

Multi-sectorial Assessment of Policy Implementation in the Nigerian Socio-political System

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Manuscript ID: RCMSS/JGGSDA/13010

Abstract

Public policy implementation is one of the ways through which the purpose of government is realised and problems confronting man are addressed. It is usually linked to number of a number of sector-agriculture, health, education, security, power and electricity, petroleum, etc. Unfortunately, the major problem confronting the developing countries like Nigeria is poor implementation of government programmes and policies to engender national and economic development. For most policies and programmes implemented in Nigeria, the paper argues that there exist a “widening gap between intentions and results”. This paper is therefore an multi-sectorial assessment of policy implementation in the Nigerian socio-political system. Factors that have hampered effective implementation of public policies in Nigeria were identified and recommendations for their efficient execution are made in the concluding sections of the paper.

Key words: Policy, Implementation, Multi-sectorial, Socio-political,

Introduction

Implementation refers to the process of converting inputs - financial, information, materials, technical, human, demands, support, etc., into outputs. This stage involves translation of goals and objectives of a policy into concrete achievement through various programmes (Egomonwan, 2000). George Honadle and Rudi Klaus in Egonmwam (2000) see implementation as the nemesis of designers; it conjures up images of plans gone awry and of social carpenters and masons who fail to build to specification and thereby distort the beautiful blueprints for progress which were handed to them. It provokes memories of a good idea that did not work, but places the blame on others. They said such are the situation in the developing countries where implementation often turns out to be the graveyard of policy and where the intentions of the designer of policies are often undermined by a constellation of powerful forces of politics and administration in co-operation with people. A project brilliantly formulated cannot achieve its stated objectives unless the projects and policies therein are efficiently implemented. An examination of post world-war planning history reveals that there have been many more failures than successes in the implementation of projects especially in the developing countries. (http://www.africabib.org/rec.php?RID=104260149&DB=p_br; Edward Aide Ayo, 1987).

According to Ikelegbe implementation is the process of translating policy mandates, intention, and prescription into result and goals into reality. Eppler(2008) points out that implementation is a process that takes longer than formulation, that is, its activities should transform a working plan into a concrete reality. Schaap(2006) cited in Eppler(2008) points out that implementation is the sum total of the activities and choices required for the execution of a strategic plan. He said it is the process through which strategies and policies are put into action. Thus a poor strategy can limit implementation efforts dramatically. This is true because there has been good policies that if properly implemented would benefit the country and bring growth to the country but failed at implementation stage, such programs as Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution, Structural Adjustment Program, Better



Life for Rural Women, etc. It is at implementation stage that most policies fail, and this has given concern to governments as well as the citizens. Implementation of policy being the most crucial of all the stages of policy is not devoid of certain factors that influence it, some of these factors are: wrong priority; shortfalls in resource availability, inadequate assessment of targets, wrong scheduling of time for project completion, inadequate project identification, formulation and design, faulty conceptualization of policy, etc. As Robert Levine has noted, the difficulties of administration rather than the nature of the project, have been the main troubles with public policies implementation. As a matter of fact, there is an abundance of project failure, resulting from the inability to or poor performance in terms of fulfilling or effectuating policy purposes or intentions. Policy mandate and objectives are rarely achieved. The final results of implementation may resemble or may be related to the policy intentions, but may not be precisely what was intended or mandated. The implementation stage is, therefore, very important. It determines whether policies become tangible or real. It is the stage where the policy idea may be realised or aborted.

For effective implementation of any policy, Alexander (1985) believes that there is need to start with a formulated strategy that involves a good idea or concept is essential in helping promote successful implementation. Good implementation naturally starts with good strategy input. The soup is only as good as the ingredients (Allio, 2005). The implication of these implementation failures includes Unemployment, lack of growth in the country, backwardness in global competition, constant crises, lack of social security, poor standard of living, high cost of living, unfulfilled life and crime among the youths, lack of integrity and honesty among the people, lack of skill and values needed among the youths, lack of self discipline, no creativity and no innovation, economy growing without generating any corresponding success, which also leads to poverty, sickness, hardship, etc.

Reasons for Implementation of Policies

According to Nyong 2005 every government strives to provide the needs of its citizens as improvements of the welfare of its citizens, meeting basic needs such as food, education, health, education, housing, good drinking water, power supply, good roads, provision banking facilities, environmental protection, etc.

