

Understanding Policy Process: Is There A Single Best Way?

Sebahattin GÜLTEKİN*

Abstract

The stage heuristic has been treated as the sole best model to explain policy process. Is it really comprehensive enough to understand the multifaceted and complicated policymaking? This study argues that diffusion framework, the punctuated-equilibrium framework, and multiple streams framework are stronger theoretical and empirical basis than stage heuristic because of a number of reasons. They are consistent and clear particularly in understanding certain stages of policy process. They have causal relationships while stage heuristic lacks causal explanation. Stage heuristic describes the policy process in general and avoids explaining complex relationships among policy phases and policy actors. Nevertheless, the alternative frameworks provide more sophisticated, profound, and descriptive knowledge. They provide an appropriate basis to develop and test hypotheses as stage heuristic lacks real-world practicability. Accordingly, the three alternatives are preferable compared to the stage heuristic in explaining certain aspects of policy process, providing scientific theory, developing and revising concepts and theories, and apprehending multifaceted structure of public policy making.

Keywords: Policy, Public Policy, Stage Heuristic Framework, Diffusion Models, Punctuated-Equilibrium, Multiple Streams Framework

Politika Sürecini Anlamak: Tek Bir En İyi Model Var Mı?

Özet

Klasik Yaklaşım Modeli birçoklarınca politika sürecini açıklayan etkili teorik yaklaşım olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Peki, bu model çok boyutlu ve kompleks politika sürecini anlamak için yeterince kapsamlı mıdır? Bu çalışma Politika Yayılım ve Yenilik Modelini, Kesintili Denge Teorisini ve Çoklu Akış Yaklaşımını teorik ve ampirik birçok nedenden dolayı Klasik Yaklaşımına tercih edilebilir görmektedir. Bu modeller net ve tutarlıdır. Politika yapım sürecinin özellikle bazı aşamalarını daha

* Polis Akademisi Güvenlik Bilimleri Fakültesi, Associate Professor, sgultekin@pa.edu.tr

gerçekçi ve açıklayıcı bir yaklaşımla ifade etmektedirler.. Bu üç model nedensellik ilişkisine sahipken Klasik Yaklaşım değildir. Klasik Yaklaşım politikalara genel bir bakış olarak görünmektedir; karmaşık ve komplike ilişkiler ve etkileşimleri açıklamaktan uzaktır ve gerçek hayattaki politika pratiklerini yansıtmamaktadır. Halbuki bu çalışmada gösterilen alternatif modeller, özellikle politika yapım sürecinin bazı aşamaları için derinlemesine ve iyi örgünlü açıklayıcı altyapuları ile politika yapım süreci ile ilgili hipotezler üretme ve bunları test etme konusunda sağlam bir bakış açısı sunmaktadırlar. Bu doğrultuda belirtilen alternatifler, politika sürecini anlatmakta, yeni ve gelişen kavramlar ve teorik perspektifler sunmada ve karmaşık yapılı kamu politika yapım sürecini analiz etmede Klasik Yaklaşım tercih edilebilir olarak değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Politika, Kamu Politikaları, Klasik Yaklaşım Modeli, Politika Yayılım ve Yenilik Modeli, Çoklu Akış Modeli, Kesintili Denge Teorisi

Introduction

Understanding policy processes is relatively complex due to multifaceted set of interacting elements in public policymaking.¹ A number of actors including interest groups, government officials, citizens, the media, and legislators are involved in the process; and not surprisingly, their values, preferences, and priorities differ from and compete with each other. Obviously, perceptions and preferences of each actor to ensure desired policy outcomes and their attempts to promote their interests as well as to discredit opponent views make understanding policy processes more complicated. Moreover, the policy process is not a haphazard process; rather, it necessitates time spans sometimes more than a decade or more. In addition, policy processes sometimes involve multiple programs and multiple implementers.²³ Technical problems and legal issues make the process more complex and difficult to simplify and to model.

The extremely complicated policy process must be simplified to explain and understand past and present policy actions and predict future policy processes through comprehensive theoretical frameworks. Using a narrow theoretical perspective, an ad hoc fashion, or commonsense approach by focusing on only explicit dynamics of the process is likely to produce invalid presuppositions, inconsistencies, erroneous assumptions

- 1 Paul A. Sabatier, The Need For Better Theories, In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), Theories of the Policy Process, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), 3-17.
- 2 Michael M.Ting, A theory of jurisdictional assignments in bureaucracies. American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 46, No. 2, April 2002, pp. 364-378.
- 3 Thad E. Hall and Laurence. J. O'Toole, Structures for policy implementation: An analysis of national legislation, 1965-1966 and 1993-1994. *Administration & Society*, Vol. 31, No. 6, 2000, pp. 667-686.

and ambiguities.⁴⁵ What needed is a range of theoretical frameworks with replicable analyses and data collection procedures, logically consistent, parsimonious, and a clearly defined set of concepts and assumptions, and falsifiable characteristic.⁶ A number of theoretical frameworks aiming to scientifically analyze policy process have been proposed in the literature. Nevertheless, the stage heuristic (SH) has been the most known and most referred policy model to understand and explain policy processes. It has been treated as the most exclusive framework to explain policy process. Many researchers treat it as the sole best model. Is it really the best method to explain entire policy process? Is it comprehensive enough to understand the multifaceted and complicated policymaking practices? This study aims to answer these questions. It aims to manifest strengths and weaknesses of the stage heuristic framework. Other alternative explanations to the stage heuristic will be discussed. Alternative frameworks' disadvantages and advantages in understanding policy process will be analyzed. Why other theoretical models are preferable to SH will be addressed.

I. STAGES HEURISTIC FRAMEWORK

The Stages Heuristic (SH) model is the most referred policymaking model. It is also known as classical model, stages model, and policy process model in literature. SH was first argued by Harold D. Lasswell more than a half century ago, with Brewer further developing it.⁷ SH framework simply divides the policy process into a series of stages.⁸ In the most basic form, the policy process is believed to be consisting of agenda setting, policy formulation, policy legitimation, policy implementation, and policy evaluation.

Agenda setting simply refers to what issues will be addressed by the government⁹ or decision-makers. A problem can be addressed if it is on the

4 Paul A. Sabatier, 1999, 3-17.

5 Guy Peters ve Jon Pierre, Introduction. In B. Guy Peters ve Jon Pierre (ed.) *Handbook of Public Policy*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2006).

6 Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inferences in Qualitative Research*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

7 Peter deLeon, *The Stages Approach to the Policy Process: What Has It Done? Where Is It Going?* In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), pp. 19-32.

8 Alican, Kaptı, *Kamu politika sürecinde klasik yaklaşım modeli*, In Alican Kaptı (ed.), *Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri*, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), pp. 25.

9 Thomas R. Dye, *Understanding Public Policy* (10th ed.), (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002).

agenda.¹⁰ Problems are defined differently by various political actors depending on their perspectives. How the problem is defined plays a pivotal role in shaping policies.¹¹ That is to say which problems will be addressed by decision-makers is decided during the agenda setting phase of the so called classical policy model. Put differently a policy process starts with a problem.¹²

Policy formulation refers to the process in which the possible policy initiatives are developed. When a problem is put on agenda by policy-makers, the phase of policy formulation begins.¹³ Policy actors try to formulate possible solutions to policy problems. Policy solution is developed to address the problem on the agenda. How the problem is defined determines the formulation of policy in the most cases. Hence, problem definition is vital for policy formulation. Discovering the causes of problem will enable policy makers to formulate effective policies to solve the problem.

