of causation and measurement. We expect to discuss the contribution of mix methods to comparison, in particular regarding different approaches of process tracing.

The fourth session will examine the use of standard quantitative techniques such as regression and events-history for policy work, as well as examine some methods such as risk-benefit that tend to be directly associated with public policy. We would also consider papers discussing the role of multiple methods in policy analysis for this panel. There are a number of significant strands of policy research using quantitative methodology, such as the political economy of the welfare state and the comparative agendas project, and we will want to assess how the choice of methods have influenced the research outcomes.

The fifth session will be dedicated to multi-methods and experimental designs. Experimental designs are less commonly used in policy analysis but are becoming a more significant part of the armamentarium of economics and political science. We will examine their role –both laboratory and field experiments– as means of strengthening policy analysis and providing new insights into relationships among the many factors involved in public policy. Some aspects of impact analysis for programs can be included in this session of the panel.

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Session 1 Methodologies for CPA - Session 1/3

Friday, June 30th 08:15 to 10:15 (Manasseh Meyer MM 2 - 2)

Discussants

Adrian Kay (The Australian National University)

Guillaume Fontaine (FLACSO Ecuador)

The Comparative Method and Comparartive Public Policy

B. Guy Peters (University of Pittsburgh)

Why we need more transparent and rigorous inductive research design in comparative public policy scholarship, and what to do about it

Caner Bakir (Koc University)

Applying Qualitative Methods to Comparative Public Policy Analysis: Insights from Multi-Site Ethnographies of Informal Garbage Governance

Raul Pacheco-Vega (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) Mexico)

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Session 2Methodology for CPA 2/3

Friday, June 30th 10:30 to 12:30 (Manasseh Meyer MM 2 - 2)

Discussants

B. Guy Peters (University of Pittsburgh)

Guillaume Fontaine (FLACSO Ecuador)

Does policy matter? A quali-quantitative approach to historical transport policy processes in Paris and London.

Charlotte Halpern (Sciences Po Paris - Centre d'Etudes Européennes (CEE))

Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) as an approach to Comparative Policy Analysis

Eva Thomann (University of Exeter)

Probing Complexity and Sustainability: Beyond System and Structure in South Asia

Preeti Raghunath (University of Sheffield)

USING Q-METHODOLOGY FOR (COMPARATIVE) POLICY ANALYSIS

Astrid Molenveld (Erasmus University Rotterdam)

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Session 3Methodology for CPA 3/3

Friday, June 30th 13:45 to 15:45 (Manasseh Meyer MM 2 - 2)

Discussants

Jon Pierre (Dept of Political Science, University of Gothenburg)

B. Guy Peters (University of Pittsburgh)

The importance of instruments mix in policy design

Guillaume Fontaine (FLACSO Ecuador)

Comparative Public Policy and Comparative Public Administration: “Never the Twain Shall Meet”?

Jon Pierre (Dept of Political Science, University of Gothenburg)

Numbers and Comparative Policy Analysis: Measurements Issues in Global Indicators

Tero Erkkilä (University of Helsinki)