



CHAPTER 3

Social Science Foundations of Public Policy

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INTRODUCTION

Public policy plays a crucial role in governance and development process and success.¹ The ideological basis and practice of public policy are framed within social science theory and methodology (Bolsen et al. 2015; Jarvie 2011). In other words, the science of public policy or policy science is founded on the social sciences. The social sciences provide the analytical explanation of governance, society and human behaviour and as such provide the necessary tools for apposite policy research and implementation (Nigrini and Llanos 2009; Wagner 2007). Aside from theoretical postulations, the social sciences attempt the empirical capture of historical and

¹David Mandiyanike. Globalisation in the Context of Public Policy. <https://gcs-vimeo.akamaized.net/exp=1512633796~acl=%2A%2F810140683.mp4%2A~hmac=5725ef6e5896ac99740f744925509b0f999e6d79e48d1acd85ef8623c11ae050/vimeo-prod-skyfire-std-us/01/926/9/229633560/810140683.mp4>

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contemporary realities to infer policy options that will advance human existence and development (O'Connor 2009; Young et al. 2002). The strategic role of the social sciences in policymaking cannot be overemphasised and thus writing on policy science as social science-oriented policy discipline, Rosenthal (1982: 287) opined that “the new policy sciences are intended to provide a cross-disciplinary framework capable of integrating and utilizing a multiplicity of techniques, models, and assumptions for developing explanatory models of the processes by which policy is made and executed”.

This chapter presents and discusses the social science basis of public policy. It briefly presents the history, epistemological thoughts (theories) and science of public policy, disciplinary paradigms and influences on public policy and cross-disciplinary dimensions in social science-oriented public policy. Disciplinary and cross-disciplinary dimensions of social sciences in public policy are two sides of the same coin. On the one hand, Rosenthal (1982) suggest “all [social] sciences are unified by their method, which enables them to produce a body of laws that is symmetrical with regard to explanation and prediction” (p. 283), while, on the other hand, methodological individualism recognises disciplinary epistemological ontology at unique theory, method and explanation, even though there may be overlaps. Hence, using unique and cross-disciplinary approaches, social science disciplines define, analyse and explain social situations to advance appropriate public policy. The ensuing policies are, therefore, structured by the guiding ideology adopted within a disciplinary or multiplicity of disciplinary approaches.

Extant research on social science and public policy across geographies show that contemporary public policy goes beyond party ideologies or the preference of governments in power. Writing on Great Britain and emphasising the importance of the social sciences in public policy, Newby (1993) notes the public outcry and violent protests which followed an increase in poll tax in 1990 had an impact on public policy. Newby thus posits: “Perhaps the most important lesson to be drawn from it is the reminder that in contemporary society governments only govern by consent; and that the consent conferred on party manifestos by the ballot box may not be sufficient justification for public policies which, in their realisation if not their design, run counter to widely and deeply held public experiences, attitudes and values” (p.365). Likewise, Albæk (1995) notes that politicians and government officials debate and modify or wholesomely utilise social science-based evidence in policymaking, even though such

use is not commonly acknowledged.² Kates et al. (2001) examined the strategic place of the social sciences in studying human societies, interactions and sustainability, especially in the developing countries. That of Mascia (2003) discussed the role of social science research in coral reef marine protection policy, while Thompson and Scoones (2009) focused emerging contributions of social sciences in agricultural and food systems policy. The works of Heyman et al. (2006) and Hackenberg (2002) demonstrated the importance of Anthropology in Public policy while that of Henderson (2007) discussed the importance of Political Science in race and equity in governance. Furthermore, Becker, Gans, Newman and Vaughan (2004) and Houglund (1990) discussed the value of Sociology in public policy by giving voice to people through social research. Woodhead's (1988) study documented the psychological intervention in making social intervention policies for disadvantaged children while Walker (1984) discussed the roles of psychologists in developing a public policy against domestic violence. Also, Bhargava and Loewenstein (2015) addressed the place of behavioural economics in making apposite and efficient public policy. Reinicke (1998) and Komesar (1994) indicated the necessity of prescribing appropriate laws to actualise policies for public good and national security, and Ward's (2007) research on "policy geographies" shows the importance of geography in environmental and planning policymaking. Finally, Hodgson (1983) presents demography as a social science which has a place in policy science, urbanisation research and public policy. Indeed, recommendations emphasising small family sizes have influenced population and development policies across the world primarily as from the mid-1980s (see also Demeny 1988, 2011; Speidel et al. 2009).³ The next section presents a brief history of the social sciences; the third section examines social science and public policy across disciplines, and the fourth discusses the multidisciplinary essence of the social sciences in policymaking despite discipline-specific uniqueness and also concludes the chapter.

² Ezekiel Gaya Best. Evidence-Based Policy Making. <https://gcs-vimeo.akamaized.net/exp=1512632828~acl=%2A%2F809997625.mp4%2A~hmac=dcba275c3d06cdfa73bcb7eb2a9d9cd4408fac954882e459a833024f661c2e2f/vimeo-prod-skyfire-std-us/01/920/9/229603133/809997625.mp4>

³ Audrey Gadzekpo Policy Briefs <https://gcs-vimeo.akamaized.net/exp=1512631269~acl=%2A%2F809988198.mp4%2A~hmac=200d1951a93019382cd24c52b3d58b64b1c40a50b4ba1abc1c79d31830289f75/vimeo-prod-skyfire-std-us/01/920/9/229601188/809988198.mp4>

PHILOSOPHY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES: CLASSICAL

This section briefly presents the events and thoughts which have influenced the emergence and disciplinary practices in the social sciences. The primary focus of the social sciences is the society as well as the embedded individuals, institutions and structures. It is important to note the influence and contributions of the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods, the French Revolution (late eighteenth century) and the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain (late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries) to the growth and development of the social sciences.⁴ During the Renaissance period (fifteenth to sixteenth centuries), Europe regenerated and reconnected to the glory and achievements of the Greco-Roman civilisation, especially in the areas of culture, literature, philosophy, architecture and classical mathematics, which was almost extinct, and it also recovered territories in Spain it had lost to Muslim invaders (Nevile 2015; Morrison 2014). It was a period of the re-enactment of European glory. Building on the consciousness of great Europe, Europe moved into the era of the Enlightenment (seventeenth century), emphasising the need for empirical validation and rationalism over the claims of the supernatural (Warner 2013; Israel 2006). For example, on the one hand, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) was an early proponent of the need to separate politics from spirituality, and he critiqued the spirituality constructions around the noble (Lopes 2017; Zuckert 2013). On the other hand, Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859) decried monarchical systems and recommended democracy and market economy as factors that enhanced liberty and equality (Herold 2015; Tessitore 2002). The Enlightenment period is often described as the Age of Reasoning (Zakai 2003).