Policy legitimation stage refers to selecting one of the proposed policies and enacting it by political support. Having formulated policy solutions, one of the proposed solutions draws the attention of decision-makers. Even though there are a number of political actors whose solutions might differ, one policy solution goes through legitimating process. In democratic countries, policy legitimation is performed by parliaments or governments.

Implementation is the process in which the legitimized policies put into action. This stage of the policy process is considered as the most critical phase¹⁴ since most policies are shaped through implementation phase. Policies are formulated and legitimized through a legislative process. However, most policies do not determine particular actions of implementers. Policies are vague in general to provide a convenient ground to implementers so that implementers can implement policies in changing times, places, and situations. How implementers put into practice the policy determine the success. That is why implementation stage is crucial for success of policies.

Policy evaluation is evaluating the impacts of the policies whether they are successful tools to ensure desired policy outcomes. As noted above,

10 A. Argun Akdoğan, Türkiye’de kamu politikası disiplininin tarihsel izler, In Filiz Kartal (ed.), Türkiye’de Kamu Yönetimi ve Kamu Politikaları, (Ankara: Türkiye ve Ortadoğu Amme İdaresi Enstitüsü, 2011), p.78.

11 A. Argun Akdoğan, 2011, p.78.

12 Alican Kaptı, 2013, p.29.

13 Alican Kaptı, 2013, p.33.

14 Alican Kaptı, 2013, p.36.

policies are preferred solutions to existing problems. When a policy is formulated, legitimated and implemented, it is important to evaluate it. Results of policies should be addressed because most policies cause unexpected consequences and side effects even if expected results emerge. A policy may be effective in dealing with a particular problem; however, it may cause unforeseen and new problems. Therefore, policies are subject to an evaluation stage.

It was assumed that government policies were developed through these sequential stages. Each stage has “a distinctive characteristic, mannerism, and process that gives the individual stage a life and presence of its own.”¹⁵ Accordingly, policy process has been viewed as sequential, cumulative, and differentiated by function.¹⁶ It is sequential because one stage leads to the next one. It is differentiated as each stage has its own dynamics and set of activities different from other stages. And it is cumulative since each stage produces its own results that are fed back into the policy process cycle. SH is viewed as the textbook of policy process due to the set of categories describing policy process.¹⁷

I.I. Strengths and Weaknesses

SH model has been important for public policy since it facilitates the understanding and research of complex and multifaceted policy process by dividing it into separate and discrete stages.^{18,19} This model provides a number of unique contributions to understanding the policy process.²⁰ First, it was a fresh insight to the pursuit of more rigorous hypotheses and models. For example, Wildavsky and Pressman’s study, *Implementation*, hypothesized a new model in which implementation was considered an indispensable element of policy design.²¹ Second, it emphasized a problem-oriented perspective and moved research away from the study of

15 Peter deLeon, The Stages Approach to the Policy Process: What Has It Done? Where Is It Going? In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), p. 21.

16 Robert T. Nakamura, The textbook policy process and implementation research. *Policy Studies Review* Vol. 7, No. 1, 1987, p. 142-154

17 Robert T. Nakamura, 1987, p. 142-154

18 Paul A. Sabatier, The Need For Better Theories, In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), 3-17.

19 Alican, Kapti, 2013, p. 41.

20 Peter deLeon, 1999, 19-32.

21 Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky, *Implementation*. In Jay M. Shafritz, Albert C. Hyde, and Sandra J. Parkers (eds.), *Classics of Public Administration*, (Belmond, CA: Thomson Wadsworth Publication, 2004

public administration and institutions, and included different stages and actors which brought a multidisciplinary approach into the policy sciences. Further, SH allows explicit inclusion of values and social norms in government policies.

SH model has been widely used due to a number of reasons.²² First, it helps the rationalization of disciplines involved in policy research. Evaluation and implementation research, for example, are indispensable elements of policy research. It divides policy process into discrete parts, which enable researchers to study each phase separately and examine each part in detail. Separate assessments of phases of policy process accelerated policy researches.

Second, SH fits well with the idea that legislators make policy and public administration implement policy. This dichotomy provides the rationale for the existence of bureaucrats and public administration, noted by administrative activities and organizational goals and practices. Discrete phase of the policy process requires experts in each part. Public administrators claim that they are the experts of implementation phase and they cannot be excluded from the policy process.

Third, SH is compatible with democratic norms as policymakers make policies and delegate power to public administration to implement within a system of checks and balances to ensure desired policy outcomes²³. Policies affect our lives drastically. If only same decision-makers affect policy process, it can lead corruption and arbitrary policy initiatives and this cannot be tolerable in democratic societies. Accordingly, a system of checks and balances within policy process is needed. SH model by dividing the process into discrete parts requiring experts from different fields provides a system of checks and balances within the process.

Fourth, it provides a convenient language for policy process. It is very useful to explain how policy process is constructed in, particularly, democratic and developed societies.

And finally, SH, most importantly, divides complex process into discrete and simple stages. It provides a groundwork understanding of policy making. It simplifies the process and provides a very brief and a general explanation about how policies are produced. It is a useful way of

22 Robert T. Nakamura, The textbook policy process and implementation research. *Policy Studies Review* Vol. 7, No. 1, 1987, s. 142-154

23 James. H. Cox, *Reviewing delegation: An analysis of the congressional reauthorization process*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004).

structuring our thinking and “seeing how all pieces of policy process fit together.”²⁴ That is the reason; it has been a good starting point to understand policy process.

However, SH has been subject to strong criticism. The major criticism, according to Sabatier, is that the stages model lacks causal theory. It does not include causal factors that affect and direct policy process within and across the stages. It seems that each stage has its own dynamics.²⁵ Therefore, SH lacks a set of coherent hypotheses across varying stages. Critics argue that SH framework is not a real theory to test different sets of hypotheses concerning policy cycle.

In addition, the sequence of the stages is problematic²⁶. Evaluations of existing policies, for example, are influential in the process of agenda setting, yet SH falls short in explaining this relationship. Public policies do not emerge from scratches. Many policies are developed upon old ones since evaluations of the latter shows inadequacy in meeting expectancy of societies and policy makers. Thus, many new policies indeed are newer versions of existing policies. However, SH framework neglects this notion and considers as policies can be developed through a separate agenda setting and formulation stages. That is to say SH does not provide sufficient ground to explain and analyze the affection between existing policies and new ones.

Furthermore, SH mostly focuses on passage and implementation of policies rather than interactions among various policy programs and policy actors. Most policies are not formulated and implemented in a vacuum. Public sphere is full of different types of policies and most of them strongly influence each other. Various policy actors with varying degree of interests also influence each other. And actors of policy process in each distinct stage can and do affect the others.

Moreover, SH overly simplifies the policy process. The policy process is complex; there are various policy proposals, multiple policy actors; interactions and exchanges among them; and even conflicting and competing problem conceptualizations. In this complex arena, SH seems too simplistic. Policy evolution, nevertheless, in most cases, lacks that simplicity.

24 Thomas A. Birkland, *An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making* (2nd ed.), (Armonk, NY; M. E. Sharpe, 2005), p. 224.

25 Guy Peters ve Jon Pierre, Introduction. In B. Guy Peters ve Jon Pierre (ed.) *Handbook of Public Policy*, (Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2006).

26 See also Robert T. Nakamura, *The textbook policy process and implementation research. Policy Studies Review* Vol. 7, No. 1, 1987, p. 142-154

The SH model lacks providing a rational ground to understand inextricable interaction among policy players.

Besides, SH fails to function as an effective instrument for policy-oriented learning throughout policy process since every policy is believed to have its own cycle different from others²⁷. Policy makers and interested actors learn from past successes and failures. There have been always unexpected events and side effects of policies. Unexpected costs and losses emerge. Such experiences provide a policy-oriented learning, yet SH seems to ignore this important relation.

