Navigating the Wicked Policy Problem: An In-Depth Analysis of Policy Dilemmas and Innovative Approaches for Effective Problem Solving

Omweri, F. S

Lecture, Kampala International University, Dept. Public Administration and Development Studies, Western Campus-Uganda

ABSTRACT: The UN established the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address a variety of social, economic, and environmental issues in order to ensure a more equitable future for all. These issues are to be addressed through policy and various relevant programs. However, some policy problems are hardly fixed despite the fact that many public policies are ostensibly being developed to address them. Wicked problems keep on piling up. Policy issues such as road safety, corruption, poverty and inequality, unemployment, land disputes, environmental degradation, gender equality, and so on have drawn a growing number of policies in an effort to address them, but these issues are recognized as being essentially amorphous and stubborn, hence creating policy dilemmas. This article offers a greater grasp of the alternatives for fixing wicked problems. It considers policy networks, policy entrepreneurship, collaborative governance, data-driven decision-making, policy diffusion, decentralization, and strategic placement of street-level bureaucrats as key strategies for tackling complex policy issues. This article makes the case that an integrated policy package is best suited to address wicked policy issues. This implies that addressing wicked problems requires a multifaceted and adaptive approach, as no single problem-solving technique can consistently and reliably provide a wide-ranging result.

KEYWORDS: Wicked Problem, Policy Diffusion, Policy Network, Collaborative Governance, Policy Entrepreneurship.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Decision-makers frequently encounter extreme complexity and unpredictable results when tackling wicked policy issues (Wright, Cairns, O'Brien, & Goodwin, 2019). Wicked problems are highly intricate, interconnected, and resist straightforward solutions (Hannigan & Coffey, 2011). Alternative strategies may be required if conventional approaches prove to be insufficient. In order to address wicked policy problems, alternative approaches must be creative and flexible in order to acknowledge the complex character of the problems at hand (Roberts, 2000). These alternative approaches frequently place an emphasis on policy networks, policy entrepreneurship, collaborative governance, data-driven decision-making, policy diffusion, decentralization, and strategic placement of street-level bureaucrats to traverse the inherent complexity and unpredictability associated with wicked policy problems.

The concept of wicked policy problem was first mentioned by Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber in 1973 in their presentation entitled 'Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning', during a conference at the University of Berkley in California. In their presentations, Rittel and Webber classified policy problems as wicked and tame problems. The authors noted that wicked problems are social and organizational planning issues that cannot be solved using conventional linear, analytical approaches as opposed to tame problems.

Wicked policy problems exist in all organizations that deal with public policy planning (Head, 2019). This policy problem camouflages in various terms in various establishments. Terms such as intractable problem, persistent problem, recalcitrant problem, or chronic problem refer to wicked policy problem. What is a wicked policy problem?

An analogy for a wicked policy problem would be a tangled knot. It is intricate, convoluted, and challenging to untangle, just like a knot. There are many intertwined threads in it that represent many parties, interests, and viewpoints. Patience, ingenuity, and careful examination of the position and influence of each thread are necessary to untangle the knot. Moreover, attempting to address a problem by pulling on one thread could unintentionally tighten another area of the knot, adding to the complexity of

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the situation. Similar to a twisted knot, wicked policy issues can defy straightforward fixes and necessitate an all-encompassing strategy to adequately handle them.

Ritchey (2013) opines that planners who attempt to address problems may suffer terrible unintended effects because problems are wicked in the sense of being severely cunning. Ritchey continues to observe that wicked problems are those complex, ever-changing societal and organizational planning problems that you haven't been able to treat with much success, because they won't keep still. They're messy, devious, and they fight back when you try to deal with them.

