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Evolution of policy analysis as a field of study in Mexico

Jose-Luis Mendez

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the context and nature of public policy analysis as a field of study in Mexico. For that, first it explains what is to be understood by policy analysis and policy field. Second, it presents the context and nature of the study of public policies in the period 1940 to 1988 in Mexico, which, albeit an area of existing study, lacked an emphasis on the approaches of policy analysis. The third section discusses the emergence of this field in the country in the 1990s, while the fourth one deals with its development from the year 2000 up to 2015. The chapter ends presenting two main conclusions. First, it concludes that in Mexico the policy analysis field has overcome what Heidenheimer (1985) calls the “visibility” threshold. In other words, after its start 25 years ago, it is now a well-established field: it is the subject of around 20 academic programs throughout the country, as well as numerous books and articles, and it sustains many professional groups within academic associations. Second, the chapter concludes that the discipline is still not well received in many quarters in Mexico and has yet to overcome some of the challenges it has faced from its outset (Mendez, 1995), such as achieving greater theoretical coherence, producing more empirical studies and maintaining its contribution to the public good without adopting a technocratic approach.

Defining policy analysis

Policy analysis is understood here as the analysis of public policy according to the goals, approaches and objects of study of this field, in two main areas: first, “evaluative policy analysis”, which aims to present policy evaluations and proposals through the use of certain tools (for example, cost-benefit analysis); and, second, “explanatory policy analysis”, which aims to describe and explain policy agenda setting, formulation, implementation and evaluation, using a specific set of theoretical approaches.

Some policy analysis methods, approaches and objects of study were originally developed by economists or political scientists, but constitute now the *corpus* that gives identity to and defines policy analysis as a field of study. Policy analysis thus should be differentiated from the study of public problems or policies using other

disciplines' approaches (something that has been done since before the emergence of the policy field in the US as well as in many other countries). Take, for instance, the analysis of macroeconomic policy from an economics standpoint. Here the analyses of public problems or policies using other disciplines' approaches and methods would be referred to as sectorial policy studies.

Although policy analysis often makes use of sectorial studies and the boundaries between disciplines may be blurred, this chapter will focus on those academic works published in Mexico related to the objects of study and *corpus* of the policy analysis field, as well as on the Mexican study programs that cover the two above-mentioned areas of such field. Thus, it will not refer to all the academic works or programs that use the term "policy" in their titles (as some of them adopt the perspective of other disciplines).

As is well known, the policy analysis field (often also called public policy field) was founded by Harold Lasswell in 1951, when his text 'The policy orientation' was published in a book edited by himself and Daniel Lerner, entitled *The Policy Sciences: Recent Developments in Scope and Method*. In that founding text, Lasswell stated that this new field was to be practical (contribute to the public good by helping to solve public problems) but also normative (by taking into consideration human rights and dignity). This meant that it was also to be multidisciplinary, because to understand public problems the field would need to adopt the methods of various social sciences—economics, political science, public administration, history and psychology. In a second key text, Lasswell (1956) studied the policy process, that is, the different "stages" of policies: agenda-setting, formulation, implementation and evaluation. In time, the policy process would become a central object of study and thus a defining feature of the field.

Despite the fact that Lasswell wrote these texts in the 1950s, the discipline would not really start to expand until the end of the following decade, to a great extent as a result of the federal programs spawned in the US by the Great Society legislation, coupled with a mandate for evaluation. As the rapid growth of these programs created a strong demand for policy evaluation, the first in-depth works on policy analysis were produced on this latter topic, such as Suchman's *Evaluative Research: Principles and Practice in Public Service and Social Action Programs* (1967). From that followed works such as Mishan's *Cost-Benefit Analysis* (1971), Weiss' *Evaluative Research: Methods of Assessing Program Effectiveness* (1972) and Rossi and colleagues' *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (1979).