SH seems a very normative model. It is a kind of expectancy that policies should follow these steps. Nevertheless, many policies do not follow these stages in order. Some stages are skipped and some change their sequences. From this point of view, SH is not a reflection of most policy practices but an expectation for future policy initiatives. Since its focus is on distinctive stages, SH has neglected the entire process as a whole.²⁸ Policy process has been portrayed as an episodic process instead of a continuous one with stages characterized as showing a linear existence rather than recursive interactions.^{29,30} Obviously, sequential activities in the real world seldom occur in a neat.³¹ Many policy initiatives interestingly do not follow each distinct stage. Most policies have their own dynamics and policy actors. Sometimes a policy is formulated first and agenda is set later. In some extraordinary cases, a new policy is implemented due to the law of the situation and followed by formulation and legitimating in democratic processes. Obviously, SH's order seems too optimistic and stands away from reflecting actual policy actions.

Similarly, SH model involves in both conceptual and descriptive problems.³² Its descriptive accuracy is problematic because it is not a paradigm, consisting of general theoretical assumptions and laws of scientific community that most of policy scholars agree upon as the same concepts may

27 Peter deLeon, The Stages Approach to the Policy Process: What Has It Done? Where Is It Going? In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), pp. 19-32.

28 Peter deLeon, 1999, pp. 19-32.

29 Peter deLeon, 1999, pp. 19-32.

30 Alican, Kaptı, Kamu politika sürecinde klasik yaklaşım modeli, In Alican Kaptı (ed.), *Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri*, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), pp. 42.

31 Thomas R. Dye, *Understanding Public Policy* (10th ed.), (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002).

32 Robert T. Nakamura, The textbook policy process and implementation research. *Policy Studies Review* Vol. 7, No. 1, 1987, p. 142-154.

indicate different meanings for different actors. Simply, SH has evolved as a common vocabulary largely due to widespread application rather than agreement on concepts or descriptive accuracy. For example, Lasswell argued that SH consists of seven different stages while Brewer proposes six stages with respect to some scholars' acceptance of five stages.³³ Obviously, there is no agreement among proponents of SH. In addition, it is subject to theoretical problems because categories do not comprehensively describe policy activity. Similarly, it is subject to practical problems since theoretical confusion causes misdiagnosis, misapplication of measures, and excludes many policies that do not fit into the sequential stages approach.

The relationships between implementers and policymakers are complex and changeable over time. Bureaucrats and politicians, for example, have changeable relationship over time.³⁴ Bureaucrats sometimes shirk in policy implementations³⁵ since policies are not always clear³⁶ and sometimes shares same objectives with policymakers.³⁷ Obviously, the relationship is unstable. This instability of interaction between policy actors influence the power granted for implementers.^{38,39} The stages approach does not provide adequate insights to understand this complexity in policy making.

SH is also short of explaining how major changes happen. There are times that drastic policy changes emerge. These kinds of policy changes are likely to emerge in different conditions than policies with little changes over time. Not all policy initiatives are paid attention. Evidently, there are different conditions and dynamics must be to promote particular policy actions. Nevertheless, SH lacks such a strong background that can sufficiently help one's understanding of why some policy issues gain attention while others are ignored. However, SH is weak to explain these differences because it treats all policies with the same logic.

33 Peter deLeon, *The Stages Approach to the Policy Process: What Has It Done? Where Is It Going?* In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), pp. 19-32.

34 Richard W. Waterman and Kenneth J. Meier, *Principal-Agent models: An expansion?* *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, Vol. 8, Issue. 2., April 1998, pp. 173-202.

35 Kenneth N. Bickers, ve John T. Williams, *Public Policy Analysis: A Political Economy Approach.*, (Boston, MA; Houghton Mifflin Co., 2001).

36 Robert D. Behn, *What right do public managers have to lead?* *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 58, No. 3, Mayıs-Haziran 1998, s. 209-224

37 Richard W. Waterman and Kenneth J. Meier, 1998, pp. 173-202.

38 John D. Huber, Charles R. Shipan, and Madelaine Pfahler, *Legislatures and statutory control of bureaucracy.* *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 45, Issue. 2, April 2001, pp. 330-345

39 B. Dan Wood, *Principals, bureaucrats, and responsiveness in clean air enforcements.* *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 82, Issue. 1, March 1998, pp. 213-234.

One might also argue that SH does not provide a strong explanation regarding how policies are diffused across countries. Not all policies a country adopts are new or invented. Policies of other states and countries are a good basis to solve problems. Accordingly, states learn from each other about policy actions.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the stages approach cannot explain how this happens.

Although SH will continue to serve as a basis for viewing and categorizing actors and actions in public policymaking,⁴¹ it can be said that the stages heuristic framework has become antiquated and outlived its usefulness.⁴² To thoroughly understand policy process, more descriptive, empirical, testable, and comprehensive theories are needed.

II. BETTER ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORKS TO STAGES HEURISTIC

A promising framework to policy process must meet four criteria.⁴³ First, any framework to be scientifically good theory must be relatively clear in its assumptions and causal presuppositions, internally consistent, parsimonious, wide in scope, testable, and definitely falsifiable.⁴⁴ Second, each framework must involve current conceptual developments in policy process, and scholars must acknowledge that each framework is useful to understand policy process. Frameworks, from a broad perspective, must function as a paradigm for policy sciences. Third, frameworks must be descriptive enough to explain much of the policy process with respect to the notion that scientific results are always tentative and uncertain. Finally, each framework must concentrate on complex relationships, conflicting interests, intertwined processes, and competing preferences. Any theoretical framework aiming to explain policy process must meet these criteria. SH framework does not meet first two criteria, thus making the need for better theories to understanding the policy process apparent.⁴⁵

40 Jack L. Walker, The Diffusion of innovations among the American states. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 63, Issue. 3, September 1969, pp. 880-899

41 Peter deLeon, 1999, pp. 19-32..

42 Paul A. Sabatier, The Need For Better Theories, In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), p.7.

43 Paul A. Sabatier, The Need For Better Theories, In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), p.8.

44 See also Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inferences in Qualitative Research*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

45 Paul A. Sabatier, 1999, p.8.

Scholars have sought better and more comprehensive theories for a thorough understanding of complicated policy process. Theoretical models that order and simplify reality, identify what is significant in policy making, harmonious with reality, provide meaningful explanations, helpful for research are considered necessary⁴⁶. Several new frameworks have been developed. The most intriguing ones are the multiple-streams framework, the punctuated-equilibrium framework, and policy diffusion framework. Major points of each of these three frameworks and why they are preferable to the stages approach will be discussed in following sections.

II.I. Multiple-Streams Framework

Multiple-streams (MS) framework, developed by John Kingdon, is based on garbage can model, a decision making model, outlined by Cohen, March, and Olsen, that organizations use to deal with ambiguity.⁴⁷ This framework is characterized by three eminent features: fluid participation, problematic preferences to deal with problems, and unclear technology, with an emphasis on agenda setting and specification of alternatives.⁴⁸ MS framework is attentive to complexity and deals with policy process under ambiguity.⁴⁹ Ambiguity is simply having several ways to think about same phenomena.⁵⁰ There are many problems in any given society but not all of them call attentions. This approach explains why some call attention why some not.⁵¹ In this theory, the problems and preferences are problematic and definitions are vague. Selecting the best possible solution to solve problems becomes difficult if not impossible. MS “translates into a process in which individuals are viewed as less capable of choosing the issues they would like to solve and more concerned about addressing the multitude of problems thrust upon them, largely by factors beyond their control”.⁵²

46 Thomas R. Dye, *Understanding Public Policy* (10th ed.), (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002).

47 Huseyin Akdogan and Yasin Kose, Kamu politika sürecinde çoklu akış model, In Alican Kaptı (ed.), *Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri*, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), p. 91.