As connoted above, and as Johanna and Katrien (2021) pointed out, Rittel, and Webber (1973) in their seminar paper described natural science problems as tame problems that are well-defined and that can be addressed through linear, reductionistic problem-solving approaches. Social science problems, on the other hand, were described as wicked. Ritchey (2013) in citing Rittel and Webber (1973) described the wicked problems as follows: there is no definitive formulation of a wicked problem; wicked problems have no stopping rule, i.e., there is no point in time at which the process of addressing a problem is completed; solutions to wicked problems are not true-or false, but good-or-bad; there is no immediate and no ultimate test of a solution to a wicked problem; every solution to a wicked problem is a 'one shot' operation; wicked problems do not have an enumerable or exhaustively describable set of potential solutions, nor is there a well-described set of permissible operations for addressing wicked problems; every wicked problem is essentially unique; every wicked problem can be considered to be a symptom of another problem; the analyst's world view is the strongest determining factor for explaining differences in descriptions of wicked problems and preferences for how they should be addressed; and the planner has no right to be wrong.

This study is rife to the fact that this description of wicked problems has been criticized for resting on a flawed assumption of wicked (Turnbull, & Hoppe, 2019). Nonetheless, scholars—including those who contest the definition of a wicked problem—generally agree that all organizations involved in public policymaking have wicked challenges (Termeer, Dewulf, & Biesbroek, 2019). While Johanna and Katrien (2021) acknowledge that scholars have contended that labeling issues as wicked could cause inactivity and dissuade interested parties from trying to resolve them, this isn't always the case since, for some, it can serve as a catalyst to pursue a policy issue to its ultimate conclusion.

2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
The goal of public policy is to address social issues that impact communities. Governments at all levels have, in fact, developed and put into effect a variety of policies. But many of the policy issued that are identified in today's policy-making environments are complicated, multifaceted and mutative in nature. As a result of this, conventional policy approaches frequently fail to resolve these issues in an effective manner, calling for innovative approaches and new perspectives. This study sought to establish the influence of integrated implementation policy framework strategies on addressing wicked policy problems.

3.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY
This research will provide valuable insights for politicians, citizens, business leaders, non-state actors, as well as policymakers at both national and local levels, and academics. It aims to enhance their understanding of the complexities inherent in wicked policy problems and to help them assess innovative methods for tackling such challenges effectively.

4.0 METHODOLOGY
The study opted to use a qualitative design to come up with its body of reliable knowledge in this topic of study.

5.0 OBJECTIVES
This study was guided by the following objectives
  i.   To explore the limitations of conventional approaches to addressing wicked policy problem
  ii.   To evaluate alternative innovative approaches that demonstrate promise in navigating wicked policy problems

6.0 EMPIRICAL REVIEWS
6.1 Limitations of Conventional Approaches to Addressing Wicked Policy Problem
Mueller (2020) observed that the failure of public policies is ubiquitous. He attributes this failure to public policies' complicated systemic structure. However, it is hard to define what is a policy failure. Some public initiatives are obviously considered failed because they either manifestly injure people or have unforeseen or unintended repercussions (Berger & Carlson, 2020). But in many cases, it is not so clear whether the policy has rightly failed. Many policies have different dimensions, so that some

dimensions can meet their targets while others can miss. Mueller (2020) contend that what is a failure to one person might be a success to another, as different people have different policy preferences. A policy fails, even if it is successful in some minimal respects, if it does not fundamentally achieve the goals that proponents set out to achieve, and opposition is great and/or support is virtually non-existent (McConnell, 2015). All policies fail, but not all of them do so for the same reasons. Many policies fall short due to a combination of poor leadership, corruption, incapacity, and/or resource scarcity, but they would still be extremely susceptible to failure even in the absence of these issues (Okolie & Edo, 2023).

However, innovative techniques such as prediction markets, experimentation and trial-and-error, 'bucket testing' and the 'mullet Strategy,' are appropriate in business and government when it comes to handling complicated issues (Watts, 2011). These approaches frequently leverage new information technologies to get past roadblocks and allow answers to emerge from the bottom up (Hayek, 2013). These remedies, however, are not panaceas for every policy objective. Mueller (2020) contends that the inherent complexity of the issue persists and that these techniques only address a portion of the issue, not the whole policy problem. Such implementation techniques have been applied but failed a number of policies. For instance, Microcredit. Microcredit is a policy that offers small loans to poor people, often women, who lack access to official or private credit. It aims to promote entrepreneurship and reduce poverty by providing them with a foundation to build human, financial, and social capital. Founder Muhammad Yunnus of the Grameen Bank in Pakistan introduced the idea in 1983. This model has been widely adopted worldwide, addressing poverty and focusing on communities, making it gender-sensitive and a significant problem in humanities (Phan, Vo, & Vo, 2023). Despite initial enthusiasm, as the policy matured and a track record became available, doubts arose about the effectiveness of microcredit in delivering its intended benefits to its beneficiaries, as it was unclear if the expected benefits were actually being realized (Jiang, Paudel, & Zou, 2020).