Human needs are numerous and increasing each day, so government tries to meet these needs which also include attainment of rapid economic growth, minimization of the level of unemployment, maintenance of price stability and attainment of equilibrium in the balance of payment. Jide Ayo(1987) points out that state reasons for implementation were to increase per capita income, more even distribution of income, increase in the supply of high level manpower, diversification of the economy, balanced development, indigenization of economic activities. The question is, has these been achieved?

Theoretical Framework

Iglesias Model of Implementation

This model argues that implementation worldwide is a problem. The model which was developed by David U.Iglesias sees implementation process as a function of an administrative agency and so if the policy is not well implemented the administrative agency ought to be blamed. He tried to isolate and identify factors which will enhance or increase the capability of administrative agencies to implement programmes. Thus, Iglesias was concerned with the factor that will help to implement programmes, example, if one wants to go into a water project; Iglesias says there should be good water engineers for that project to succeed and not just any engineer. He listed the following factors that will help in implementing projects:

The Structure: For any policy to succeed there must be a stable organized structure.

The Technology: This refers to information essential for the operation of the organization. For instance, if any external affairs minister is brought into a system he is not familiar with, he cannot perform. He needs good knowledge of what is involved.

The Support: This refers to the range of actual potential roles and behaviour of persons and entities which tend to promote attainments of set organizational goals. Any policy that does not have support, input, and compliance from the people will not work. Thus, part of the reason why the Structural Adjustment Programme in Nigeria failed is because people did not support the programme following the hardship it brought on the people.

The Resources: These refer to personnel, without good expertise the project will not succeed.

Leadership: Good leadership that can influence, facilitate implementation and change things is necessary for any organization to succeed. Poor leadership hinders progress.

Smith Model of Policy Implementation

Smith says that government policies are deliberate policies to establish new transaction pattern or to bring about a change. Policies are not by chance; thus, public policy is a purposive action by government to establish new transaction pattern. When government takes any new issue, the reason is to take action or cause a change in the society or organisation. For instance, Poverty Alleviation Programmes are established to solve the problem of poverty so that those who have been at certain level of poverty can move up, and some to get a job and start earning money. Operation Feed the Nation was to produce food. The model maintained that policy serve as tension generating force in society, since, policies are intended to bring about change in the society, some people will be affected so there is bound to be tension in the society. There are people who used to serve as maids but with provision of free education, those maids may not want to continue as maids anymore, and this will cause tension to those masters. Even as school becomes free, and children go to school, no mother releases her child as maid; it generates tension. So changes at times bring tension and can generate conflict. Smith went further to say that in the process of implementation, tension, stress and conflicts are created between the implementer and those affected by the policy. When government wants to dualize roads, some houses will be affected.

Smith, the chief exponent of the model argues that stress and conflict occur within components of the implementation process, and they are: (i) Idealized policy implementation, which involves the interaction of policy makers with particular idealized elements. This is done to set a standard or practice that must be followed as ideal. (ii) Implementing organization: This emphasise that there should be the organization responsible for implementation of the policy. That organization is a unit of governmental bureaucracy. Among all the categories of theory, smith model says an unqualified and unstable administrative organization may reduce the capacity to implement public policy. (iii) Target groups: These are groups affected by the policy, when the target group is against the policy or indifferent; there will not be any good implementation, this indifference could be because of prior policy failure.

Grindle's Model of Implementation

Grindle's model argues that the implementation of a programme is influenced by those interested and affected by the programme. That policy implementation brings changes in social, political and economic life of the people, and when a good policy produces social change the programme will attract people in that area, some looking for jobs, some to change their social life style. He mentions that when people are going to benefit from a particular programme they will show a lot of supports. For example, if the government of Cross River State decides to provide electricity, it is for all the people and the support they give to that programme will affect or influence the implementation. Those whose interests are threatened by such project are bound to oppose the project, and those who stand to gain are bound to encourage the implementation of the project. If Nigeria is to have a constant supply of light, many people will not buy generator, in that case the people selling generator will lose market and will not be happy, and they will make sure the implementation of electricity policy in the community is not efficiently done.

