

What is policy implementation politics essay



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Formatting and implementing policies are different issues in theoretical and practical terms. The implementation might be a complicated process because it concern with political, financial and administrative issues, and it requires motivation, proper lobbying, and technical, professional and administrative support.

Policies are written statements of ideas, goals and plans of action, proposed or adopted by some agencies Menou (1991, p. 50)

Public policymaking is often viewed as a conveyor belt which issues are first recognize as a problem, alternative courses of action are considered, and policies are adopted, implemented by agency personnel, evaluated, changed and finally on the basis of their success.

Briefly all this process or activities that occur in public policymaking are the stages of policy cycle which illustrate the life of each policy.

Starting from setting the agenda until evaluating the policy then edit it or terminate it by giving an alternative policy which will replace it and pass all the process, each policy must overtake this process that is called policy life cycle.

1. What is policy implementation?

1. 1 Definition: As a general concept policy implementation can be defined as the third stage of policy cycle its means the stage of the policy process immediately after the passage of a law, or the action that will be taken to put the law into effect or that the problem will be solved. Implementation, viewed most broadly means administration of the law in which various actors, organization, procedures, and techniques work together to put adopted policies into effect in an effort to attain policy or program goals. Implementation can be also defined in terms of outputs, or the extent to which programmatic goals are supported or perused, like the level of expenditures that committed to the programs.

1. 2 policy cycle : it is a framework that can help to understand better the policy implementation as a stage correlative to other stages.

Policy cycle

Agenda setting : (Stage 1) we mean by agenda setting the list of problems or issues that government officials or organization are paying serious attention and giving time and considering as a public agenda at the at the public meeting or legislature, in other word it is the set of issues that government decide to take action against.

Policy formulation:(stage 2) the passage of legislation designed to remedy past problem or prevent future potential problem, it can be inducements, rules, facts, rights or powers, and typically it is the legislature task

Policy implementation:(stage 3) it might consider as the most important part of policy cycle, it means what happen after a bill become a law(Eugene bardach MIT press 1977) or the actions that will be taken to put the law into impact or the problem will be solved by following a set of process to translate the law into actions that ensure the achievement of the legislation.

Policy evaluation: (stage 4) considering the results of policy that have been implemented or measuring the actual effects of legislation on the particular problem or to what extent policies achieve its intended results, and that's will be possible by looking for the consequences of the implementation of this policies and learn from it.

Policy change or termination: (stage 5) by redesign some policy to become a new policy after evaluates it(Paul Sabatier 1980), or ending outdated policies or programs are found to be unworkable. This stage is the end point of policy cycle that why it can means the policy redirection, project elimination or partial elimination

2. Who implement policy?

Typically, the administrative agencies are the primary actors in public policy implementation. However, there are other factors and institutions are also involved in the process such as legislatures, political executive, and the courts. And this is because of the difficulty or the complication of the implementation of policy.

2. 1 The bureaucracy: after a law is formulated by the legislature than signed by the executive (president or other chief executives) the next step is for the various administrative agencies to begin the process of implementation, these agencies should carry out the policies under jurisdiction, and those who participate in the legislative process are usually unable or unwilling to develop precise guidelines also because of the complexity, lack of time, interest, or the information of the issue that is under consideration.

2. 2 the legislature: typically politics concern with the formulation of policy, which should be handled with the political branches of government, but this traditional view have been changed today because the legislative bodies has become concern with the implementation by drafting a very specific laws which concern with the details and attempt to remove a lot of bureaucratic discretion, and this practice has become a necessity because a lot of failing of policy implementation coming from the problems were not addressed in the original drafting. On the other hand administrative agencies involve in the formulation of policies when they draft regulation in support of existing legislation that typically consider as a legislature task.

2. 3 political executives: when presidents, governors, and other chief executives usually find themselves competing with the other political factors to influence administrators by using many tools such as executive order to set policy or the appointment of most heads of executive departments who bring their values, beliefs, and resources to their decisions and action.

