

their content and paths of inheritance (Collier and Messick, 1975). As communication, trade, and travel links have encouraged closer ties among countries, the process by which countries learn policy lessons from abroad has become of greater concern.

Although one systematic study was published earlier (Waltman, 1980), until recently lesson drawing was largely neglected. The study of policy borrowing per se has only come to have a niche in the broader field of policy studies in the past decade, and slowly at that. Research in policy borrowing is difficult because it involves in-depth knowledge of the content of policy and policy development in two or more countries. As Hall (1993) notes, "Like subatomic particles, ideas do not leave much of a trail when they shift." Recently scholars have attempted to go beyond individual case studies to the specification of comparative hypotheses about what circumstances are likely to lead to policy borrowing (Bennett, 1991a; 1991b; 1996; Cox, 1993; Robertson and Waltman, 1993).

The empirical conditions facilitating and hindering policy borrowing in different policy areas need to be carefully delineated. These conditions may be institutional, cultural, or policy-specific, but only a systematic comparative study can clarify the situation. As Wolman (1992) says, "We know little about the role policy information from abroad plays, either in a