



## POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: PROCESS AND PROBLEMS

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### Abstract

Policy implementation is of crucial importance to the success of the government. It is the heart of governance. The policy cannot be successful if the implementation does not bear any relationship to the intentions of policy adopters. Implementation is the process of putting policy into practice. Implementation is the recognition of a policy decision. Implementation is the stage between a decision and operation. The implementation process involves the maintenance of the political process which had actually authored the policy. Policy implementation reveals the strengths and weaknesses of the decision making the process. Policies cannot be understood in isolation from their agencies of implementation. The framework assumes that the degree of implementation is a function of the interactions between policy content and implementation agencies. Effective implementation requires a series of command and capacity to coordinate and control which is lacking in developing countries like India. This paper attempts to understand the policy implementation process and highlight the role of various agencies involved in the implementation process. It also focuses on various issues such as policy design, coordination, public participation and lack of financial resources etc. that hinders the implementation.

**Keywords:** Policy implementation, coordination, public design, public participation.

### Introduction:

Policy Implementation is the most important stage of the policy cycle. Policy Implementation is the process of putting policy into practice. The Implementation of public policies has become a central concern of analysis in the public sector. Implementation is the stage between a decision and operation. It seeks to determine whether an organization is able to carry out and attain its fixed objectives. According to Anderson, "policy is being made as it is being administered and administered as it is being made." The task of implementation is to form a bridge that allows the objectives of public policy to be achieved as outcomes of government actions. According to Donald Van Meter and Carl Van Horn, "Policy Implementation encompasses those actions by public or private individuals (and groups) that are directed at the attainment of goals and objectives set forward in prior policy decisions". The policies that are embodied in statutes often are in draft form and require many additional developments to implement the policies. If a political system is just, even if goals are noble and even if the structure of the organisation is very strong, no policy can succeed if the implementation part is not up to mark. Successful attainment of policy goals depends on its proper implementation.

### Methodology:

The purpose of this article is to examine the concept of policy implementation, various agents involved in this process and problems associated with public policy implementation.

This paper is descriptive and analytical in nature. The data used in it have collected from secondary sources. Necessary secondary data was collected from journals and reference books.

### Agencies Involved In Policy Implementation:

Public policy implementation in democratic countries is a complex process .various agencies involved in this process directly or indirectly. Some of important agents are as follow:



#### 1. Parliament and Policy Implementation

In a parliamentary form of government legislature plays important role in policy formation as well in implementation. The role of the legislature is not very crucial; they may affect the administrative organisations in many ways. It can lay down limits to administrative delegation. It may specify limits on the legislation over the use of budgetary funds. Legislature plays an important role by expressing its opinion during the question hour session. Members of the parliament can ask the government any question. There are many committees such as the public account committee, estimate committee etc that enable the members to scrutinize the government's decision.

#### 2. Judiciary in Policy Implementation

Judiciary also plays an important role in policy implementation. Some laws are implemented primarily through judicial action. Judiciary is an independent organ. It checks the functioning of legislature and executive. The constitution of India entitles the Supreme Court to exercise the power of judicial review. Any policy framed by the government leading to incongruence with the constitution is declaring null by Supreme Court. Public policies are formulated to serve society. The innovation of Public Interest Litigation also enables the Supreme Court to direct the government to change defective policy.

#### 3. Policy Implementation and Bureaucracy:

Bureaucracy plays a different role in policymaking and implementation in different systems. Bureaucracy is considered just an agent of the policymaking. Members of bureaucracy are highly skilled, qualified and experienced. They can implement public policy in a very effective way. According to Wallace Sayre, "not an autonomous brain in its own right but rather the neutral executor of plans made by other". In most countries, bureaucracy is one of the important actors in Decisions making. In most modern political systems, the power of bureaucracy as a decision-maker has been gradually increasing. The bureaucracy is typically considered an executive branch of the Government. This is a leading institution that performs most of the day to day duties of Government. The bureaucracy controls the personnel, resources, Materials and legal powers of Government, and it is this institution that receives most of the implementation directives from the executive, legislative and judicial decision- maker. The interaction between the political executive and bureaucracy is essential to the determination of bureaucratic influence in the policy process. The major task of administration in any political system is the implementation of public policies. Therefore, public administration as a functional system has mainly concentrated on the machinery for the implementation of public policies, as given, rather than on making them. Political executives decide on policies and Bureaucracy implements those policies. The Bureaucrat must clearly understand the nature of policies that the political master has set. They are responsible for advising in the formulation of policies designed to attain Goals, and also organizing and managing the resources required to transmit through these policies. Second, they should assist policymakers to avoid doubt. Third, they should be able to interpret the general policies and their objectives into operational targets. This function should also consist of an analysis of the costs and benefits of each policy alternative. They should adopt a rational approach to implement policies.

#### 4. Political parties in Policy Implementation:

Political parties also influence the implementation process of public policy. They try to influence the executive as well as bureaucracy to implement policies that serve their purpose. Political parties present their policies to the public in order to gain their support. Since policies are formed by leaders of the ruling party. Sometime political parties prevent the implementation of a policy that goes contrary to their ideology.



#### 5. Interest Groups in Policy Implementation:

Interest groups employ an influence on the implementation process. The exercise of pressure through an interest group is the main feature of a democratic government. They try to protect the interest of their members. According to Dror, "Because of discretion often vested in agencies by legislation, once an act is adopted, the group struggle shifts from the legislative to the administrative arena". Interest groups follow their interest at every stage in the policy implementation chain and use their tactics on weak links of the chain to control the implementation process.