In turn, the most important in-depth explanatory studies of policy began to appear in the early 1970s. Several of these works were related to the failure of some of the Great Society programs and dealt mainly with implementation, such as Derthick's *New Towns In-Town: Why a Federal Program Failed* (1972) and Pressman and Wildavsky's *Implementation* (1973). However, in the 1970s the first in-depth work on agenda setting was also published, that is, Cobb and Elder's *Participation in American Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda-Building* (1972), as well as the influential article on that same subject of Downs' 'Up and down with ecology—the "issue-attention" cycle' (1972). In that decade, Lowi's and Heclo's

seminal articles on policy types and arenas also appeared—‘Four systems of policy, politics and choice’ (1972) and ‘Issue networks and the executive establishment’ (1978), respectively—along with the first widely used textbooks on public policy, such as Jones’ *An Introduction to the Study of Public Policy* (1970), Anderson’s *Public Policy Making* (1975), Quade’s *Analysis for Public Decisions* (1975), Stokey and Zeckhauser’s *A Primer for Policy Analysis* (1978) and Wildavsky’s *The Art and Craft of Policy Analysis: Speaking Truth to Power* (1979).

In the next two decades other influential works of both evaluative and explanatory policy analysis were published, for instance Dunn’s *Public Policy Analysis* (1981), Patton’s *Practical Evaluation* (1982), Kingdon’s *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* (1984), Peters’ *American Public Policy: Promise and Performance* (1986), Scriven’s *Theory and Practice of Evaluation* (1987), Majone’s *Evidence, Argument, and Persuasion in the Policy Process* (1992), Weimer and Vining’s *Policy Analysis: Concepts and Practice* (1992), Baumgartner and Jones’ *Agendas and Instability in American Politics* (1993) and Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith’s *Policy Change and Learning: An Advocacy Coalition Framework* (1993).

To a great extent following the steps set out by Lasswell (1951, 1956), in one way or the other all of these works tried to answer research questions of this field, such as: What is public policy? How does the policy process unfold? How does the agenda-setting process work? How is a policy formulated? How should it be formulated? What are the main factors behind policy implementation? How should a policy be evaluated? Furthermore, such works – and others produced either in those same times or later, in the US and elsewhere – are those to which policy analysts refer when studying a policy and thus constitute the *corpus* that gives identity to the public policy field and differentiates it from other disciplines such as economics, sociology, demography, and so on.

Policy studies in an authoritarian political system, 1940–1990

As mentioned earlier, the policy field emerged in the 1950s and further developed in the following decades of the 20th century, mainly in the US—by then a nation with a democratic political system and a professional bureaucracy. It could be said that these two features were behind the fact that the federal programs of the 1960s were coupled with a mandate for evaluation, producing thus a demand for policy analysis and academic works. On the other hand, the basis for the supply of such analysis was also present, as by that decade the US already had a wide array of universities and research centers. Furthermore, economics, public administration and political science were all by then consolidated disciplines, related to university departments where graduate programs and research activities were developed across the country (some of these departments had been established as far back as the late 19th century or early 20th century).¹

¹ I am applying here to the Mexican case a “supply-demand” approach similar to the one used by most studies of policy analysis capacity (Howlett, 2015; Weimer, 2015).

In contrast, for the most part of the second half of the 20th century, Mexico was a nation with an authoritarian political system and a bureaucracy organized through a spoils system. Although formally democratic and federal, during most of this century the country had quite a centralized political and administrative system. The president controlled the dominant political party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional [Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI]), which in turn controlled workers and peasants, to a great extent affiliated to that party. Business was organized in non-partisan chambers, but it was also controlled by the state through a variety of regulations and benefits. The third sector was very weak and also closely related to the state. Furthermore, there was no merit-based civil service (formally introduced only in 2003). In a context where the PRI managed to win all the elections and civil servants were accountable to their political bosses rather than to citizens, the demand for evaluating government programs with tools such as cost-benefit analysis, or for explaining their evolution using public policy approaches, just was not there.

Although the lack of demand was probably the most important factor, it should also be noted that between the 1950s and the 1980s such evaluations and explanations could not be easily provided in Mexico, for at least two reasons: first, research was still very weak in most academic departments dealing with economics, public administration and political science; and second, Marxism prevailed within many such departments as the preferred approach for economic, governmental and political analysis. Thus, many of the works of economists and political scientists focused on the relations of the state with social classes or capitalism. As Valenti and Flores (2009) have stated, during this time Mexican academia was discussing what development model Mexico should follow, rather than the efficiency of the state within a capitalist model.