48 Nikolaos Zahariadis, Ambiguity, Time, and Multiple Streams. In Paul A. Sabatier (eds.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999). pp.73-93.

49 Kingdon in Nikolaos Zahariadis, 1999, pp.73-93.

50 Feldman in Nikolaos Zahariadis, 1999, p. 74. .

51 A. Argun Akdogan, Türkiye’de kamu politikası disiplininin tarihsel izler, In Filiz Kartal (ed.), *Türkiye’de Kamu Yönetimi ve Kamu Politikaları*, (Ankara: Türkiye ve Ortadoğu Amme İdaresi Enstitüsü, 2011), p.80.

52 Nikolaos Zahariadis, Ambiguity, Time, and Multiple Streams. In Paul A. Sabatier (eds.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), p. 76.

According to MS, the policy process consists of three streams of policy actors and processes. The first stream involves problems which contain the data about problems and varying problem definitions. Some problems are ignored whereas policy makers pay attention to the other problems.⁵³ Three reasons effect whether or not problems are addressed. First, indicators can be used to evaluate the existence and severity of a problem. For example, if crime skyrockets due to homeless people, the problem of homelessness is more likely to attract the attention of policy makers. Second, an important and high-profile event can cause high amounts of attention to the problem. For example, September 11 drastically changed perception and attention of policy makers in the US regarding world wide terrorism. 9/11 functioned as a stimulus for new policy initiatives against the problem, threat of terror and terrorists. Third, feedback of existing policy programs may bring new conditions into the realm of policy makers' attention. For example, the effectiveness and efficiency of three-strikes laws has been questioned and new proposals have been requested. These proposals are the result of feedback of the programs which indicates many unintended consequences and deficiencies in the prevention crime.⁵⁴⁵⁵⁵⁶⁵⁷ Same things happen with Turkey's 1982 constitution. Many scholars, journalists, and politicians argue that Turkey needs new Constitution making emphasis on evaluation of 1982 constitution.⁵⁸⁵⁹ However, in policy process, not all problems are given attention since actors in policymaking "define conditions as problems by letting their values and beliefs guide their decisions, by placing subjects in one category rather than another and by comparing conditions in different countries".⁶⁰

Policy stream, the second stream, concerns with various solutions to problems stated in the first stream and proponents of the solutions. Indeed, its meaning is broad. It includes the policy ideas that are developed

53 Kingdon in Nikolaos Zahariadis, 1999, p. 76.

54 Samuel Walker, Sense and nonsense about crime and drugs: A policy guide, (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth / Thompson Learning, 2001)

55 Mary A. Yeats, "Three strikes" and restorative justice: Dealing with young repeat burglars in Western Australia. *Criminal Law Forum*, Vol. 8, Issue. 3, 1997, pp. 369-385.

56 Michael Vitiello, Three strikes: Can we return to rationality? *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, Vol. 87, Issue. 2, 1997, pp. 395-481.

57 Dan Lungren, Three cheers for 3 strikes. *Policy Review*, Issue. 80, November-December 1996, pp. 34-38.

58 Hikmet Tülen, Gündemin değişmeyen konusu: Anayasa değişikliği tartışmaları, *Atatürk Üniversitesi Erzurum Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi*, Vol. 4, Issue. 1-2, 2000, p. 203.

59 Hasan Canpolat and Mehmet Cangir, Değişen dünyada kamu yönetiminin geleceği ve Türkiye'nin reform gündemi: Devletin daha fazla demokratikleşmesi, *Türk İdare Dergisi*, Issue. 466, March 2010, p.25.

60 Nikolaos Zahariadis, 1999, p. 76.

in policy communities which consist of bureaucrats, politicians, researchers, academicians, interest groups, and so on; vocalization of these ideas through meetings, hearings, conferences, print and visual media; competition of these ideas; revision, integration, selection, or abandonment of these ideas; and preparing proposals according to practical feasibility and value acceptability of the ideas. Policies technically practicable and conforming values of policymakers are more likely to be adopted.

A politic stream involving electoral institutions and elected officials is, according to Kingdon, the third stream of MS framework. Politics matter in shaping policy choices.⁶¹ Three elements, national mood, pressure groups, and administrative and legislative turnovers, should be clarified in this stream because these are vital factors in the politics stream. National mood is the concept that indicates the common way of thinking in a country. It does not mean that all people think or feel the same but it means that a large number of people feel roughly the same. For example, the national mood of the U.S. in terms of terrorism is that people want the government to be harsh on terrorist threats. In this sense, public opinion pools are effective tools for policy actors to learn the national mood. From a different point of view, it can be argued that preparing national mood for preferred policy actions becomes significant for policy actors. For example, if a new surveillance policy is aimed, then related policy actors must prepare the public about the necessity of a new surveillance policy.

Interest groups are also important in the stream of politics because politicians seek the support of interest groups.^{62,63} Support or opposition of interest groups is crucial for politicians because they may determine the future of any policy proposals and the future of politicians in the political arena. For example, if all trade policy interest groups are against a new proposal of the proposed trade policy of the government, then the proposal has almost no chance to be implemented by the government. Administrative and legislative turnover affect politics as well as national mood and interest groups pressures. A new member in administration or a major shift in Parliament can affect the balance of politics in the country. Accordingly, policy preferences are affected by these turnovers. For example, changes in Iraq policy have been discussed since democrats gained the

61 Guy Peters ve Jon Pierre, Introduction. In B. Guy Peters ve Jon Pierre (ed.) *Handbook of Public Policy*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2006).

62 Steven J. Balla, Administrative procedures and political control of the bureaucracy. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 92, No. 3, Eylül 1999, s. 663-673.

63 Terry M. Moe, The Politics of Bureaucratic Structure. In John E. Chubb and Paul E. Peterson (Eds.), *Can the government govern*, (Washington, D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1989).

majority of congressional seats in the 2006 elections in the U.S. Therefore, who holds power is, undeniably, influences policy preferences.

However, each of these three streams is not enough to explain policy process in MS framework. Three streams normally function independently, but should be coupled, according to Kingdon. In other words, to make a policy proposal rise, these three streams should join together at the same time. There must be windows of opportunity to connect the streams. The times that these three streams join altogether is defined as “policy windows”.⁶⁴ When an important event happens, the policy windows are opened. Drastic terrorist attacks in Turkey historically opened policy window for new policies against terrorism. When Turkish Government and judicial decisions oppose each other in the first decade of new century, government decided to make some changes in Constitution. The confrontation between politicians and judiciary, in other words, drastically affected the agenda and opened policy window for policy makers.

Policy entrepreneurs mobilize their resources and power to affect policy makers through different means. They try to promote their policy proposals. National mood, interest group pressure, and changes in government influence the selection of policies. If all three streams are coupled in a single policy proposal, the policy proposal has a good chance to be adopted. All three streams “interact only during open windows when policy entrepreneurs attach problems to solutions and present them to receptive political audience”.⁶⁵ Put differently, entrepreneurial strategies of policy actors affect the coupling of the streams. In this sense, policy windows can be considered as windows of opportunity. If policy entrepreneurs are successful to couple all three streams, then policy shifts are possible.

II.I.I. Why is it preferable to stages heuristic?