Whereas the executive effort at control are limited but the indication show that president and governors are generally successful in directing the actions of their subordinates (Marissa Golden, what motivates bureaucrats).

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3. 4 The courts: also can be involved in policy implementation or influence it when they play the role of interpretation of statutes and administrative rules and regulation and their review of administrative decisions in cases brought before them, it might be the most important influence on the implementation of policies and sometimes the courts go so far to take over the management of programs on behalf of the individuals whose substantive and due process rights have been violated.

Recently, many of supreme courts recognize the need of administrative discretion and flexibility in some kinds of due process ruling, but they still retain jurisdiction over the actions of federal and state agencies.

However, there are other factors that may influence policy implementation such as community organization which could take a part in the implementation of policy or programs especially at the local level.

Another actor may be involved in the implementation of policy who is pressure groups who always try to seek to influence the guideline and regulation in the way that will benefit their cause.

4. Policy implementation approaches:

There are two main approaches that could help to understand better how policy implementation precedes the top-down approaches and the bottom-up approaches

4. 1 The top down approaches: where the state policy implementation is influenced by federal level factors such as the clearness of law or regulations that federal government sends

to the state Or the amount of resources that the federal government provides to the state which is crucial to the successful implementation of policies, and that's depend to the resources of the state or the local government some states are more independent on federal governmental aid than others. All this variables are very important to determine the success or the failure of any state implementation efforts.

Top-down followers argue that policy designers are the main actors and focus their attention and concentration on the factors which might be manipulated at the national level.

However there are so many attempts to develop top-down models of policy implementation one of them is Sabatier and mazmanian model.

The top -down approach start by assuming that the decision -making is more taken by central government and it ask the next questions:

To what extent the action of implementing officials and target groups consistent with that policy decision?

What are the principal factors affecting the policy outputs and impacts, relevant to the official policy and politically significant?

How was the policy formulated over time on the basis of experience?

To what extent were the objectives attained over time or to what extent were the objectives consistent with the impacts?

Nonstatutory variables affecting implementation

Socioeconomic conditions and technology

Media attention to the problem

Public support

Attitude and resources of constituency groups

Support from sovereigns

Commitment and leadership skill of implementing officials

Ability of statute to structure implementation

1. Clear and consistent objectives

2. Incorporation of adequate causal theory

3. Financial resources

4. Hierarchical integration in implement institutions

5. Decision rules of implementing agencies

6. formal access by outsider

Stage (depend variables) in the implementation process

Policy outputs of compliance with policy actual impacts of perceived impacts
major revision

Implement agency Outputs by target group policy outputs of policy outputs in
statute

Tractability of the problem

1-Availability of technical theory and technology

2-diversity of target-group behavior

3-extent of behavioral change required

Figure 1-Skeletal flow diagram of the variables involved in the implementation process (mazmanian and Sabatier effective policy implementation p-7)

These models identify 16 independent variable among three main categories:

The tractability of the problem.

The ability of the statute to structure implementation.

Nonstatutory variables affecting implementation.

But this model has been criticized because of the failing to illustrate which is the variables were likely to be more important, and also because of the assumption of the farmers of policy decision are the key actors.

4. 2 The bottom-up approaches: there are some bottom-up factors which may affect success or failure of in implementation such as the state capacities (available resources and stuff) and the disposition of state some policies could be easily implemented than other according to attitude of state. For instance the liberalness or the conservativeness of the state political environment will affect how easily a policy is implemented. A welfare

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policy could be easier to implement in more liberal state rather than more conservative state. Contrary a conservative policy could be easier to implement in more conservative state rather than liberal one.

Another factor may affect the implementation of policies which is the varying between states in terms of their capability to implement the federal policies for instance the number of staff that needed to implement some federal policies make a greatly different between various states.

Also the amount of resources that each state allocate it to implement federal policies can make a various different in policy implementation from state to state, meaning that state which have more resources is much more likely to implement policy than other states with a few or less fiscal resources.

