

Ethics and policy research papers example

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



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Introduction

Policies play a central role in the implementation of an organization's aims and priorities. They give directions that guide the implementation of decisions through certain parameters. Managers in various organizations require policies in order to make either subjective or objective decisions. The impact of any policy directive involves both intended and unintended effects (Walker et al., 2014). While intended effects seek to derive positive impacts, unintended effects occur in complex adaptive systems. The significance of ethics in policy development process cannot be gainsaid. Policy development requires observance of certain ethical principles and codes that define a particular environment for which the policy intends to influence. In this regard, an interwoven relationship between ethics and policy exists.

Role ethics in policy development

Ethics describe the rules and norms that govern important values in the society. These values revolve around the interaction of human beings as well as their communities with one another. Ethics provides normative analysis of moral issues at stake during the process of policy development. Walker et al. (2014) observed that ethics is necessary in the process of policy analysis and decision making in government departments. While recognizing the role of ethics in public policy, Mahon and Robinson (2011) opined that two issues are critical in understanding the ethics. These issues include the purpose of policy development and the policy instruments for realizing these ends. In this regard, ethical values answers the both the purpose of policy development as well as the means for attaining the policy objectives. For example, it is ethical for the government to ensure security for its citizens. In this regard, a security policy will aim to enhance positive outcome (safety) for a great number of people. In utilitarian terms, the government can incorporate a raft of measures to curb insecurity as means of realizing the ultimate goal for majority of the people. These measures may involve subjecting individuals that breach safety and freedom of others to criminal proceedings. Ethics focuses on the ultimate good in the society. The Medicaid programs are social policies founded with aim of enhancing positive health outcomes among most residents of the United States (www.medicaid.gov). These policies were formulated with the purpose of fulfilling a positive need. In this case, the US government was under ethical or moral obligation to enhance the lives of its citizens through a social program that would improve their health. Any policy development must take cognizance of that

good and aim to promote it. In this regard, ethics provides a fundamental framework upon which policy development revolves.

Ethical considerations when drafting policy

It is necessary to observe certain ethical principles when drafting policy.

These considerations include rights, interests and values; transparency, public engagement; information, communication, education. Balancing of interest, values and rights helps to avoid conflict between individual and community interests. Even though every individual has a right to civil liberties, enjoyment of such rights might be limited in the public interest (Mahon & Robinson, 2011). Any policy should strive to enhance individual rights and values. In cases where community values seem to conflict with individual values, the values of the community may govern in the policy.

These values must be in harmony with national and international laws.

Deliberations on ethics should take cognizance of values, interests and rights that promote good to the society.

Transparency and public engagement are important in the public policy debate. Policy planning should involve the stakeholders. Decisions on policy should be open to the public. This would enhance their confidence and participation in the policy development process and increase awareness. If the policy to be developed concerns a particular disease, public engagement and transparency would enable people to prepare and respond to the disease. This can take place at family, community or individual level.

It is necessary to inform, educate and communicate to the public about the issues involved policy development. Early communication would enable the

public to plan and anticipate the policy instrument. Communication should involve culturally and linguistically appropriate modes.

Decision-making amid conflicting principles and norms

Leaders often find make decisions amid conflicting principles and norms. These decisions are usually backed by various ethical theories and principles. The most commonly applied ethical theory is utilitarianism. This theory is centred on a higher good to the greatest possible number of people. In cases where principles and norms conflict, leaders make decisions that yield desired outcome to the greatest number.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a social policy in the United States. The policy was developed under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act for low income families and individuals in the United States (www.medicaid.gov). These families have inadequate resources to finance healthcare services. The ethical considerations associated with the policy include transparency and public engagement; interests, rights and values and respect. During formulation of Medicaid policy, the federal government underscored the necessity of public engagement through legislation. This has increased public awareness about the program. The program enhances human dignity and respect by attempting to improve health outcomes of poor people in the United States.

Impacts of Medicaid

The policy was intended to address health problems among low households. The policy intended to address dental problems and was open to people with disability and children below 21. Medicaid policy has improved health

outcomes among most people in the United States (www.medicaid.gov). Although the policy targeted poor households and disadvantaged groups, the success of the program has seen many ineligible persons seeking to enrol.

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, it is evident that discussions on policy cannot be complete without the mention of ethics. Ethics forms an integral part of policy development process. Therefore, it is incumbent upon policy developers to take into account various ethical considerations and their impacts on policy development.

References

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