Do executive orders lead to better policy outputs than the traditional policy process? the case of Botswana

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness of Presidential Directives in comparison to the traditional policy process in Botswana. More precisely, the study determines whether the use of Presidential Directives is a more efficient and effective means of achieving policy outputs, as compared to the traditional policy process. To achieve this, the study conducted a comprehensive analysis of policies and Presidential Directives in Botswana, examining the processes through which they were formulated, implemented, and evaluated. The methodological approach adopted includes an interpretivist research paradigm as well as a qualitative research approach for both data collection and analysis. Results reveal that Presidential directives achieve outputs faster and more effectively than the traditional policy process. Presidential Directives may have some advantages in terms of speed and flexibility, they are not necessarily more effective than the traditional policy process in achieving their planned outcomes, policy process, which involves stakeholder consultation, evidence-based decision-making and comprehensive analysis of the policy context, is a more reliable and effective means of policymaking in the long term. However, the study also found that there are some areas where Presidential Directives may be more appropriate, such as in emergency situations or when quick decisions are required. Overall, this research provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of different approaches to policy-making in Botswana, and its findings have important implications for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers in the field of public policy. The study recommends transparency and accountability; stakeholder engagement; evidence-based policy-making and comprehensive policy evaluation.

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INTRODUCTION

Public policy generally refers to the intended intervention by government agency to improve the conditions of society (Hyden, 2002: 46). Government decisions across the world are driven by the implementation of public policy in different sectors of the economies (Tshombe & Molokwane, 2022:179, 180). Literature traces the first written documentation to the code of the Hamurabi in Babylon between 1792 BC and 1758 BC, then came an even more detailed code of policy in the form of the twelve tablets of the Roman Empire, all the way through to the Magna Carter and the beginning of National Constitutions (Joireman, 2001). Throughout all this, executive orders existed, authority was centered on the ruling elite and separation of powers is a fairly new concept. The study examines whether presidential directives yield better outputs compared to the traditional policy process.

In the Unites States of America (USA), Executive orders as a formalized and recognized policy process are as old as the USA Constitution itself and usually steeped in controversy. More than 13,000, in one form or another, have been issued since 1789 (Joireman, 2001). Africa also had its own traditional policy processes which in some instances came through consensus and in other instances came as clear orders from the ruling elite who were usually Chiefs (Okeke, 2011). Botswana in particular has always had
a more evolved system of policy formulation through the democratic and consensus seeking Kgotala system (Obasi & Lekorwe, 2014). This was a system that allowed people to air their views and for politically sensitive community decisions to be taken through the people. Nonetheless, this is not to suggest that executive orders are foreign to Tswana culture as Chiefs have always held significant power and made some decisions without consultation (Thihalefang, 2018).

On the one hand, the traditional policy process, which is the public policy process in basic form, can be said to be a sequence of four phases: agenda setting, formulation, implementation, and evaluation. On the other hand, executive orders (Presidential Directives) include specific form of orders of the state that carry the force and effect of law, stating requirements for the Executive Branch. An, executive order is normally used when there is an immediate need for policy change (Deering & Maltzman, 1999). Here, the normal review process is circumvented with the approval of the Executive and remains in effect until the policy is updated (Knill and Tosun, 2008). Both these policy approaches work within the ambit of Government, hence making government noteworthy. In bypassing the legislative process, the executive branch is able to directly influence policy outcomes (Seretse, 2016) and outputs. The outputs are the actions or items that contribute to achieving an outcome. These are activities that support the desired results and are nearly always quantitative, with data available to show whether these have been delivered (Haus, 2018). They are easy to report on and to validate and there is no grey area around outputs. The study compares policy outputs that arise from executive orders with the policy outputs that arise from the traditional policy process with particular focus on Botswana. Arguments for, and against these policy processes are innumerable.

