

The Impact of Public Administrators' Institutional, Professional, and Private Worldviews on Land Resource Distributions in Israel: A Policy Study*

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Abstract

This comparative chronological examination of the establishment of new towns in Israel focuses on how local planning and administrative practitioners become a source of original policy initiatives. The research adopts a modality of policy process, emphasizing the advantages of flexible decision-making with regard to the overall governance of land-use. This investigation of spatial policymaking for land distribution is particularly relevant to circumstances of scarce land resources, within geographic environments characterized by high demographic growth and conflict between local identities and cultures. A case study of new towns established is used to analyze the role of professional practitioners, as they regularly confront social and ethnocultural dilemmas when deciding on local land distributions, which carry the capacity for spatial inclusion or discrimination of various communities. The impact of their institutional, professional, and personal value systems on the Israeli sociospatial order may ultimately affect the national land policy outcome.

Keywords: new towns, public policy process, spatial policy, land distribution, spatial conflict

1. Introduction

Alongside territorial land claims and accelerated urbanization processes, countries across the globe are experiencing the growth of unmanageable megacities as well as unprecedented housing and infrastructural crises that accompany high-density living. Hence, there are compelling dilemmas regarding new towns both as a remedy and a source of conflict. As a case in point, Israeli land policy must consider homogeneous ethnic communities that identify with particular territorial spaces. As these spaces become insufficient to accommodate fast-growing populations, the building of new towns could provide reasonable solutions, if not for the clash between high demand for and scarce supply of land resources. Competition for land resources is likely to produce contention on the part of different socioeconomic and ethnic groups, promoting abstract political attitudes and a lack of national institutional policy guidelines or directives. Increasingly, difficult decisions for the distribution of lands fall to planning practitioners at meso- and micro-bottom-up administrative levels.

*This article presents the views and positions of the author alone and not necessarily those of HK's editors and publisher.

The broader concept of public policy in democratic governments is the promotion of equitable distributions of public resources for the public benefit. The wide spectrum of gain and loss for various policy stakeholders, each at the expense of another, is emphasized by sectoral concerns reflecting personal loyalties, the empowerment of sociopolitical lobbies, and economic and market forces. This is compounded where territorial contentions are rooted in overlapping historical, geographical, ethnocultural and religious claims, produce active contention over the same land resources (Gertel Groome and Hočevár 2019; Low 2008; Szilard, Huggins and Unruh 2012). Aside from its asset value, land draws added meaning from the relevant demographics, sociopsychological imagery and symbolic properties attributed to it (Werlen 2017). In this sense, economic and social values become a recurring source of conflict relating to patterns of land distribution that formulate the essence of space (Low 2017).

The realities of controversial selective rights and benefits for complex publics made up of smaller separate communities tend to encumber high-level political decision-makers aiming to promote socially cohesive popular agendas. In lieu of taking a particular stance regarding issues of conflict, governing mandates are able to avoid accusations of narrow partisanship by relying on abstract or vague non-committal macro-declarations and political gestures (Althaus 2008; McConnell 2010a, 2010b). Statements of this nature are termed ambiguous because they lack a comprehensive definition of problems, goals, and solutions. In the absence of clarified policy goals, there can be few guidelines for local administrators and practitioners are routinely confronted by dilemmas regarding public competition for resources.

Understanding the work environment and intellectual and organizational resources surrounding local planners and administrative practitioners at meso- and micro-levels of policy processes is essential in estimating their contribution to policymaking. Amid conflicting influences on public policy, these practitioners serve the institutions that employ them, their immediate clientele (public), and elected and non-elected stakeholders (Brodin 2011; Maynard-Moody and Portillo 2011). As they influence implementation outputs relating to land distributions, thereby contributing to an integrated national policy outcome, their mindset is worthy of insightful discussion (Barabas 2016). Where sectoral and cultural resource distributions are concerned, decisions may be affected by the combined understanding of world ideologies and social realities that define individual administrators. However, the bulk of research on policy process concentrates on professional administrative behavior, but does not extend to the potential impact of practitioners' personal and cultural belief systems, their identities, motivations, values, opinions, perceptions and emotions (Keiser 2010; Pulzl and Treib 2007; Sabatier, Loomis and McCarthy 1995; Whitford 2002; Yannow 2000).

Spatial planners and administrators operating within governing systems experience sociopolitical conflict while personally belonging to, or identifying with, a particular segment of the delicate cultural and/or territorial fabric under contention. Increasingly, local and regional conflicts have been playing out on the international stage (Carothers and Youngs 2015), which is liable to affect local policymaking. This is especially applicable to the field of Israeli land distribution and spatial development, and the focus of a case study which we conducted on the distributions of limited land resources for the establishment of new towns in Israel (Gertel Groome and Hočevár 2024).¹ The study indicated the utility of bottom-up flexible independent

¹ The research was conducted with reference to new towns established within pre-1967 borders only, in accordance with the 1949 Armistice "Green Line."

implementation initiatives for policymaking concerning land resource distributions for new towns, as a conflict/ambiguity type issue. Based on the study data, which documented the main contenders for land distributions within decision-making processes, this article is dedicated to the exploration of motivating factors that drive the activities of planning and administrative practitioners. Notably, they function within the framework of implementation processes dominated by sociocultural and political symbolisms and traditions. Our goal was to determine how and to what extent policy initiatives are significantly impacted by, or dependent on, individual practitioners' institutional, professional, and private worldviews.

The research presented here offers an interesting tool for mapping the methodological dynamics of decision-making for spatial planning and implementation. The data is used to explore the roles of professional civil servants, planners, and local administrators, as initiators and implementers of land distribution policy. This should provide useful insight into the modalities of policy processes in terms of conflicting national political and public interests within a range of social, economic, and multi-ethnic concerns.

2. Focused Literature Review

2.1. Typologies of Decision-making Defined

Kingdon's (2010) ideal circumstances for setting successful policy agendas outline three streams of circumstance: the problem considered, policy alternatives for implementation, and the political position of politicians willing and able to make a policy change. Heywood (2002) describes favorable conditions for successful policy implementation that include: technical, administrative, and budgetary feasibility; congruence of policy initiatives with dominant values; favorable interpretation of the law; political receptiveness and public pressure/demand. Lavee, Cohen and Nouman (2018) argued that three factors promote policy implementation initiatives among administrators: public perceptions revealed in interactions with clients, professional ethical values, and a supportive organizational environment. Such approaches to successful policymaking can be examined in relation to one or more of the nuances of three key models of policy process: 1- *Top-down* (Hogwood and Gunn 1984; Mazmanian and Sabatier 1983; Pressman and Wildavsky 1984; Sabatier and Mazmanian 1980; Van Meter and Van Horn 1975), 2- *Bottom-up* (Braybrooke and Lindblom 1963; Hjern 1982; Hjern and Hull 1982; Hjern and Porter 1981; Lipsky 1980) and 3- *Hybrid* (Elmore 1985; Majone and Wildavsky 1978; Ripley and Franklin 1982; Sabatier, 1986; Scharpf 1978).