The Industrial and French Revolutions resulted in the dismantling of the old order that was characterised by strong kinship ties, religion and monarchical rules (Byrne 1998). The revolutions resulted in rapid industrialisation, unplanned urbanisation and deplorable reduction in human living standards and livelihood. It was for this reason that Thomas Malthus opined that the world population was growing geometrically while the food supply was increasing arithmetically and that unchecked population growth would lead to anarchy (Tietenberg and Lewis 2016). It is for this

⁴ Browne Onuoha Social Sciences Foundation of Public Policy: Brief Introduction <https://gcs-vimeo.akamaized.net/exp=1512630761~acl=%2A%2F809984977.mp4%2A~hmac=070a4e4b19b6d6cc7c4610cf48453c293108faa3ac8c48f009dea07b02db4f14/vimeo-prod-kyfire-std-us/01/920/9/229600534/809984977.mp4>

reason that social scientists recommend public policy as a panacea for addressing challenges to human survival and development. Epistemological thoughts (theories) guide policies. This section discusses three of such ideas which have guided policies in diverse nations including positivism, humanism and Marxism.

Positivism sees social science from the perspective of a systematic method of understanding human and social behaviour through empirical scrutiny (Neuman 2003). Positivism involves the use of quantitative methods and analysis to collect and analyse data on any social issues. August Comte, one of the earliest fathers of Sociology, was the first person to use the term positivism (Riley 2007). Positivism describes a philosophical underpinning, which explains a stage in societal development that is characterised by rationality. Comte claimed that human societies develop through different stages including the theological (traditional), metaphysical and positivistic stages. The positivistic or scientific stage is the stage of modernity and advanced development. It is a stage where institutional actions and public policy would be guided by empirical data. Positivism emphasises empirical analysis of social phenomenon in such a way that empirical data are collected on social phenomena to establish the cause-and-effect relationships. To positivists, there exist empirical facts that can be measured quantitatively and objectively in social reality, apart from subjective ideas or thoughts, and laws of cause and effects govern them, thus making social reality researchable (see Punch 2005; Neuman 2003). Ulin et al. (2004) argued that the underlying assumption of positivism is that science aims to develop the most objective and empirical methods possible to get the best understanding of social reality. In social sciences, researchers whose works are influenced by this philosophical orientation often tend to quantitatively establish the relationships that exist between two or more variables involved in a particular social reality and how they manage to shape events. They also rely on statistical analysis in explaining the relationship between variables involved in a social phenomenon. Positivism involves scientific investigation and uses a fact-based approach. It is, however, argued that this approach does not provide an in-depth understanding of social reality, as it does not probe in-depth into the nuances involved in the construction of social reality.

Humanism, on the other hand, is another principal philosophical orientation in the social science field. Humanism is a wide-ranging set of philosophies, which holds human interest and dignity as a primarily important belief (Richardson and Heidegger 2003). It emphasises rationality, the

primacy of the human race and a move away from the supernatural. Furthermore, humanism consolidates on the ability to lead ethical lives by individual accomplishments. It is a system of thought that places prime emphasis on the supremacy of human intelligence above supernatural matters or divine interventions. Humanism ideology turned away from the medieval scholasticism to embrace cultural Renaissance movement that discouraged interest in Greek and Roman thought. In essence, the central focus of humanism is the human beings who form an integral part of the society. In African parlance, humanism can be likened to *ubuntu* which literarily means to be humane, but in cultural practicality, it means the whole essence of working for human good (Dauda 2017).⁵ However, as a philosophical underpinning in social sciences, it goes beyond being human to laying primary emphasis on humankind and wellbeing at both micro and macro levels. According to Elders (2003), the first person to use the term humanism was the German author F.J. Niethammer (1808), who got his inspiration through an expression of Cicero, *sc. studia humanitatis*. Humanism was used as a movement in twentieth century to raise consciousness on the need to expose the younger generation to classical studies rather than primary focus on the sciences (Elders 2003). Elders further explained that at a time in the European society, those who subscribed to the rationalism of the Enlightenment period rejected the idea of the religious dimension of man and embraced the idea of humanism that was subsequently understood as meaning the total autonomy of man.

Marxism has its roots in the ideological and philosophical propositions and works of Karl Marx. The primary focus of Marxism is the dialectics of the human society. Karl Marx opined that exploitation and class struggle are phenomenal features of the different stages of the human society from the period of slavery, estates and up to the contemporary class system (Holland 2009). The crux of the differentiation between the dominant and the dominated classes is regarding the control of the means of production.⁶ In the period of slavery, slave masters owned the means of production including slaves. In estates, the noble owned land, and the serfs lived

⁵ Mary Ssonko Nabacwa. African Scholars/Leaders and Classical Schools of Thought: A Case of Nyerere's TANU Party and the Ujaama Villages in Tanzania. <https://gcs-vimeo.akamaized.net/exp=1512634736-acl=%2A%2F810689863.mp4%2A~hmac=39c81a8f406e25a39a47d05d592e4e81e445e95991b4da97f92e5dc87c7ba561/vimeo-prod-skyfire-std-us/01/949/9/229749310/810689863.mp4>

⁶ Carolyn D'Cruz, Sam Wallman and Sam Davis (2017) IDEOLOGY: Key Concepts in Gender, Sexuality and Diversity Studies <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frQ2oZ6DE9Y>

on land and produced for the nobles. With the Industrial Revolution, the means of production is land, factories, machinery and capital. The bourgeoisie are the owners of the means of production while the non-owners, the proletariat, give their labour in exchange for wages. The proletariat is alienated from the work process, co-workers, the product and himself, while the bourgeoisie exploits the proletariat by extracting surplus value. In essence, the proletariat produces the wealth that the bourgeoisie controls. The proletariat is unaware of the exploitation process because it is in a state of false consciousness. However, Marx predicts that the proletariat will eventually reach a state of consciousness, transit from a class-in-itself to a class-for-itself and engage the bourgeoisie in a class revolution, which would be won by proletariats. This will usher in a socialist society where the state will own the means of production, people will give to the state according to their capability and the state will provide according to need. The Marxist theory has influenced neo-Marxian theories such as dependency theory and the world capitalist system theory as well as many anti-colonialism, anti-neo-colonialism and anti-globalisation theories (Wolff and Resnick 2012; Sanyal and Bhattacharyya 2009).