Grindles tried to explain the contextual variables that influence project implementation process in Third World countries. He outlined some factors that influenced implementation of policies as: inadequate definition of goals, Socio -political context in which the policy is proposed and executed, the political nature of the place which the policy is to be implemented matters a lot for the smooth implementation of the plan. In Nigeria for instance, the instability in the political sphere of the country affects the implementation of such policies due to political changes. Available institutional capabilities- most time provision is not made for the institution that is going to implement such a policy, it is always good to consider whether the institution will have the means to implement such policies. Lack of identification of target group, when a policy is formulated, and the target group is not determine, there is always a problem of sabotage. Lack of continuity and commitment: Poor monetary term, a situation where there is many project competing for resources, the success of the competing interest group depends on the political resources at their disposal with which to bargain as well as the strategies adopted, sometimes there is no money to complete a project that has been started or it could be due to financial misappropriation. Also, the power base and strategies of actors involved in the implementation can influence the course of implementation.

Case Studies of Some Policies that have failed in Nigeria

There are some policies that have been formulated to address some fundamental problems in the Third World countries especially in Nigeria, such policies include Education policy, Agricultural policy, Health Policy, policy against fake drugs, privatization policy etc.

Education policy

According to Osokoya (1987), education is a distinctive way in which the society inducts its young ones into full membership. So every modern society needs some educational policies to guide it in the process such initiation. The problem of educational policy is traceable to the planning stage which comes immediately after policy formulation.

Likeje (1986) stated that good planning will ensure effective implementation. The UBE (Universal Basic Education) was established in 1976 and later UPE, then National policy on Education in 1977. All these projects were evaluated and found to have some problems of implementation because of lack or absence of political will, lack of continuity of programmes and corruption. Between 1960 to 2011, the country has had several governments led by Dr. Azikwe (late) to the current president. In 50 years Nigeria has had 14 heads of state, so educational policies at primary, secondary and tertiary institutions were

formulated by various governments but political instability stalled or discouraged the political will to implement such projects. As new governments come in quick succession and with the relative uncertainty, continuity in projects or policies could not be guaranteed. Every political player was in a hurry to help himself before he was displaced by another group. This has affected educational policy/project implementation in Nigeria (Okoroma, 2003).

Agricultural Policy

In the period immediately following independence, the agricultural sector played its expected roles in national development. In fact, the Federal Government of Nigeria has identified agriculture as a key development priority in its efforts to halve poverty by 2015 and to diversify the economy away from the oil sector (Soludo, 2006; http://www.ifpri.org/publication/environmental-considerations-nigerian-agricultural-policies-strategies-and-programs_br).

Before the discovery of crude oil, Nigeria had been able to produce enough food for her citizenry and raw materials for exports. In fact, Nigeria was one of the world's largest producers of groundnut, cocoa, palm oil and kernel, rubber, etc. However, with the neglect of agriculture and the total dependence on petroleum (the so called black gold) as the major foreign exchange earner, the country began experiencing food shortage. Food prices started rising while foreign exchange earnings from agriculture decline drastically. Despite these challenges, agriculture remains a major sector upon which the majority of the rural poor in Nigeria depend. The country has put in place several such programs and policies over the years. These include Cooperative schemes, Farm settlement scheme, Integrated Agricultural Development Programmes(1970s) Operation Feed the Nation (1977), Rural Banking scheme(1977), Land Use Decree(1978), Green Revolution Programme(1980), Directorate of Food Roads and Rural Infrastructure (1986), Better Life Programme(1987), National Directorate of Employment(1986), Nigeria Agricultural Cooperative Bank, Family Support Programme (1994), People's Bank of Nigeria (1989), National Fadama Development Programme(1999), Root and Tuber Expansion Programme(2000), the Presidential Initiative (2001), National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy(2004) and the Seven Point Agenda(2007). In all these, the implementation of the project has been a problem, fertilizers meant for the farmers do not reach them, loans are given to people who are not farmers with interest, other facilities intended for farmers are diverted, and policies are made but not properly implemented (Adebayo, Babu and Rhoe, 2009).

Health Policy

The United Nations declared health for all as a fundamental human right. Governments all over the world have taken it as a right to improve the health status of its citizens. In Nigeria, the National Health Policy was adopted in 1985 to achieve health for all, provide comprehensive health care delivery system, and provide preventive, protective, restorative and rehabilitative health care to all. In addition to reduce infant mortality, the following were adopted to expand immunization programme such as whooping cough, TB, Tetanus, Measles, etc. Also attempts have been made to improve the functional efficiency of Teaching Hospitals. But it has been contended that it is lack of political will and poor policy making that failed to divide responsibilities effectively between Federal, State and Local governments that resulted in Primary Health Care services lacking staff and funds. To buttress the issue of lack of funds, the Federal Ministry of Health disclosed that the #282.77 billion provisions earmarked for health in the 2012 budget could not address the health