2.1.1. High-level Institutional Dictate

Within the rational top-down point paradigm, a bulk of literature assumes that policy administrators and implementers, such as field-level workers and civil service bureaucrats, adhere to set policy in accordance with rational, mechanical, and professionally objective efficiency (Portillo, Bearfield and Humphrey 2020).² We refer to this decision-making typology

² This idea is supported by the scientific objectivist trends in social sciences from the last century. Jurgen Habermas (Owen 2002) has severely criticized the prevailing 'Technocracy' that idealizes the ability of policy experts to advise decision-makers on optimal strategic tactics for successful achievement of policy goals.

as High-level Institutional Dictate because there are no original initiative implementations taking place at the local level.

2.1.2. Local Institutional Professionalism

Some scholars assume that without clear top-down policy goals and guidelines, public service delivery is doomed to failure, especially where implementations appear incongruous with macro policies or with one another (Hudson, Hunter and Peckham 2019; Matland 1995; May 2015; McConnell 2015; Mueller 2020). However, hybrid and bottom-up approaches claim that implementation is not necessarily a simple administrative procedure for the distribution of public resources to beneficiaries, and not always efficiently managed in accordance with rational, clear, and accurate guidelines (Hupe and Hill 2016). This is especially true regarding issues of conflict and competition for limited resources. Where policy guidelines are lacking, implementation infrastructures exist within institutional administrations whose very purpose lies in the achievement of policy output. As such, ambiguous policy processes can promote implementation initiatives, even as these might be incongruous with other policies or implementations. For instance, Brodtkin (2011, 255) considers administrative decisions as *"political work to the extent that it effectively determines who gets what and how, thus constituting a form of policy politics"*. Therefore, politicians facing policy deadlock with regard to conflict-oriented issues may tend to rely on ambiguous political declarations, effectively deferring top-down decision-making to administrative operatives (Howlett, McConnell and Perl 2015; Kingdon 2010). We categorized this hybrid/bottom-up typology, whereby decisions designating policy beneficiaries are deferred to administrators and practitioners at local levels, as Local Institutional Professionalism. In the absence of top-down clarity, original local decisions that may be unaccountable to macro-level policy processes and/or incongruent to one another, can still produce implementation outputs (Winter 2006).

Assuming that the state is limited in its understanding of citizens' needs, administrators are expected to adjust or interpret clear top-down policy guidelines to gain a more meaningful service-oriented perspective. This allows for "divergence" of various implementation methods (Brodtkin 2003; Levee et al. 2018). Accordingly, Gofen (2014, 473) suggests that administrators play a key role in implementation outputs subsequently legitimized through high-level official policy change: *"Often portrayed as policymakers rather than policytakers, street-level bureaucrats play a key role in policy implementation"*. Thus, local planners and administrative practitioners are effective policymakers because they are experts in the delivery of public services in a fair and equitable manner. Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2012) deliberate on whether field-level bureaucrats are state agents or local citizen agents. In this paradigm, the basis for administrative intervention remains goals-oriented macro policy. Resulting implementation outputs represent recurring deviations from macro directives that can collectively provide re-evaluative feedback and eventual adjustment within the top-down hierarchical policy cycle.³ Within these hybrid parameters, practitioners of this type tend to rely on their professional sense of judgment, which is generally unaffected by any particular ideological narrative.

In our previous research, we distinguished between the distribution of public services as a

³ Policies are multiple, overlapping and in line with macro level decisions (Braybrooke and Lindblom 1963; Lindblom 1959).

frame of reference used in policy models and the distribution of land as a physically limited natural resource (Gertel Groome and Hočevár 2024). That is because competition for land as a commodity resource implies high-level political ambiguity relevant to issues of conflict and non-consensus (Matland 1995). We maintain that, unlike service-type policies, implementation outputs for land distributions should not have to rely on meso- or micro-implementation level adaptive or interpretive interventions within top-down systems. Instead, they are best initiated through progressive, flexible decision-making processes.

2.1.3. Administrative Professionalism and Personal Administrative Ideology

We categorize typologies of decision-making based on bottom-up original implementations within flexible decision-making processes as the Administrative Professionalism and Personal Administrative Ideology typologies. They correspond to the *Orphan Implementations of Public Policy* modality of policy process, which we have introduced in our previous research (Gertel Groome 2021; Gertel Groome and Hočevár 2024). Building on the literature relating to empowered administrative decision-making for conflict/ambiguity issues, we explored policy processes orphaned from high-level policymaking (Brodkin 2011; Carey and Foster 2011; Denhardt and Denhardt 2000; Gofen 2014; Levee et al. 2018; Levee and Cohen 2019; Yannow 2000). In developing the *Orphan Implementations* modality, we addressed the deference of policymaking to decision-making at localized implementation levels of the processes. Local implementation initiatives were buoyed by flexible bottom-up decisions, thus enabling meso- and macro-level planning practitioners and administrators to be attentive to conflicting moral, ethical, and ideological value systems. The modality holds that abstract political declarations encourage flexible decision-making and fluidity between ambiguous high-level political declarations and policy implementation outputs (Gertel Groome and Hočevár 2024). These, in turn, have the combined capacity to collectively influence national spatial policy outcome (Mandl, Dierx and Ilzkovitz 2008, 3). We present the Administrative Professionalism and Personal Administrative Ideology typologies as similar to one another, albeit the latter additionally relies on the self-identification values of the administrator, and considers his/her personal perceptions and practices as a core element of bottom-up influence on public policy.

2.2. New Institutionalism and Professional Policy Implementation for Resource Distributions

Laws, policies, national agendas, and declarative statements are made by governments and politicians, but many policy decisions are contingent upon local institutional, professional, and personal environmental circumstances. Since circumstances might change, Howitt (2003, 150) regards the evolution of spatial configurations in dynamic terms. Implementation of public policy also depends on the changeable behavior of people and institutions, which often contributes to the survival of an institutional organization, its maintenance, legitimacy and structure (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Scott 1995). Bureaucratic frameworks of implementation may compete for control and status, and/or in order to determine institutional core-values (Nicholson-Crotty 2005). Given the capacity for administrative influence at policy

implementation levels, practitioners' motivations affect the dissemination of public services and resources, and are therefore worthy of consideration as a relevant component of the policy process (Gofen 2014; Lavee, Cohen and Nouman 2018; Richardson, Gustafsson and Jordan 1982). Motivations may be manifest in the form of personal, professional or prevailing ideals, belief systems and desires, dominant social values, and public pressures or demands.

As spatial planners and administrative practitioners work within public institutions, and in tandem with political developments, to implement distributions of economic and physical resources, they become engines of social networking. Where land issues are concerned, they are de facto protectors and holders of public territories. To adequately promote the distribution of public land resources, spatial implementation processes may be grounded in institutional, community, or personal value systems (Oliver 1991; Powell and DiMaggio 1991).

