The Policy Cycle

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No policy cycle or process can take place unless there is an agenda for it. An agenda is the assortment of issues, contemplations of its reasons, clarifications, and other components of public issues that come to the consideration of the community and their lawmaking officials. Agendas exist at all stages of state’s management and policy-making (Protess, McCombs, 2016).

Policy cycle comprises of eight different stages; the first stage of any policy process is agenda setting. Agenda setting is a vital part of public policy development. It is basically the issue-sorting stage in the public policy process where policymakers or legislators discuss and ponder upon some key issues that need to be resolved.Agenda setting purpose is to identify the problem of the state or its public concerns and then define the problem and decide about its solution. This stage of policymaking helps policymakers decide what should be addressed and what should be ignored. There are usually numerous issues that need to be addressed but some needs serious attention and long term plan to address them.

Multiple agendas are discussed by the policymakers before they are put forward for further debate. In agenda-setting, the public problem is put on the agenda, and the policy makers try to look for its long term solution.

There can be multiple agendas such as:

* **Systemic agendas**. Systemic agendas encompass all matters of concerns policymakers believe are worthy of addressing.
* **Institutional agendas**. Institutional agendas are shaped from systemic agendas. In the institutional agenda, policymakers scrutinize issues and their suggested solutions in a specific time frame.
* **Discretionary agendas**. Discretionary agendas address the issues that are highlighted by policymakers that have not essentially made it into the above agendas.

**Decision agendas**. These agendas are the confirmed list of problems or concerns to be put forward to the next stage of the policy-making process (Birkland, 2015).

**References**

Birkland, T. A. (2015). *An introduction to the policy process: Theories, concepts, and models of public policy making*. Routledge.

Protess, D., & McCombs, M. E. (2016). *Agenda setting: Readings on media, public opinion, and policymaking*. Routledge.