Literature reviewed points to more arguments being against executive orders as an alternative policy process typically illustrating that power should not be concentrated in a few people or one person (Hudson et al., 2019). Though in unequal footing, the traditional policy process has also been criticized for its prolonged – red tape muddled processes which often delays needed services (Institute of Development Studies, 2006). In this regard, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: Do executive orders achieve better policy outputs than the traditional policy formulation method? Which policy method is more effective in Botswana, between executive orders and the traditional policy method?; and, What possible recommendations can be made to remedy any shortcoming of either of the policy methods? This study’s inquiry is explored by analysing the effectiveness of presidential directives in achieving policy objectives, considering their advantages and limitations in comparison to the traditional policy process. These two policy formulation methodologies are initiated in completely varying techniques but culminate to similar implementation strategies, exploring these methodologies has the potential to build on the improvement of policy formulation (Hudson, et al., 2019).

**Literature Review**

The discretion to use the traditional policy method or executive orders lies with the president of a country. The amount of power that the executive branch has through executive orders requires an assessment of the outputs and the need for this policy formulation method over the more democratic and practical traditional policy formulation method (Mayer, 1999). Executive orders give presidents or heads of state unprecedented power which over the course of time, has proved to be both a blessing and a curse (Bardach & Patashnik, 2019). Executive power has enabled the executive to make numerous strides within short time periods, in the same breath it has enabled the abuse of power (Gerhardt, 2006). To curb two much power resting in one person, systems have been put in place to spread power across governments. The most common system being the representative legislative system that keeps executive power in check (Gerhardt, 2006). This system is that it often delays and at times puts off – policy solutions because power is spread across different people with different viewpoints and motivations. The problem is therefore simply, which of these two policy formulation methodologies leads to better policy outputs? Currently in Botswana, the President controls the key apparatus of the state such as the Armed forces, Police Service as well as Government Broadcasting and Information providers. Because of his position, the President leads and controls the executive arms of government, and also has substantial authority over the legislature (Thihalefang, 2018). In the exercise of all these powers, the President is not obligated to consult anybody or heed anybody’s advice – including when he makes executive directives (Obasi & Lekorwe, 2014).

The parliament of Botswana works through majority rule where the greater number makes the final decisions on policy (Obasi & Lekorwe, 2014). What this means is that in the event that the majority do agree with policies (weather beneficial or not) they would simply strike them down. The situation is usually political – set by party lines. Should nothing be done about this issue, there would then be a rise in “imperial presidency” and the “Big man/woman syndrome.” Essentially, the phenomenon entails the unlawful and unethical exercise of presidential powers beyond both the constitutional and statutory boundaries that guard executive power (Okeke, 2011). The main identifiable issue is unchecked power that comes in the form of executive orders. The key challenge is the unilateral discretion of one individual discernible during the implementation of executive orders. This process of policy creation often has limited guidance in terms of its processes, it usually rises out of an un-detailed constitutional declaration that leaves room for the holder of the executive seat, to decide exactly how much policy making power he or she has. There is a lot of ambiguity around the authority of parliament to check these executive powers and this leaves room for corruption, impunity and profligacy. To the contrary, the traditional policy process comes forth as highly detailed, comprehensive and often done meticulously by a group of experts all closing down the space for error.
**Policy making through the conventional policy process**

A conventional policy making process typically includes several stages namely: problem identification; agenda setting; policy formulation; policy implementation; policy monitoring and policy evaluation. Different pieces of literature will document these steps differently omitting some particularly those at the begging phases of a policy e.g., some may exclude problem identification and begin with agenda setting, others may exclude both and begin with policy formulation etc. For purpose of this paper, we discuss agenda setting, policy formulation policy implementation and evaluation. According to Cloette and de Conning (2011: 87), in policy agenda setting refers to a deliberate panning process through which policy issues are identified, problems defined and prioritise, support mobilised and decision makers lobbied to take appropriate action. In the Policy formulation phase, the elected officials formulate alternative policies to deal with a particular problem (Tshombe & Molokwane, 2022: 181). The policy implementation stage entails the conversion of mainly physical and financial resources into concrete service-delivery outputs in the form of facilities and services (Brynard, Cloette & de Conning, 2011: 135, 136).