Within the New Institutional focus on political level policy processes, Hall and Taylor (1996, 949), view prevalent functional institutional procedures at implementation levels in terms of evolutionary, culturally, and historically embedded traditions. Actors, both inside and outside administrative organizations, are cast as essential stakeholders in the adoption of New Institutional practice. Hall and Taylor (1996, 954) note that policy actors seem to drop from sight, resulting in "*action without agents*." This holds additional testimony to the phenomenon whereby high-level responsibility for practical actions is vague, and meso- and micro-level policies are not synchronized within top-down decision-making processes. While bottom-up decision-making relies on original implementation initiatives, individual planning and administrative practitioners constitute the institutions within which they operate. As such, practitioners' decisions to advance implementation initiatives are based on their institutional preferences and professional judgements, but might also be influenced by their personal worldviews.

Within the institutional framework of the Israeli planning process, there tends to be an understanding of the division between political or macro agendas, both articulated and vague, and professional field-level considerations. Spatial planning methodologies offer a clear picture of the parameters of institutional flexibility, motivating and tailoring land resource distributions to specific communities.

As a parliamentary democracy in a uni-level centralized national government, Israel is an example of a multi-party political system that encourages various and conflicting political representation within its government coalitions. As such, inclusionary policymaking is complicated, often abstract, and ambiguous. Alongside bureaucratic, technical, legal, and budgetary norms and conditions, and personal behavior, the sociological strain of New Institutionalism views operative organizational conduct in terms of accepted convictions pertinent to professional practice. A relevant example of organizational conduct is outlined in the Israeli Planning and Building Law (GOI 1965) as based on the Westminster model, which includes the UK, Australia, Canada, and Israel. The law sets out a relatively fluid hierarchy of government spatial planning institutions that is flexible enough to reflect bottom-up input. Figure 1 illustrates the statutory process, whereby spatial distributions may be initiated or enabled by any of the governing levels, subject to adjustment of higher-level plans. Responsibility for planning at macro-, meso-, and micro-levels is shared by a combined cast of government planning agencies. Planning committee members represent various issues of

conflict and consensus, reflecting a microcosm of public interests and political motives. The macro tier represents general policymaking with few implementation preferences, the aim of which may be vague or abstract (Alexander, Alterman and Law-Yone 1983, 108; Howlett 2014, 294; Linder and Peters, 1988, 744). The high meso-level may or may not provide policy frameworks and schemes or strategies for implementation, specifying policy objectives and instruments (Page 2010; Schneider and Ingram, 1994). Lower down the hierarchy, local planning decisions relate to specific and detailed schemes. Practical policy implementation is the approval of schemes submitted at local administrative levels.

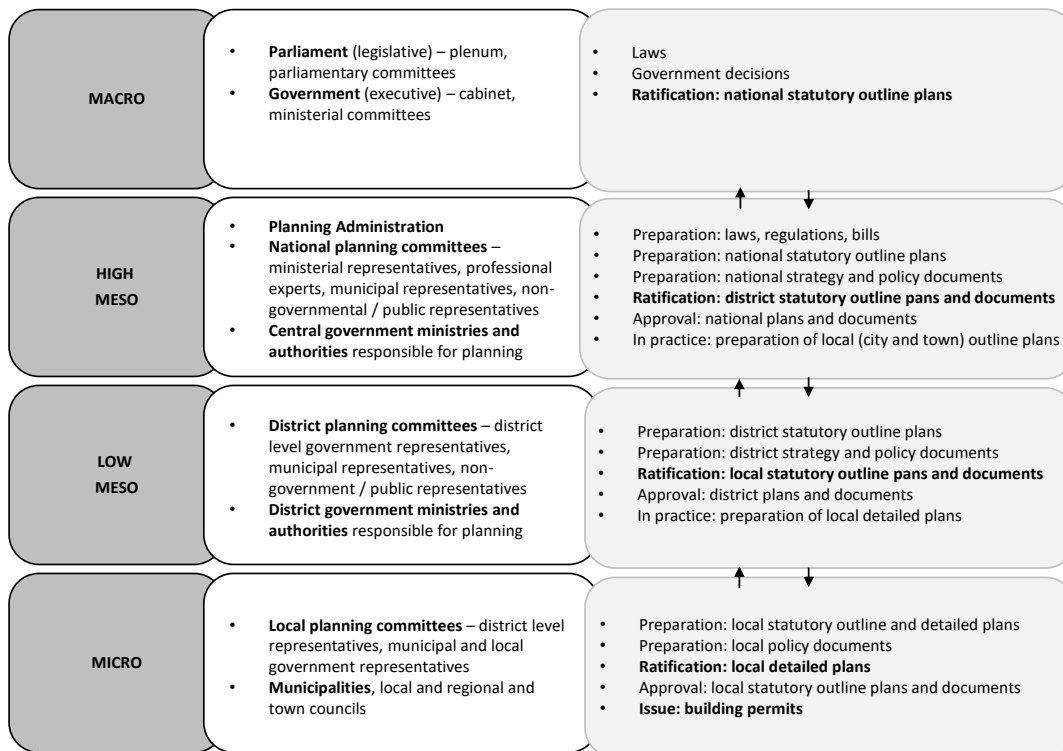


Figure 1: Levels of government decision-making within Israeli spatial planning processes (Adapted from The Building and Planning Law, 1965).

As within all institutional frameworks, Israeli administrative norms have developed and progressed over time (Christensen, Lægreid and Wise 2002). Further periodic amendments to the law and its statutory procedures for approval of spatial distributions of scarce land resources, widen the scope of flexible decision-making at implementation levels (GOI 2004; IPA 2018, 2022). This allows for separate, more enhanced discussion and specific administration of particularly complex policy issues (Roded 2012, 145).

Where Israeli governance defers to local administrators regarding such issues, they hold ample flexibility to initiate and direct decision-making processes. Yet, Roded (2012, 145) is concerned that increased field-level policymaking calls into question the professionalism of administrative practitioners, vis-à-vis the politicization of their role, particularly where land distributions are concerned. This is indeed relevant regarding new town establishments, as spatial practitioners might act in support of their view of national or institutional interests, narrow ethnocultural demands, as well as their own personal outlooks. We hope that for issues characterized by vague political intentions drawing flexible decision-making processes,

planners and administrators are encouraged to exercise professional discretion based on field-level knowledge of the needs of particular communities. Yet, we cannot rule out the possible benefits of moderate individual diplomacy on the part of local practitioners in terms that advance the public good. Together, the identification of target populations, analysis of relevant socioeconomic and cultural data, and the consideration of land-use maps and geographic market forces must contribute to professionally balanced spatial planning solutions. Ideally, the implementation of local policy initiatives should yield a wider, more mature policy outcome to support ethnic inclusivity on a national level.

2.3. Administration of Spatial Resources amid Political, Socioeconomic, Ethnocultural, and Environmental Ideologies

Over time, spaces defined by historically documented or perceived social interactions can produce overlap of various ethnicities at the same geographic coordinates (Lefevbre 1991; Low 2008, 34–36, 40; Thelen 2003). Opposing sociospatial perceptions regarding heritage and tradition would then result in inequalities that include, exclude or prefer particular communities. For example, in the case of Israel, multiple socially constructed narratives relating to the same territorial spaces draw concurrent competing land claims from several communities. Analyses of Israeli land distributions for large ethnic minority Arab and Jewish Ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) populations illustrate how spatial issues become practical circumstances for public resource distributions (GOI 2003, 2015, 2016, 2022a,b). Here, within flexible decision-making processes, political ambiguities pose ethical and moral policy dilemmas for field-level planners and administrators (Gertel and Alterman 1994).