PHILOSOPHY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES: CONTEMPORARY

This section is a follow-up to classical philosophies of public policy. It is primarily devoted to constructionist approaches to public policies in contemporary (African) societies. We shall, therefore, proceed to examine how theoretical frameworks—from modernity to post-modernity—influence public policy formulation and execution in Africa. There is a consensus among social thinkers that contemporary societies have moved past modernity or positivistic thinking to a combination of both objective and subjective construction of social realities to capture the realities of the post-modern world (Chute 2011). The positivistic model reveals a plethora of debates around relatively disaggregated issues of rationality, complex social actions and reactions that suggest multi-level analysis rather than a wholesome approach. Adrian Kay (2006) indicated that positivistic model espoused the notion of policy cycle typical of seesaw movement of policymakers regarding the endless cycle of policy decision.

Although the positivistic had been flawed, especially because of its inability to explain complex processes and dynamism due to its appeal to linearity, it gave impetus for exploring dynamic challenges in policy formulation. Closely related and sometimes serving as alternative approach to

positivism is structured interactionism. Structured interactionism sees policy as an on-going process that involves several stakeholders such as politicians, public officials, citizens and NGOs, among others, as stakeholders (DeLeon and Vogenbeck 2007). In Africa, the reign of positivist paradigm is represented in the ascendancy of evolutionary paradigm and modernisation theory in colonial and postcolonial eras. Furthermore, Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory of human development process has tremendously influenced many social thinkers and consequently policy-makers. The general assumption was that change was incremental, evolutionary and transmissible. This formed the ideological backbone of modernisation theory. Modernism was the major developmental public policy introduced in many post-independence African countries. This falls within the ambit of Talcott Parsons' and W.W. Rostow's evolutionary models that differentiated between traditional and modern attributes. Both Parsons and Rostow opine that societies develop as they evolve from traditional states and values to the modern ones that are similar to Western societies (see Parsons 1960, 1971; Rostow 1959). In theory, African societies fell into the category of traditional society and were deemed fit for the transition. Ideological transfer of Western modernism was recommended as public policy in the post-independence period.

Post-positivist paradigm rests on Thomas Khun's work on objective positivism. Modelling policy, in line with post-positivism, embraces the use of intuition and context-bounding (Kay 2006). Post-positivism predicates policy research and policymaking in the context of the society or people to whom the policy is intended. It captures the values and interpretations of populations in arriving at public policy. Post-positivism or constructionism has great potentials at formulating context-bound public policy, but it is critiqued as "irrational" due to its emphasis on subjectivity by those who are objectivity-oriented (Kay 2006). Besides, post-modernism as a philosophical tradition simply rests on the assumption that the world has moved beyond modern to that which is more than modern. It is the teleological conception of development and progress that gave rise to post-modernism. It is within this philosophical orthodoxy that nations now move from supermarket to supramarket and mega mall, from megacities to smart and resilient cities. It is also within the post-modern conception of societies that human relations are seen as McDonaldised as humans make policies to cope with emerging trends of the world that is beyond modern (Olutayo and Akanle 2007; Olutayo and Akanle 2009). The effect of post-modern thinking on public policy is definitive. It is within

this thinking that approaches like e-governance and participatory development processes evolved. That is, states can no longer run citizens' affairs in draconian manners, and people must be involved in making policy choices through democratic processes and feedbacks. It is also within the post-modernist orientations that policymakers believe there should be more innovative approaches to governance particularly with the use of technology.

Also, post-structuralism is a more recent philosophical tradition with origin in mid-twentieth century. Post-structuralism is a critique of structuralism. Post-structuralism rejects self-sufficiency and self-reliance of structures unlike structuralism's reification of structures. Post-structuralism is theoretical and methodological in that it suggests an approach to studying and understanding ways and manners knowledge emerge, is produced and developed (Lather 1993). It also prioritises the role of culture and history in understanding people and societies through correct interpretations of their post-structures of actions. For instance, for the post-structuralists, it is impossible to understand a people and social realities without first understanding the social realities in the contexts of existing system of knowledge. Post-structuralism is therefore both descriptive and historical in accounting for structural processes of social realities unlike structuralism that treated social realities as isolated categories (Poster 1989). This has a lot of policy implications in that it will be inappropriate to formulate policies on a social/public process or problem without a sufficient understanding of not only the problem as an object but also the history and contexts of the problem. Interestingly, this is usually not the case in Africa where public policies are nothing but mere derivatives or wholesale importation of foreign policies and anecdotal imaginations of the political elites and their subjective *Think Tanks*.

THE SCIENCE OF PUBLIC POLICY: EMPIRICISM, OBJECTIVITY, SUBJECTIVITY AND APPROACHES

Public policy in contemporary times goes beyond assumptive decisions by the political elite. It is preferable to have policies that evolve out of empirical index. Hence, policy research forms a credible aspect of public policy-making which brings in elements of scientific procedures in the formulation and implementation of public policy. The science of public policy follows the collection of primary and secondary data in the conceptualisation and

implementation of public policy (Norton and Alwang 1997). Secondary data are sets of data that have been earlier collected and are readily available. These include secondary statistics, records of births and deaths, census and information in printed sources such as books, journals and periodicals (and online/internet media in recent times). Primary data, on the other hand, are original data that have been collected from people through specially designed instruments such as questionnaire and interview guide (Omobowale and Okakwu 2013; Neuman 2003).

