

Policy Actors and Policy Process

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Course Overview

	Morning Session (10:00 ~ 13:00)	Afternoon Session (14:00 ~ 16:00)
2 Aug 2024	Concept of Public Policy	Assignment & Task Division
9 Aug 2024	Research & Doing Policy Analysis	Hands on Using AI tools
16 Aug 2024	Policy Actors & Policy Process	Policy Simulation
23 Aug 2024	Power & Policy Agenda	Elevator Pitch & Policy Brief
30 Aug 2024	Policy Implementation	Policy Workshop

Day III: Session Overview

- State in public policy
- Critique of the state
- Characterizing state
- Private sector and public policy
- Interest group and public policy

What state does? Policy Instrument

- Ban the use of plastic bags
- Introduce Universal Basic Income
- Control of Time Zones
- Pay People to leave the country
- Regulate Names
- Ban Chewing Gum
- Enforce compulsory happiness
- Taxation on windows
- Ban on excessively Thin Models
- Tax on sugary drinks
- Free public transport
- Ban on high-heeled shoes
- Tax on social media use
- Allow Nudity on public beaches
- Tariffs on Video Games Consoles
- Limiting Internet Access to Specific Hours
- Rwanda 2008
- Finland
- North Korea 2015
- Japan 2009
- Iceland
- Singapore Since 1992
- Bhutan
- UK 1696 - 1851
- France 2015
- Mexico 2014
- Luxembourg 2020
- Greece 2009
- Uganda 2018
- Spain 2021
- Brazil 2013
- Cuba 2008

Critique of the state: Why?

- State interventions to correct market failures are not universally accepted.
 - Question about legitimacy of state actors in correcting market
- The choice of tools like regulation and taxation often sparks debate.
 - Question about the choice and effectiveness of instrument.
- Questioning the state authority: why do state holds too much power?
- Different political theories offer various reasons for critiquing the state (Liberal, Marxist, Feminist, Environmental).

Liberal and Libertarian Critiques

- **Liberal Perspective:**

- E.g.: Regulation of digital markets – too much regulation might stifle innovation.
- **Argument:** State intervention should be limited; markets should largely self-regulate.

- **Libertarian Perspective:**

- E.g.: Opposition to Universal Basic Income (UBI) – seen as government over-reach.
- **Argument:** State interventions are forced; prefer minimal or no state involvement.

Marxist and Feminist Critiques

- **Marxist Perspective**

- **E.g.:** State support for big corporations during economic crises (e.g., bailouts).
- **Argument:** State favors capitalist interests, neglects working-class needs.

- **Feminist Perspective**

- **E.g.:** Maternity leave policies – are they enough to support gender equality?
- **Argument:** State policies should often reinforce gender norms rather than challenge them.

Environmental and Anarchist Critiques

- **Environmental Perspective:**

- **E.g.:** Government subsidies for fossil fuels – contradicting climate goals.
- **Argument:** State prioritizes economic growth over ecological sustainability.

- **Anarchist Perspective:**

- **E.g.:** Resistance to state-imposed lockdowns during pandemics.
- **Argument:** State authority is inherently oppressive; prefer decentralized governance.

Characterizing States: Government System

Feature	Federal System	Unitary System
Structure	Divided central and regional governments	Concentrated in the central government
Constitution	Rigid	Relatively flexible
Autonomy	Degree of autonomy in certain areas.	Local governments have limited powers
Sovereignty	Central and regional governments	Central government
Law making	Both central and regional governments	Power in the central government
Complexity	More complex (multiple layer)	Less complex (single layer)
Examples	United States, Canada, Germany, Australia	United Kingdom, France, Japan
Advantages	Responsiveness to local needs	Efficient decision making
Disadvantages	Potential for conflict between governments	less responsive to local needs

Characterizing States: Government Bodies

Feature	Presidential System	Parliamentary System
Legislature and Executive	Separate and Independent: The president is directly elected and not a member of the legislature. There is a clear separation of powers.	Intertwined: The executive (PM) is chosen from the legislature and is accountable to it. The executive is part of the legislature.
Executive and Judiciary	Independent: The judiciary is separate from both the executive and legislature. Judges are appointed by the president (often with Senate confirmation).	Independent: The judiciary is generally independent, but the government can influence the judiciary through appointments and other means.
Checks and Balances	Strong: The system is designed to prevent any one branch from becoming too powerful. The president can veto legislation, the legislature can override vetoes, and the judiciary can declare laws unconstitutional.	Weaker: While there are checks and balances, the fusion of executive and legislative powers reduces their effectiveness. The legislature can remove the prime minister through a vote of no confidence.
Stability	More stable: Fixed terms for the president and members of the legislature contribute to stability.	Less stable: Governments can fall if they lose a vote of no confidence in the legislature.
Efficiency	Less efficient: The separation of powers can lead to gridlock and delays in decision-making.	More efficient: The fusion of executive and legislative powers can lead to quicker decision-making.