Successful policy implementation is the final acid test for a policy to be successful. To illustrate, countries that successfully implemented their police are the South East Asian developing countries. Prior to these, other such as Argentina, Chile, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand Indonesia and the Philippines has successfully converted their policy plans into effective sustainable policy action programmes (Meyer & Cloette, 2011: 229). Evaluation is a systematic assessment of the envisaged or implemented response of a public sector decision maker to improve a perceived societal problem in a specific way (Brynard, Cloette & de Conning, 2011). At some point in its life cycle, a policy will require evaluation and subsequently, change. According to Meyer and Cloette (2011: 224), this a typical change model will entail: (a) policy maintenance where an institution or organisation just maintains or slightly amends its programmes, activities or goals; (b) policy innovation when an institution involves itself in an activity or service that is completely new to it; (c) policy termination, through rare, it entails ending the life of a policy completely and; (d) policy succession wherein an institution replaces existing programmes o projects.

**Policy making through executive orders**

Presidential directives, such as proclamations and executive orders, are a tool used by Presidents to announce official policy and make declarations (Torling, et al., 2012). A review on the use of executive orders at international level reveals that the amount of Executive Orders issued by presidents has increased over time, with the greater part being used to reorganize the federal government and to uphold civil rights (Mayer, 1999). Presidents have been more likely to use Executive Orders when they face opposition from Congress (Tien, 2001). In relation to the constitutional foundation for Presidential Directives and Executive Orders, the Constitution grants the president extensive executive power, but that the use of Presidential Directives and Executive Orders has been contentious and has been challenged in court. The use of these actions has increased in recent years, particularly in the areas of national security and foreign policy (Gerhardt, 2006). To illustrate, examining the use of Executive Orders and Presidential Directives by President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama, Rudalevige (2013) found that while the number of Executive Orders issued by both presidents was similar, President Obama made more use of Presidential Memoranda, which are similar to Executive Orders but do not have the same legal weight. Both presidents used these actions to bypass Congress and to advance their policy priorities. Under President Donald Trump’s rule, it was found that while the number of Executive Orders issued by the President was alike to that of his predecessors, he utilised these more to reverse policies put in place by previous presidents. His Executive Orders became as such, exposed to being contested in court and to be blocked by the courts (Al-Jabri, 2017).

At the level of Africa, a study by Mwesige (2016) reveals that the President of Uganda has been increasingly using executive orders to bypass the legislative process and to push through controversial policies. The same study also discovered that the use of executive orders has led to a lack of accountability and transparency in government decision-making. Another study by Olayede and Adebanwi (2018) examining the use of Presidential Directives in Nigeria found that the President of Nigeria had been using Presidential Directives to bypass the legislative process and to push through notorious policies, predominantly in the areas of land reform and anti-corruption efforts. The use of Presidential Directives as such, had led to a lack of accountability and transparency as well in government decision-making. Ndiukmana (2020) examined the use of Executive Orders in Rwanda, finding that the President of Rwanda had been progressively using more executive orders to centralize power and to push through controversial policies, particularly in the areas of land reform and political repression. Similarly, the study also found that the use of executive orders has led to a lack of accountability and transparency in government decision-making. Overall, the literature on Presidential Directives and Executive Orders in Africa suggests that these actions have been used increasingly by African presidents to bypass the legislative process and to push through controversial policies (Al-Jabri, 2017).

**Theoretical perspective on the public policy making process**

Exploring outputs differences between the normal policy process and executive orders requires bringing theory into play to explore how it may influence each of the two policy formulation methods. There is no single theory applicable to public policy as a whole. The world is too complex to allow for parsimonious and universal explanations. The theoretical perspective of the policy process is based on the understanding that rules, social norms and institutions are powerful in shaping individual behaviour and preferences of policy targets (Ostrom, Gardner, Walker & Agrawal, 2008). Eclecticism in relation to policy makes a great deal of sense because of how vast policy is. Cairney (2012) finds that the combination of multiple theories in policy studies has an immense potential value—
new combinations of theories or concepts may produce new perspectives and new research agendas. However, it also raises important ontological, epistemological, methodological, and practical issues that need to be addressed to ensure disciplinary advance.