Data collection follows the principles of objectivity or subjectivity. Objectivity is guided by the norm of scientific probability, immune from value judgement as much as practicable. Subjectivity follows the rule of context and interpretations, and the value judgement of research subjects are put into consideration. The collection of objective and subjective data follows differing approaches. Objective data follows the probabilistic principle. Hence, as much as practicable, samples are drawn in such a way to give every member of the population an equal chance of being selected. The major methods of probabilistic sampling include ballot or simple random sampling, systematic sampling, cluster sampling and stratified sampling. In ballot or simple random sampling, a researcher would randomly draw samples from a population of research subjects. A researcher must have a full list of the population to draw samples randomly. Systematic sampling involves selection of the Nth number from a population. The Nth number is derived by a division of the total population by the total number of the samples to be drawn. The Nth number will form the range points for sample selection. Cluster sampling is used when a researcher intends to draw samples from a collection of sub-populations. The sub-populations will form clusters from which samples will be scientifically drawn. For example, a researcher working on migrant populations may cluster the migrants to their primary nationalities and draw a sample from the nationality-clusters. In stratified sampling, a researcher divides a population into different subgroups (especially on the basis differing qualities, e.g. male/female, junior/senior) and draws samples from each subgroup. Aside from the probabilistic sampling techniques, there are non-probabilistic techniques such as purposive sample (selection based on the knowledge base of a population viz-a-viz the research focus), snowball sampling, used when a research population is difficult to locate. Once a sample is found, he or she would lead the researcher to other potential samples. Quota sample is done with the intention to have a fair reflection of all the characteristics in a collection of research population. Hence, the

same proportion of samples with the predetermined characteristics is selected from the total population. Subjective research is usually carried out with the aid of non-probabilistic techniques and the research process could be contextual and/or ethnographic. Some peculiar methods of data collection in subjective research include archival research, observation and interviews (see Bernard 2006; Punch 2005).

THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PUBLIC POLICY

Political Science and Public Policy

As a discipline in the social sciences, political science deals with the workings of government and governance especially in relation with local, state and national (or as defined relative to the structure of each nation) governance. Political science also studies international relations, power politics, power relations and acquisition, public administration and finance as well as resource allocation. Political science uses both theory and empirical methods to understand governance in domestic and international environments and proffers policy options for good governance and peoples' advancement (Dunleavy 2014; Corbett 2011). A recognised geographical space internationally accepted as a nation constitutes a state. Structures of state differ from one nation to another. However, the more popular ones since the nineteenth century include liberal democracies (for instance, the USA, France and Great Britain), the Socialist States (e.g., defunct USSR, China, Cuba and North Korea), monarchical systems (Saudi Arabia, Swaziland and Oman, for instance) (e.g., see Schumpeter 2013; Singer and Weir 2006; Laibman 1992; Torres 1989). Irrespective of the structure of government practised, there is a connection between state and policymaking and constituted governments thus play vital and principal roles in policymaking. Also, the structure and process of governance influence policymaking in every nation (Dunleavy 2014). For example, liberal democracies usually apply laissez faire policies with private capital as a primary essence of production. Socialist systems prioritise state ownership of means of production, and monarchical systems attribute all social benefits and production as the benefaction of a hereditary sovereign to the citizens (Singer and Weir 2006).

Irrespective of the system of government practised, governance is vital in state administration and public policy. According to Edwards, Halligan, Horrigan and Nicoll (2012: 9), "Governance is concerned with how

societies, governments and organisations are managed and led. Importantly, this includes how they structure and otherwise order their affairs, make decisions and exercise powers, and manage their relationships and accountabilities.” The principles of governance, which a nation adopts, have direct implication for public policy.⁷ For example, liberal principles favour the primacy of private capital in policy formulation while conservative, socialist and welfarist structures would advance some form of populist orientation in public policy. Irrespective of the structure of governance, the ethos of good governance, transparency and accountability for efficient and effective implementation are most important to achieve successful public policy (Singh, Ansari and Singh 2009). In most Third World countries, and African nations, in particular, good governance is not a readily given phenomenon. It is influenced by the politics of resource allocation and power relations (Palaniswamy and Krishnan 2012, Wong 1994). In Africa, ethnicity, patronage, nepotism and corruption among other socio-political vile influence power relations and determine resource allocation and public policy (Galiani and Schargrotsky 2011; Omobowale and Olutayo 2007, 2010; Olarinmoye 2008). Such political vile frustrate good governance and render public policy ineffective for social and political development.

By extension, the political economy of governance structures public policy in contextual terms. Within a political economy, local (local politicians and businesses) and global actors (the globalisation process, multinational corporations, international organisations and developed economies) play strategic roles in politics and the economy influence and structure the context of public policy (Rausser and Swinnen 2011; Galston 2006). Political scientists examine and identify the processes of political economy and the impact of same on public policy and society. Political economy holds a binding cord on people and policy. The strong link between politics and the economy presupposes a connection between the political and economic classes. The political class formulates and enforces public policy, while the hold of the political class on power is also somewhat influenced by local and global economic actors. Hence, more often than not,

⁷Tom Mboya. Linking the Concepts of Governance, Politics and Public Policy. <https://gcs-vimeo.akamaized.net/exp=1512634165~acl=%2A%2F810143186.mp4%2A~hmac=533d482b9fccc6885900d7e77e983ebe9235fdb268c25ef1d61e86cc197c8921/vimeo-prod-skyfire-std-us/01/926/9/229634101/810143186.mp4>

economic actors influence local and global politics as well as public policy formulation and implementation.

