

What lessons on Canadian Indigenous policy has scholarship published in the journal *Canadian Public Policy* offered since the 1970s?

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Context

Indigenous policy discussions in Canada have become increasingly salient nationally, as evidenced by language in Parliament House debates. Contemporary research has outlined differences in income that Indigenous organizations have advocated for closing. While there is evidence that recent moves towards increased recognized rights to self-governance and land have increased Indigenous incomes, some of these policies may increase income inequality between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. To ensure that future policy increases the well-being of Indigenous peoples, research in the policy arena must incorporate an Indigenous worldview and work to answer questions Indigenous communities prioritize and move towards more comprehensive evaluation methods.

Key finding(s) from the research

Articles on Indigenous self-determination in the *Canadian Public Policy* journal have shifted towards being more quantitative, which in practice limits the breadth of questions researchers are able to answer to what variables settler-influenced institutions such as Statistics Canada have decided are important to collect.

Population(s) studied: First Nations, Metis, and Inuit populations in Canada aged 15-65

Research dataset(s) used: Linked Parliamentary Data Project, Canadian Hansard Dataset

Policy implications for this research

Census data still suggest significant differences in income between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. However, many potentially important aspects of Indigenous realities can't be captured simply from this measure. It is important for public policy to both interrogate whether recent policies are actually moving Canada closer to an equitable income distribution and to consider the potential implications of policy for outcomes not measured.

Policy area(s) this research can inform: Education, training and learning; Government; Indigenous Peoples; Labour; Society and community

Read the full article

Feir, D. L. Policies for other people: Reflections from an economist on research and federal policy regarding Indigenous nations in Canada after 1975. (2024). *Canadian Public Policy*, 50(1), 36-61. <https://doi.org/10.3138/cpp.2023-051>