7.0 ALTERNATIVE INNOVATIVE APPROACHES AND WICKED POLICY PROBLEMS

7.1 Policy Networks Approach and Wicked Policy Problem

In contrast to hierarchies, policy networks are more suited for handling wicked problems because of their complexity, multidimensionality, lack of conclusive solutions, and conflicting values or interests among stakeholders (Klasche, 2021; Lutz-Ley et al, 2021). Policy networks include a broad range of players from various sectors, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, corporations, and civil society groups, in contrast to hierarchical arrangements, where decision-making authority is centralized at the top (Santori & Jin, 2023).

These policy players collaborate, exchange expertise, and offer comprehensive answers so that everyone may make sound choices and address wicked issues. The holy book reads, 'just as a body, though one, has many parts, all its many parts forms and function on one body.' This is the similar way in which policy networks ought to function. A network of relationships connecting various policy actors and stakeholders—each with a distinct role—is assembled to form policy networks in order to create and implement policies (Wang & Ran, 2023). The group of actors can comprise government and non-government entities working together towards the common objective (Locatelli et al., 2020). This implies that there are policy issues that can't be fixed by a single entity. For example, policy issues like environmental deterioration, conflicts over land, inequalities and poverty, corruption, road safety, and youth unemployment cannot be addressed comprehensively by single entity. Sydelko, Espinosa and Midgley (2023) contend that it requires the combined efforts and interactions of several policy actors to address complex policy issues.

Carlsson (2000) indicate that policy networks are a collective action. Participants bring forth diverse needed expertise, additional resources, and alternative perspectives to policy issues. According to Knoke (2019), policy networks collaborate, communicate, negotiate, and exchange information in order to create and implement policies that address wicked issues. Policy network analysis focuses on the connections and interdependencies between the government and other social actors in an effort to understand the process of developing public policy and its outcomes (Adam & Kriesi, 2019). In this regard, Sydelko, Espinosa, and Midgley (2023) observe that wicked problems necessitate cross-agency government answers and are beyond the purview of a single agency. For instance, terrorism, money laundering, child trafficking, goods smuggling, climate degradation necessitates a complete systemic strategy that transcends boundaries and includes individuals and stakeholders in the co-production of policy and its implementation for positive results. Yet, misaligned actions taken by a single organization can have unfavorable consequences (Ferlie et al., 2011; Urquhart et al., 2023). Furthermore, Turnbull and Hoppe (2019) claim that policy networks offer already linked pathways for problem-solving and are able to handle problems, coordinate resources, create learning opportunities, and address shared goals (McGann & Whelan, 2020). This is because policy networks are adaptable, effective, and creative hybrids of organizational structures that allow members to work together to achieve objectives that would be impossible for them to achieve separately (Adam & Kriesi, 2019).

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Contrastingly, although there is a growing body of research examining money laundering and the laws designed to prevent it, Gerbrands, Unger, Getzner, and Ferwerda (2022) find that it is still unclear how successful these laws are overall. Money laundering and terrorism have generated great interest internationally because of their implications for economies and financial institutions worldwide. Money laundering undermines the integrity of financial systems, results in a loss of control over an economy's policies, distorts the financial system, creates instability in investments, and reduces government tax revenue (Segovia-Vargas, 2021). On the other hand, tiny economies are particularly hard hit by the financing of terrorism (Sunarmi & Lubis, 2020). In order to counteract terrorism and money laundering through practice and policy, cooperation amongst policy networks is required (Segovia-Vargas, 2021).