From the foregoing, political and economic interests of influential actors could influence public policy. To achieve good governance and effective public policy, political scientists recommend public engagement. Public engagement involves deliberate effort to advance public participation in public policy process and implementation by raising consciousness, working with people as stakeholders (and taking care of social diversity), to appreciate policy and ensuring public acceptance before going ahead to implement policy (Wadsworth 1997).^{8,9} It is predicated on the participatory development approach. Public engagement could be at different levels, including public communication (communication flow from government or policy sponsor to public representatives), public consultation (information flow from public representatives to government or policy sponsor) and public participation (two-way dimensional flow of communication between government and public representatives) (Rowe and Frewer 2005). In short, public engagement entails community or public communication and feedbacks at the micro level as much as possible to ensure effective public policy. Public rejection limits political power. Political will and power do not possess absolute capability to ensure policy effectiveness if the public is not successfully engaged.

Sociology, Anthropology and Public Policy

Sociology and anthropology study human grouping and societies, and the embedded cultures. The disciplines have a direct bearing on public policy because of their focus on human societies, structures, social relations and cultures. In formulating public policies, the importance of knowledge of how human society works cannot be overemphasised. This is because human societies are variegated along the lines of culture, ethnicity, class structure and other forms of diverse components and institutions which

⁸Idda Lyatonga. Analysing Stakeholders' power in Public Policy. <https://gcs-vimeo.akamaized.net/exp=1512633235~acl=%2A%2F810077975.mp4%2A~hmac=3ee3b80835e61389ab20fbad16b4dc6ec9a9dfc30bee6243920caa9e8727ed28/vimeo-prod-skyfire-std-us/01/924/9/229620168/810077975.mp4>

⁹Juliana Mafvil. Defining Social Diversity. <https://gcs-vimeo.akamaized.net/exp=1512633481~acl=%2A%2F810079536.mp4%2A~hmac=99683fc9ba716ab1de2f3b9899931c2df2f5f32681488b9e61005c4eb4046f53/vimeo-prod-skyfire-std-us/01/924/9/229620480/810079536.mp4>

are in turn also dynamic. Public policies are fundamentally inclusive and progressive when tailored in consonance with observed variations in the society. Although the scope of public policy is getting vast, as time passes to include post-industrial issues like social media regulation and sustainable ecosystem, among other things, it is important to note that public policies are better conceived and understood in their social contexts.

Culture is central in understanding humans and realities that shape their existence. It has been succinctly explained above that public policy cannot be dissociated from social contexts. The pivotal context of culture in successfully implementing public policy has been adumbrated by Fairhead and Leach (2005) in their research on social shaping narrative and the scaling up of agricultural production in Africa. Public policy in its complete essence is aimed at strategic actions and plans for the achievement of public needs. Although there are several attempts made to define culture, the classic definition of Sir Edward B. Tylor in 1891 is it is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, customs and any other capacities and habits acquired by a member of a society. This definition reveals the far-reaching issues addressed by culture. The word “acquire” used in that definition shows the intertwining of cultural needs and the role of policy. Going by this premise, therefore, it would not be out of place to state that public policy is public only in the sense that it is social. Being social, means efforts must be made to understand the social and cultural contours that determine the possibility of success or failure of public policies. This is simply because there is scarcely any policy without the influence of social relations and culture. The facile duality of universality and diversity of culture makes for interesting discourse in social scientific explanation of public policy. Universal explanation of culture is usually favoured by structural functionalists like Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski, Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer and Talcott Parson (Lane 1994). Their major postulation rests on the claim that culture has evolved to serve a function in the society. Thus, cultural universality is subsumed in the assumed universality of family, age, symbols, language and various social institutions. It must be noted that emphasis here is not laid on variation but on similarity that labels culture as universal. Ubiquity of culture therefore suggests that irrespective of kinds of variations, food, gender, polity, religion, language, marriage, childhood and other components of culture, it exists everywhere.

Simply put, culture is universal but varied. It means that perceptions of people about things or phenomenal vary from society to society, and these

perceptions or cultural values influence public policy. In every society, social institutions ensure cultural patterns and social relationships are organised to accomplish basic social tasks (Jackson 2005). Hence, public policies cannot be dissociated from social institutional arrangement and cultures simply because as social relationships persist, people either consciously or unconsciously enter into social contracts that dictate patterns of behaviour with both direct and indirect impacts on public policy.

As much as cultures have an overbearing effect on public policy, it is important to note that culture is not static. It changes over time through the process of social change. Social change is the process by which a society transforms its processes and values over time. It could happen unconsciously, and it could also be consciously affected through public policy. A good example is the change from large family sizes to smaller ones among Africa's middle-class members. Hence, social change occupies a central place in sociological and anthropological discourse because human societies are as dynamic as humans themselves.

Psychology and Public Policy

Man is a social being with an urge to live an associated life with others in his society. That man needs the society for his existence or survival is not in doubt. Psychology studies the human mind and explains how individuals and groups of people experience the world through instincts, emotions and conscious states. In short, psychology examines individual behaviour, mind and personality within the context of human biology and social environment. There is an intertwined effect between human psychology and public policy. The state of mind, emotions and human consciousness could inform the blend and dimensions of public policy, and public policy has the potentiality of impacting human life tremendously. Hence, in designing and implementing public policy, it is crucial to bring psychological principles on board.

Public policy brings about change (Kiesler 1980). Psychology as a discipline aims at bringing about positive change to advance human survival within his environment. In promoting change, social values determine to a large extent how humans relate with one another at both the individual and community levels (Fox, 1998). Thus, psychology addresses human stimulus and cognitive behaviour which could impact public policy. It also responds to public issues that are aimed at driving knowledge on how to galvanise and synergise human institutions to make them efficient for

human developmental growth (Garrison et al. 2017). The potential of psychology to make a long-term impact on individual's and group's life chances have been clearly demonstrated in various scholarly research (e.g., see Plomin 2004; Gjerde and McCants 1999; Weiner 1998). Behaviour of people shapes and is driven by how issues of governance, environment, poverty and policy are managed. As a result, psychologists have a role to play in determining the course of actions and activities geared towards resolving social developmental challenges. Social values and human actions drive policies aimed at social change that are supported by evidence-based policies (Basu et al. 2017; Prilleltensky 1994). Thus, psychology views policy-induced change as an entity in the community which cannot be separated from it. Therefore, in the identification of social policy as a force that drives societal change, psychologists usually advocate policies that maximise and encourage accessibility and involvement of societal members, in particular the vulnerable.