The capacity to regulate the fair distribution of land resources at implementation levels is influenced by administrators' perceptions of the public interest. Yet, administrators themselves may emotionally identify with certain cultures, ideologies, or popular narratives, attitudes, and trends that can change over time. Such trends are often propagated by forces of globalization, encouraging the participation of interest groups across the world in national and local policymaking (Zaeid 2014). Recent manifestations of the international public tendency to command influence over delicate geopolitical mechanisms can be observed in relation to climate change, as well as territorial disputes between Russia and Ukraine, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and others (Abnett 2023; Epstein and Huynh 2023). Social and mass media "influencers," populists and activists are compelled to choose sides. Despite extreme geographic and cultural distances, students, citizens, and institutions around the world join large demonstrations to promote opinions regarding major ethnic, socioeconomic, environmental, and territorial issues. This must somehow contribute to the shaping of the way local administrators define and promote the public interest.

Social, political, and/or economic pressures brought to bear on policymakers can reflect a range of potential policy beneficiaries. Cries for cultural (social) justice and human rights are often based on events, experiences occurring in time and space (Low 2017, 15–19). If stakeholders' beliefs and ideologies create and shape the built environment, based on symbolic cultural or religious lines in physical space, ideals and prejudices can define and be defined by the organization of such spaces (Jones, Rhys and Michael 2014, 112–113; Leicht and Jenkins 2007). In this regard, urban and regional policy processes for land distributions

are affected by paradigms that incorporate sociopolitical, economic, ethnocultural, and ecological concepts.

To serve a heterogeneous public equitably, policymaking should be flexible enough to acknowledge contentions among meso- and micro-level administrators, within public institutions and lobby groups, even as they are influenced by their own personal identities or by external media trends. While spatial orders can be implemented to emphasize and perpetuate timely dominant political and economic ideologies at the expense of weaker ones (Low 2017, 38, 40–42, 70), it is reasonable to hope that administrators would use them to support sociocultural inclusivity (Low 2017, 19, 39; Soja 2010; Werlen 2005, 55).

Our previous study of new town establishment in Israel relied on constructions of policy process to explore institutional frameworks for flexible administrative decision-making, against the backdrop of national historical and ideological evolution of spatial policy over time. Accordingly, the study was informed by the relationship between ethnographic ideologies and professional variables relevant to the organization and distribution of land as a public commodity (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Hennink, Hutter and Bailey 2020; Williams 2019).

We discovered that *the Orphan Implementations modality* (Gertel Groome and Hočevár 2024) served as an adequate foundation for fluidity and decentralization of policy decisions by leveraging high-level ambiguity to achieve processes more in tune with the public and political perspectives, as they changed over the course of time.

The initial analyses identified distinct chronological time-periods representing nationalist ideological doctrines on the distribution of land in sociographic space (Low 2008):

- **The Ideological period** (1950s–1980s) enjoyed consensus around the goal of nation-state building, immigrant absorption, and the strategic dispersal of new towns and villages.
- **The period of Economic Normalization** (1990s) focused on commitment to fiscal responsibility, the consolidation of urban and regional metropolitan centers, and the expansion of existing built areas. This was an era of non-consensus and opaque public policy regarding statutory planning for the establishment of new towns, often relating to specific target populations or social and environmental justice (Efrat 1994; IPA 1993; Kipnis 1996; Knesset 2010; Lerman and Lerman 1992; Peled 2002; Rachewski 1992).
- **The period of Social and Environmental Justice** (2000–2022) was associated with harshly conflicting views on the establishment of new towns, weighing development against preservation of agricultural and open spaces (Orenstein and Hamburg 2009). Flexible statutory procedures were installed (GOI 2004) to facilitate a political atmosphere of inclusive multiethnicity, heterogeneity, equity, and prosperity for all citizens. This period remained heavily influenced by international concerns relating to social and environmental justice (Zaeid 2014, 334).

We submitted:

1. Evolving doctrines were based on ethnocultural, religious, socioeconomic, and ecological principles and proved to be important factors within Israeli decision-making processes, particularly in terms of local administrative implementation initiatives (Low 2017, 40–42, 70).
2. For conflict/ambiguity type issues, ambiguous, vaguely defined political declarations offered Israeli planners and administrators the advantage of flexibility to support policy processes initiated on intermediate meso- or local micro-implementation levels.
3. Policy for issues of conflict was most often deferred to bottom-up administrative planning initiatives at implementation levels, subsequently ratified by higher planning authorities in accordance with the Israeli statutory planning and building process (GOI 1965).
4. Pragmatic localized administrative decisions produced local implementation outputs, which largely provided the integrated social balance for Israeli national policy outcome, thereby encouraging demographic resilience and spatial stability.

The previous study suggested that wherever local administrative efforts nurture and shape the morphology of land-use and land distributions, original implementation initiatives could leverage flexible political declarations to weigh and proportionate competing land claims. In this way practitioners may offer creative solutions for social justice. We considered social justice in terms of increased parity among opposing groups of contenders to promote a more egalitarian policy outcome. To the extent that the personal mindsets of individual practitioners affect their decisions on land distributions to various population groups, the resulting diverse local implementation outputs would potentially contribute to a sustainable national spatial policy.

3. Research Approach

The case study of land distributions for the establishment of new towns in Israel focused on the implementation of contentious spatial policy decisions. The research incorporated primary and secondary documentation and employed research tools for layered analyses of policy processes. The documentation was cross-referenced with the practical stages of the spatial process outlined in Israel's Planning and Building Law (GOI 1965), together with other relevant government decisions and procedures. Semi-structured interviews with key government officials and professional land-use planners from the public and private sectors and lobby groups were used to provide the study with empirical data relating to land distributions in Israel, and more specifically to the attitudes of stakeholders and actors.

The interview analyses presented here follow our previous research results relating to the impact of local decision-making within flexible processes on national policy, as discussed in Gertel Groome and Hočevár (2024). Used to support the *Orphan Implementations of public policy* modality for deciding spatial issues of conflict and ambiguity, the interview findings also indicated empowerment of administrative practitioners as policymakers operating within

prevalent institutional and sociocultural contexts. Employing the same set of interview data, our objective in this article was to address the extent to which policy initiatives for public land resource issues, defined by conflict and ambiguous politicized processes, were significantly impacted by, or dependent on, the institutional, professional, and personal ideologies, value systems, world-views, loyalties, or ethics of field-level actors. Accordingly, we established characteristic typologies of decision-making to systematically classify the data on the activities of local planners and administrators across instances of new town implementation initiatives.

