**Incorporating Ethics in Public Policy Decisions**

Student

University

Course

Instructor

Date

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1. **Introduction**

In any society, public policy is central to leading the people to a better life. It is a proposal to solve pertinent and real-life concerns guided by a conception and executed by programs as a path designed or ratified by the government or NGOs. It encompasses plans, laws, and behaviors. To ensure that public policies positively impact society, their development and implementation should consider various life aspects. Ethics foster better public policy decisions.

1. **Ethics**

Ethics is a multidimensional aspect. Socrates viewed ethics as morality and what it requires of us (Raches, 1986). However, there are many theories with varying conceptions of what morality entails. Overall, most theories view ethics as the standards for what is good or bad and right or wrong in a distinct society or profession (Carneades.org, 2015). Therefore, what is considered ethical in one society may be considered unethical in another society or setting.

1. **Incorporating Ethics in Public Policy**

Society should develop and implement a moral operating system to effectively incorporate ethics into public policy. Utilitarianism would be effective in this case. Utilitarianism advocates for actions that enhance pleasure or happiness and oppose those actions that lead to harm or unhappiness (Horowitz, 2011). When directed to public policy decision-making, a utilitarian philosophy would have a goal of bettering society. This would involve assessing the available choices and settling for the most beneficial one. For instance, if the government wants to make a policy on dealing with increased rates of crime, it should first assess the available alternatives. Should they create job opportunities as the government has a moral obligation to empower its people, start arresting idlers, or make more stringent penalties against people arrested for a crime? Overall, creating opportunities stands out as it benefits society more than the other alternatives. Creating opportunities will cut crime rates and empower society while arresting idlers and implementing stringent penalties will only benefit the society by reducing crime. Based on this example, incorporating ethics in public policy decisions is essential as it fosters accountability between the government or administration and the public. It also ensures the public receives the resources it needs fairly. Ethics also allow the administration to incorporate integrity guidelines in their functioning, fostering trust from the society.

1. **Personal reflection**

A few years ago, I managed a group of 10 employees. At times, I found myself in situations requiring me to choose between organizational needs and employee needs. For instance, I would be tagged between using the company's resources to empower employees or letting them work in detrimental conditions to cut down expenses and thus increase profit margins. Initially, I would always opt for the organization as I thought using organizational resources for employee empowerment was morally wrong. With time, I learned that empowering employees is a company's moral obligation, and it has enormous benefits for both the employees and the organization. For instance, ensuring a conducive working environment improves employee wellbeing, their dedication to work, and productivity, increasing overall organizational productivity.

1. **Conclusion**

Ethics are key to public policy decisions. They allow policymakers to consider all aspects of an issue and settle for the most beneficial solution for both the government and society. Policymakers have an ethical obligation and responsibility to ensure that their decisions are primarily based on how beneficial a policy is to society.

**References**

Carneades.org. (2015). Ethics vs. Morality (Philosophical Distinctions). *YouTube.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAkqh9pfVkc>

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