It is important to note that social, cognitive and behavioural factors and behavioural economics are germane to the application of psychology in public policy. Social cognitive and behavioural factors are elements present in human personality and environment which can influence human behaviour. Through cognitive abilities, individuals make impressions about other people and objects they visualise within their environments. Through cognition, individuals create ideas and make judgements about other people. The judgements are most often mainly a result of predicated observation, or pre-existing knowledge of an individual that could influence how the observed information is interpreted (Tsay-Vogel et al. 2018). By understanding social perception, policymakers and governments could interpret peoples' actions so that information can be inferred to predict people's behaviour. Hence, by understanding people's cognition and behaviour, the government could formulate and execute public policies that could have a positive effect on the people to which a policy or project is targeted.

Policy psychologists are concerned about the factors that influence people's cognition and behaviour towards a government policy. Policy psychologists examine the conditions that influence feelings and behaviours with the aim to understand how beliefs, thoughts, feelings, intentions and goals intertwine and impact constructions and convictions with a view to advance psychological procedures to influence interactions, governance and public policy. Social cognition and behavioural factors could influence government policies. Hence, psychologists explain how and why peoples'

feelings and imaginations could influence the acceptance or decline of public policy.

Furthermore, psychology also explains how individuals rationally make economic decisions. The idea of behavioural economics captures this. Again, social, cognitive and emotional factors influence people's economic behaviour (Hattwick 1989). Individuals are rational beings who make informed decisions based on their convictions on the course of action, which could provide the best utility (Shiller 2005). Individuals view public policy within the construct of the most rational utility that could bring the greatest benefit at the minimal cost. Hence, for example, a taxation policy put in place by a city council could influence a decision to migrate to another city, if the tax levied is not commensurate with economic and developmental benefits accruable. In short, individuals may not dogmatically accept or follow public policy. People could devise economic behaviour that would circumvent an unpopular policy for rational gain.

Economics and Public Policy

A principal concern of all human societies is the allocation of resources for the production of goods and services. Economics provides the intellectual basis of the allocation of resources and the distribution of goods and services. It also explains the forces of demand and supply and how they influence production and distribution of goods and services (Colander 2001; Houck 1989). Resources are scarce, but human wants are limitless. Economics studies how individuals make choices from their preferences in order to satisfy want. Economics also studies the context of the resources of a nation, how national economies are structured and the influence of local, national and international forces on the state and global economies (Hoover 2010; McEachern 2006). The economy or the economic institution is the foundation of every society, without which a society cannot survive. The pivotal place of the economy in the survival of the state makes economic issues matters of public policy. The scientific study of economics commenced in the nineteenth century. It was initially named political economy and later economics (Fetter 2003). Early theorists including Adams Smith, John Stuart Mill and Jean-Baptiste Say, among others, described economics from the perspectives of how states utilise their resources in the production of wealth (Backhouse and Medema 2009). The production of national wealth goes beyond an individual, hence the state takes a strategic position in making policies on how resources are

utilised to make wealth and the procedures and processes of the distribution of the same (Pressman 2011; Komesar 1994). This somewhat explains why economics was first called political economy. Economy was, and it is still, very much influenced by the politics and polity of nations.

The scarcity of resources is an economic and a social reality among nations. Wealth is not evenly distributed, but all human beings have unlimited wants. Unequal access to resources delineates people to the wealthy and the poor as the wealthy would have higher economic power to access scarce resources than the poor. Scarce resources are goods whose demand is higher than supply (Van de Werfhorst 2007). For example, the wealthy would be more economically capable of acquiring ostentatious commodities such as gold and diamond than the poor. In fact, even concerning the commonly available goods such as bread, the quantity and quality the wealthy could afford would be incomparable to those of the poor. Goods and services are germane for survival, but the same are subject to the forces of demand and supply. The higher the demand, the higher the price and the more the poor are priced out. The social relations of scarcity breed poverty and widen the gap between the poor and the wealthy. Of course, poverty is relative to individuals, peoples and nations. It is important to note that every country has its population of the poor.

A common denominator of poverty is the poverty line. The poverty line is a measurement of a minimal income per day within which an individual may survive within a country or society. The poverty line for Africa and the other most impoverished nations in Asia is living below \$1.90 per day, while it is as much as \$10 in the industrialised Western countries. More than 50% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa lives below \$1.90 (World Bank 2016). Africa thus has a vast population of the vulnerable, living in poverty, exposed continuously to ill-health and diseases with little or no access to modern healthcare and with low life expectancy.

Unlimited wants, but scarce resources also mean people build their preferences, and for rational individuals, needs take priority over wants. Hence, the economic behaviour of humans is not instinctual, but rational, based on economic realities of demand and supply, which determine price and access to goods. Access and non-access to goods determine national and individual wealth and survival. This explains the place of public policy in economics. Governments and international organisations make and influence economic policies that would advance trade and supply of goods and services for individual, national and global wellbeing. Thus, the structure of the economy, or national political economy, whether liberal or

socialist, determines the allocation of resources and the supply of goods and services. Whereas liberal economies are guided by the forces of demand and supply, frame-worked within laissez-faire fiscal policies, socialist economies are state-controlled and are subject to the dictates of the political elite. The state controls the allocation of resources and supply while demand may outstrip the supply. Of course, the price may be low; the so-called cheap goods may not efficiently go round. Furthermore, the international economic institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organisation provide advice, recommendations and interventions with economic policy implications to national governments for the advancement of national and global economies.

Law and Public Policy

The relationship between law and public policy has been described as “hand in glove” such that programmes and actions, which of course imply policy, are hinged on the mechanism of administrative law (Kim 2014). Put differently, statutory attribute of a policy is concomitant to the intertwinement of law and policy. Kreis and Christensen (2013) opine that the connection between the law and policy focuses on the interchange of policy and associated social and political constraints, routines and administrative procedures. Policy impacts on social, political and economic dimensions of life within the context of the law. Questions relating to the evolution of legal traditions have often been answered from dual philosophies of natural and positive jurisprudence. The primary human intercourse with the natural order, which is usually treated with deep sense of inviolability and inalienability, forms the core theme in natural law. The natural law has served as the basis for the evolution of other laws and a purveyor of civic movements and revolutions across the world, including the civic democratic revolutions of seventeenth to eighteenth century. The positivist concept of law sharply contrasts with that of natural or idealistic philosophers. Positive law rests on the normative ontological explanation of the basis of legal norms and their effects on the society. The contextual import of the origin of the legal tradition is that it helps to query isomorphic variations of legal orientations of different countries and political systems along the path of ideological orientation. Most policy scholars trace the fusion of policy and social institution to the Western influence on

development, especially from the mid-twenty-first century (Araral and Amri 2016).