All of the above being said, there were differences in the level of policy analysis capacity among state levels and sectors. First, the federal government had more capacity overall than state and local governments, which rather followed federal policy initiatives (with a few exceptions, like more developed states such as Nuevo Leon or Jalisco). The federal executive branch concentrated most analytical resources, as the great majority of legislative initiatives were developed there (the PRI held the majority of seats in Congress up to 1997, and until then the latter was what could be termed a rubber-stamp institution). Finally, within the executive branch, policy capabilities were greater in areas related to public finance and economic development, which were among the few with the essential inputs for policy analysis—quality data, up-to-date hardware and software, civil servants with graduate studies, and so on. It should be noted in this sense that since 1946 the Ministry of Finance (Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público) was led by experienced economists and in time it would become a highly technocratic and professionalized agency (together with the Bank of Mexico).

There were also differences among (and within) the various universities regarding research capacities and the aforementioned influence of Marxism, especially since the 1970s. To mention just one example, in 1964 the Center of Economics and

Demography (Centro de Estudios Económicos y Demográficos, or CEED) was founded at El Colegio de México (COLMEX), where some economic and demographic phenomena started to be identified and studied as public problems (although rather implicitly). For instance, in 1970 CEED published the book *Dinámica de la Población en México* (*Population Dynamics in Mexico*), which, together with other studies of the early 1970s, was key in identifying “the demographic problem” and changing Mexican public policy in this realm.² In turn, in 1976, Mario Ojeda, from the Center for International Studies (Centro de Estudios Internacionales, founded in 1960 at the same institution), published the book *Alcances y Límites de la Política Exterior de México* (*Scope and Limits of Foreign Policy in Mexico*), which studied the determinants of Mexican foreign policy. However, these and other sectorial studies of public policy produced in the 1970s did not refer to the abovementioned public policy *corpus*. In fact, at the time it was rather difficult for them to do that, as the first in-depth policy studies had appeared in the US just a few years before in the late 1960s and early 1970s; thus, they were not so well known at that time (even in that country).

In the first half of 1970s, several new universities were founded, such as the Center for Research and Teaching in Economics (Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, or CIDE) and the Metropolitan Autonomous University (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, or UAM). As mentioned later in the chapter, in the 1980s these universities would provide the basis for the emergence of public policy academic programs later on.

The 1970s was also a decade when the country started to suffer repetitive economic crisis, in contrast with the long period of economic growth and stability experienced between 1940 and 1970. Beginning in the latter year, presidents put aside the conservative policies of the finance ministry and started to overspend. There was a first economic crisis in 1976, at the end of Echeverría's presidency, and an even worse one in 1982, at the end of López Portillo's administration. This led to the arrival to the presidency that year of Miguel de la Madrid, a civil servant who had worked at the Bank of Mexico and the finance ministry. His administration started to recognize the fiscal and administrative crisis of the “owner state” (Mendez, 1994, 1996a) as well as the waning of the previous “import substitution” economic model. Both of these factors would involve a greater demand for an efficient state, which would in turn promote policy analysis (Aguilar, 1992a, 2010; Mendez, 1995). As can be seen, the 1980s thus provided the basis for the emergence of the policy field in Mexico, which started to develop in the following decade.

² Previous to this influential work, several individual studies had been published on this theme by researchers such as Victor Urquidí and Gustavo Cabrera at the first of the abovementioned centers of El Colegio de México, as well as by others at the Social Research Institute (Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales) of the Autonomous National University of Mexico (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, or UNAM), such as Raul Benítez Zenteno. For a detailed discussion of the emergence in the 1970s of “the demographic problem” and population policy in general in Mexico see Brachet, 1984.

The emergence of the public policy field in the transition to democracy, 1990–1999

The national context

After a strongly contested election, in 1988 de la Madrid was succeeded by Carlos Salinas in the Mexican presidency. In the following years, two developments would create a more favourable climate for policy analysis in the country. First, as is well known, during these years the perestroika and glasnost reforms took place in the USSR together with the fall of the Berlin Wall. Secondly, in 1991 in Mexico, the United States and Canada signed the North American Free Trade Agreement. These two events would contribute to a greater openness in Mexican academic centers to theoretical approaches other than Marxism (for instance those developed in the US). Furthermore, Salinas' economic policies, together with the uprising of the Zapatista movement and the assassination of the PRI presidential candidate in 1994, weakened the economy to such degree that another strong economic crisis would occur at the end of that year, just at the beginning of the following administration of Ernesto Zedillo (Mendez, 1995).