The overall premise was that planners and administrative practitioners operating on the intermediate meso- and local micro-levels are a source of creation and implementation of policy for the distribution of land resources. To discover how their personal mindsets and varying backgrounds might influence the course of decision-making, we relied on the comprehensive mapping, presented in our previous study of 52 instances of planned new town implementations in Israel from the years 1950-2022. This traced the planning and implementation processes for new town establishments, implemented under circumstances of ethnocultural and environmental conflict. All instances referred to new towns in existence or undergoing statutory processes. Their existing or target populations were either large enough to potentially carry official urban status – from 4,999 residents (GOI 1993), planned for a capacity of that size, or the subject of planned urban densification for culturally adapted large semi-rural municipalities established after the year 2000.⁴

The interview data was compiled between the years 2021-2022 from 13 semi-structured interviews conducted, in discussion format, with civil servants – practicing and retired, private practitioners, consultants contracted by government agencies, and non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives. All held senior positions related to planning and building practice and had participated in, or had knowledge of, at least 3 of the new town implementations relevant to the case study.⁵

Interview questions relating to the 52 mapped instances of new town implementations were included in the interview analyses, only when referenced by at least 2 respondents in common. There were 22 such instances, constituting a substantial representation of the past 50 years of spatial practice. The majority of these (approximately 60%) were initiated at meso- or local micro-levels of policy processes, including all instances between the years 2000 and 2022.

Respondents were shown information relating to the 52 mapped towns, as well as their dates of establishment or statutory acknowledgement, and the documented reasons for their establishment. This information helped to ground responses within the dynamics of chronological periods, defining high-level government doctrine, its flexibility, or lack thereof. The points of discussion raised in the interviews are outlined in Table 1 and coded according to criteria for descriptive and interpretive analysis. These provided a basis for calculating the study results.

4 The data incorporated large, semi-rural Bedouin municipal entities. These sizable tracts of land comprise multiple villages expected to increase in population and living density, over time becoming towns.

5 Professional experience was verifiable by official protocols and documentation.

Table 1: Points of discussion and analysis for semi-structured interviews of planning practitioners

	Point of discussion	Analytical Indication (criteria)	Coding
<i>i</i>	Recount successful new town implementations in which you were involved, and name and date them – inclusive of instances relating to positive statutory decisions.	- Introduce the topic of discussion <i>Isolate common data</i> regarding instances of field-level initiatives to establish new towns	Number of common referenced original field-level instances (procedural)
<i>ii</i>	Recount who and what agencies were involved in each of the successful implementations at macro-, meso- and micro-planning levels, and indicate which of them leveraged the greatest support for implementation.	<i>Type of institution most likely to promote new town establishment</i>	Dominant field-level support for implementation: yes; no (1, 0)
<i>iii</i>	Try to pinpoint at what level (macro, meso, and micro) <i>and with whom</i> the idea for each of the successful implementations originated.	a. Practical decisions traced to <i>administrator/practitioner</i> b. <i>Original initiative</i>	a. Administrator: yes; no (1, 0) b. Original initiative: yes; no (1, 0)
<i>iv</i>	Recount whether or not each of the successful implementations was <i>incongruous</i> with the high-level government doctrine of relevant periods, and if so, <i>why</i> .	a. Establish <i>incongruity with national doctrine or high-level flexibility and decentralization of policy issues</i> b. Explain why <i>administrators</i> initiated implementation decisions with/without explicit high-level backing versus <i>personal ideology or identity</i> supporting or negating social justice /ethics (history, geopolitics, religion, culture, loyalty)	a. Incongruity; high-level flexibility (1, 0) b. <i>Decision typologies:</i> Local Institutional Professionalism; Administrative Professionalism; Personal Administrative Ideology or Identity (1, 2, 3)
<i>v</i>	Recount the decision-making process, was it flexible? who was opposed to each of the successful implementations, at what levels (macro, meso, and micro), representing which institutions/organizations and <i>why</i> – describe conflicts, if relevant.	Based on conflict/ ambiguity, establish <i>high-level incongruity with national doctrine or flexibility and decentralization of policy issues</i>	Incongruity; high-level flexibility (1, 0)
<i>vi</i>	Discuss the following catalysts for successful implementation of new towns in terms of their influence: demand or need, government finance, national or local government policy (institutionalism) or others (e.g. loyalty to employer), cultural identity/reverse discrimination.	Explain why <i>administrators</i> initiated implementation decisions with/without explicit high-level backing versus <i>personal ideology or identity</i> supporting or negating social justice /ethics (history, geopolitics, religion, culture, loyalty)	<i>Decision typologies:</i> Local Institutional Professionalism; Administrative Professionalism; Personal Administrative Ideology or Identity (1, 2, 3)
<i>vii</i>	Please add any additional information/opinions that you would like to share.	Open discussion	Background information

Each point of discussion, some overlapping, intimated one or more significant elements of analysis. Others simply provided background information. Data on new towns established was time referenced to identify possible correlations of local administrator decision-making with chronological time-periods (point *i*). Data on field-level institutional and personal involvement in new town establishment were recorded to explore the roles of administrative actors' (points *i*, *ii*, and *iii*). Elements of original field-level planning implementation initiatives unconnected to any clear form of macro-political policy guidelines or instruction were identified (point *iii/b*). These represented bottom-up original decision-making at meso-levels and/or local micro-levels, indicating that individual planning and administrative practitioners served in the capacity of primary policymakers for implementation. Implementations that related to flexible governance were noted (measured by the strength of points *iv/a* and *v* combined).

The reasoning behind practitioners' original initiatives was categorized into the four conceptual typologies of decision-making as subject to flexibility, to gauge how policy was affected by institutional, professional, and personal value systems within policy processes (points *iv/b* and *vi*):

- **High-level Institutional Dictate** – top-down, without original local initiative implementations
- **Institutional Professionalism** – bottom-up or hybrid, possibly incongruent with other policies
- **Administrative Professionalism** – bottom-up, relying on high-level flexibility in policymaking
- **Personal Administrative Ideology or Identity** – bottom-up, defined by self-perception

4. Results

This study of new town establishment in Israel over time explored motivating factors for administrative policy decisions regarding land distributions in circumstances of conflict and ambiguity. We found that the majority of sociospatial decisions recorded were grounded either in local institutional choices and/or in high-level flexibility within administrative policy systems. The evidence suggests that successful implementations depended more on dominant institutional and professional loyalties than on practitioners' personal value systems, world-views, or ethnocultural leanings. Even so, nearly a quarter of the documented original initiatives were attributable to the personal mindset of specific planners and administrators.

The interview data were coded with reference to the points of discussion listed in Table 1, then compiled and recorded in Table 2.⁶ Organization of the data and its aggregates into sets for analysis resulted in identifiable patterns of response according to the conceptual typologies of decision-making. Three of the typologies related to practitioners' original bottom-up implementation initiatives, while a fourth recorded top-down policy origins (see Figure 2).

⁶ If discrepancies occurred between varying responses to a single point, the majority response was used for analysis. If only two respondents discussed an instance, with discrepancies in their responses, the instance was discarded.