needs of the people (http://www.thenigerianvoice.com/nvnews/77725/1/2012-budget-cant-meet-health-needs-of-nigerians-mi.html_br). Even though President Goodluck Jonathan declared that the allocation of #282.77 billion to the health sector is the third highest in the entire budget after security and education, but the ministry maintained that the allocation was grossly inadequate to address the numerous health challenges in the country. Fatima Bamidele gave the ministry's position at press briefing organized by the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) in Abuja, to mark the presidential launch of the community based and voluntary contributor social Health Insurance Programme.

The question is, are our policies in the right direction, do we spend more time on important issues as health of the society. A country with developed health policy would develop her health centers. Health institutions constitute the wealth of the people in any country. If people are not healthy they cannot do anything, they cannot work, and if in a country people are not working the level of the economy of that country will be low. The little facilities seem to be concentrated in the urban centres leaving the rural areas to suffer. Teaching hospitals are now commercialized making it difficult for the poor to enjoy health.

Policy Against Fake Drugs

Recently, more complicated and diverse issues about drugs have emerged. Governments, policy makers, academic institutions and civil society organizations are addressing safety, efficacy, quality and access to medicines in an increasingly complex and global environment. In this situation, counterfeit drugs are emerging as worldwide dilemma; they are not only threatening the health care system of developing countries but also posing challenges to the developed countries. According to the World Health Organization, a counterfeit medicine is one which is deliberately and fraudulently mislabelled with respect to identity and/or source. Counterfeiting of drug is a major concern in the developing countries. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) state that 10% of all drugs sold in the global medicine market are counterfeit (http://www.who.int/entity/medicines/services/expertcommittees/pharmprep/WHO-ACM-3IMPACTSurveyDataCollectionToolReport.pdf_br).

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) was established in 1999, to control the circulation, importation, exportation, manufacture, advertisement, contend against the distribution and sale of fake products and drugs in the country. In the course of its operation, NAFDAC discovered that many fake drugs like fake paracetamol, fake hypertensive drugs, etc. are smuggled into the country. The problem of fake drugs proliferation in Nigeria have affected the credibility of the health care system and can exert very harmful effects on the consumer resulting to illness, disability and even death and anyone can be a victim over 150 children died in 1989 as a result of formulation error indrug and as was reported in the Sun News Paper of 17/5/2012 where fake malaria drugs killed some persons. Thus, NAFDAC was established to help create a fake-drug-free environment (NAFDAC Consumer Safety, 2003). The intent was to ensure effective registration of good quality drugs that are inexpensive in Nigeria. The inability of the agency to closely monitor the drug market has brought a wider spread of fake drugs in the country (http://www.search4dev.nl/record/353722_br).

. Government, on the other hand has not helped the situation, as there is a political setback in giving adequate penal sanctions to offenders as stipulated in the drug laws. NAFDAC has failed to effectively fight against fake drugs in Nigeria even with their intense efforts in doing so. Some of the reasons are lack of adequate and continuous support of the government; inadequate support from some stakeholders that are expected to join force with NAFDAC in the fight such as the customs, police and the judiciary (Chinwendu, 2008).

Nigerians, even prefer foreign drugs, than drugs made and certified by NAFDAC. More challenges come up from unscrupulous drug dealers who sometimes have the backing of lawmakers and politician making the stipulated drug laws and standard unattainable (Akunyili, 2004)

Privatization and Commercialization Policy

In the business sector, a survey conducted by the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) revealed that only about ten percent (10%) of industries run by its members are fully operational. This means that 90 percent of the industries are either ailing or have closed down. Given the fact that manufacturing industries are well-known catalysts for real growth and development of any nation, this reality clearly portends a great danger for the Nigerian economy. Mr Jide Mike who disclosed this fact, attributed the cause to poor infrastructure, multiple taxes imposed on manufacturers and the difficulties in accessing finance, he remarked in addition to policy somersault, funding remains a challenge to all manufacturing sector. Yet when these companies were privatized, the elite or the Nigerian bourgeoisie who bought them over now had money to finance such industries, cause the poor to suffer.