It should also be noted that in this decade the country made important advances towards democratization, first through the creation of the Federal Electoral Institute and second by the emergence of stronger opposition parties and the weakening of the PRI, which lost the majority in the Chamber of Representatives in 1997 (Nacif, 2012; Camp, 2013). Social actors like the mass media, business and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also became stronger in these years (Mendez, 1999; Esteinou and Alva, 2009; Somuano, 2011; Hughes, 2012; Thacker, 2012; Trejo, 2014) as well as state and local governments (especially during Zedillo's administration) (Beer, 2012; Seele, 2012).

Thus, in this decade, as a result of repetitive economic crisis and greater democratization, the demands for a more efficient state that had emerged in the 1980s were further strengthened. Although these processes do not necessarily mean that the demand for policy analysis increased significantly in these years, or that the administrative environment within the state was much more favorable to it (Cabrero, 2000), to some extent they promoted a more favorable context for the emergence of the policy field within some Mexican universities, especially with respect to what I have called explanatory policy analysis.

Publications

It is possible that the first text by a Mexican researcher published in Mexico that refers to an author of the policy field was Brachet's article 'El proceso social en la formación de políticas: el caso de la planificación familiar en Mexico' (1984). This article approaches its object of study from a dependency and corporatist state perspective and does not take into account the extensive academic work that had been already produced within the policy field on agenda setting (for

instance, Cobb and Elder, 1972).³ However, it refers to Lowi's (1972) work on policy types to briefly argue that Mexican population policy could be introduced in the governmental agenda because it was a distributive policy.

Most probably, the first text published in Mexico to focus on an author in the policy field was 'Política pública y gobierno del estado' (1990), by Aguilar, which, among other things, discusses Lasswell's contributions and its implications for Mexico.⁴ This text was followed a couple of years later by Aguilar's 'Introductory studies' to his first two edited collections of translated texts on public policy, namely *El Estudio de las Políticas Públicas* (1992a) and *La Hechura de las Políticas Públicas* (1992b). In the first of them, he discussed again the emergence of the policy field and Lasswell's contributions, while in the second one he discussed the concept of policy and the contributions of several important policy authors. In 1993, Aguilar published introductory studies to his two other collections of policy texts, *Problemas Públicos y Agenda de Gobierno* (1993a) and *La Implementación de las Políticas* (1993b), where he discussed the topics of the policy process and agenda setting and policy implementation, respectively.

In turn, at the beginning of the 1993 the journal *Foro Internacional*, of COLMEX, published my article 'La política pública como variable dependiente: hacia un análisis más integral de las políticas públicas' (1993a), where I identified the underdevelopment of public policy as a dependent variable within the policy field and, after discussing several policy approaches, I proposed a scale of policy activism as a way for better explaining public policies.⁵ In two texts that appeared a few years later (Mendez 1996a, 1998), I applied the theoretical framework developed in this article in a comparative study of industrial policy in Nuevo Leon, Mexico, Pennsylvania, US, and North Rhine-Westfalia, Germany. In the 1990s, I also published four other texts on the subject, on the public policy field (Mendez, 1995), the federal and subnational small business policy in Mexico (Mendez 1996b; Mendez and Ríos, 1998) or NGOs and industrial policymaking (Mendez, 1996c).⁶

³ Just as was the case with other studies of public policy published in Mexico in the 1980s, despite the fact that some of them could have mentioned the term policy or public policy (*política pública*) (see, for instance, Mendez, 1986).

⁴ The three authors of these first policy publications in Mexico (Brachet, Aguilar and Mendez) were at the time COLMEX professors who had had study or research stays at US universities in the 1970s and 1980s (Wisconsin, Berkeley and Pittsburgh, respectively). In 1992 a Mexican Academy of Public Policy was founded, having Aguilar as its first president and myself as its first secretary general. I was its second president, followed by Pedro Moreno (Autonomous Metropolitan University at Xochimilco, or UAM-X), Juan Pablo Guerrero (CIDE) and Felix Velez (Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico, or ITAM).

⁵ This article has been reprinted four times so far, by the National Institute of Public Administration (INAP), COLMEX, UNAM and the School of Public Administration of the Federal District.