Table 2: New towns in Israel – policy decisions and implementations: data sets for interviews

Points of discussion			<i>i</i>	<i>ii</i>	<i>iii/a</i>	<i>iii/b</i>	<i>iv/a & v</i>	<i>iv/b & vi</i>	
		New town incidences - date established	Number of common referenced instances	Dominant field-level support for implementation; yes; no (1,0)	Administ-rator: yes; no (1,0)	Original Initiative: yes; no (1,0)	High-level Flexibility; incongruity (1,0)	Decision-making typologies	Local Institutional professionalism; Administrative professionalism; Personal Administrative Ideology/Identity (1,2,3)
New town		KIRYAT YEARIM (Ultra-Orthodox)	1975	2	1	0	1	1+0*	1
		KOCHAV YAIR	1981	2	1	0	1	1+0*	1
		METAR	1984 (1980)	2	1	0	1	1+0*	1
		LEHAVIM	1985 (1982)	2	1	0	1	1+0*	1
Policy/plan for permanent settlements for the Bedouin population in the Negev	TEL SHEVA	1968	2	0	0	0	0	-	
	RAHAT	1972	2	0	0	0	0	-	
	SEGEV SHALOM	1979	2	0	0	0	0	-	
	AR'ARA BANEDEV	1981	2	0	0	0	0	-	
	KSEIFEH	1982	2	0	0	0	0	-	
	HURA	1989	2	0	0	0	0	-	
	LAKIA	1990 (1974)	2	0	0	0	0	-	
MODI'IN		1990 (1965,85)	2	1	1	1	1	3	
ELAD		1998 (1990)	3	1	1	1	1	3	
SHOHAM		1993 (1965) (1972)	3	0	0	0	0	-	
BAT HEFER		1990	3	0	0	0	0	-	
HARISH (Ultra-Orthodox)		2010 1995 (1992)	4	1	1	1	1	3	
ZUR YITZHAK		2002 (1998)	2	1	1	1	1	3	
KASIF (Ultra-Orthodox)		2022 (2007)	3	1	1	1	1	3	
HASHAM ZANA (Bedouin)		2021	2	1	0	1	1	2	
UM BATIN (Bedouin)		2005 (2003)	2	1	0	1	1	2	
ABU TLUL (Bedouin)		2011 (2006)	2	1	0	1	1	2	
MAKCOL/MARIT (Bedouin)		2003 (1999)	2	1	0	1	1	2	

*High-level flexibility during the Ideological period encouraged decentralized decision-making, incorporating bottom-up interpretations of top-down political declarations for creating a nationalistic spatial order.

Table 2 shows that all the instances relating to the Plan for permanent settlement for the Bedouin population in the Negev as top-down initiatives, were incongruous with land policy ideals of the time and not necessarily supported by individual administrators at local levels. The ideals of the Ideological period (1950s–1980s) related primarily to nation building and immigrant absorption, but not to land allocations for Bedouin towns. Only two other instances held similar characteristics: the towns of Shoham and Bat Hefer. These towns were established in the period of Economic normalization of the early '90s. Their implementations were also a product of top-down decision-making, not necessarily supported by individual local administrators. Their establishment was somewhat incongruent with the ideals of that period. Even though these towns complied with the accepted need for consolidation of urban and regional metropolitan centers, they did not live up to the desired densification of existing urban entities. Dilemmas of that time centered mainly on the financial and environmental strain on the public incurred by the establishment of exclusive new towns with lower population densities (suburban) that would serve upper socioeconomic strata.

The towns of Kiryat Yearim, Kochav Yair, Metar, and Lehavim were intended for exclusive populations (the first Ultra-Orthodox and the other three upper-middle class). They were not necessarily advanced by individual administrators, but they were supported and instigated by bottom-up local administration institutions as original initiatives. Their establishment in the Ideological period (during the '70s and early '80s) fit in with the ideal of new towns as a nation-building measure. The hybrid-style flexibility of the ideological period encouraged decentralized hybrid decision-making, which was also expected to conform to the national consensus and to non-specific political declarations regarding the deliberate design of an Israeli spatial order. Land distributions presented the opportunity to build a new network of cities, towns, and villages that identified as Israeli living spaces, in tune with the emergence of the fledgling state.

The instances of Modi'in, Elad, and Zur Yitzhak differed slightly from Harish and Kasif in that the latter two targeted Ultra-Orthodox populations.⁷ However, they all enjoyed the support of field-level public institutions and individual local administrators. These were original initiatives, but they also benefited from highly flexible processual systems that synchronized between ideological timeframes. The instances of Modi'in and Elad occurred during the period of Economic Normalization (1990s). The towns were intended for working and professional classes vis-à-vis the rising cost of housing in cities. As such, they represented the densification of central metropolitan areas of the country. Even though the development of existing towns would have been preferable to the establishment of new ones, these towns offered a welcome balance of ideals. The instances of Zur Yitzhak, Harish, and Kasif occurred in the period of Social and Environmental Justice (2000–2022). Although new towns were not beneficial to environmental conservation, flexible high-level attitudes and newly fortified statutory procedures promoted the strengthening of inclusive multiethnicity, heterogeneity, equity, and prosperity for all citizens. These included Ultra-Orthodox, secular, Moslem, varied socioeconomic sectors, and others alike (GOI 2004).

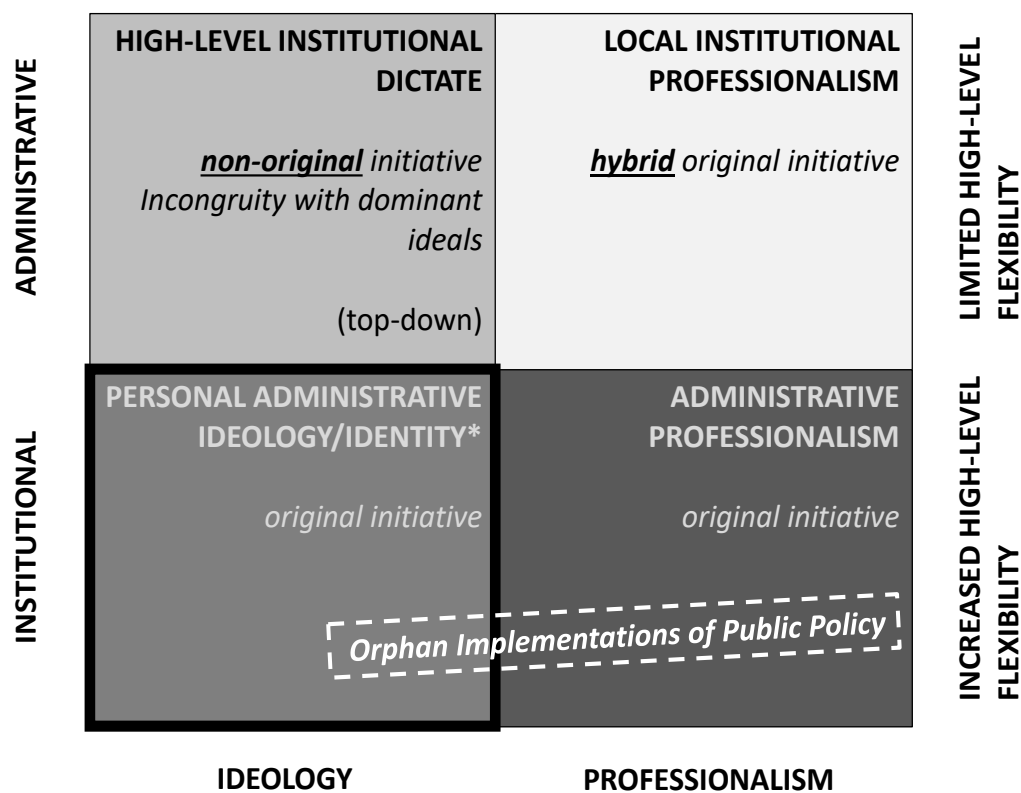
The four latest Bedouin town instances, Hasham Zana, Umbatin Abu Tlul, and Makcol/Marit were original initiatives that had institutional field-level support, but did not involve the personal mindsets of individual administrators. They also benefited from flexible processual