General Problems of Project/Policy Implementation

Most projects suffer some failures at implementation stage. Reasons for this are as follows:

- **Inadequate definition of goals.** Most times the goals lack clarity, compatibility, where various goals are pursued, implementation is also complicated.
- **Over ambitious Goals.** Doing many things without achieving any.
- **Lack of well defined programme:** In Nigeria, for example, specific actions aimed at achieving policy goals and objectives are often not well articulated. Hence, implementation usually takes the form of trial and error. In some cases programme chosen may not be politically acceptable and politically attractive to the national policy decision.
- **Cultural consideration:** Cultural consideration hampers project implementation in many areas. Policies in some communities are difficult to implement due to the belief of the people-the people see it as a taboo or violation of their culture.
- **Compromises:** Compromises during implementation could be a problem; it could alter the basic goals. Policies could be formulated but at the implementation in order to favour some factions of the country changes its direction which tends to alter the sole aim of such projects.

Political Opposition: This refers to the resistance of all sorts which manifest themselves from all groups of people or individuals during the implementation process. Here primordial interests often overcome the rational, practical process. Decision makers only think of themselves and their immediate families (Felicia Okim, 1988).

- **Lack of continuity and commitment.** A situation where there has been a developed plan and stated in the plan like building of shopping complex. Leader '1' might start the project only for leader '2' to come in and abandon the project.
- **Insufficient capital to handle projects.** For any project to be effectively implemented, the resources for its implementation must be adequately put in place, when money is not available at the right time it hinders implementation.

- **Social economic factor:** This is one of the problems of policy implementation in Nigeria. Predatory elites in Nigeria go out to borrow but do not invest the money. They exploit and deplete the economy.

- **Inexperienced implementers,** I know it all disposition.

- **Lack of data to follow up events** (Egonmwam, 2000).

- **Abuse of Contract Awards:** In some cases, contracts are awarded to contractors who have connections, even when their estimates exceed those of others and their efficiency is in doubt. Some collect mobilization fees, misuse them and perform very poorly. In certain cases, bad jobs are approved by officials who bribed to do so. Also, because there is no rigid law to be invoked against any defaulting contractor than to terminate the contract agreement and re-award it to another contractor, the indiscriminate abuses by contractors tend to delay project execution and seriously affect plan, implementation and cost (Edward A. Ayo, 1987)

- **Corruption:** The 2004 corruption perception index, released by Transparency International (TI) the watchdog on global corruption, rank Nigeria as the third most corrupt country in the world. In 2003, the organization ranked Nigeria second, one step improvement from the previous position as the most corrupt country in the world. Although President Olusegun Obasanjo disputed the rating, many Nigerians agreed that it was correct. No doubt these unfortunate and corrupt practices affect project implementation as they occur at various stages of project execution (Ejiogu, 2005:11).

Conclusion

Project implementation means money spent; laws enforced, employees hired, plan of action formulated and carried out successfully. But the problem with Nigerian implementation is the structure among which is the absence of a central coordinating member (Obande, 2007). Malaysia was colonized and left with many challenges to face, but, they strengthened their institutional framework, managed and monitored the implementation of policies and today they have developed and we talk of their success story. Nigeria has been having the problem of implementation of policies. A lot of projects were never implemented. As pointed out by Obande (2007), Nigeria is faced with the following problems:

- Lack of proper co-ordination, harmonization and control.
- Lack of focus.
- Political will has been another problem in Nigeria
- Academia, it is just recently that most institutions embarked on strike upon strike before few research organizations were empowered with funds.
- Resource allocation is another problem.

The practical reality is that Nigerian framework exists only in principle.

Recently Tinapa in Cross River State could not be managed, it has been sold to a foreign firm, this shows the problem of lack of continuity and not having the ability to continue the project left by predecessor.

Recommendations

- Government should have a culture of implementation of project and culture of better work ethic.
- There is the need for government to set up institution that will monitor the planning and execution of projects. This entails that contracts should be monitored, most time

contractors' are paid mobilization fee to enable them start the project, but in most cases the contract ends there.

- Progress report, there should be periodic progress report; it serves as a means not only of highlighting achievements but also of identifying problems and bottlenecks in implementation for which remedial measures can be devised in order to enhance progress in the succeeding project.
- There should be accountability and transparency of money given out for any project.
- Budget should be targeted towards actualizing growth in a particular project for the society.
- Eliminate the hydra-headed monster of corruption (Nyong 2005).
- Good leadership and good governance at all levels of government is necessary as that will bring about positive change (Nyong 2005).

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