

The KAPSARC Energy Policy Database: Introducing a Quantified Library of China's Energy Policies

Authors : Philipp Galkin

Abstract : Government policy is a critical factor in the understanding of energy markets. Regardless, it is rarely approached systematically from a research perspective. Gaining a precise understanding of what policies exist, their intended outcomes, geographical extent, duration, evolution, etc. would enable the research community to answer a variety of questions that, for now, are either oversimplified or ignored. Policy, on its surface, also seems a rather unstructured and qualitative undertaking. There may be quantitative components, but incorporating the concept of policy analysis into quantitative analysis remains a challenge. The KAPSARC Energy Policy Database (KEPD) is intended to address these two energy policy research limitations. Our approach is to represent policies within a quantitative library of the specific policy measures contained within a set of legal documents. Each of these measures is recorded into the database as a single entry characterized by a set of qualitative and quantitative attributes. Initially, we have focused on the major laws at the national level that regulate coal in China. However, KAPSARC is engaged in various efforts to apply this methodology to other energy policy domains. To ensure scalability and sustainability of our project, we are exploring semantic processing using automated computer algorithms. Automated coding can provide a more convenient input data for human coders and serve as a quality control option. Our initial findings suggest that the methodology utilized in KEPD could be applied to any set of energy policies. It also provides a convenient tool to facilitate understanding in the energy policy realm enabling the researcher to quickly identify, summarize, and digest policy documents and specific policy measures. The KEPD captures a wide range of information about each individual policy contained within a single policy document. This enables a variety of analyses, such as structural comparison of policy documents, tracing policy evolution, stakeholder analysis, and exploring interdependencies of policies and their attributes with exogenous datasets using statistical tools. The usability and broad range of research implications suggest a need for the continued expansion of the KEPD to encompass a larger scope of policy documents across geographies and energy sectors.

Keywords : China, energy policy, policy analysis, policy database

Conference Title : ICPSIR 2015 : International Conference on Political Science and International Relations

Conference Location : Prague, Czechia

Conference Dates : July 09-10, 2015