In Peru, as a case study, Locatelli et al. (2020) demonstrated that policy network analysis is a useful method to evaluate the degree of internal climate policy integration in the land-use sector (wicked issue). In Peru, national government institutions play a pivotal role in climate change policy networks that demonstrate national ownership of the issue. Conversely, private sector organizations and subnational actors exhibit the least involvement in climate change information sharing and collaboration. Although players from many levels and sectors are engaging in both adaptation and mitigation, which is encouraging for climate policy integration, the mitigation policy subdomain predominates in Peru's climate change policy network. In the climate change policy network, there is a good chance for multi-actor coordination and collaboration, despite the homophily in some groups and the dominance of particular actors. In addition to serving as the focal point of each subdomain, actors with the ability to connect the two policy subdomains also fill in any structural gaps that exist between them.

Locatelli et al. (2020)'s case study takes as back to the analogy of the functioning of human body with many different parts but all working together harmoniously and collaborate to achieve a common goal. Policy networks consist of diverse actors and stakeholders, each playing a unique role and interconnected in a web of relationships to develop and implement policies. Therefore, policy network approach to solving obstinate policy problems is critical in the formulation and implementation of public policies.

7.2 Multiple Streams Approach and Wicked Policy Problem

Kingdon's multiple streams approach can help to address wicked policy problem, which are multifaceted, incredibly unpredictable, and involve a number of parties with competing interests. The MSA suggests that for meaningful policy change to take place, three distinct streams—problem, policy, and politics—need to merge (Béland, 2016). After the coupling of the streams, the policy window open, an opportunity which the policy entrepreneur seizes and manipulate to bring forth policy change (Herweg, Zohlnhöfer, & Zahariadis, 2019). Omweri, Muna, and Njoroge (2023) contend that the multiple streams approach provides a useful lens for understanding the complex interactions between social, political, and economic factors that influence the formulation and implementation of wicked policy.

Kingdon's (1984) work introduced policy entrepreneurship as a theoretical concept about the individual's role in policy change. Studies have identified and described policy entrepreneurs as innovative individuals or groups from the private, public, or third sectors who are willing to invest resources—time, energy, expertise, or money—to either advocate for major policy changes or resist them. They are characterized as energetic actors who work with others in and around policymaking venues, leveraging resources to promote a favored policy change. They exploit opportunities to influence policy outcomes—without having the resources required to achieve this goal alone. If necessary, they risk their reputations and the loss of their investment in order to promote a policy they favor in hopes of a future return. Once they identified the issue, they provide recommendations, work to get them on the political agenda, legitimate them, make it easier for them to be put into practice, and promote evaluation (Frisch, Cohen, & Beeri, 2020).

Kingdon further argues that policy solutions are made while waiting to find policy problems and then policy entrepreneurs complete the cycle by attaching solutions to these problems (Béland & Howlett, 2016). Further, The MSF captures the role or activities involved in identifying problems that require a solution, finding circulating policies that address those problems, and navigating the political climate in the policy community as well as the general sentiment of the country (Omweri, Muna, & Njoroge, 2023). A savvy and resourceful actor (policy entrepreneur) will take advantage of any window of opportunity to bring together all three streams and push for a change in policy (Harrison, 2023).

Every stream is essential to solving the wicked policy issue. Firstly, the problem stream focuses on to the identification and characterization of wicked policy issues. Having multiple interrelated components, being hard to define, and lacking a final answer are characteristics of wicked situations (Ritchey, 2013, in citing Rittel and Webber, 1973). The multiple streams strategy acknowledges the value of framing, agenda-setting, and problem awareness in drawing attention to wicked problems and making them prominent for policymakers (Herweg, Zahariadis, & Zohlnhöfer, 2023).

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Secondly, the policy stream entails developing possible fixes for difficult-to-solve issues. In this stream, specialists and policy entrepreneurs create and advance alternative policies that can deal with the wicked issues (Fowler, 2019). In order to achieve this goal, such policy alternatives must meet the criteria Lindquist et al. (2021) advances that policy choice needs to satisfy the following requirements: it must be technically feasible, have value acceptance among policy specialists, have reasonable costs, and be accepted by the public and politicians. This suggests that in the event that this requirement is not met, the policy will remain resistant to policy fixes.

