

Policy entrepreneurship and institutional change: Who, how, and why?

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Summary

In the past three decades, “policy entrepreneurship” has emerged as a key analytical concept helping to explain institutional and policy change. Despite this, however, the literature on policy entrepreneurship remains theoretically vexed, producing limited theoretical knowledge or explanatory models able to draw firm conclusions. Theory building on policy and institutional change, for example, how policy entrepreneurs institute and navigate change agendas, using what tools, strategies, resources, and capacities remains opaque. This is especially the case in developing country contexts, where most analytical investigation of policy entrepreneurship has addressed “first world” case examples. This special issue seeks to address this analytical gap in the literature, focusing on cases specific to developing country contexts, deepening our empirical knowledge of policy entrepreneurship in developing countries, but also exploring theoretical and conceptual debates as they relate to developing countries.

1 | INTRODUCTION: INSTITUTIONS AND POLICY CHANGE

Institutions and institutional analysis have occupied a central place in social scientific inquiry. This is hardly surprising. Societies are defined by institutional contexts; political life by institutional arrangements that broker the relationships between interests and the distribution of power; economic life by the institutional rules and norms that govern exchange and the inscription of value; and social relations by institutions such as class, race, gender, and patriarchy—among others (Browne, 2017; Giddens, 1979, 1984; Joas, 1987; Merton, 1968; Parsons, 1949; Weber, 1947). For scholars of development and developing societies, institutions have been no less important. Historically, institutional analysis has comprised the *raison d’être* of comparative development studies, with variation in institutional design and institutional quality seen as responsible for uneven patterns of modernization and economic attainment (Almond, 2015; Eisenstadt, 1962; Hall, 1986, 2010; Hall & Soskice, 2013; La Palombara, 2015; North, 2005). More recently, new institutionalism has again focused attention on institutions and variation in institutional performance as causative explanations for the uneven distribution of global wealth. As North famously put it, a central puzzle of our time is to understand which institutional types “induce economic stagnation and decline” and which facilitate success; a grand project to

realize optimization in institutional design and with it successful societal outcomes (Lecours, 2005; North, 1990, p. vii). Getting institutions “right” has thus been a recurrent scholarly concern and reflected in development practice in the work of multilateral development organizations whose *modus operandi* has rested on institution building as key to economic and social progress (Blyth, 2002; Chang, 2007; Garrett & Lange, 1995; Ostrom, 2015; William, 2003).

As social scientists have also recognized, however, this belies an enduring problem for institutional theory—the inability to explain *change* (Bakir & Jarvis, 2018; Capano, 2009; Harty, 2005). As bundles of regulatory technologies, institutions are designed to produce consistency, regularize political, economic, and social exchanges and, in doing so, enhance efficiency, diminish uncertainty and eliminate, or at least moderate, disruptions (or negative externalities) that detract from optimal collective outcomes. Institutions, in other words, reproduce *stasis* through what Huntington (1968, p. 9) described as “stable, valued, recurring patterns of behavior”. For new institutionalists, in particular, successful institutions “stick around” and enjoy high levels of legitimacy because what they do is socially beneficial—that is, they evolve an “institutional stickiness” because patterned behaviors and institutional arrangements become orthodox, ingrained, accrue power, resources, and know-how that facilitate their reproduction and resistance to change. Institutional change therefore becomes problematic

TABLE 1 Summary of two literature surveys of the field

	Frisch-Aviram et al. (2020) (N = 47)	Bakir and Gunduz (2020) (N = 27)
Type of data/research design	Qualitative data = 74.5% Quantitative data = 23.4%	Single case study design = 70%
Data collection methods	Interview = 53.2% Survey = 6.4% No. clear methods = 36.2%	–
Frequently studied national context	China = 25.5% India = 10.6%	China = 29.6% Turkey = 14.8%
Frequently studied policy domain	Environment = 19.1% Health = 17% Education and welfare = 12.8%	Public sector management = 25.0% Environment = 18.5%

Source: Frisch-Aviram et al. (2020); Bakir and Gunduz (2020).

because the costs associated with isomorphism, the uncertainties, and disruptions this may cause become greater as institutions become more deeply embedded (Bush, 1987, 1989; Harty, 2005, p. 59; Koning, 2015).