#### **Problems in Policy Implementation:**

Policy implementation is not an easy task. Problem of the implementation of policy are common in all countries. Some of problems in policy implementation are given below:-

##### 1. Lack of public involvement:

Public involvement in policy implementation is of very importance. For the success of policy active involvement of the public is essential. Involvement will give the target group a sense of belonging as well as get them committed to the successful implementation of the policy. Public puts pressure on the administrative staff to produce the result. By protest and mass involvement the public can build a power structure of its own to implement policies. The chief of the implementing agency must properly educate the personnel along with the citizens regarding a different aspect of the policy being implemented. The implementers should attempt to mobilize public support and shape favourable public opinion regarding the objectives of policy to be implemented by them. Due to lack of resources, poor knowledge and lack of political support public do not participate in policy implementation.

##### 2. Lack of administrative capability:

Policies are formulated by the political executive but executed by the bureaucracy, which is rule-bound and rigid. The success and failures of various programs have depended on the capacity of bureaucracies. In most developing countries the greatest obstacles to implementation are administrative and political, rather than economic. Lack of administrative capability in implementation also poses a hazard to Successful implementation. Administrative capability is the capacity to obtain projected results with the help of the organization. In an organization resources are mobilized and transformed by the use of administrative skills and technology to attain desired goals. Administrative capability is an important means of converting or processing programs inputs into outputs. Implementation of development programmes and policies in developing countries has exerted strains on changing capacities of the governmental and other institutional machinery.

##### 3. Policy design:

Effective implementation of a policy depends on policy design. According to Dror, "skilled manpower in the developing countries is the scarcest resource of all". He observed that there is a lack of skilled experts in policy-making occupations. According to Dror, "knowledge and information are another very limited resource, partly because of the lack of professionally qualified manpower, but more importantly because the knowledge, both factual data about the respective countries and scientific theories that could help accelerate development, often does not exist". Qualified manpower and knowledge are the central factors for good policy formulation. Poor policy design also affects the implementation process. Sometimes policy designs are not compatible with the implementation agencies.



4. Lack of personnel and financial resources:

In developing countries, most of the policies are not implemented properly because of the lack of trained staff and financial resources. Implementation implies allocating personnel resources to suitable tasks, motivating them and rewarding them for their performance. Regardless of their status, specialised knowledge, qualifications all the personnel engaged in a policy implementation program need to work as a unit for the purpose of achieving policy results. But sometimes lack of the allocation of work to personnel also hinders implementation. Implementers need financial resources and infrastructure. The Provision of funds in the budget does not mean that the amount sanctioned is enough to meet the requirements.

5. Lack of administrative motivation:

The officials involved in the process of implementation do not find enough motivation. In the current environment, officials are not interested in implementing policies. They fall in captivity of money and do not perform their duty. Lack of dedicated staff at block district and State level and non-cooperation to policy guidelines also hinders the implementation process.

6. Poor coordination and cooperation:

Poor coordination is a hurdle in the successful implementation of public policy. Communication is an essential element of policy implementation. Through communication, orders are transmitted to correct personnel in a clear manner while such orders must be accurate. It may even be looked upon as the means by which special information inputs are fed into social systems. Inadequate information can lead to misinterpretation by implementers may cause obstacles to policy implementation problems. Miscommunication can destroy the objectives of the policy. Lack of coordination and cooperation among the administrative institutions is a loophole in the whole institutional set-up. Barnard has rightly viewed it as the means by which people can be linked together in an organization to achieve the objective of the program.

7. Pressure of time:

Pressure of time to implement policy creates an implementation gap. While fixing the time frame the policy formulators do not take into consideration the conditions prevailing. The head offices compel the agencies for fast implementation. Under such conditions, implementers are unable to perform their duties properly.

8. Social, political conditions:

Problems related to policy implementation in developing countries are linked with basic socio-economic and political conditions. The policymaker must consider the social, economic, political environment in which policy is formulated. Policy implementation requires constant political and administration commitment for the decided course of action. The political environment certainly affects implementation processes in varying ways. Even organizational hierarchy has to compete with the problem of rationality, subunit loyalty, weak supervision etc. which harm implementation.

9. Interest group policies:

Some time interest groups also work to weak the implementation process. These interest groups put direct pressure on the bureaucracy to reverse policy decisions that are against their interests. Industry influences the implementation of environmental policy through the business lobby, and representative of business interest. Industrialist has a link with ruling parties.



#### 10. Lack of Clear Definition of Goals:

Policy goals often lack clarity and consistency with the demands of the people. Policymakers in India assume that they know the needs of the target groups whose social situation they are attempting to improve and therefore see no need for clarity of goals. And it is obvious where policy goals are not clear, implementation tends to be more difficult.

#### Conclusion:

Policy implementation is a complex process. The success of any government depends upon the successful implementation of policies. The Policy does not implement itself. It requires a wide range of actions. In India different institutions like the legislature, executive, judiciary, political parties, pressure groups participate directly or indirectly in policy the implementation process. Lack of coordination and missing links among the administrative institutions hinders in implementing policy actions. Policy implementation at the highest level is not considered by an effective coordination and cooperation. Implementation of development programs and policies in India has exerted strains on the varying capacities of the governmental machinery. The Implementation process faces many problems. There is too much workload of policy implementation on policymakers, and inadequate competence of the specialist as well as the field staff. Policies must be structured, funded and directed so that bureaucracy has a clear framework for the application. Effective and successful policy implementation is the key to national growth, it is a building block that assists socio-economic and political progress and can only be achieved not only through a continuous political dedication and clear definition of responsibilities and coordination, but also through genuine commitment to eradication of corruption at all levels of government.

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