American Social Welfare Policy: A Pluralist Approach

Chapter 3

Social Welfare Policy Research
A Framework for Policy Analysis

A Proposed Model for Policy Analysis

- Policy analysts are expected to evaluate a policy and make recommendations
  - (1) the historical background of the policy,
  - (2) a description of the problem(s) that necessitated the policy
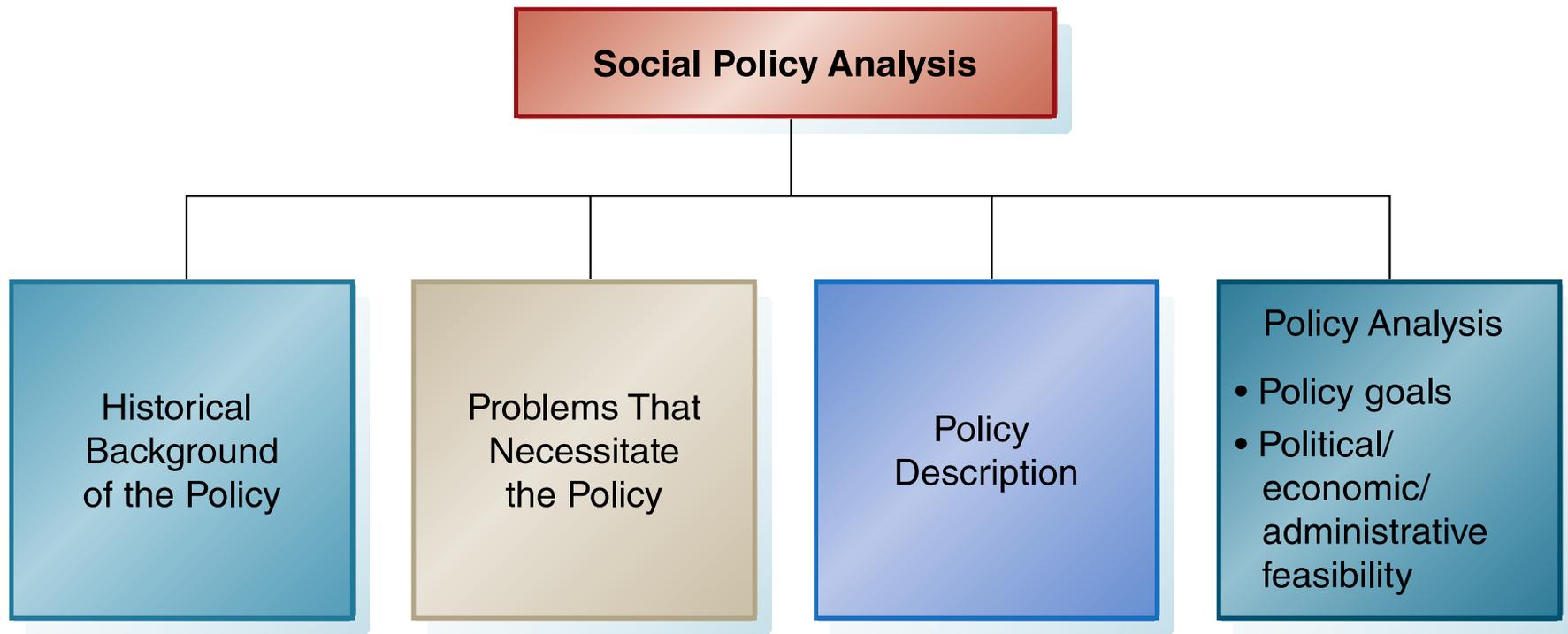 - (3) a description of the policy, and (4) the policy analysis

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FIGURE 2.1 Proposed Framework for Policy Analysis

Historical Background of the Policy

- Problems That Necessitate the Policy
  - Examination of the problems that led to the creation of the policy
- Policy Description
  - Detailed explanation of the policy

Historical Background of the Policy

- ## Policy Analysis
  - The analyst engages in a systematic analysis of the policy
    - Policy Goals
      - Analysts must understand the value premises of the policy

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Historical Background of the Policy

- Political Feasibility
  - The political feasibility of a policy is a subjective assessment

- Economic Feasibility
  - Most social policies require some form of direct or indirect funding

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Historical Background of the Policy

- Administrative Feasibility
  - The analyst must also be concerned with the administrative viability of a policy

Researching and Analyzing a Social Policy Assignment

- Students tasked with a policy analysis assignment will face two major hurdles
  - The first is finding and focusing on a manageable social policy
  - And the second is finding or generating information relevant to it.

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Social Policy Research and the Internet

- The Internet has made the job of the policy analyst immeasurably:
  - Easier, more efficient, and even more fun
    - Recruiting subjects & collecting data online for research requiring quantitative data collection

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Conclusion

- The choice of a policy analysis framework
- Social policy analysis is largely subjective
  - Analyst's value system, ideological beliefs;
    - And their particular understanding of the goals and purposes of social welfare

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