7 Elad originally targeted national religious groups, but eventually evolved to become an Ultra-Orthodox town.

systems that synchronized between ideological time frames. Again, new towns were weighed against environmental conservation, but flexible high-level attitudes and fortified statutory procedures strengthened inclusivity and multiethnicity as applied to land distributions weighed in the balance of ideals (GOI 2004).⁸

5. Analysis and Discussion

Figure 2 presents a matrix of the typologies of decision-making within land-use distribution processes. The matrix is ordered by three categorial parameters: a- standards of high-level flexibility; b- reliance on either prevailing ideologies or on professionalism; c- emphasis on implementation initiatives of either administrative practitioners or of institutional organizations.



*The Personal Administrative Ideology/Identity typology represented nearly 1/4 of all recorded instances, and almost 1/3 of recorded original initiatives.

Figure 2: Classification of data on Israeli new towns according to typologies of decision-making.

The *Orphan Implementations of Public Policy* modality rests on an increased standard of high-level flexibility of policy processes, relating to original bottom-up implementation initiatives and the capacity to produce a national policy outcome. The *Orphan* modality covers decisions based on professionalism and "good practice" or on the individual ideologies/world views of planners and administrators, or both. The focus here is on the extent to which individuals

⁸ Where Bedouin towns were concerned, desired high-density criteria for new towns were also considered an important long-term goal. See footnote number 4.

rely on their personal identities or mindsets to impact decisions regarding original policy implementation initiatives. We found that individual attitudes were a prominent factor in 38% of the new town instances defined as original initiatives.⁹

Within the parameters of this research, couched in conflict/ambiguity issues and ambiguous politics, new town establishments represented original bottom-up initiatives in 60% of all instances. These tended to have field-level support (points *ii* & *iii/b*). As represented by the two lower quadrants in Figure 2, approximately 70% of those original initiative instances included positive indications for high-level flexibility (points *iv/a* & *v*). These fit the *Orphan Implementations* modality of policy process.

5.1. High-level Institutional Dictate

The top left quadrant in Figure 2 relates to implementations of new town instances relevant to the top-down High-level Institutional Dictate typology of decision-making, as referenced by interview responses. Not surprisingly, this typology accounted for roughly 40% of all instances recorded, most of which occurred in the first ideological period of state building. In accordance with certain elements of dominant national discourse, some implementation instances indicated incongruity with other top-down ideals. For example, the prevailing atmosphere of the Ideological Period (prior to 1990) unquestionably supported the strategic establishment and dispersal of new towns and villages – primarily to absorb poor immigrants, without reference to existing populations. It seems that necessity also paved the way for the establishment of some new Bedouin towns, as well as towns for more elitist groups. Most policies derived from macro political consensus relating to the public needs. Although implementations targeting Bedouin populations responded to their immediate land needs, those implementations bore incongruities in relation to other, more mainstream political ideals (point *ii*). Not unlike original institutionalist decision-making, these instances were not decided by flexible processes (points *iv/a* & *v*), and were negatively correlated with, and not considered to be, original initiatives (point *iii/b*).

5.2. Personal Administrative Ideology

Our main line of enquiry, relating to the impact of the individual identities or worldviews of administrators at implementation levels, is satisfied by the Personal Administrative Ideology typology for decision-making, depicted by the lower left quadrant of Figure 2. Herein, we observed that 38% of the instances founded on original initiatives could be traced to individual administrators' personal ideologies and or belief systems. The indication of deference to administrative discretion at implementation levels was further strengthened by the significant correlation of the personal administrator variable (point *iii/a*). It was recognized as a source of original initiatives (point *iii/b*), with variables relating to field-level support for implementation (point *ii*) and high-level flexibility (as opposed to incongruity with other policy frameworks) (point *iv/a* & *v*). This typology was relevant to many instances occurring in the period between the years 1990 and 2022, defined by the densification of central metropolitan areas and later by the promotion of inclusivity and multiethnicity.

⁹ These included hybrid original initiatives.

5.3. Administrative Professionalism

As depicted by the lower right quadrant in Figure 2, just over 30% of the instances establishing new towns as original initiatives (point *iii/b*) were decided at local implementation levels (point *vii*). However, they were not attributable to individual administrators (point *iii/a*). They did occur within the framework of high-level flexibility (points *iv/a* & *v*), and were positively correlated with field-level support (point *ii*). This deference to administrative discretion at implementation levels within a flexible atmosphere, accommodated professional evaluation of internal and international "good practice" to support original initiatives. The focus here was on the infrastructural and cultural needs of particular target populations rather than on the personal sentiments of administrators. Most of the new towns established after the year 2000 targeted minority populations in accordance with the inclusive multi-ethnic thrust of that time period. The Administrative Professionalism typology of decision-making did show some traits in common with field-level "divergence," such as attentiveness to target populations and reliance on administrators' professional/ethical value-based judgement (Lavee 2018). However, the former is distinguished by its reliance on bottom-up original implementation initiatives, whereas "divergence" relies on hybrid processes that stem from top-down policy.

Both the Personal Administrative Ideology and the Administrative Professionalism typologies of decision-making held in common the highest level of flexibility defined by non-committal political ambiguity regarding issues of conflict (Matland 1995). This encouraged deference of decision-making to administrative operatives at implementation levels. Accordingly, within relevant institutional, professional, and personal administrative contexts, the instances recorded related to bottom-up original implementation initiatives. Such fluid policy processes were compatible with the *Orphan Implementations of Public Policy* modality, promoting ethnoculturally balanced national distributions of land as a public resource. These implementations are identified as a part of the holistic sustainable national outcome, hopefully achieving a balance of social justice issues.