In social theory, but also in policy science, this begs an obvious question: how is agency, or policy entrepreneurship, able to overcome recurrent patterns of behavior, the tendency toward institutional reproduction and achieve change? (Giddens, 1979, 1984; Sewell, 1992). How are the perceived costs and risks associated with institutional isomorphism set aside and a constituency of change-makers enabled? Theoretically, change should not be possible, or at most a tall order given embedded institutional stickiness, creating what Harty characterizes as inherent contradictions within new institutionalist perspectives—and institutional theory generally (Harty, 2005). New institutionalists, for example, deal with the “change” conundrum by locating the possibility of change in *exogenous* processes—that is, large-scale reforms that rupture institutional arrangements or sudden crisis events that inject new political bargains to accommodate social and economic demands. Incremental or gradual change as a result of *endogenous* institutional processes is discounted, contributing to what Capano describes as an “epistemological and ontological” problem for policy scholars whose intellectual motif rests on the fact of new policy designs or policy modification realized through institutional change (i.e., adaptation, reform or replacement) (Capano, 2009; Harty, 2005).

Indeed, in the policy world, considerably more change and institutional fluidity can be observed than is acknowledged by new institutionalist perspectives, prompting policy scholars to develop their own theoretical models in order to explain change processes in policy and institutional contexts. Actor action models represented in the Multiple Streams Framework (MSF), the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF), and the Punctuated Equilibrium Framework (PEF) have each identified nonlinear, iterative change processes, abandoning *stages heuristic* paradigms that depict change as a sequential progression of interrelated events (problem identification, agenda setting, policy formulation, through to implementation, postimplementation monitoring, and recalibration) around discrete issue/policy/institutional domains. Instead, these approaches see change as the outcome of often nonrelated processes across domains that occur through multiple cycles, discursive

interactions, conflict, and cooperation and where normative and empirical values interweave to produce uneven processes of change dependent on context, actors, actor coalitions, and institutional type (Bakir & Jarvis, 2018; Baumgartner, Jones, & Mortensen, 2014; Cairney, 2015; Cairney & Jones, 2016; Capano, 2009; Robinson, Caver, Meier, O'Tool, & Laurence, 2007; Weible, Sabatier, & McQueen, 2009). Kingdon's influential MSF approach, for example, understands change-making a variable process of discrete activities across three conceptual streams: problems, policies, and politics. For Kingdon, each of these streams “has a life of its own, and runs along without a lot of regard to happenings in other streams” (Béland & Howlett, 2016; Kingdon, 2003, p. 227; Weible & Sabatier, 2006; Weible & Schlager, 2016). Change, in other words, is as much a process of happenstance, opportunism, and contingency as it is of rational, evidence-based policy making or the deliberative, planned activities of policy entrepreneurs.

Another equally influential set of approaches to policy and institutional change focus on social and policy learning as a result of *exogenous and endogenous* processes (Hall, 1993). Literatures addressing the origin of policy ideas, for example, how ideas are learned and adopted by political and policy practitioners, and through what mechanisms and processes they transfer and diffuse, see agential and institutional learning as a key driver of change (Bennett & Howlett, 1992; Cao, 2012; Dobbin, Simmons, & Garrett, 2007; Drezner, 2005; Elkins & Simmons, 2005; Gilardi, 2005, 2010; Meseguer & Gilardi, 2009; Voegtli, Knill, & Dobbins, 2011). Several interrelated processes and constituencies are identified, including epistemic communities such as specialist knowledge practitioners who communicate through discrete networks and collectively forge ideational changes in relation to policy thinking, institutional agendas, and goals which then filter into domestic institutional contexts (Blanco, Lowndes, & Pratchett, 2011; Grossmann, 2013); or exogenous processes such as international standards regimes, market access considerations or interstate competitive pressures which create new problems and agendas that contribute to policy and institutional change (standards adoption, regulatory reform, or adherence to “best-practice”/rankings) (Carroll & Jarvis, 2013; Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996, 2000; Jarvis, 2017a, 2017b). Change thus arises through multidirectional processes that inform policy thinking, agendas, and preferences.

