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Editorial

Behavioural science is of course a well-established, multidisciplinary field of research, but it is only in relatively recent years that the findings from this field have been applied to policy concerns in any substantive and sustained sense, in both the developed and developing world contexts. There are many indications of the growth in what may be broadly classified as behavioural public policy. For example, a number of dedicated behavioural public policy units that are either closely linked to or that actually sit within governments have been established around the world, including (until recently) the Social and Behavioral Sciences Team in the USA and the Behavioural Insights Team in the UK. The World Bank has recently launched its own similar team – the Global Insights Initiative – to consider the application of behavioural insights in the developing world context.

Moreover, a number of related societies and high-profile conferences have been initiated, not least the Behavioral Science and Policy Association, a global community of behavioural science researchers, policy analysts and practitioners with a mission "to promote the application of rigorous behavioural science research to concrete policy solutions that serve the public interest," and the International Behavioural Insights Conference has attracted a large number of delegates in London, then Boston and now Singapore, with the aim of bringing together "the world's leading behavioural insights experts with policy makers and practitioners to explore how they can make better and smarter policies that matter." Further, numerous consultancies have either been established or have extended their portfolios to advise on the ways in which behavioural insights might be used to improve programmes, policies and products, and academic and popular science books are published in this area on what seems like a weekly basis.

The thirst for behavioural science knowledge from academics, practitioners and policy makers is unquestionable and seemingly unquenchable. It is intended that this new journal will contribute substantively to this field by serving as a forum for people to publish and share their knowledge and findings in this now highly important area of public policy.

Our scope

The study of behaviour is important within many disciplinary specialties, and therefore the scope of the journal is necessarily broad. While it is fair to say that

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economics and psychology have thus far had the most influence over the burgeoning field of behavioural public policy, broadening the scope to also consider knowledge from, for example, animal behaviouralism, anthropology, evolutionary biology, law, philosophy, political science and sociology has the potential to create a much richer discourse, and given the nature of the journal, multidisciplinary work is particularly encouraged. The multidisciplinary breadth of the journal is reflected in the backgrounds of the members of the editorial board. In addition to being broad in a disciplinary sense, the journal will publish theoretical, conceptual and applied work, will accept papers that are related to any policy sector and will be international in scope. The journal is not intended to serve as a forum to advocate the behavioural approach to policy; it is a scholarly outlet, and critiques of the approach will also be considered and published. Our only stipulations are that authors frame their articles such that their arguments are accessible to a multidisciplinary audience, and that their work in some sense relates the study of human behaviour to policy.

This and the next two issues are intended to serve as statements of the scope that the journal will adopt. The articles in this first issue are laid out before you, and reflections from many leading scholars on these can be read from the journal's media portal at https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/behavioural-public-policy.

The structure

After the first couple of years, the journal will be published quarterly, but in order to get things up and running, there will initially be two to three issues per year. We are open to normal standalone submissions, which can be uploaded through the journal website at https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/behavioural-public-policy. In the early years of the journal, however, an emphasis will be placed on publishing what are known conventionally as special issues. Across issues, these will take two different formats. The first format will consist of a series of circa 5000-word articles written under a particular behavioural-relevant theme. The second format will include a relatively long policy-relevant paper written by a leading behavioural science researcher (or researchers) on a topic agreed with the lead editors, followed by a series of responses and reflections written by an interdisciplinary mix of behavioural science experts, practitioners and policy makers.

So far, there are planned special issues on: neuroscience and consumer behaviour; the past, present and future of the UK Behavioural Insights Team; using behavioural science to inform policies in developing countries; whether happiness should be a goal of public policy; valuing foreign lives in

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genocide and mass atrocities; perspectives on the psychology of poverty; the importance of reciprocity in public policy; norms and public policy; behavioural science and regulation on disclosure and consumer protection; and public concern for reducing inequality. Anyone who is interested in organising a special issue of the journal can approach any of the editors, including the members of the editorial board, to discuss their ideas.

In short, *Behavioural Public Policy* will offer a multidisciplinary, cross-sectoral, international scholarly forum for the presentation and dissemination of ideas in this growing field of policy analysis. We hope that you, the readers, share our enthusiasm for this venture.

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