⁶ It is possible that these were the first empirical studies published in Mexico on specific public policies applying approaches from the policy field, as in general the studies of concrete policies published in this decade by Mexican authors still did not refer to the field's *corpus* (for instance those studying specific policies published in the 1993 issue of *Revista de Administración Pública*). For an exception, see Canto, 1997.

In mid-1993 the INAP journal *Revista de Administración Pública* published a special issue on public policy, with three articles on the policy field and its relationship to public governance in Mexico by Moreno, Guerrero, and Bazua and Valenti, respectively, an article on policy alternatives evaluation by Gonzalo Robles, another on policy evaluation by Cardozo and an article by myself (1993b) where I use the policy framework developed in *Foro Internacional* (1993a) to analyze some specific policies.

In turn, Garza published in the same journal the articles 'Diseño de una política pública para la prevención de desastres naturales' (1995) and 'Políticas públicas, ética y seguridad en el marco de la acción del estado. Reflexiones para el próximo siglo' (1999). In both of these texts, Garza developed policy models that could be applied in disaster prevention. In 1995, Omar Guerrero published in the same journal the article 'Continuidad y terminación de políticas en la administración pública' (1995), where he discusses the policy stage of termination. The year before he had published in *Gestión y Política Pública*—a journal created at CIDE in 1992—the article 'Los usos del análisis de la implementación de las políticas' (1994); a few years later, he would publish in the same journal 'Las políticas públicas antes de las ciencias de las políticas' (1997). The first article was on the subject of implementation and the second one on theoretical developments for the study of policy before the 20th century.

Gestión y Política Pública would publish in this decade two other articles on public policy by Mexican authors, namely Juan Pablo Guerrero's text 'La evaluación de políticas públicas: enfoques teóricos y realidades en nueve países desarrollados' (1995) and Arellano's article 'Política pública, racionalidad imperfecta e irracionalidad. Hacia una perspectiva diferente' (1996), the first on policy evaluation and the latter on the limits of public policy analysis to understand and change policy processes. Throughout the 1990s, this journal would also publish several articles on public policy by non-Mexican authors.

In 1994, Canto and Moreno produced the edited book *Reforma del Estado y Políticas Sociales*, published by the UAM-X, with contributions by Canto, Varela and others on the subject of social policy. In turn, in 1996, Merino published an edited book on public policy and local management, *Política Pública y Gestión Local*, which included chapters on various issues of policy analysis by Canto, Mejía and others. The same year *Política y Cultura* (a journal created at UAM-X in 1992) published a special issue on public policy and NGOs, with contributions on the subject by Moreno, myself (Mendez, 1996c) and other authors. In 1999, Pineda published the edited book *Enfoques de Políticas Públicas y Gobernabilidad*, where some chapters dealt with the study of policy.

Academic programs

Although since the 1960s there have been in Mexico graduate programs in public administration (for example, those created in 1967 at UNAM) (Doring 1979), probably the first course on public policy in Mexico was taught on CIDE's MA

in public administration when this program started in 1976. It was not possible to get the syllabus of that first course, but it was possible to look at the syllabus used for the fall semester of 1983, when the course was taught by Roberto Estes, Pedro Moreno and Myriam Cardozo. In accordance with the academic context at the time, this course was still somewhat influenced by Marxist approaches, as it included a text by Poulantzas in its bibliography. However, there was a second course on public policy right after this one, taught by Pedro Moreno and Myriam Cardozo, which included texts such as the abovementioned *A Primer for Policy Analysis*, by Stokey and Zeckhauser. In 1995, CIDE's MA was renamed and started to be called the MA in public administration and public policy.

The first graduate program with the term "public policy" in its title was the MA in public policy established in 1987 at ITAM. However, it should be noticed that this was more a MA on applied economics with a focus on economic policy than an MA on public policy proper, as instead of having a truly interdisciplinary approach involving the consideration of the aforesaid areas of study and *corpus* of the policy field, most of its courses were related to the different aspects of economic policy from an economics standpoint. The program has become more interdisciplinary in time, although it still focuses heavily on economic methods.