2 | POLICY ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THEORY BUILDING

Despite such efforts, however, theory building on policy and institutional change, how policy entrepreneurs institute and navigate change agendas, using what tools, strategies, resources, and capacities remains opaque—a theoretical soup flush with ingredients but no preferred or obvious recipe. To be sure, the literature addressing policy entrepreneurship continues to grow, but it remains theoretically vexed and inconclusive (Bakir & Jarvis, 2017; Bakir & Jarvis, 2018; Hopkins, 2016; Lundström, 2005; Mintrom & Norman, 2009). The MSF, ACF, and PEF frameworks, for example, while widely employed have produced little theory knowledge or explanatory models able to draw conclusions about causality. The majority of the MSF literature is comprised predominantly of “isolated case studies where authors either: do not speak to the wider literature, present models that are difficult to compare with others, or use MSF to focus on new objects of study” (Cairney & Jones, 2016; Jones et al., 2016; Rawat & Morris, 2016; Zahariadis, 2007, 2016). Equally, the ACF framework has been criticized for its conceptual slipperiness, focusing on the role of values, ideational attitudes, and beliefs as core motivating agents in coalition formation, but unable to empirically define these in ways that explain their hierarchy of association in terms of causality—not all values, beliefs, and attitudes, for example, are held equally, some are more important than others and thus likely exert more influence in motivating agential activity (Carstensen, 2011; Jacobs, 2009; James & Jorgensen, 2009, pp. 144–145). So too, the PEF framework has been found lacking, highlighting incidences of gradual, evolutionary change, and periodic large-scale punctuated changes as equal evidence of its theoretical propinquity: “Any particular policy history in which one sees change can be called confirmatory evidence. Any policy history in which one sees stability can also be seen as confirming evidence” (Robinson et al., 2007, p. 141).

The policy learning literature has also proven inconclusive. As Shipan, Volden, and Gilardi note, after 50 years of research and over 1,000 research papers, the mechanisms by which policy is transferred, how learning occurs and how this impacts policy and institutional change has fallen “short of providing compelling evidence” (Gilardi, 2010, pp. 650–651; Shipan & Volden, 2012, p. 788). Rather, conceptual and analytical models able to demonstrate causality in respect of policy entrepreneurship, or provide working resource models, “tool kits” or cross-institutional stratagems for policy entrepreneurs, remain elusive or at best in a state of pretheoretical or preconceptual development. The reasons for this are both obvious and complex.

2.1 | First, the problem of analytical and empirical indeterminacy

As any rudimentary survey of the literature will reveal, policy entrepreneurship is an empirically rich research area. Much of this work is descriptive, case-based, discrete, and noncomparative, addressing instances of policy entrepreneurship in numerous institutional and national contexts. At the same time, much of what is being described