Literature in this study discusses the ambiguities and in some instances contradictions between executive orders and the typical policy process. For this reason, the focus of the review is on both pluralist and elite theories. This is because this eclectic combination is aligned to the two policy processes under discussion. When applied to the subject of political power, functionalist theory takes the shape of pluralist theory, which suggests that political power in democracies is spread among several veto groups that contend in the political process for resources and influence. Sometimes one specific veto group may win and other times another group may win, but in the long run they win and lose evenly and no one group has any more influence than another (Dahl, 1956). Mariotti (2020) suggests that as this process unfolds the government might be an active participant but, it is an impartial participant. Just as parents act as impartial arbiters when their kids argue with each other, so does the government act as an unbiased referee to ensure that the rivalry among veto groups is done fairly, that no group obtains undue influence, and that the needs and interests of the citizenry are kept in mind.

The process of veto-group competition and its supervision by the government is functional for society, according to pluralist theory, for three reasons. Firstly, it ensures that conflict among the groups is delivered within the political process instead of transforming into outright hostility. Second, the struggle among the veto groups means that all of these groups attain their goals to at least some degree. Third, the government’s regulation helps ensure that the outcome of the group competition benefits society as a whole (Holyoke, 2020). Political pluralism promotes the proliferation of many interest groups and subscribes to the idea that competition among interest groups will create the maximum balance of interests and lead to the best compromise in policy and law making. Government works when the populace being governed feel that the laws are reasonable and reflect their interests, which is the objective of a pluralist government (Mills, 1965). In accordance with Social Contract theory, people also willingly defer some of their free will in order to have a well-organized society, which is ordered because they have willingly embodied laws and government with the power and authority to enforce it (Ostrom et al., 2008).

Several elite theories have a difference of opinion to the pluralist model. According to these theories, power in democratic societies is concentrated in the hands of a few wealthy individuals and organizations or economic elites that exert excessive influence on the government and can shape its decisions to benefit their own interests (Thompson, 1975). Far from being a neutral referee over opposition among veto groups, the government is said to be influenced by economic elites or at least to cater to their needs and interests (Osei, 2018). Perhaps the most famous elite theory is the power-elite theory of Mills (1956). According to Mills, the power elite is composed of government, big business, and the military, which together make up a ruling class that reaps society and works for its own interests, not for the interests of the citizenry. Members of the power elite, Mills said, see each other socially and serve together on the boards of directors of corporations, charitable organizations, and other bodies. When cabinet members, senators, and top generals and other military officials retire, they often become corporate executives. Conversely, corporate executives often become cabinet members and other key political appointees (Domhoff, 2010). Notwithstanding, it should be noted that whilst other elite theories exist, Mills’s power-elite model remains popular. It is in this regard; we view the elite theory as being the most relevant to this study.

**Methodology**

This study adopted a qualitative approach and case study research strategy. The study was guided by both the interpretivist research paradigm. Interpretivist researchers emphasize the importance of context, meanings, and subjective experiences. They employ qualitative methods such as interviews, observations, and textual analysis to capture and interpret social phenomena (Guest et al., 2021). The adoption of the case study strategy allowed for the examination of the complex social phenomena that is, policy and helped in gaining insights into the intricacies of the policy outputs. This study’s research design followed multiple cases within a bounded system utilizing multiple sources of data to provide a comprehensive and rich understanding of the cases. The selection of cases was purposeful. Data was collected through desktop research and was analysed through content analysis. The usage of secondary data is as useful as information that would have been obtained from primary research because collection of secondary data is an empirical exercise that applies the same basic research principles as studies utilizing primary data and has steps to be followed just as any research method (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). When conducting data analysis, there was a lot of focus on: the quality of the data sources; consideration for the limitations and biases of the original studies that data was obtained from and; clear documentation of our own research process and interpretations.

