

# ANÁLISIS DE POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS: PERSPECTIVAS PRAGMÁTICAS, INTERPRETATIVAS, DE REDES Y DE INNOVACIÓN PÚBLICA

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Roth, A. N. (2017). *Análisis de Políticas Públicas: Perspectivas Pragmáticas, Interpretativas, de Redes y de Innovación Pública*, Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia

The book is a selection of papers from an International Colloquium on Public Policy titled “Teorías y métodos para el análisis de políticas públicas”, that took place at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia in 2016. The text’s main questions are: What analytical perspectives can be gained by the subjective and everyday experience of the actors involved in the implementation of public policies and what do these contribute? What innovations have been tried to take on complex problems and reach collaborative solutions in the field of public policy? What are the possibilities of combining theories and methods in public policy analysis?

The importance of this book is that it poses a discussion on Policy Analysis as a method for generating solutions to complex and dynamic public problems. Its authors state that public policy analysis should be considered as a method to generate knowledge “in action” for solving public problems in practical ways (Zittoun, 2017). Their research suggests using a pragmatic approach to draft solutions and redefinitions for public problems, as well as to improve the processes of redistributing resources and powers when formulating and implementing public policies.

These works were published in three thematic blocks to show the importance of formulating new ways to approach public problems and the strategies to

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“solve” a society’s multiple ills. The analysts suggest the use of constructivist and dialogic approaches as an alternative before the difficulty of delivering appropriate solutions to citizens; they warn that rational and normative analysis possess serious difficulties to account for public problems, which is why it’s necessary to find alternatives to reform, improve or supplement existing solutions.

In Latin America, and particularly in Colombia, the foundational approach of Policy Analysis emerged during the nineties, guided by technocratic, bureaucratic and rational models led by experts. Analytic guidance viewed public institutions as formal organisms in charge of formulating and implementing public actions with almost no citizen participation.

In the current context, characterized by global order, it is argued that public policy analysis should adapt to the rapid changes of the times, which implies the development of processes for public innovation. New public policies aim to build exits, in a deliberative and consensual way, from the public controversies among several parties or actors in power and decision-making; larger civic participation processes are being sought for affairs of collective interest –a complex task in Colombia–, given that it went from using the experts’ approach to collaborative processes and networks that increased working in association and public deliberation.

The second part of the book is a reflection on public innovation, an approach that comes from different epistemological aspects based on reflexive pragmatism that aim to co-create problem solutions that need new strategies, concepts, ideas or intentions (Zurbruggen, 2017). Public innovation argues for experimentation and learning while solving public problems: it is a method, or path, of reflexive research focused on finding solutions to normative, treasury and administrative deficiencies, as well as an alternative that opens the door to new actors of global and local order that participate in the governance of societies.

The relational approach suggested through public innovation cannot be understood as a simple administrative and managerial fact. It is the transformation of traditional administration guided by logics of command and control of the vertical kind, a new organizational order that demands the opening of spaces for networks of social actors, like private enterprises and communities, with the purpose of building tailored solutions for the reality of the context, taking all of the different groups of interest’s particularities into account.

The third part of the book presents public policy analysis approaches that combine different theories (the network theory and the interorganizational theory) or renew analysis approaches like the Bounded Policy Transfer. These guidelines offer an analytical framework to understand the transference of the

politics, concepts and methodologies that are adopted and developed by other political communities.

Summarizing, the book contributes to the deliberation on the persistence of rational, positivist and quantitative logics in public policy analysis –perspectives that can be surpassed by interpretative approaches that value the importance of the voices of social actors, subjectivities and normative values–. Interpretative approaches (theories, approaches and methods) have managed to build rigorous alternatives in the face of a reality that is perceived as absolute, as a permanent social construction. The understanding of reality as a whole is the knowledge of the chaos of modern societies. That is, what is sought through these perspectives is a plea to value the role of subjects and communities in the building of knowledge to solve public problems.

## REFERENCES

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