Thirdly, According to Fitch, Fairbrass, Fitch, & Fairbrass (2018), the politics stream focuses on the political landscape and the setting in which policies are developed. It is centered on the political environment, power relationships, and the existence of either helpful or detrimental policy actors (Zahariadis,2019). Wicked problems often involve diverse and conflicting interests, (Rittel and Webber, 1973), making the politics stream central to addressing such obstinate policy issues. Therefore, policy entrepreneurs should be astute, rally support from key parties, and align their suggested policy solutions with the reality of politics.

Based on the aforementioned analysis, this study concludes that policymakers are more likely to act when a wicked problem garners public attention (problem stream), there are workable policy options (policy stream), and the political environment is conducive (politics stream). Policymakers can better comprehend the complexity of wicked policy challenges and create solutions by applying the multiple stream approach. In order to enable a more thorough and successful policy response to wicked problems, a holistic approach that takes into account the interactions between issues, politics, and policies are critical.

7.3 Strategic Placement of Street-Level Bureaucrats Approach

Setegn (2018) state that public policies made at the top will have to be implemented at local level by street-level bureaucrats who enjoy a considerable degree of autonomy and discretion in the execution of their duties. Lipsky (1980, [2010]) describes street-level bureaucrats as public employees- front lines- who interact directly with citizens. Lipsky contend that these are workers who work in schools, lower courts, legal services officers and other agencies whose workers interact with and have wide discretion over dispensation of benefits or allocation of public sanctions. Street-level bureaucrats aid the execution of policies and the resolution of complex policy issues are greatly (Tummers, & Bekkers, 2014). They play critical roles in tackling intricate and multifaceted problems that are difficult to solve and frequently include conflicting interests and ideals (Tucker, Hendy, & Chrysanthaki, 2022).

Though street-level workers can take many different shapes and forms and they develop coping mechanisms in preforming their duties in implementation of public policies, the jobs typically could not be performed according to the highest standards of decision making in the various fields because street-level workers lacked the time, information, or other resources necessary to respond properly to the individual case. Instead, street-level bureaucrats manage their difficult jobs by developing routines of practice and psychologically simplifying their clientele and environment in ways that strongly influence the outcomes of their efforts. Mass processing of clients is the norm, and has important implications for the quality of treatment and services (Lipsky, 1980).

Consequently, street-level workers with insufficient resources, time, information, and mass client processing have serious and dire consequences to implementation of public policy (Visintin, et al., 2021). For instance, firstly, the ability to carry out public policies efficiently may be hampered by a lack of resources, including infrastructure, personnel, and finance. It is necessary to implement policies pertaining to critical services—like waste management, firefighting, emergency services, utilities, food, health, and finance—as swiftly and without any interruptions as possible. Secondly, street-level officials frequently deal with heavy workloads and time constraints, which can make it difficult for them to provide each client the proper attention and care. This could result in hasty judgments, mistakes, and an incapacity to handle complicated or unusual situations. For example, it could be difficult for a teacher who has a heavy schedule at school to successfully execute the curriculum within the allotted time frame and achieve the desired results in each leaner. Thirdly, street-level bureaucrats may find it difficult to make wise decisions or offer suitable services if they do not have access to timely and correct information in the implementation of public policies. This may lead to inconsistencies, inefficiencies, and possible harm to the desired policy outcomes. Fourth, when dealing with a huge volume of clients, street-level officials may turn to expedient, standardized processing techniques in the policy implementation. This could lead to a propensity to prioritize speed over quality as well as a lack of expert care and assistance in the process of putting policy into practice (May, & Winter, 2009).