is *ad hominem* insofar as the object or target of description and empirical observation remains fluid and indeterminate. Policy entrepreneurship is a generic and unstable category. It can denote multifarious activities and attitudinal capacities; a state of mind, openness to innovation, creativity or problem solving; or refer to strategic capabilities, resourcefulness, agility, or organizational dexterity in the way actors are able to navigate complex institutional environments. Equally, it can also refer to the political acumen of actors, the forcefulness of personalities, strategic positioning as decision-makers in organizational contexts, opportunism and risk calculation, or capacities associated with the deployment of resources, the construction of change-making constituencies or the ability to “crash through or crash” managerial styles (Oakes, 1976). Kingdon, for example, defines policy entrepreneurs generically as encompassing a wide variety of individuals defined only by attributes such as readiness, flexibility, and connectivity—ethereal traits that are fluid in terms of how analysts interpret and observe them (Kingdon, 2003). Mintrom (2000) and Mintrom and Norman (2009) invoke capacities such as persuasiveness, interpersonal acuity, and leadership abilities while others highlight strategic thinking ability, navigating uncertainty, competitiveness, bargaining capacities, or functional skills as knowledge brokers (Cairney, 2018; Christopoulos & Ingold, 2011; Christopoulos & Vogl, 2015; Mackenzie, 2004). Policy entrepreneurship, in a sense, is everything that can be observed in those entrepreneurs who succeed—attributes one suspect which may also be observable in “entrepreneurs” who fail. The problem in describing policy entrepreneurship through such indeterminate analytical lenses thus reveals an obvious selection bias with concomitant implications for theory development.

At the same time, institutional context is also clearly important as an explanatory factor in policy entrepreneurship. Institutional quality matters. Forward looking, responsive institutions are doubtlessly more receptive to policy entrepreneurs compared to institutions who display cautious, risk averse cultures, or who suffer less imaginative or ineffectual leadership. Resources, happenstance, the disposition of senior organization decision-makers, the human resource capacities, and management style of the organization, among others, play important roles in defining the environmental context that either enables or hinders policy entrepreneurship.

An elemental problem in theory building thus concerns the indeterminate, ethereal, and fluid set of attributes, capacities, and motives that comprise policy entrepreneurs on the one hand, and on the other, the analytical inability to account for the institutional/organizational types that either facilitate or impede policy entrepreneurship. Theory building has thus far failed to adequately grapple with such problems, leaving scholars with few tools other than recourse to empirical observation and description.

2.2 | Second, the problem of policy change and measurement

While the literature clearly recognizes the role of policy entrepreneurs as change agents, the object of inquiry, *change*, remains ambiguous.

Policy entrepreneurship as a set of activities, ideational dispositions, and capacities in specific environmental contexts is only important in terms of what it is able to produce—*change*. But what is successful or failed policy entrepreneurship being measured against; what specific changes, outcomes, or measures constitute successful policy change or successful policy entrepreneurship? As Capano notes, too much that is complicated in exploring such issues is played down in research of this nature or, as the case may be, the *explanandum* (change) is either undefined or defined ambiguously (Capano, 2009, p. 8). For example, would blocking the introduction of a new policy or the redesign of an existing institution be considered successful policy entrepreneurship if it could be demonstrated that the intended new policy and institutional reform may not produce the outcomes they intended? Would the absence of change thus be beneficial such that nonchange is the appropriate measure of successful policy entrepreneurship—or would this case fall outside the analytical frame of scholars investigating policy entrepreneurship because of the absence of change?

Relatedly, what degree of policy change constitutes change? New policy, policy reversal, small-scale policy reform, changes to institutional agendas, the ability to influence ideational values among decision-makers, changes in policy making agendas/priorities, or some other measure? Innovation, for example, is frequently used interchangeably with “change” to denote progress in policy areas as a result of entrepreneurial activity. But to invoke Capano (2009, p. 8) again, simply labeling something “innovation” is not itself evidence of policy change or of qualitative improvement in a policy approach in a specific issue domain. Changes to criminal law, for example, do not necessarily reflect a policy change in relation to criminality, while changes in enforcement practices or regulatory oversight strategies do not equate to new policy directions or policy innovation but rather to methods of policy enforcement. What is labeled as “policy change” or “policy innovation” may not in fact be policy change at all but incidences of other forms of activity that have little bearing on policy *change*. The type of policy change to be explored in relation to policy entrepreneurs thus requires much greater analytical precision than it has thus far received in the literature (Howlett & Cashore, 2009).