**Findings and Discussions**

This section presents findings drawn from literature on Policy out puts that emanate from executive orders and their equivalences that emanated from the traditional policy process. The findings reveal that in terms of the presidential powers in Botswana, the President plays a largely ceremonial role in the country’s political system, with the Cabinet serving as the main source of executive power. Specifically, policy outputs from executive orders presented include: the declaration of assets and liabilities and the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19. Those from the traditional policy process include: The Financial Intelligence Act 2009 and the National Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS.
Findings

Policy Outputs emanating from Executive Directives

The policy outputs emanating from Executive Directives include the following:

Declaration of assets and liabilities

The Presidential Directive on the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities in Botswana was issued by President Ian Khama in 2009 (Seretse, 2016). The directive requires all public officials, including members of parliament, permanent secretaries, directors, and heads of parastatals, to declare their assets and liabilities to the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) within three months of their appointment to public office (Tlhalefang, 2018). The purpose of the directive is to promote transparency and accountability in public office and prevent corruption (OP, 2020). The assets and liabilities that must be declared include property, businesses, bank accounts, and other financial interests. The directive also requires public officials to update their asset and liability declarations annually and to notify the DCEC of any changes to their financial status within 14 days of such changes (Seretse, 2016). Failure to comply with the directive can result in disciplinary action, including suspension or termination of employment.

The Presidential Directive on the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities is a significant step in the government's efforts to promote transparency and accountability in public office and prevent corruption (Tlhalefang, 2018). It is part of a broader strategy to improve governance and strengthen democratic institutions in Botswana. An analysis of these findings reveals that, in 2016, the Director-General of the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) revealed that more than 20% of public officials who were required to declare their assets and liabilities had failed to do so. This was despite the fact that failure to comply with the directive is a criminal offense and can result in disciplinary action, including suspension or termination of employment (Tlhalefang, 2018). In 2019, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) also expressed concern about the low compliance rate with the asset declaration requirement. The PAC recommended that the government take steps to enforce compliance with the directive and ensure that all public officials are held accountable for declaring their assets and liabilities (OP, 2020).

Recent reports indicate that Members of Parliament including Cabinet Ministers, will be directed to declare their funds to the Ethics and Integrity Directorate (EID) when Parliament resumes in November (The Botswana, Gazette, 2023). It anticipates that this special directorate will formally invite them to make their declarations. In accordance with the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Act, No. 12 of 2019, as amended by Act No. 1 of 2020, the EID is responsible for promoting and reinforcing integrity and accountability in public office. The EID resumed its functions in 2020. The Directorate is thus responsible for the secure storage of these declarations for monitoring purposes. It also fosters a national culture of ethical conduct and prevents unethical behaviour in public office by developing and promoting a Code of Ethics, standards, and best practices for ethical conduct (The Botswana, Gazette, 2023).

Task Force on Covid 19

The establishment of a COVID-19 Task Force in Botswana was a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which began spreading globally in early 2020. The main objectives of the task force were to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 in Botswana and to mitigate its impact on the country's health, social, and economic systems (Moeti & Seipone, 2020). Specifically, the objectives of the COVID-19 Task Force in Botswana included: Preventing the spread of COVID-19 (Moeti & Seipone, 2020); Identifying and isolating infected individuals (Moeti & Seipone, 2020); Testing and contact tracing (Chabaesele and Kebapetse, 2020); Provision of medical care (Moeti & Seipone, 2020); Mitigating the economic impact (Reuters, 2021) and; Providing public education and awareness. The objectives of the COVID-19 Task Force in Botswana were crucial in mitigating the impact of the pandemic on the country. The task force played an essential role in preventing the spread of the virus, providing medical care, and mitigating the economic impact of the pandemic. When it came to containing the spread of COVID-19, Botswana was able to contain the spread of COVID-19 through early detection and isolation of infected individuals, as well as contact tracing and testing (Tlale & Willhems, 2021).