These consequences, as demonstrated above, compromise the fairness and efficiency of the execution of public policy and services. Therefore, it is necessary for policymakers to set aside sufficient funds, offer sufficient guidance and assistance, and give top priority to supplying street-level bureaucrats with correct and timely information if the intended outcomes of policies are to be achieved. Providing the street level workers with such essentials, culminates to positioning them strategically in executing public policies, hence addressing wicked policy problems. This is further demonstrated in study Setegn (2018) conducted to

explore the factors which influence street-level bureaucrats in the implementation of public policies in Land bank and transfer office of Addis Ababa. The study showed that factors- problem of resources, clarity of goals and objectives and control measures, influenced the role of the officers and the decisions they take in providing access to land for the public through tender. It was further noted that the officers were not equipped with the necessary resources which in turn influence the extent to which they provide the necessary services to the public. The findings also revealed that the officers' level of experience and education has a significant influence on the extent to which they are able to develop coping mechanisms when the situation calls for it. Street-level officials can be strategically positioned to solve wicked policy issues. Strategic positioning means training street-level workers in fundamental knowledge and skills. It is imperative for policy makers to provide unambiguous policy objectives and organizational frameworks that facilitate activity (Frisch, Beeri, & Cohen, 2021).

7.4 Data-Driven Decision-Making Approach and Wicked Policy Problem

The concept of using evidence to guide policymaking has its roots in ancient Greece, when Aristotle proposed that different fields of knowledge ought to guide decision-making (Aernoudt, 2020). Idris, IMensah, and Gavkalova (2021) contend that this approach combines information from science, practical application, and values-driven thinking.

In Aernoudt (2020) work he states:

> 'Evidence-based policy is about making decisions based on knowledge with a certain degree of confidence what works, at achieving which outcomes, for which groups of people, under what conditions, over what period, and at what cost. For policymaking and implementation purposes, it is as essential to establishing that an intervention does not work, as it is to know that it does work. Hence, we need information and data that can confirm, or reject, our assumptions about a policy's anticipated effectiveness and how it is best achieved.'

Munro (2014) reports that evidence-based approach to policy took precedence in UK from the earlier 1997 under the Blair administration to end ideologically driven politics to replacing it with rational decision making. Through the white paper in 1999, the government committed to produce policies that real deal with problems; that are forward looking and shaped by evidence rather than a response to short-term pressures; policies that tackle causes not symptoms. Additionally, Nutley and Davies (2000) and Sutcliffe and Court (2005) argued that evidence-based approach led to the integration of experience, judgement and expertise with the best available external evidence from systematic research hence shifting from opinion-based decision making towards evidence based.

On the contrary, most developing countries make policies that are not anchored on evidence. As a result, such policies have failed to address the real problems such countries are facing, hence continuing to witness wicked policy problems. For instance, in their study, Howes, Betteridge, Sause, and Ugyel (2018) argued that the prerequisites or conditions for evidence-based policy making have received relatively little attention, and it is unclear whether or not these requirements are generally more or less likely to exist in developing nations. According to Howes, Betteridge, Sause, and Ugyel (2018), an environment that supports evidence-based policy making includes strong incentives for the adoption of good policies, a ready supply of such policies, a variety of domains into which they can be adopted, institutions that are capable of putting them into practice, and a variety of domains into which good policies can be adopted. However, the study came to the conclusion that these conditions are more likely to exist in developed countries as opposed to developing ones based on the development literature, their personal experience, and the comparison of Australia and Papua New Guinea. Oronje, Murunga, & Zulu (2019) outlines that having adequate financial and human resources is critical for enabling evidence use. Behague et al. (2009) contend that the majority of poor countries struggle to implement sound evidence-based policies because they lack sufficient funding, have to constantly ask partners and donors for money, and typically are unable to secure the necessary funding. This is despite the fact that EBPM in developing countries are intended to help provide relevant solutions to help in reducing poverty and improve economic performance (Sutcliffe & Court, 2005).

Eden, and Wagstaff (2021) conducted a study on evidence-based policymaking and the wicked problem of SDG 5 Gender Equality. In their study they stated that decisions are successful when informed by evidence. Eden, and Wagstaff (2021) add that blending insights from the evidence based policymaking and wicked problem provide actionable and practical policy advice to governments for dealing with wicked problems. Oronje, Murunga, and Zulu (2019), however, assert that the ability to apply evidence to decisions on policies and programs is limited. Civil servants' competencies can be enhanced through training and mentorship programs in evidence use, which can support and enhance initiatives to develop capacity for using evidence.