2.3 | Third, the problem of change and values

When addressing cases of policy entrepreneurship and policy change much of the literature does so by analyzing “successful” cases but also cases which have a “feel good” set of outcomes associated with them—that is, progressive, solutions-based policy changes that have an unambiguously positive social impact (see, e.g., Court & Maxwell, 2005; Goyal, Howlett, & Chindarkar, 2020; Huitema & Meijerink, 2010; Mallett & Cherniak, 2018; Turner Johnson, Hurt, & Hoba, 2011). Analysis of policy entrepreneurship in cases of vexed policy change has attracted much less attention—in part because there is no “feel good story” to tell, in part because abstruse policy outcomes are more difficult to assess, and in part because examples of contested policy change do not fit the image of policy entrepreneurs as enlightened, inspiring, progressive change makers commonly depicted in the

literature. Arguably, however, contested and vexed policy spaces are by far more numerous and significant than the often boutique policy spaces explored in case studies of “successful” feel-good policy entrepreneurship.

This is especially true for developing societies where policy entrepreneurship and policy change have disproportionately concerned issues of liberalization (current account, trade, foreign investment, etc.), privatization, marketization, and deregulation since the 1980s with enormous implications for national policy approaches in areas such as import-substitution industrialization, infant industry protection, government procurement practices, the preferential treatment of domestic capital/industry, or approaches to privations and social protection. The magnitude and domestic impact of these changes has been far reaching, yet remarkably almost absent in analyses of policy entrepreneurship in developing societies (Carroll, 2010, 2014; Carroll & Jarvis, 2017). An obvious question is why? Why the tendency to select nonambiguous cases in terms of “positive” policy change outcomes; why the inability to grapple with more complex, ambiguous, and vexed policy spaces where policy entrepreneurs obviously engage; and what does this suggest about the prospects for theory development beyond empirical description of “feel good” or progressive case examples?

As already noted, these issues reflect larger methodological problems inherent in studies of policy entrepreneurship, especially how “change” is understood, what constitutes change, how differences in the scale or magnitude of change should be measured or conceptualized, and how we should assess change in terms of its quality—that is, the values we ascribe to the types of policy changes that result from policy entrepreneurship. For theory building to proceed, more complex, obtuse cases of policy entrepreneurship will need to be investigated and built into the stock of empirical knowledge—a process that has not yet gained traction.

3 | SIX NEW STUDIES IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD CONTEXT

This special of *Public Administration and Development* represents a major attempt at gleaning further empirical evidence in policy entrepreneurship in developing societies as a means of contributing to theory building. Indeed, the institutional diversity of developing societies offers a vast laboratory for empirical investigation, as well as providing opportunities for analytical investigation of atypical institutional contexts beyond what the existing body of literature on policy entrepreneurship has typically presented. The special issue comprises six research articles that represent a combination of original empirical studies across a variety of national and sectoral contexts, attempts to stabilize the language of policy entrepreneurship and institutional change through extensive literature surveys, and attempts to grapple with the conceptual challenges of theory building noted above.

The first two articles by Bakir and Gunduz (2020) and Frisch-Avram et al. (2020) survey the state-of-the-field and the conceptual

challenges faced in analyzing policy entrepreneurship. In contrast to the sizable literature on policy entrepreneurship in the “first-world,” much less scholarship on policy change in developing country contexts is apparent. Both articles thus explore the verities of entrepreneurial agency in developing country contexts and across institutional types; public, private, and third sector institutions. Policy entrepreneurs, they note, operate across all levels of government and across juridical spaces at the transnational and global levels. At the same time, both articles also note that there is insufficient theoretical development, with conceptual slippage, confusion, and an unstable theoretical grammar operating in the field—a process that they observe leads to conceptual stretching and methodological opaqueness (Bakir & Gunduz, 2020; Frisch-Aviram et al., 2020). More than one third of the studies in the sample of Frisch-Aviram et al. (2020) analysis, for example, were not associated with any discernable research method (see Figure 1), with most case studies reliant on qualitative single-case design approaches with limited potential for generalization and conceptual advancement in the field. Frisch-Aviram et al. (2020) also identified over 20 entrepreneurial strategies in the literature, suggesting a cascading or stretching set of conceptual approaches to understanding what constitutes policy entrepreneurship. To what extent these activities or styles of policy entrepreneurship are unique relative to cases drawn from developed country contexts, however, remains unanswered.