As things went back to normal, Economic recovery was key. Botswana’s economy was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, but the government implemented measures to mitigate the impact, including stimulus packages and financial assistance for affected individuals and businesses. The country's economy is projected to recover quickly due to the government's efforts (Chabaesele & Kebapetse, 2020). There was also a robust vaccination program. Botswana rolled out a national vaccination program against COVID-19, with the first doses administered in March 2021. As of May 2021, over 150,000 people had received at least one dose of the vaccine (Tlale & Willhems, 2021). Overall, the COVID-19 Task Force in Botswana was successful in preventing and controlling the spread of COVID-19, mitigating its impact on the health and economic systems, and promoting public awareness and communication. The government's swift and effective response helped to contain the virus and prevent a major outbreak in the country. Botswana rolled out a national vaccination program against COVID-19, with the first doses administered in March 2021. As of May 2021, over 150,000 people had received at least one dose of the vaccine. (Tlale & Willhems, 2021). On the downside, there were some legal proceedings instituted against the government of Botswana during the Covid 19 pandemic. These include a court case by Botswana Nurses Union against government who expressed concern over their members’ health and safety.

Policy Outputs emanating from the traditional policy process.

Policy output emanating from traditional policy process include the following:

252
Anti-Money Laundering Policy

The government of Botswana introduced an anti-money laundering policy to: curb illegal harbouring of dirty money; build and maintain public confidence in the country’s financial institutions; ensure legitimate business as well as to; maintain a good image to attract donor funding and foreign direct investment (Republic of Botswana, 2023a). Several legal instruments serve as enforcement mechanisms for the policy and these include the Proceeds of Serious Crime Act (POSCA) which commenced in 1990, and the Financial Intelligence Act of 2009. The Financial Intelligence Act is the other legal instrument that informs policy direction by conducting research on trends of money laundering, terrorist financing the financing of proliferation of and educate and inform the public about trends in money laundering and related crimes. Financial Intelligence Acts (Republic of Botswana, 2009b). The Act provides for the establishment Financial Intelligence Agency (FIA) which is statutorily mandated to act as a central Agency responsible for among others: requesting, receiving, analysing and disseminating to an investigatory authority, disclosures of financial information, concerning suspicious transactions, financing of any activities or transactions related to money laundering, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Republic of Botswana, 2009b).

The National Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS

The National Strategic Framework for HIV was established in 2003. The government of Botswana developed the National Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS, outlining its comprehensive approach to prevention, treatment, care, and support (Ramogola et al., 2020). The key Expected outputs from this framework were Preventing New Infections, Systems Strengthening, Strategic Information Management and Scaling up Treatment, Care and Support (Republic of Botswana, 2003). In working on these key outputs, Botswana has brought about innovative interventions, focusing on prevention of mother-to-child transmission, increased testing and counselling services, and efforts to reduce stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS (Ramogola, et al., 2020). Botswana's experience with addressing HIV/AIDS reflects a multifaceted approach involving political commitment, strong leadership, international collaboration, and a focus on both prevention and treatment (Republic of Botswana, 2003). While challenges persist, Botswana's efforts serve as a model for other nations in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Botswana's efforts yielded significant progress in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The country achieved high rates of HIV testing, increased access to treatment, and a notable decline in HIV prevalence (Ramogola, et al., 2020).

Discussion

In analysing the presidential directives and their aptitude to meet their intended policy outputs, we find that there is swift implementation when they are used. A case in point is the presidential directive that led to the formation of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 in Botswana. The implementation of its policy measures led to early detection and isolation of infected individuals, as well as contact tracing and testing and was successful in providing accurate and timely information to the public about COVID-19. To attenuate the financial impact the outputs included stimulus packages and financial assistance for affected individuals and businesses to help them recover (See item 4.1.1.2). Later on, the directive still followed up on its outputs as it rolled out a national vaccination program against COVID-19, with the first doses administered in March 2021. Notwithstanding, the presidential directive policy route has its shortcomings as well, based off the fact that it is usually an abrupt order from the president, the policy normally lacks in planning and programming. To illustrate, the presidential directive of 2009 by President Khama which sought to introduce the declaration of assets and liabilities (Republic of Botswana, 2009c). The executive order had measures to be followed but was not adequately planned out, when for instance senior officials did not declare their assets and liabilities – there were no measures taken against them. This led to the policy failing in its follow up output and ultimately more than 20% of public officials who were required to declare their assets and liabilities had failed to do so.