Understanding the Private Sector

- Consists of businesses and organizations not owned or operated by the government; for-profit enterprises, non-profits organisations.
- **Profit Motive:** Operates primarily to generate profit for owners and shareholders.
- **Diverse Sectors:** Encompasses various industries including technology, finance, manufacturing, and services.
- **Private Ownership:** Includes sole proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations.
- **Examples:** Small business, multinationals

Power and Influence of the Private Sector

- **Economic Power**
 - Significant control over markets and economic resources.
 - Ability to influence policy through substantial investments and economic contributions.
- **Lobbying and Advocacy**
 - Engages in lobbying to influence legislation and regulation.
 - Uses media and public relations campaigns to shape public opinion and policy.
- **Research and Development**
 - Fund academic research to advance knowledge in their fields or support public policy interests.
 - Grants to support students and researchers in areas aligned with their business interests.
- **Patient and Technological Dominance**

Private Sector in Public Policy

- Lobbying: Directly lobbying government officials and legislators to influence policy decisions.
- Public Private partnership: Collaborative projects between government and private companies to deliver public services or infrastructure.
- Corporate Social Responsibility: companies engage in CSR initiatives to address social and environmental issues, often aligning with public policy goals.
- Sponsorships, innovation and knowledge creation
- Public awareness on interest of policy issues
- Coalition building with private agencies
- Using business organisation for liaison between state and the public

Private Sector Motives in Public Policy

- Protecting business interest: Create conducive regulatory environment
 - E.g. Lobbying against stringent environmental regulations that could increase operational costs.
- Influencing market competition: secure market access and create competitive advantages.
 - E.g. Advocacy for trade policies that open up international markets or protect against foreign competition.
- Reputation, brand imaging and social impact
 - Supporting policies on sustainability to socially conscious consumers.
- Innovation, market expansion and future growth
 - E.g. Tech companies pushing for favorable data privacy laws to boost innovation
- Building strategic relationships and risk mitigation
 - E.g. Collaborating on infrastructure projects or healthcare initiatives.

Interest Group

- Group of people or organization concerned about particular issue
- Directly or indirectly affected by the issue/agenda
- Little or no formal organization
- Voluntary (people or organization choose to support/oppose issue)
- Aim to achieve some decided goals
- Do not aim to infiltrate the decision making process (i.e. do not intend to become engage in formal government process)

Type of Interest group: Cause Group

- **Issues:** Promote issues that may or may not directly impact their members.
- **Motivation:** Driven by shared beliefs and a desire to influence public policy.
- **Tactics:** Utilize various methods to promote their causes,
- **Corporate Influence:** Some groups may be secretly funded by corporations to shape public opinion in their favor.
- **Growing Influence:** Increasing membership in cause groups reflects growing disillusionment with traditional politics and a focus on specific issues.
- **Example:** women's association, issue based groups

Type of Interest group: Sectional Group

- **Economic Foundation:** derive power from their economic role and influence.
- **Bargaining Power:** Ability to influence government policy depends on the perceived importance of their role.
- **Tactics:** Can use various tactics, including strikes, lobbying, and public campaigns, to achieve their goals.
- **Evolving Roles:** The power and influence can change over time due to factors like government policies and societal changes.
- **Examples:** Trade unions, professional associations (like medical associations), and business groups are common examples.

Interest Group in Public Policy

- **Participation:** provide alternative ways for public to engage in politics
- **Political education:** help members to learn about political process
- **Motivation:** Provide new issue in the government attention, more information
- **Mobilization:** built pressure for action and support/oppose of new policies
- **Monitoring:** monitors the behaviour and action of the government
- **Provision:** can use their knowledge to provide services despite government funding

Interest Groups: Interactions

Professional Monopolist

consist of members from specific professions

often hold a monopolistic control over certain services or knowledge areas

lobby to maintain their monopoly by resisting policies that might dilute their control or standards

Corporate Rationalizer

represent large corporations or business sectors

Challenge the professional monopolist through resource mobilization

advocate for free-market policies, reduced government intervention, and deregulation

Equity Advocates

typically represent marginalized or disadvantaged groups

focus on promoting fairness, justice, and equal opportunities within public policy

advocate for policies that address systemic inequalities. E.g. progressive taxation, social safety nets, and anti-discrimination laws

Thank You !