Bakir and Gunduz (2020) ask are there any significant defining characteristics of policy entrepreneurship in developing countries that warrant theoretical attention for theory building? For Bakir and Gunduz, theory building in the developing world should go beyond “context matters” and explore instead “how context matters,” especially how multiple contextual factors inform agential action in the entrepreneurship process and the strategies policy entrepreneurs adopt. Bakir and Gunduz thus attempt to both stabilize the analytical focus of inquiry in to policy entrepreneurship and, at the same time, provide an analytical template to inform future scholarship.

The contribution by Goyal et al. (2020) by contrast seeks to make an important theoretical contribution. Echoing the first two articles, the authors correctly point out the conflation of various similar concepts in the policy entrepreneurship literature and the resultant lack of a common grammar or a stable theoretical language. As the authors also note, many changes in contemporary public policies invariably involve technological innovation which for them suggests the possibility of using technology as a key explanatory variable in theory building. To that end, the authors modify Kingdon's (2003) MSF, reconceptualizing a six-stream variant that includes a problem stream, policy stream, politics stream, technology stream, process stream, and a program stream, with each associated with distinct forms of policy entrepreneurship. Analyzing technology policy innovation in India, for example, they illustrate the roles, activities, and strategies of problem brokers, policy entrepreneurs, political entrepreneurs, process brokers, program champions, and technology innovators in each of the streams, highlighting the complex interplay of these activities in policy change. This framework, the authors suggest, provides a more nuanced set of insights into the microdynamics of policy entrepreneurship which can be productively applied in future studies.

The contribution by He and Ma (2020) is situated in the China context and highlights a distinct type of policy entrepreneurship in which private corporations initiate and facilitate public-sector innovations. While the role of private sector organizations and non-government actors' in public policy entrepreneurship has been documented in the literature, there remain obvious ambiguities and tensions between for-profit actors, their motives and the public interest—ambiguities that muddy the conceptual waters still further in terms of how we should understand policy entrepreneurship and policy change. As He and Ma demonstrate, however, when business strategies are favorably aligned with public goals, corporate actors from the private sector can drive and have a positive impact on public-sector outcomes (He & Ma, 2020). Analyzing the case of mobile healthcare payment innovations in China, the article both elucidates the role of corporate policy entrepreneurship, formulates a series of theoretical propositions to characterize the cross-boundary strategies crucial for making policy changes happen, while also calling for more empirical inquiries to examine the theoretical propositions advanced by the authors.

The fourth article by Ohemeng and Kamga (2020) resonates with Bakir and Gunduz's (2020) paper, arguing that a major weakness in the existing literature rests in the linkage between policy entrepreneurship research and institutional entrepreneurship—the latter defined as the role of individual entrepreneurs in the institutionalization of policy ideas. Institutionalizing “best practices” in the public sector, the authors argue, represents a formidable governance challenge in low-income countries but one otherwise critical to elevating collective social outcomes and improving public-sector performance (Bakir & Jarvis, 2018). Using the case example of performance management in Ghana's public service, the article documents processes of institutionalization, the strategies utilized (sense-making and sense-giving, coalition, and network building, as well as story-making and story-telling), and how these enabled institutional entrepreneurs to effect institutional change (Ohemeng & Kamga, 2020). Both ideas and agency, the authors note, have an impact on institutional entrepreneurship, albeit these observations have attracted limited scholarly attention in terms of how ideational power and discursive tools shape the political realm and eventually determine policy change in developing world contexts.