Even though it pays particular attention to decision-making under ambiguity, MS framework is an extremely powerful framework for policy process. It enables us to use the garbage can model in national-level policy-making as it integrates policy communities with broader events. Broad political events may cause promotion of specific policy interests. In addition, Kingdon makes the importance of ideas in policymaking process visible although he does not deny the impact of self-interests. Struggle over ideas

64 Kingdon in Nikolaos Zahariadis, *Ambiguity, Time, and Multiple Streams*. In Paul A. Sabatier (eds.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999). p.77.

65 Nikolaos Zahariadis, *Ambiguity, Time, and Multiple Streams*. In Paul A. Sabatier (eds.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), p. 81.

is the essence of policymaking in policy communities.⁶⁶ Complexity, fluidity, and fuzziness are important features of policy making.⁶⁷ The stages approach however does not deal with complexity, variability, and ambiguity in the policy process. Hence, it can be argued that MS approach provides a stronger theoretical framework to understand policy process than SH.

The concepts of MS framework are explanatory regarding the policy process. For example, policy windows, national mood, interest groups, and turnovers are influential factors in the policymaking process. The emphasis on the influences of interest groups is remarkable because many studies have asserted that interest groups are dominant in policymaking process.^{68,69} In addition, the concept of coupling expresses how different streams can join each other and produce opportunity for new policies. In other words, policy making does not consist of distinctive and completely independent phases; the three streams should join and result in policy. SH, nevertheless, is inadequate to reflect the interaction of stages in policymaking. Factors such as national mood and turnovers are also ignored in the stages approach although they are critical concepts in policymaking.

All policymaking frameworks aim to describe and predict.⁷⁰ MS approach is no different. Nevertheless, it can be argued that MS framework focuses on understanding and explaining policy process rather than predicting it. It specifies the conditions under which policy initiatives are proposed and promoted. MS approach therefore aims to understand reality, and as such it is argued that it provides a realistic picture of reality. Policy entrepreneurs, for example, are believed to employ some strategies to promote their policy preferences.⁷¹ Obviously, MS provides a truer picture of the reality than SH model.

MS is particularly successful in how agenda is set for different types of policies and for different countries.⁷² It is very effective in explaining agen-

66 Deborah Stone, *Policy paradox: The art of political decision making*. (New York, NY: Norton & Company, 2002).

67 Nikolaos Zahariadis, 1999), pp.73-93.

68 Bernard Rosen, *Holding government bureaucracies accountable* (3rd ed), (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc, 1998)

69 Terry M. Moe, *The Politics of Bureaucratic Structure*. In John E. Chubb and Paul E. Peterson (Eds.), *Can the government govern*, (Washington, D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1989).

70 Nikolaos Zahariadis, 1999), pp.73-93.

71 Michael Mintrom, *Policy entrepreneurs and the diffusion of innovation*. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 4, No. 3, July 1997, pp. 738-770.

72 Huseyin Akdogan and Yasin Kose, *Kamu politika sürecinde çoklu akış model*, In Alican Kaptı (ed.), *Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri*, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), pp. 103.

da setting and development for many public policies in Turkey. For example, development of human rights policies in the country and how they came to agenda can be easily explained and understood by MS model.⁷³

Policy making is complex and understanding it is not easy. MS framework provides a comprehensive basis to understand policymaking. Three streams seem to be a true reflection of what is happening in policy arenas. Problems received the most attention rather than routine concerns. Problems make people aware of what is going wrong and what needs more attention. When problems become visible, solutions become important. This is what exactly policy stream proposes. Many actors including researchers, bureaucrats, interest groups, even citizens will propose solutions to problems. Multiple solutions and proposals will compete to solve problems, and it is the task of politicians to select competing policy initiatives. Again, this points to the importance of politics stream. MS framework is comprehensive and descriptive to understand policymaking whereas SH seems a normative approach rather than a true reflection of what is happening in policy arenas.

Policy entrepreneurs have huge impact on policymaking.⁷⁴ They are expected to make problems visible, though not all problems received attention. Some problems receive more attention than others. Policy entrepreneurs try to make problems related to their desired policy outcomes visible and try to put them on agenda. There is thus a constant interaction between problems stream and policy stream which shows that streams are not independent and do not have independent characteristics from each other. A similar interaction happens between policy stream and politics stream. Policy entrepreneurs propose policy actions and try to influence politicians who will decide on appropriate solutions. Obviously, policy stream and politics stream are tied to each other. Policy entrepreneurs strive to set the agenda for problem solving. However, without influencing politicians and decision makers, their agenda may become meaningless. Hence, problems and politics stream are related to each other. Stages approach nonetheless ignores this interaction and influence between various phases in policy making.

Overall, MS framework is applicable in a broad variety of policy arenas. It can be argued that MS has a stronger theoretical and empirical basis than SH approach in terms of explaining and understanding policy mak-

73 Huseyin Akdogan and Yasin Kose, 2013, p. 103

74 Michael Mintrom, Policy entrepreneurs and the diffusion of innovation. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 4, No. 3, July 1997, pp. 738-770.

ing. MS is not cumulative; rather, it is a dynamic combination and interaction of multiple factors. Policies are set and adjusted through a complex combination of problems, solutions and politics. Although three streams are interconnected, each stream has its own dynamics and rules largely independent from others. Moreover, as Zahariadis argues, ambiguity in policy making requires more information to simplify policy process. MS provides us more information than SH. In addition, ambiguity opens windows for innovations since new solutions to problems are welcome.⁷⁵ Evidently, MS framework is preferable to stages approach in understand policymaking because it “provides a rich and multilayered metaphor of policy making from the early acceptance of new ideas about public problems to the active considerations of solutions as new public policy”.⁷⁶

II.II. Punctuated-Equilibrium Framework

Another alternative framework is the punctuated-equilibrium (PE) model developed by Baumgartner and Jones in the mid-1990s.⁷⁷ PE aims to explain why some public policies changes drastically while most policies stay constant and radical changes are rare for them.⁷⁸

PE argues that policies follow an incremental time journey. Stability typifies most policy areas rather than crisis. However, there are periods in which major policy shifts are likely to occur due to events and crises.⁷⁹ Changes in public understanding of problems may also cause major shifts in policy preferences. Policy entrepreneurs, to make major policy changes, seek to design new policy images and to exploit multiple policy venues. In other words, PE framework claims that policy shows a relative stability and incrementalism followed by unexpected episodes of substantial change largely due to catastrophic events, economic, social, and international crises, shifts on modes of production and so on.⁸⁰ It can be argued

75 Nikolaos Zahariadis, Ambiguity, Time, and Multiple Streams. In Paul A. Sabatier (eds.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), pp.73-93.

76 Thomas A. Birkland, *An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making* (2nd ed.), (Armonk, NY; M. E. Sharpe, 2005), p. 226.

77 Paul A. Sabatier, *The Need For Better Theories*, In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), p. 9.

78 Sinan Ulkemen, *Kamu politika sürecinde kesintili denge modeli*, In Alican Kaptı (ed.), *Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri*, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), pp. 105.

79 James L. True, Bryan D. Jones, and Frank R. Baumgartner, *Punctuated-Equilibrium Theory: Explaining Stability and Change in American Policymaking*. In Paul A. Sabatier (eds.) *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999)

80 Carter A. Wilson, *Policy regimes and Policy Change*. *Journal of Public Policy*, Vol. 20, Issue. 3, December 2000, pp. 247-274

that policies are in most part results of incremental changes but sometimes of dramatic changes. Thus, both stability and dramatic changes in understanding policies become crucial.