In this way, the first two academic programs that can properly be considered as public policy programs were those opened in 1994 at UAM-X and at the Latin American Social Sciences Faculty at Mexico (FLACSO México). The first was an MA in public policy, which opened with a cadre of 10 students. Among its founding professors were Myriam Cardozo, Pedro Moreno and Giovanna Valenti, who have since been doing research within the policy field. The second was the MA in government and public affairs, which although it does not mention the term public policy in its title, has had a focus on public policy from an interdisciplinary perspective, including courses dealing with several aspects of the abovementioned policy process.

Also in 1994, COLMEX's BA program in public administration, founded in 1982, was changed to include for the first time three specific courses on public policy: two courses on comparative public policy and one on policy design and evaluation. These courses were taught for the first time in the 1997 January–May semester, the first one by myself and the second one by Leo Zuckerman and Gloria Labastida (Dirección de Asuntos Escolares, 2012). The BA in public administration was changed in 2002, and has since been known as the BA in policy and public administration (*política y administración pública*). In 1993, this program celebrated its 20th anniversary, with the participation of several national and international professors, such as Guy Peters, Charles Lindblom, Giandomenico Majone and Peter De Leon.

In short, in the 1990s a significant number of texts on policy analysis by Mexican authors started to be published, three academic programs were created explicitly addressing the areas of study of this field and at least one more program introduced policy courses. Furthermore, two academic journals were created where policy analysis articles began to be published, namely *Gestión y Política Pública* and *Política*

y Cultura (to which we have to add those articles published in *Foro Internacional* and *Revista de Administración Pública*, created earlier). In this way, it would be fair to argue that the policy analysis field clearly emerged in Mexico in this decade. Next, we will see how in the following two decades it continued to grow, in terms of both publications and study programs.

The expansion of the public policy field in an emerging democracy, 2000–2015

The national context

In July 2000, for the first time in 70 years a candidate of a party different from the PRI, Vicente Fox of the National Action Party (Partido Acción Nacional, or PAN), won the presidential election. In 2006, Fox was followed by another president from the same party, Felipe Calderón, who in turn was followed by Enrique Peña, again from the PRI. Although one of the losing candidates in 2006 claimed that that election had been fraudulent, the 2003, 2009, 2012 and 2015 federal elections took place without major problems. To this extent, it can be said that in 2000 Mexico started a new era of a consolidating democracy.

Furthermore, during these years reforms were made to promote greater government transparency and accountability and a merit-based civil service was introduced. Several decentralized regulatory agencies and advisory councils, as well as some independent think tanks, were created. Up to now, these reforms have faced a strong resistance from bureaucratic and political elites at both the national and local levels as, despite the regime's democratization, to a great extent such elites still maintain an authoritarian and clientelistic culture (Grindle, 2012; Camp, 2013; Giraudy, 2015). Even then, the reforms contributed to generate a less politicized policymaking process in certain areas of the Mexican state and involved a greater demand for policy analysis. On the other hand, during this period several universities in Mexico City increased the number of faculty members interested in policy analysis, such as the previously mentioned CIDE, FLACSO México and COLMEX, plus others such as Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM), followed by numerous state universities. As it will be shown in other chapters of this book, policy analysis capabilities also increased substantially at several Mexican think tanks.

In this way, if we compare cross-nationally the level of policy analysis capacity according to the presence of the demand and supply factors of such analysis, it could be said that by the second decade of the 21st century Mexico was at an intermediate level. This means that policy analysis is not highly demanded by the state but there are good levels of quality information on the features and problems of the country as well as significant policy analysis capabilities in local think tanks and universities, and thus policy analysis can be either done within the state or contracted out whenever needed (Mendez and Dussauge-Laguna, forthcoming).

Publications

In the first 15 years of the 21st century a wide variety of works on public policy appeared in Mexico.⁷ On the uses and orientation of the policy analysis field in Mexico and Latin America, Cabrero published the article 'Usos y costumbres en la hechura de las políticas públicas: límites de las policy sciences en contextos cultural y políticamente diferentes' (2000), and Valenti and Flores published the article 'Ciencias sociales y políticas públicas' (2009).

In turn, several texts were published on the relationship between public policy and democracy and participation, such as Rodolfo Canto's 'Políticas públicas. Más allá del pluralismo y la participación ciudadana' (2000). Leon and Mora (2006) along with Cabrero, Uvalle, Garduño and Gutierrez also published chapters on this topic in the book *Democracia, Ciudadanía y Políticas Públicas* while Vidal Garza published 'La política pública en democracia: retos y oportunidades' (2009).