Though the complexity and uncertainty associated with wicked policy problem question the reliability of empirical evidence and diverse perspectives and values involved lead to disagreements various actors on which evidence to prioritize and how to interpret it, evidence-based policymaking play a variable role in addressing wicked problems (Head, 2022). Evidence provides policymakers

with potential strategies, and enables understanding of the likely impacts of different interventions (Al-Ubaydli, Lee, List, & Suskind, 2021).

7.5 Decentralization Approach and Wicked Policy Problem

Political and ethnic disputes, and unequal distribution of resources have been, and still are, serious wicked issues in many nations (Juma & Arudo, 2016). Federalism and political decentralization contribute for the reduction of ethnic conflicts in many countries. It also helps in solving secessionist movements (Tan, 2022). Lodén and Bingmark (2022) contend that global wicked problems require management outside government at multiple levels of governance. Organizations are encouraged to handle wicked challenges in conjunction with stakeholders rather of trying to solve them on their own, even when there are conflicting degrees of authority, viewpoints, and values among the stakeholders. Due to globalization, the private sector has begun to play a role in governance, resulting in the involvement of many parties while resolving wicked problems (Glass & Newig, 2019).

Bayu (2021) contends that ethnic federalism, opted in 1991, indeed paved the way for the recognition, accommodation, and institutionalization of ethnocultural diversity for the first time in the country's history since its modern existence in Ethiopian. Thum (2019) highlights that Singapore separated from Malaysia to become an independent and sovereign state as the result of deep political and economic differences between the ruling parties of Singapore and Malaysia, which created communal tensions that resulted in racial riots in July and September 1964. At the height of never-ending political tensions in Singapore that seemed to weigh down peace and development, it was decided Malaysia becomes an independent state from Singapore. The intention of separation was to relieve of all the tensions that had dogged these two regions for a long time (Lim, 2015).

The issue of unequal distribution of resources is yet another wicked policy problem which has been source of potential instability in African countries like Kenya. This resulted to pressure for a devolved form of government from the numerically smaller communities organized around the political party KADU (Kenya African Democratic Union) during earlier years after independence (Kanyinga, 2019). The fearing that large groups would dominate them and their land after independence, they supported a regional form of government to avoid the dominance of these groups. KADU membership comprised ethnic minorities such as the various Kalenjin subgroups, the Maasai, and the Miji Kenda groups at the coast. These are also the groups that favored devolution of power to the region because they feared domination by the large groups, such as the Kikuyu and Luo, who were in KANU (Kivuva, 2021). Infrastructure and other national resources were witnessed during the Moi Regime; where the Kalenjin ethnic group have been perceived to have benefit more than the other ethnic groups. However just like for the Kikuyu community, not all the Kalenjin have enjoyed in the Moi era and then yet again Kikuyu community during in Kibaki and Uhuru eras (Kivoi, Yogo, Luseno, & Malicha, 2022).

8.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Five main strategies were examined in this analysis: policy networks, multiple streams, strategic placement of street-level bureaucrats, data-driven decision-making approaches, and decentralization. This study believes that a systematic grasp of the intricate nature of the issues at hand as well as the capacity to create novel solutions for efficient problem solving are essential for navigating wicked policy challenges. This suggests that no single tactic is independently reliable enough to be applied alone. This study recommends that it is crucial to implement these alternative strategies complementarily. Nonetheless, the political, cultural, legal, and environmental framework of the policy must be taken into account as a benchmark to determine the best strategy of implementation. For instance, decentralization and devolution have reduced ethnic tension in Kenya, but federalism is considered the source of ethnic conflicts in Ethiopia. Ethnic federalism complicates state-society relationships, creating a favorable environment for ethnic confrontation and conflict. It erodes coexistence values and hard ethnic boundaries, leading to conflicts like the Oromo and Somali conflicts. Territorial recognition and institutionalization of ethnicity allow for the emergence of 'ethnic like and ethnic others' thinking, making minorities victims of politics and restricting constitutional rights. This has created new problems of ethnic tensions and conflict across Ethiopia. The study reveals that while multinational federation plays a crucial role in accommodating and institutionalizing ethnocultural diversity, the notion and implementation of federalism instigate ethnic conflict in the Ethiopian context (Bayu, 2021).

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