5.4. Local Institutional Professionalism

Shown in the upper right quadrant of Figure 2, a third of the original initiative instances establishing new towns (point *iii/b*) were somewhat incongruous with the dominant national discourse (points *iv/a* & *v*). They were attributable to local micro-level institutional considerations which manifested as hybrid implementations (point *vii*), but not to individual administrators (point *iii/a*). They were positively correlated with field-level support (point *ii*). The Local Institutional Professionalism typology is related to a plethora of conflicting policies that produced a muddled, incongruent style of ambiguity, largely in response to the dominant nationalist ideologies in the period prior to the year 1990. Interview respondents generally agreed that individual planners and administrators of that time were not likely to issue policy decisions that outright defied the high-level political doctrines of nation-state building. True to the institutionalist concept, implementers are both constrained and enabled within prevailing frameworks (DiMaggio 1998). One interview respondent explained¹⁰: "Regardless of whether I personally believe in the ideology behind a particular spatial initiative, I am a part of an institution that lends it support. Being an experienced professional, I can do the job well."

¹⁰ Translated from Hebrew.

Therefore, I have a responsibility to do so." Thus, the administrator might have expressed institutional loyalty, but most certainly employed professional skills, rather than individual or personal ideological reasoning (points *iv/b* & *vi*).

Contrary to the Administrative Professionalism typology, which operates under an obligation to fill the needs or demands of target populations, Local Institutional Professionalism proved more attuned to the demands of the local institution served. Even though the nature of this typology is institutional rather than needs-oriented, it showed a similarity to the hybrid field-level "divergence," which functions by adjustment or interpretation of consensus-based top-down policy guidelines (Brodin 2003; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2012).

Administrative Professionalism and Local Institutional Professionalism typologies accentuated the emergence of professional acumen as a guiding principle within the close-knit guild of planning practitioners. Both these typologies of decision-making, as well as the Personal Administrative Ideology typology, derive from bottom-up or hybrid original implementation initiatives. Yet, only Personal Administrative Ideology and Administrative Professionalism qualified as *Orphan Implementations of Public Policy*, in terms of the modality of policy process for conflict/ambiguity issues. The modality requires: 1- original implementation initiative, 2- a highly flexible flow of decision-making between policy levels, and 3- the capacity of aggregate implementation outputs to influence the national policy outcome. We found that Personal Administrative Ideology and Administrative Professionalism met those criteria, including the benefit of a more flexible policy atmosphere experienced in the most recent time period. The Local Institutional Professionalism of the upper right quadrant in Figure 2, could not provide a sustained flow of reciprocal cooperation between the local decision-makers and high-level politics. This lesser standard of flexibility attached to hybrid decision-making likely impeded the collective influence of local implementation outputs on the national policy outcomes for that typology.

Although proposals for unestablished new towns were not tested empirically, the interview framework for open discussion raised examples of initiatives that have not been implemented to date. These may be of some relevance regarding the typologies of decision-making identified in our research. While the High-level Institutional Dictate typology values were able to offer retrospective "time-lag" backing to expedite original implementation initiatives in later periods, Local Institutional Professionalism sometimes worked to delay new town proposals that were incongruent with updated dominant political doctrines (Heywood 2002). Some respondents were of the opinion that certain proposals could not meet professional "good practice" considerations as per Local Institutional Professionalism as well as Administrative Professionalism typologies. Others explained that there were proposals not approved due to the sway of certain administrators in accordance with the Personal Administrative Ideology. Also, budgetary feasibility and statutory processes for proposals were generally assumed to follow from high-level political and local professional decisions, as well as in relation to public demand or need for housing. Thus, many of the respondents felt that unimplemented proposals were still likely to be revisited and approved in the future, under more favorable market and/or doctrinal conditions.

6. Conclusions

Israel's Ideological period of state building was consensus-driven, and the establishment of new towns fit in with that consensus. Later on, flexible policies led to local-level land distribution initiatives that were interpretations or adjustments of top-down policy. Latter time periods saw the increasing political need to reconsolidate national consensus, specifically relating to controversial land distribution issues. This may have drawn high-level, ambiguous ideological statements, but held few goal-aligned policy directives. As a result, deference to decentralized original implementation initiatives, at meso- and micro-levels of policy processes, produced spatial plans for new towns that were subsequently adopted by national government decisions (Gertel Groome and Hočevár 2024). Such high-level processual flexibility ensured that the terms of administrative empowerment at implementation levels were maintained. This conceptualization of the *Orphan Implementations of public policy* modality supported original bottom-up initiatives as relevant to the typologies of decision-making in the lower quadrants of the matrix in Figure 2. Administrative Professionalism, as well as Personal Administrative Ideology-type decisions, best conformed to the parameters of the *Orphan* policy processes because they were capable of producing national policy.

Our study mapped the impact and influence of the personal mindsets of individual administrative planners and practitioners on planning and spatial policy for new town land distributions in Israel. We found that, despite the inherent relevance of professionalism to original policy initiatives for the establishment of new towns, almost one-third of the original initiative instances recorded were recognizably influenced by the personal cultural or political mindsets of individual administrative practitioners. These fell under the Personal Administrative typology of decision-making. As such, we cannot dismiss the suggestion that emotionally charged issues affect the administration of policy processes. Moreover, this tendency could increase, given the surge of global interest in regional and national conflicts.

While international sociopolitical contexts interact with national and local policy processes (Sapru 2006; Zaeid 2014), intensified globalization of conflict/ambiguity issues may threaten the dominance of professionalism over the personal ideology of administrators. Clearly, not all participants in globalized systems, seeking social justice as they define it, should be considered stakeholders within policymaking processes. Therefore, further study is advisable to explore the impact of widespread transborder sociopolitical trends in terms of their effect on meso- and micro-level administrators'. Such insight might eventually help minimize the reinforcement of identity or sympathy-based expressions of exclusionary sociopolitical sentiment on the part of administrators. Accordingly, the ideological strength of individual administrators could produce local implementations channeled toward a more altruistic, socially resilient world vision.

Evidence showing that much of the policy implementations were not attributable to the Personal Administrative Ideology typology of decision-making argues against the view that the political leanings of administrators challenge their professional judgement (Roded 2012, 145). Along the axis of professionalism in Figure 2, original initiative decision-making is reinforced by the professionalism of administrators. Focusing on the impetuses behind spatial planning and administrative practitioners' policy decisions, the Administrative Professionalism typology represented over a quarter of the documented original instances.

Within this typology, new town implementations were initiated through local micro-level decisions, unattributable to the personal sentiments of planners and administrators. Relevant instances occurred within the framework of high-level flexibility in a period of increased reciprocity regarding the flow of decision-making between policy levels, relating to new towns in particular (GOI 2004). Attuned, in their professional capacity, to the physical infrastructural and cultural needs and interests of particular local target populations, spatial practitioners also considered international standards of "good practice" as a part of their working "tool box." As policy initiators and implementers of land resource distributions, in situations defined by multiple levels of conflict and political ambiguity, practitioners should strengthen their reliance on professional reasoning to guide the design of policies that promote a combined socially and politically equitable national outcome (Mandl, Dierx and Ilzkovitz 2008, 3). In this regard, we hope that our research can contribute to a better understanding of patterns of decision-making to promote spatial policy that is valid, ethnoculturally sustainable, and socially balanced.

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