On the other hand, a group of texts on policy evaluation were published in these years, such as Mejía's *La Evaluación de la Gestión y las Políticas Públicas* (2003), and Cardozo's 'Evaluación de políticas de desarrollo social' (2003), *La Evaluación de Políticas y Programas Públicos. El Caso de los Programas de Desarrollo Social* (2006) and 'De la evaluación a la reformulación de políticas públicas' (2013), as well as Salcedo's *Evaluación* (2011).

If in the 1990s only a couple of authors had studied empirically policies using the approaches of the field (Mendez, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c, 1998; Canto, 1997; Mendez and Ríos, 1998), in the past 15 years several other authors have started to publish studies of this sort, for instance, DeLeon and Hernandez's 'El caso del Programa Nacional de Solidaridad en México: estudio comparado de terminación de políticas' (2001) and Rodríguez's *Fundamentos Teóricos de las Políticas Públicas y Estudios de Caso. Programas Públicos en México* (2011) and *Políticas Públicas: Un Estudio de Caso* (2014), as well as Flamand and Moreno's *Seguro Popular y Federalismo en México. Un Análisis de Política Pública* (2015). During these years, I published three additional texts of this type: 'La política industrial en México' (Mendez, 2009), 'Implementing developed countries' administrative reforms in developing countries: the case of Mexico' (Mendez, 2010b) and 'Los programas de Monitoreo Ciudadano, Lenguaje Ciudadano y Cartas Compromiso de la Secretaría de la Función Pública' (Mendez, 2012).

Among the edited books on public policy that appeared in this time there were Aguilar's *Política Pública* (2010) and Merino and Cejudo's *Problemas, Decisiones y Soluciones* (2010), as well as Mendez's *Los Grandes Problemas de México. Políticas Públicas* (2010a) and *Análisis de Políticas Públicas. Teoría y Casos* (2015). Finally, among the texts discussing the policy process in general were Arellano and Blanco's

⁷ The overview of publications within the policy analysis field presented in this section is only partial, as their number has increased quite considerably in recent years so as to make it impossible to mention them all. In turn, the number of sectorial studies of policies has also increased significantly, although they are not mentioned here for the same reason.

Políticas Públicas y Democracia (2013) and Merino's *Políticas Públicas. Ensayo sobre la Intervención del Estado en la Solución de los Problemas Públicos* (2013).

Academic programs, journals and associations

In the 2000s, several additional public policy academic programs were opened in Mexico City, such as the MA in government and public affairs (in place of the previous Master's in public administration) at the Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales at UNAM, the MA and PhD in public policy at ITESM, the PhD in public policy at CIDE and the MA in government and public policy at Universidad Panamericana, among others.

During this period, public policy academic programs were also being created at universities in several Mexican states, for instance Universidad de Guadalajara, ITESO-Universidad Jesuita de Guadalajara, Benemerita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Escuela Libre de Derecho de Puebla, Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur, Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez, Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, Universidad Autónoma de Sonora and Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo del Estado de Michoacán.

Furthermore, in addition to the journal articles CIDE, UAM-X and COLMEX, UNAM started to publish public policy articles in several of its journals (*Estudios Políticos*, *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales* and *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*). Finally, it is also worth noting that in 2014 a research committee on public policy was created within the Mexican Association of Political Science.

Conclusion

After this review of the evolution of public policy in Mexico, it is fair to say that today the country has overcome what Heidenheimer (1985) called the "visibility" threshold in this field. In other words, after 25 years it has now developed into a well-established field with around 20 academic programs throughout the country, continuous publication of works on the subject and various associated professional groups within academic institutions. Of course, despite the relative advancement of democracy and public accountability in the country, policy analysis is still not well received in some quarters, as both clientelism and private interests are still prevalent in Mexican policymaking process today. Furthermore, despite its progress, the field has yet to overcome some of the challenges it has faced from its outset (Mendez, 1995; Arellano, 1996), such as achieving greater theoretical coherence, further evolving from its initial almost exclusively theoretical and normative focus to a more empirical one, and better integrating its orientation towards policy efficacy with citizen participation, so that the field can keep contributing to the public good without adopting an excessively technocratic approach.

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