Policy frameworks try to explain one of these two, policy stability and policy change, with PE framework covering both. Issue definition and agenda setting are critical factors in PE model. Issues are defined differently in policy arenas and these definitions have impacts on agenda setting process. Existing polices are evaluated and then its effectiveness and efficiency are questioned or supported. If a policy is supported, incremental changes are likely to take place when a problem related to the policy is encountered; if the policy is questioned, the opportunity to make major policy change emerges. The U.S. policy arena shows a relatively conservative nature with respect to some major changes in governmental policies.⁸¹ However, Turkey policy ground reflects a policy environment filled by dramatic policy changes largely affected by drastic political and social events.

To make dramatic changes in policies, conflicts and problems are needed. PE indicates that there are periods of equilibrium, in which a policy issue is dominated by a policy subsystem in the long run and disequilibrium in which major policy changed are insisted and put on agenda.⁸²

Appropriately, it can be argued that policy subsystems are critical to ensure equilibrium of policy incrementalism because policy subsystems seek to construct a policy monopoly, a concentrated, closed system of policy actors, which constantly benefits the interest of actors in the monopoly.⁸³ Accordingly, this system is likely to stay closed and stable for a long time, which in consequence causes stability of policies. Gridlock and frequent macro level policy changes rarely occur in the American policy system, but changes have arisen over years. However, Turkey's policies change frequently involving in drastic changes. Recent changes in judicial system as opposed to the results of referendum 2010. The changes were drastic in 2010 and new drastic changes exist in 2014. Turkey is a good example of frequent drastic changes in public policies. In short, some policy changes are incremental, whereas the others occur sporadically. The budgetary process is a good example of incremental policy change. However, foreign policy shows relatively dramatic changes compared to budgetary process.

81 James L. True, Bryan D. Jones, and Frank R. Baumgartner, 1999.

82 James L. True, Bryan D. Jones, and Frank R. Baumgartner, 1999.

83 Thomas A. Birkland, *An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making* (2nd ed.), (Armonk, NY; M. E. Sharpe, 2005).

Institutional structures and agenda setting provide a basis for PE approach. Policy subsystems, iron triangles consisting of legislators, bureaucrats and interest groups, can be dominated by a single idea, but domination may change over time. Bounded rationality, consideration of uncertainty and impossibility of complete knowledge is tied to incremental-policy orientation of these issue networks.⁸⁴ In addition, some issues catch fire and control the agenda and results in change within macropolitics of countries. In short, PE model contains times of “periods of equilibrium or near stasis, when an issue is captured by a subsystem, and periods of disequilibrium, when an issue is forced onto the macropolitical agenda”.⁸⁵ That is to say “policy remains stable, followed by a period of rapid change, then stability again”.⁸⁶

II.II.I. Why is it preferable to stages heuristic?

Although clear causal relations and precise presuppositions are not constant in PE approach due to complex institutional dynamics and macropolitics,⁸⁷ it is a powerful framework for policy process particularly about the budget. It takes into consideration of bounded-rationality, characteristic of human decision making and the nature of institutions including iron triangles. Multiple venues interact in policy making with boundedly rational decision making and this eventually enhances incremental policy making.

One of its strengths is that decision-making processes are taken into account for a more accurate picture of the policy process. It shows that how policy decisions are made and why policies are as they are. In other words, PE provides a comprehensive picture of how policy decisions are made. When looked at the political arenas, one can see various actors with competing interests and preferences and complex relations. It seems difficult to promote only one group’s interests. Obviously, bargains and compromise are expected among all different actors so that there will not be too many opponents of the chosen policy. The bargaining process involves

84 Charles E. Lindblom, *The science of “Muddling through.”* In Jay M. Shafritz, Albert C. Hyde, and Sandra J. Parkers (eds.), *Classics of Public Administration*, (Belmond, CA: Thomson Wadsworth Publication, 1959)

85 James L. True, Bryan D. Jones, and Frank R. Baumgartner, *Punctuated-Equilibrium Theory: Explaining Stability and Change in American Policymaking.* In Paul A. Sabatier (eds.) *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), p. 101.

86 Thomas A. Birkland, 2005, p. 228.

87 James L. True, Bryan D. Jones, and Frank R. Baumgartner, 1999, p. 104.

persuasion, negotiations, and debate.⁸⁸ Proposals and counter proposals are exchanged until a mutually acceptable solution is found. The aim is to minimize conflict among participants by compromise. One might argue that all these bargains and exchanges allow only gradual testing of new policy proposals. Small adjustments to existing policies agreed on before are more realistic instead of drastic changes. This is so because it is not easy not ensure political support of the majority of participants. That is why it is expected that the agreed solution will be not much different from the status quo. Therefore, it can be argued that PE provides a more enhanced picture of policy process than SH.

Nevertheless, there are times drastic changes occur as the result of some events or problems that affect policy actors drastically. The Iraq policy of Turkey has been drastically changed due to terrorist attacks in the last quarter of twentieth century although there have been incremental changes. The Syria policy of the country followed a similar path and overturned completely. September 11 made a similar impact on the U.S. foreign policy. PE in this context provides a strong basis to understand drastic changes whereas SH approaches all policies in the same logic. Hence, PE model provides a more powerful base to understand drastic policy changes. Examining tobacco policy in Turkey, Ulkemen argues that PE is very successful to understand most policies relative stability and punctuation in policymaking.⁸⁹

Neither incremental nor large-scale policy changes always occur. PE approach explains punctuations and stasis in a single theory whereas other theories aim to explain either the former or the latter. Its approach toward policy networks is insightful in that it explains the complex relations and interactions between implementers, decision makers, and entrepreneurs. Stability and incremental changes will doubtlessly occur in policy process. PE framework indicates that even though policies are believed to follow an incremental path, policy punctuations are always possible. SH nonetheless considers all policies in the same logic. It does not provide how drastic policy changes happen. It is also inadequate to argue about incremental nature of most policies. Accordingly, PE can be considered as a stronger theoretical framework than SH to understand policymaking.

88 Charles E. Lindblom, The science of "Muddling through." In Jay M. Shafritz, Albert C. Hyde, and Sandra J. Parkers (eds.), *Classics of Public Administration*, (Belmond, CA: Thomson Wadsworth Publication, 1959)

89 Sinan Ulkemen, Kamu politika sürecinde kesintili denge modeli, In Alican Kaptı (ed.), *Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri*, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), pp. 114.

II.III. Diffusion Models

The policy diffusion framework is another alternative to explain policy process. Although Sabatier⁹⁰ argues that it was developed by Berry and Berry, it can be traced back to Mohr⁹¹ and Walker.⁹² Its main concern is to explain how states adopt policy innovations.⁹³ In its unsophisticated meaning, the policy diffusion (PD) framework asserts that policy adoption is “a function of both the characteristics of the specific political systems and a variety of diffusion processes”.⁹⁴

Policies are believed to be incremental⁹⁵ in the most cases; however, there is always policy innovation.⁹⁶ It should also be noted that not every policy that countries use is invented by themselves. Some policies are adopted from other countries, which can be defined as policy diffusion. In other words, diffusion of policies indicates the geographical spread of policies. Indeed, there are two models in the context of adoption of new policy programs by any given state or country; internal determinants models and diffusion models.⁹⁷ The internal determinants models indicate that social, economic, and political attributes of the state determine adoption of new policies.^{98,99} Internal factors are significant to determine policy actions.

Diffusion models speculate that a state’s policy adoptions are tightly connected to other states’ policy initiatives. Put differently, “the pattern of adoption of the policy by the states results from states’ emulating the be-

90 Paul A. Sabatier, The Need For Better Theories, In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), 3-17.

91 Lawrence B. Mohr, Determinants of innovation in organizations. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 75, Issue. 1, March 1969, pp. 963-974

92 Jackl L. Walker, The Diffusion of innovations among the American states. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 63, Issue. 3, September 1969, pp. 880-899.