There is technical unwritten agreement between the state and its people such that while the people yield their loyalty to the state, the state, in turn, is expected to protect the interest of the people regarding policy formulation. The primacy of state's functions has been summarised by Constantinos (2009) as the provision of security and law. This is a framework through which all other political goods can be delivered through a system of codes and procedures, which regulate the interactions of the population and sets the standard for conducts. The system of codes, procedures and constitution legitimise state actions, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, recognise the collectivity of individuals in the context of their culture—legal pluralism. The state is codified by law (and at times by international conventions) as a legitimate entity with the right of jurisdiction over a defined territory, function or sector of public policy, laws vary across states and territories (Hveem and Nordhaug 2002).

Thus, legal pluralism is a central theme in contemporary policy reconceptualisation processes. Legal pluralism here suggests the possibility of comparison and integration of relatively divergent orientations, norms, values, fads and strict conventions or rules of procedure and administration (Sharafi 2008). The admixture of divergent legal orientations is vitally implicative in public policy studies. Fundamental issues often surge when it comes to fusing international conventions or best practices with traditionally acceptable rules of behaviour, especially when the “marriage” share dissimilar values. This is a severe constraint in public policy formulation—where public policy is expected to balance the equation between policy users' demands and global best practices. The era of linear nomothetic ontologies has fast given way to ideographic and multiple approaches to policy formulation process. The ramifications and manifestations of legal pluralism are daunting and far-reaching. However, the essence of legal pluralism must not be trivialised in addressing African developmental challenges at which polices are focused. This is why Gebeye (2017) argues that legal pluralism is no longer a descriptive tool in Africa; it is a policy field in the rule of law promotion and development discourse.

Geography and Public Policy

Geography studies the planet earth and its human and natural components. The two basic fields of geography: physical and human geography

examine the natural world and human interaction in his environment within spatial context. Spatial context refers to the space, environment and conditions within which the physical environment and human beings exist. Everything happens within a context and nothing happens in vacuum. The physical and social environments provide a platform or context where phenomenon occurs. It gives room for interaction among human beings and also between man and his environment (Worboys 1996). Simply put, the spatial context, therefore, is the physical space where every activity that concerns man and his environment take place. Spatial context includes the water bodies, land and air and every other element that makes up man's physical environment. All these spatial elements play a great role in all aspects of human life, economy, health, interactions and networks, among others (Theobald 2001).

The physical environment is embedded with natural resources that are somewhat freely given to mankind by nature. Natural resources are products of the environment, which needs to be adequately managed by relevant stakeholders, which include the government, multinational companies and members of the community where such resources are located (Thakadu and Dikobe 1997). Resource management is imperative in order to ensure sustainability. This calls for public policy in the management of natural resources. Whereas public policymaking is usually the preserve of the government, it should not be done without the participation of the community within which a natural resource exists. The community exercises some degree of moral ownership over resources that exist within its environment. Every community where any natural resource is located has a sense of association and claim over such a resource and deserves to enjoy some benefits as regards the resource in question (Thakadu and Dikobe 1998). Governments and multinational corporations may make profits from natural resources through exploration, the community which may be polluted due to exploration activities deserves compensation, and appropriate environmental protection and renewal policies must be put in place. In most developing countries, host communities are usually excluded from the control and benefits of natural resources. In recent times, however, efforts are being made by governments and multinational companies to allow host communities benefit from their resources. In Nigeria, an example is the 13% resource allocation for oil-producing states in Nigeria and scholarships which are embodied in the corporate social responsibilities of the multinationals for their host communities (Ebiede 2011).

Exploration of resources breeds environmental pollution, climate change and conflicts. Climate change is reflected in the rise in average surface temperature on earth caused by human use of fossil fuels and the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the air (Odoh and Chilaka 2012). Aside the environmental damage that is attributed to climate change, many communal conflicts have been attributed to climate change and environmental degradation. In Nigeria, for example, the Niger-Delta and cattle herdsman and farmers crises have been attributed to environment and climate change (Ebiede 2011; Moritz 2010). Indeed, pro-resource sustainability public policy would substantially reverse climate change and stem the tide of conflict in resource-rich environments. Hence, the need for resource management for environmental sustainability also calls for development planning.

Every government desires to meet the needs of the populace and increase the standard of living of the people in all ramifications. In all, it is the desire of every country to be developed. However, development is a continuous process that requires adequate planning and consideration by every stakeholder involved. Development planning process must also take into consideration every group of the population irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity and age, in such a way that equity and justice will be allowed. However, development planning process is not the same for every country, and it is not the same for a country at different times. Every country has different needs that need to be met. Also, the developmental pace varies across countries, and it should be noted that no country is ever really developed because people's needs are unending, and the more such needs are being met in different sectors of the country, the more they are developing. Development pace differs across countries. While some countries are experiencing slow pace in developmental strides, others are moving quite fastly. The dichotomy between the Western nations and Third World nations in Africa, Asia and South America is best explained through this. Furthermore, several factors influence development planning. Such factors include the availability of human and natural resources, availability of skilled manpower, peace and stability and above all, the presence of a government with the sufficient political will and determination to chart a developmental path for the nation. It should be noted that while designing developmental plans, every nation must place equity and justice as its central focus. Every developmental plan by any country must provide level-playing ground for its citizens to maximise their potentials, while also

ensuring justice for all. This will enhance the sustainability and success of such developmental plan.

