

# Distinguished Scholars Seminar Series 2023



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## Biography

Ahmed Shafiqul Huque's research and teaching interests are in public policy and administration, governance, development, climate change, and capacity building in developing countries. He has published sixteen books and numerous research articles in leading international journals including Public Administration Review, Governance, Public Management Review, International Review of Administrative Sciences, International Journal of Public Administration, Journal of Comparative and Comparative Politics, Pacific Affairs and Asian Survey. Dr. Huque was the Editor-in-Chief of the journal Public Administration and Policy, and Contributing Editor for Southeast Asia for the on-line Encyclopedia of Public Administration and Policy. Professor Huque served as the Vice President of the Hong Kong Public Administration Association, and provided consulting services to various organizations including the Companies Registry of Hong Kong Government, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and assessed grant applications for Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and Department for International Development (DFID). He held visiting appointments at the University of East Anglia (UK), Victoria University of Wellington (New Zealand), Universiti Brunei Darussalam, and Chiang Mai University (Thailand).

## ABSTRACT

### Integrating Theory and Practice in Public Policy

Theories are the foundation of knowledge because they help to predict facts and identify unexplored areas for research. Theories are validated by research and provide a sound basis for practical action. Practice is equally important because some things can only be learned through doing and experiencing. Integration of theory and practice is essential for efficiency and effectiveness of public policies based on informed decision-making. It helps avoid unintended consequences and adaptation to changing circumstances. The integration will maximize the potentials for innovative and creative public policies that will assist with long-term planning for the country. Theories have implications for public policy for promoting stakeholder and citizen engagement that contributes to enhancing trust and legitimacy for governments.

The integration of theory and practice in public policy can be challenging. Theories are formulated with the objective to cover a broad spectrum while practice focuses on specific sectors of policy areas. However, the integration is necessary to refine theories and validate them to ensure their robustness. It also provides a practical guide for application in specific contexts across society. The objective is to accumulate insight and information that progressively leads to a cumulative body of knowledge to expand the scope of research.

Theory and practice integration can be advanced through case studies, simulation games, role playing scenarios, problem-based learning, reflective journals, field visits, and interviews. The discussion will focus on evidence-based policy design, policy learning and adaptation, interdisciplinary collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and long-term thinking and sustainability to highlight the potentials of enhancing research quality by capitalising on the advantages of integration of theory and practice.