Unlike the top-down model, the bottom-up approach of policy implementation stare by identifying the factors which involve in the service delivery in the local areas and asking about the goals, strategies, activities and also contacts, than try to develop a network technique to identify local, regional and national actors which involve in the policy implementation.

This approach argues that the policies are determined by the bargaining between number of organization and their clients rather than being controlled by the central decision making.

Also this approach have been received a number of criticisms for the assumption that policy implementation should occurs in a decentralization decision-making environment.

Bottom-up approach was somewhat flawed by a rather limited explanation of implementation behavior as both a desirable from the implementation and the only analytical approach for complex organizational and political problem.

Policy implementation tasks:

It refers to the necessity of getting new way to implement policies, or what managers should do to avoid the negative aspects and complexity of implementation process. This framework divides the process of implement policies into six nearly successive tasks, these machinery will present with examples of how they emerge in apply:

4-1 Legitimation (Task 1)

Legitimation means getting buy-in reform the appropriate people in the country to push the reform process forward. Furthermore Legitimation, or getting the policy accepted as important, desirable, and worth achieving, is especially critical for policies that are part of a donor assistance package, which risks being seen as externally imposed. This may result the policy champion or the group of manager and subordinate how might believe in this policy and seek to implement it well. Example provides help or assistance to concern with the negative aspect of corruption.

4-2 Constituency-building (Task2)

Constituency-building, or gaining active support from groups that see the proposed reform as desirable or beneficial, needs to translate into commitment to act toward achieving the policy objectives. So the task is

pushing group to commit the reform by giving their best effort and resources to make it achieve. So many tools can be used to fulfill this task such as inviting public and private actors to workshops to discuss issues that relevant to each sector, and try to resolve the points which are not consensus, and try to draft the policies.

4-3 Resource Accumulation (Task 3)

Resource accumulation means ensuring that present and future budgets and human resource allocations are sufficient to support policy implementation requirements, this task to secure the resources of the policy implementation process , organization have different ways to accomplish this task by negotiate with the ministries about the budget allocated, or find a new resources allocation.

4-4 Organizational Design/Structure (Task 4)

Organizational design/structure involves adjusting the objectives, procedures, systems, and structures of the agencies responsible for policy implementation. This task may include establishing new organizations, formal or informal, that links the various entities with a role in implementation, by establish action planning and results monitoring, this may lead to contribute of structure in the success of reducing fees charged.

Mobilizing Actions (Task 5)

Mobilizing actions builds upon the favorable constituencies assembled for the policy (Task 2) and marshals their policy implementation. Commitment and resources engage in concrete efforts to make change happen. Its focus

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is on identifying, activating, and pursuing action strategies. It move toward mobilized constituency and funds among the structures of organization, by create, develop and carry out the steps essential to interpret aims into results. These actions may help to build a consensus between government and civil society stakeholders, roles, responsibilities, and actions to make decentralization operational.

Monitoring Impact (Task 6) Monitoring impact, or setting up and using systems to monitor implementation progress, is the final policy implementation task.

Monitoring systems not only alert decision-makers to implementation snags, but also inform them of the intended and unintended impacts of implementation efforts. This monitoring may include establish a Policy Analysis and Implementation Unit to assist the president Economic Cabinet to improve policy decision-making with a strong focus on tracking implementation and results achieved.

A good example here could be the livestock action plan committees monitored and noted problems in compliance with the plan's steps to reduce excessive regulation in the countries of West Africa. Livestock producers credited this oversight with keeping the reforms on track and achieving the intended reductions in petty corruption and commerce-inhibiting regulation.

Conclusion:

The policy implementers should improve their understanding of the implementation process and implementation outcome by using the result of the several researches to redesign policies so they can do their work better

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and that is the policy makers and managers should be able to use the knowledge generated from the new finding in the research of policy implementation to facilitate the implementation.

Also increasing use of the private sector including faith-based organization to implement policies raises new challenges for both those who design and those who implement policies, these challenges aside, the future of implementation research as an optimistic one and one that should greatly improve the understanding of this crucial phase of the policy cycle.