Finally, the contribution by Hu et al. (2020) explores recent scholarship on policy entrepreneurship by addressing the issue of agential motivations. For Hu et al., existing conceptions of entrepreneurial motivation is laced with notions of intentionality which over emphasizes the agential power of entrepreneurs while underestimating the importance of strategic interaction between context and agential motivations; context, in other words, is an important element shaping the motivations of policy entrepreneurs. To illustrate their argument, the authors explore the process of urban renewal in a Chinese metropolis, highlighting the role of sociopolitical dynamics in policy-making systems in developing countries and the long shadow this casts in terms of defining agential considerations, motivations, and resultant policy-change outcomes. As the authors argue, a relational theoretical treatment of the strategies and motives of policy entrepreneurs embedded in

concrete geographical and historical contexts, greatly advances scholarly understanding of the polymorphous and dynamic nature of policy entrepreneurship (Hu et al., 2020).

4 | CONCLUDING REMARKS: TOWARD A FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

Scholarship into policy entrepreneurship and policy change is relatively recent, although it tracks a longer lineage of literature on the origins of policy ideas and their role in policy change (Lasswell, 1970; Lerner & Lasswell, 1951). Perhaps then, we should not be overly concerned that theory building efforts have thus far proven tentative. At the same time, the complexity of the agent-structure problem in understanding the sources and origins of policy change, the role of institutional types in either facilitating or hindering policy entrepreneurship, and the emergence of a “general explanatory theory for policy change” might also reflect the fact that such is not “ontologically viable” (Capano, 2009, p. 26; Lewis & Steinmo, 2012). Scholarship on policy entrepreneurship can thus hardly be faulted for failing to solve one of the most enduring riddles in social theory! That said, in order for there to be conceptual and theoretical progress this must necessarily lay in several interrelated areas.

First, greater analytical precision and the emergence of a common grammar such that “like” can be compared with “like.” The current default research agenda remains discrete case studies or the identification of new forms of policy entrepreneurship—a fact that highlights the formative nature of the enterprise but also limits the potential for comparative research agendas and the emergence of theoretical generalization and theory building.

Second, the development of analytically rigorous classification systems, typologies able to differentiate between types of policy change, institutional types, and types of policy entrepreneurship as it relates to attributes, skills, capacities, and strategies. Overcoming the current jumble of competing definitions and case-specific observational quirks in the literature remains an urgent priority.

Third, greater empirical investigation of atypical institutional contexts, where avenues for policy entrepreneurship are more problematic. The overwhelming force of scholarship on policy entrepreneurship has been “first world”; investigations of policy entrepreneurship in developed, higher quality institutional contexts where issues of probity, transparency, and accountability are assumed. For the vast majority of the world's population, however, institutions and institutional quality operate on a different level, often under more resource constraints, or in contexts where information is asymmetrical or institutional capacities are constrained. The environmental contexts for policy entrepreneurs may thus be more complex, with concomitant implications for the scale and scope of policy change. One of the obvious challenges for scholarship is thus greater diversity in the range of institutional contexts analyzed and calibrating these with the types of policy change that result.

Finally, and perhaps obviously, scholarship on policy entrepreneurship will need to grapple with what we might term the “levels of

analysis problem.” Policy entrepreneurship in localized, discrete, sub-national contexts is of no less value than that in large-scale institutional contexts that engage in national level economic planning or country-wide social policy. It is, however, of a different order and magnitude and suggests the need to develop a schema able to calibrate for such differences and the fundamentally different types of policy entrepreneurship skills and practices that operate at different institutional levels.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many of the articles included in this special issue were presented in the 2018 *International Conference on Social Policy and Governance Innovation* hosted by the South China University of Technology in Guangzhou, China. The guest editors are grateful to the conference organizers. This special issue was generously supported by Dr Jose Antonio Puppim de Oliveira, the Editor of *Public Administration and Development*, and the late Dr Paul Collins, Honorary Advisor to the journal and who sadly passed away before this special issue was published.

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How to cite this article: Jarvis DSL, He AJ. Policy entrepreneurship and institutional change: Who, how, and why? *Public Admin. Dev.* 2020;40:3–10. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.1876>