93 Sebahattin Gultekin, Kamu politika sürecinde politika yayılım ve yenilik modeli, In Alican Kaptı (ed.), *Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri*, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), p. 120.

94 Paul A. Sabatier, The Need For Better Theories, In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), p. 10.

95 James L. True, Bryan D. Jones, and Frank R. Baumgartner, Punctuated-Equilibrium Theory: Explaining Stability and Change in American Policymaking. In Paul A. Sabatier (eds.) *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999)

96 Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, Innovation and Diffusion Models in Policy Research. In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), pp.169-200.

97 Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, 1999, pp.169-200.

98 Christopher. Z. Mooney and Mei-Hsien Lee, Legislation morality in the American states: The Case of Pre-Roe Abortion Regulation reform. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 39, Issue. 3, August 1995, pp. 599-627

99 Lawrence B. Mohr, Determinants of innovation in organizations. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 75, Issue. 1, March 1969, pp. 963-974.

havior of other states".¹⁰⁰ According to Rogers, diffusion is "the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system".¹⁰¹ Accordingly, states' policies are good sources of policies for other states.

Most policy actions in the U.S. reflect a diffusion model.¹⁰² The experiences and policy evaluation of states become a good source for other states in terms of policy adoption. States tend to adopt other states' policy programs for three reasons. First, states learn from each other. States will adopt successful programs and, at best, unsuccessful policies may be adopted with revisions.¹⁰³ Second, states try to pursue nationally and regionally-accepted standards. No state wants to lag behind other states. The states compete with each other to adopt the best policies. A state's policy success increases the pressure for other states to adopt that policy because states do not want to use antiquated and ineffective policy. Third, states also adopt other states' policies due to pressure from citizens and policy entrepreneurs. News of successful policy programs in other states can place pressure on elected officials to adopt the same policies. In addition, the news media can significantly influence the diffusion of policy programs by reflecting upon other states' policy successes and failures.¹⁰⁴ Pressure for new policy adoption may come from either policy entrepreneurs or/and citizens. Scholars have recognized for years that there are several factors that influence states' innovations of existing policy programs.¹⁰⁵ It apparently becomes problematic for one to understand the policymaking process without a particular attention to diffusion models unless policymakers invent policy programs.

100 Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, 1999, p. 171.

101 Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*. (New York, NY: Free Press, 1983), p.5.

102 Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, 1999, pp.169-200.

103 Everett M. Rogers, 1983.

104 Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, 1999, pp. 169-200.

105 Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, *Innovation and Diffusion Models in Policy Research*. In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999); Michael Mintrom, *Policy entrepreneurs and the diffusion of innovation*. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 4, No. 3, July 1997, pp. 738-770; Christopher. Z. Mooney and Mei-Hsien Lee, *Legislation morality in the American states: The Case of Pre-Roe Abortion Regulation reform*. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 39, Issue. 3, August 1995, pp. 599-627; Virginia Gray, *Innovation in the states: A diffusion study*. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 67, Issue. 4, December 2003, pp. 1174-1185; Jackl L. Walker, *The Diffusion of innovations among the American states*. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 63, Issue. 3, September 1969, pp. 880-899; Lawrence B. Mohr, *Determinants of innovation in organizations*. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 75, Issue. 1, March 1969, pp. 963-974.

II.III.I. Why is it preferable to stages heuristic?

PD framework can be considered as an effective model to explain policy process. It has been increasingly used to explain policy adoption in the U.S. recently.¹⁰⁶ It also is useful to explain other countries' policy preferences. It is understandable that countries do not invent policies from scratch. Brand new and never implemented policies are rare in today's world. Countries tend to adopt other countries' policies. For example, when a new problem occurs in Turkey, the media and academicians research the policies of the West to solve the problem. Policy proposals are developed over the successful policy implementations of Western world. New laws are referred to developed democratic countries' laws. This shows the effectiveness and validity of PD.

Research suggests that diffusion may work in several ways.¹⁰⁷ First, the national interaction model posits that communication networks of state officials determine adoption of other states' policy programs. Therefore, more communication between state officials and policy entrepreneurs leads to a greater diffusion of programs. Annual conferences and meetings provide strong networks for policy makers. The stages approach does not deal with this kind of interactions among policy makers among different levels of governments. Therefore, one might argue that PD provides a clearer policymaking picture than SH since the former is satisfactory enough to deal with the inadequacies of the latter.

¹⁰⁶ Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, State Lottery Adoptions as Policy Innovations: An Event History Analysis. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol.84, No: 2, Haziran 1990, s. 395-415; Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, Tax Innovation in the States: Capitalizing on Political Opportunity. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 1992, 715-742; Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, The politics of tax increases in the states. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 38, No. 3, 1994, s. 855-859; Frances S. Berry, Sizing up state policy innovation research. *Policy Studies Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 3, Autumn 1994, s. 442-456; James M. Lutz, Regional Leaders in the diffusion of Tort Innovations among the American states. *Publius*, Vol. 27, Issue. 1, 1997, pp. 39-58; Michael Mintrom and Sandra Vergari, Policy networks and innovation diffusion: The case of state education reforms. *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 60, No. 1, 1998, pp. 126-148; Frederick J. Boehmke and Richard Witmer, Disentangling Diffusion: The Effects of Social Learning and Economic Competition on State Policy Innovation and Expansion. *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 57, Issue. 1, March 2004, pp. 39-51; Lawrence J. Grossback, Sean Nicholson-Crotty, and David. A. M. Peterson, Ideology and Learning in Policy Diffusion. *American Politics Research*, Vol. 32, Issue. 5, September 2004, pp. 521-545; Robert Chamberlain and Donald P. Haider-Markel, "Lien On Me": State Policy Innovation in Response to Paper Terrorism. *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 58, Issue. 3, September 2005, pp. 449-460; Andy Karch, National Intervention and the diffusion of policy innovations. *American Politics Research*, Vol. 34, Issue. 4, July 2006, pp. 403-426.

¹⁰⁷ Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, Innovation and Diffusion Models in Policy Research. In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999),

Second, the regional diffusion model assumes that states tend to adopt policy programs of those states that are geographically close and share similar regional characteristics.¹⁰⁸ The regional diffusion models can be divided into two forms: neighbor models which emphasize the influence of states that share the same border and fixed region models which claim that states' policy adoption is determined by not only border-neighboring states but also states in the near vicinity. States tend to learn about policy programs from their neighbor states.¹⁰⁹¹¹⁰ In addition, states tend to adopt nearby states' policies because they compete more often with them rather than with all states.

The third diffusion model supported in the literature is leader-laggard model.¹¹¹ According to this model, some states are leaders in inventing and establishing new policies. Other states tend to trail these leaders. Hence, leader states' policy programs considerably determine other states' policy adoptions. For example, California and New York, since they are perceived as leader states in the U.S. context, are supposed to affect other states in the context of policy diffusion.¹¹² Same happens with policies of the US. It usually affects rest of the world. Germany makes similar impact in European Union (EU).

Vertical influence model presumes that the federal government is a top-level example for other states and its policy initiatives have a huge impact on other states policy adoptions.¹¹³ Accordingly, the federal government vertically influences state-level policy adoptions. Policies of EU affect member states' policies drastically. Russia's policies, similarly, influence former Soviet countries. Regional and global standards also affect countries' policies because increasing values and principles cause pressure

108 see also Bradley C. Canon, and Lawrence Baum, Patterns of adoption of tort law innovations: An application of diffusion theory to Judicial Doctrines, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 75, Issue. 4, December 1981, pp. 975-987

109 Frederick J. Boehmke and Richard Witmer, Disentangling Diffusion: The Effects of Social Learning and Economic Competition on State Policy Innovation and Expansion. *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 57, Issue. 1, March 2004, pp. 39-51.