Demography and Public Policy

The knowledge of the demographic mapping of any country is irretrievably crucial at any point in time with a view to understanding dynamics, trends and projectile of a given population. Demographic data are also vital for effective and sustainable planning for the growth and development of a population. This is because the structure of a population has implications for its level of productivity (as in whether the population is ageing or young), health system, urban planning and management, conflict management and migration tendencies, amongst other concomitant issues associated with demographic change (UN 2013). The demographic structure of a population influences the tone of its political intercourses such that demographic characteristics such as income, gender, education, age and sometimes race or ethnicity underlie political decisions and by extension public policy (EU, 2007). It is against this background that this section discourses the importance of demography for policy formation and sustainable development. This will be systematically done by way of examining thematic demographic components such as fertility, mortality, migration and urbanisation

Fertility rate is one of the major demographic indicators used by development experts to track trends in both population and development across the globe (UN, 2017). Although the debate about fecundity is, more often than not, inconclusive, the number of births, which is often calculated per thousand, has a huge implication for both present and future social, political, environmental and economic changes (EU, 2007). According to McNicoll (2003), fertility has both positive and negative sides. High fecundity or high fertility could easily be mistaken as retrogressive demographic transition and declining fertility as positive in demographic shift, going by the classic works of Thomas Maltus, who saw an inverse relationship between high fertility and welfare. This is because, high fertility is believed to be tantamount to low development while developed countries typically reflect low fertility (Kirk 1996). Conversely, according to Obono (2003) the main issue with fertility lies in the disaggregation of conceptual issues relating to specific demographic structure of different countries of the world rather than projecting a linear pathway for solving population-related challenges (see also ECOWAS 2007).

Another crucial component of demography that must be considered in policy formulation is mortality. Mortality varies according to its classifications—infant mortality, child mortality and pre-mature mortality—and forms one of the major targets of sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the United Nations (Osborn et al. 2015). UN (2017) indicates pervasive epidemics, crises, poor healthcare and poverty that result into high death rates as the major challenges in sub-Saharan. Morbidity and mortality are closely linked because mortality thrives when there is high incidence of illiteracy, poor governance and outbreak of epidemics of violent crises or war. The place of policy is thus evident with regards to examining various factors causing deaths. Public policy address health system challenges; improve maternity, paternity and childcare systems; control epidemics as well as enhance elderly care.

Migration is the third vital component of a demographic structure and is equally important in policy discourse. Population growth is usually associated with fertility and migration. Global migration pattern is constantly changing in composition and size (Kararach 2014). Out of the estimated 34 million international African migrants in 2015, not less than 18 million live in other African countries (UN, 2013). Economic Commission for Africa (2016) shows that migration pattern in Africa is not static such that Africa has started to experience reverse migration in recent time (see also Akanle and Olutayo 2012). Major drivers of migration in Africa, however, include poverty, globalisation forces, labour demands and remuneration, urbanisation, environmental degradation, deficit food supply, and other socio-religious and political crises (UN, 2017). In the same token, the demand for more cities characterises the trend of development in the twenty-first century (Akanle and Adejare 2017). Davis (2004) visualises the increasing migration in contemporary sense from the angle of urban climacteric which is further consequential for increasing slums in the urban space while food production, the ozone layer and job opportunity deplete as against increasing pollution, crime, homelessness and other forms of miseries—due to rural-urban migration. The implication of this for public policy is that there is need to demystify the concept of urbanity and rurality, just as it is equally important to regulate in-migration and out-migration of citizens to address their attendant challenges.

Urbanisation is a concept that is contiguous to demographic change in contemporary parlance. There are compelling empirical evidence attesting to the fact that there is urgent need for research and policies to meet the daunting challenges of contemporary urbanisation trends (UN, 2012).

For instance, according to the United Nation's World Economic and Social Survey (2013), more people have begun to live in urban spaces since 2007 than those living the countryside leading to heightened demographic stress and urban miseries (such as homelessness, congestion, slumhood, criminality, gentrification, poor sanitation, squalor and pollution, and down to infinitum) in the city space (also see Akanle and Adejare 2017; Cobbinah et al. 2015). It is also projected that more than 70% of the world's population would be resident in the city by the year 2050, especially in Africa and Asia. As more people abandon agrarian eco-space to occupy urban areas, most of which are already densely populated, farming and other agribusinesses are jettisoned in search of illusory "greener pastures". The imminent policy gap in respect to this development is evident in the disparity in the concentration of projects and life-enhancing facilities in the city space at the neglect of rural areas.

Urban planning and renewal form the fulcrum of sustainable urban management strategy with the ambit of global best practice and urban policy shift (Cobbinah et al. 2015). By this, policies are expected to focus on ways of making cities, especially in areas with fast growth, like Congo Kinshasa, Lagos and Cairo in Africa, more resilient and inclusive. If necessary measures are not put in place, in terms of redistributive policy, to address upsurge in the rate of urbanisation, the inevitable consequence would be shortfall in social and health facilities, shortage of energy and increasing level of insecurity as well as emergence of more slums, among others (UN, 2013).

To this end, the overarching import of in-depth understanding of demographic trends as they connect to social and spatial development, cannot be overemphasised in scaling up policy formulation processes for development purposes. As indicated in EU (2007: 9), "demographic factors matter for economic growth just as much or sometimes even more than the factors commonly stressed in the literature". A sustainable way of preserving both the rural and urban spaces, in demographic terms, would be to explore eco-friendly and humane policies that will ensure greenness of the ecosystem.

CONCLUSION: SOCIAL SCIENCE MULTIDISCIPLINARITY IN PUBLIC POLICY

The social sciences provide the foundation for the science of public policy. The early thinkers, as well as the diverse fields of the social sciences, offer unique explanations for public policy. As much as social science disciplines are unique in their presentation of the society and public policy, it is important to note that public policy is not restricted to a particular discipline. The beauty of the social sciences in public policy is its multidisciplinary nature. The diverse disciplines are unique and yet interwoven especially in application to the society and in public policy formulation. All social science disciplines utilise paradigms (theories) and empirical methods in pragmatic public policy analysis, and they recognise the place of politics in policy formulation and implementation. Making the right policies may be challenging, and the politics of public policy may be inhibitive, but multidisciplinary social sciences is a strategic intervention in successful policymaking.

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