Looking into policies that came about through the traditional policy process, the evidence from literature suggests that such policies are less inclined to achieve their outputs in time and often take too long before implementation. Be that as it may, in the long run these policies seem to fare well in achieving their outputs. One advantage of presidential directives is their ability to quickly address urgent issues or implement specific policy priorities. As noted by Tulis and Bybee (2018), presidential directives allow the president to bypass the cumbersome and slow policy process and take swift action on pressing issues. Additionally, presidential directives can be used to implement policies that may not have been possible through the traditional policy process due to political holdup or other obstacles (Tulis & Bybee, 2018). However, there are also disadvantages to presidential directives. One major disadvantage is that they can be more prone to legal challenges or controversy. As noted by Kelso and Kohler-Hausmann (2018), presidential directives are subject to judicial review and can be struck down if they are deemed unconstitutional. Additionally, presidential directives can be controversial if they are perceived as overstepping the bounds of executive power or encroaching on the authority of other branches of government (Kelso & Kohler-Hausmann, 2018).

One advantage of the policy process is its deliberative and collaborative nature. As noted by Sabatier and Mazmanian (2019), the policy process allows for input from multiple stakeholders and can help to ensure that policies are well-informed and well-supported. Additionally, the policy process provides opportunities for public input and transparency, which can increase public trust in government decision-making (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 2019). However, there are also disadvantages to the policy process. One major disadvantage is that it can be slow and complex, and may be subject to political gridlock or bureaucratic obstacles. As noted by Bardach and Patashnik (2019), the policy process can be slow and difficult to navigate, which can delay the implementation of
urgently needed policies. Additionally, the policy process can be subject to political gridlock or bureaucratic obstacles, which can make it difficult to achieve policy goals (Bardach & Patashnik, 2019).

**Conclusions**

Presidential directives and the policy process are two different ways of making decisions and implementing policies in government. It would be inaccurate to claim that one is universally better than the other, as the effectiveness of each approach depends on the specific context and situation. However Presidential directives have proved to proffer policy outputs at a faster pace than the traditional policy process. The traditional policy process is a more formal and structured approach to making policy decisions. This process typically involves multiple stages. The policy process here is designed to be a more deliberative and collaborative approach to making policy decisions, with input from multiple stakeholders and branches of government. The decision as to which approach to adopt continues to rest on the ambit of the leadership of a specific country.

Following an assessment, the outputs of both the traditional policy process and the executive order policy process, several recommendations are preferred to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of policymaking. These recommendations aim to enhance the outcomes of policy development and implementation. First, it is recommended that an inclusive and meaningful stakeholder engagement be fostered by all policy makers by soliciting input, feedback, and expertise from diverse stakeholders, including civil society organizations, communities, and affected individuals. This will help ensure that policies reflect the needs, perspectives, and expertise of all relevant stakeholders. Secondly transparency and accountability should be promoted through guaranteeing that policy deliberations, decisions, and justifications publicly accessible. This will foster trust, enable scrutiny, and allow for better accountability. The third recommendation entails emphasising the importance of evidence-based policy-making. This can be achieved through conducting rigorous research, data collection, and analysis to inform policy decisions. Utilise available evidence, research findings, and evaluations to assess policy impacts, identify areas for improvement, and learn from past experiences. The fourth to the sixth recommendations include ensuring that there is: comprehensive policy Evaluation; Legislative Oversight; Interdisciplinary Collaboration; Continuous Learning and Improvement as well as; emphasising a culture of continuous learning and improvement in policy-making.

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