110 Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, State Lottery Adoptions as Policy Innovations: An Event History Analysis. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol.84, Issue: 2, Haziran 1990, s. 395-415

111 Frances S. Berry ve William D. Berry, State Lottery Adoptions as Policy Innovations: An Event History Analysis. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol.84, No: 2, Haziran 1990, s. 395-415

112 Virginia Gray, Innovation in the states: A diffusion study. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 67, Issue. 4, December 2003, pp. 1174-1185.

113 Michael Mintrom, Policy entrepreneurs and the diffusion of innovation. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 4, No. 3, July 1997, pp. 738-770.

for countries to adopt them.¹¹⁴ Gultekin provides many examples of PD practices in Turkey. Many policies of the country adopted from the Western World including Criminal Code, Code of Civil Law, and obligations code.¹¹⁵ Similarly policies of the EU affect Turkey's policies since Turkey, as a candidate country for EU membership, is expected to adopt EU's policies.¹¹⁶ The affection between Turkey and EU is a good example of vertical influence model of PD.

It can be said that policy entrepreneurs are agents and drivers of policy diffusion.¹¹⁷ Policy entrepreneurs can also be considered as people who open the policy windows. Successful policy programs are more likely to be adopted because the states and countries seek improved policies. Applied and incrementally changed policies of other states/countries provide a good source for policymaking of other states/countries. Since they are implemented and their success or failure can be seen, other states are willing to adopt them because they involve in less risk compared to completely new, untested theories. That is why policy entrepreneurs pay attention to policies implemented in other countries. Many countries implement similar policies to similar problems. Tezer, for example, proposes to apply 'performance based budgeting' for Turkey as implemented by many OECD countries.¹¹⁸ Akay, similarly, provides emergency management policies of Japan as a good source for Turkey's emergency management policies.¹¹⁹ These are examples of PD since policies of other countries affect countries. Hence, one might argue that PD is very successful in providing causal relationships across countries' policies since many policies are adopted from other implementers with respect to some differences in practice.¹²⁰

It is obvious that diffusion models are extremely useful tools to understand policymaking. Obviously, SH overlooks, if not ignores, the in-

114 Sebahattin Gultekin, Kamu politika sürecinde politika yayılım ve yenilik model, In Ali-can Kaptı (ed.), Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), p. 123.

115 Sebahattin Gultekin, Kamu politika sürecinde politika yayılım ve yenilik model, In Ali-can Kaptı (ed.), Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), pp. 137.

116 Sebahattin Gultekin, 2013, p. 139.

117 Michael Mintrom, Policy entrepreneurs and the diffusion of innovation. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 4, No. 3, July 1997, pp. 738-770.

118 Meral Tecer, Türkiye'de bütçe politikası uygulamaları ve performans esaslı bütçeleme, In Filiz Kartal (ed.), Türkiye'de Kamu Yönetimi ve Kamu Politikaları, (Ankara: Türkiye ve Ortadoğu Amme İdaresi Enstitüsü, 2011), pp.183.

119 Aslı Akay, Türkiye'de afet politikaları, In Filiz Kartal (ed.), Türkiye'de Kamu Yönetimi ve Kamu Politikaları, (Ankara: Türkiye ve Ortadoğu Amme İdaresi Enstitüsü, 2011), p.465.

120 Sebahattin Gultekin, 2013, p. 127.

teraction and policy learning between states and the federal government. Therefore, it can be argued that the stages approach misses an important source of policymaking. The diffusion model clearly is preferable to SH in this sense. Evidently, diffusion models are a good reflection of reality of policy making in policy communities whereas SH overlooks the policy-making among countries. The former hence has a more powerful descriptive ground than the latter.

III. CONCLUSION

This study aims to address the question of whether there is a single best way to address and understand policymaking or, in other words, whether SH is the sole best model of policy process. That is the reason, diffusion framework, the punctuated-equilibrium framework, and multiple streams framework are evaluated, discussed, and proposed as effective policy models with strong theoretical and empirical ground while especially early policy studies behave the stage heuristic as the single policy model. To compare alternative three frameworks with SH, this study applied to Sabatier's four criteria, mentioned above, as useful evaluation gauges to evaluate alternative frameworks being stronger theoretical approaches to policy process.¹²¹ Accordingly, policy frameworks should be good scientific theories. When the three frameworks are analyzed, one might argue that they meet these criteria whereas stages approach lacks this feature. The concepts and propositions of all three alternative frameworks are consistent and clear. They have causal relationships while stages approaches lack causal explanation. In addition, three alternative frameworks have been revising and developing conceptually whereas SH could not ensure conceptual development. It only mentions about the policy cycle. However, the three alternative frameworks have been developing and applied largely by policy scholars. SH looks like to have completed its development.

SH describes the policy process in general and avoids explaining complex relationships among policy phases and policy actors. Explaining and understanding policy process requires more complicated and thorough theoretical frameworks.¹²² Nevertheless, the three alternative frameworks

121 Paul A. Sabatier, *The Need For Better Theories*, In Paul A. Sabatier (ed.), *Theories of the Policy Process*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999), 3-17

122 Alican, Kaptı, *Kamu politika sürecinde klasik yaklaşım modeli*, In Alican Kaptı (ed.), *Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri*, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), pp. 42.

provide more sophisticated and profound, descriptive and causal knowledge about policymaking. Alternative frameworks provide an appropriate basis to state and test hypothesis concerning policymaking and policy processes. It is also noteworthy that SH lacks a clear paradigm,¹²³ in which policy scholars can conduct their inquiries and studies whereas the other three frameworks provide strong paradigms to study and understand policy process.

Furthermore, it can be argued that the descriptive information that SH lacks in depth understanding and real-world practicability.¹²⁴ SH model indeed provides a general and broad picture of policy process. It encompasses all phases of policymaking whereas other alternative frameworks usually focus on certain stages. Even though any given alternative framework focuses on some aspects of policymaking process, they are preferable over SH due to their strong practicability and reflection of what and why happens in policy making. SH for example not as clear as MS in terms of how policy agenda is set. MS' arguments with many present day examples provide a very credible basis about how agenda is set in policy world. PE model provides a more realistic interpretation of how policy decision is made compared to SH model. PD approach offers a strong argument about policy agenda setting and decision making in policymaking. That is to say stages approaches provide superficial policy knowledge compared to the other alternatives with respect to its broader view of the entire policy process. In the real world, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to see what stages approaches tell us about the distinct phases of policy making. Accordingly, it can be argued that the diffusion frameworks, the punctuated-equilibrium model, and multiple streams theory are preferable compared to the stages approaches particularly in the context of explaining certain phases of policy process, providing scientific theory about these phases, developing and revising concepts and theories, and apprehending multifaceted structure of public policy making.

There emerge new research questions for further studies. Future research should address particular policy venues whether these alternative frameworks are more successful in some policy areas. For example, whether education policies could be explained by punctuated equilibrium model whereas foreign policy problems can be addressed through mul-

123 Robert T. Nakamura, The textbook policy process and implementation research. *Policy Studies Review* Vol. 7, No. 1, 1987, s. 142-154

124 Alican, Kaptı, Kamu politika sürecinde klasik yaklaşım modeli, In Alican Kaptı (ed.), *Kamu Politikası Süreci: Teorik Perspektifler, Modeller, Analiz Yöntemleri*, (Ankara: Seçkin, 2013), pp. 42.

tiple streams framework may be addressed by future studies. In addition, factors affecting a country's inclination to one of these policy models should be studied. Obviously not all countries follow same path. Every country may have different orientation toward policymaking. Factors affecting a country's orientation should be addressed by further research.

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