

# Turning Policy into Delivery: A Case Study Approach

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## Abstract

The purpose of this article is to encourage institutions, especially secondary schools, to move towards greater improvement through turning policy into delivery. It is imperative that each institution or organization has appropriate policies in place. Certain institutions and organizations are good at policy design but less so in policy implementation. Policy itself is not enough to turn an institution or organization around hence policy design should not be equivalent to a silo. To turn an institution or organization around is directly proportional to turning policy into delivery. The policy should promote a culture of development and enculturation of those who happen to join the institution. In addition, self-regulation strategies are crucial when attempting to turn policy into delivery. Clearly, delivery chain should allow for policy to be deliverable. Although there is a vast amount of literature about policy implementation, the researchers wanted to encourage principals of secondary schools to move from partial effectiveness to improvement through intensifying turning of policies into a delivery strategy. The researchers adopted a case study approach and selected five principals of schools randomly. The respondents were interviewed at their respective places of work when convenient. The purpose of interviews of the participants was to ascertain their

experiences in turning policy into delivery in their working environments. Their responses were analysed using data matrix. Their responses were recorded and presented as a case study approach. The findings of both the respondents and the literature review confirm that all stakeholders are ultimately responsible for turning policy into delivery.

**Keywords:** Policy, Delivery, Implementation

## 1. Introduction and Motivation Underlying the Problem

Policy implementation seems to be an institutional or organization-based problem. Although all institutions appear to have policies in place, some seem to be more effective at daily implementation than others. It is not only the policies that can turn an institution around; the implementation of the policy should also promote cultural development and the enculturation of those who make up that institution. However, Policy design is a complex issue hence turning policy into delivery is not a simple issue. The Policy designer should develop strategies and plans for turning the policy into delivery. The people responsible should be clear headed and critical in outlook. Critical and creative thinkers can have magnificent ideas which contribute significantly towards turning Policy into delivery, but the leadership of an organisation is responsible for turning Policy into delivery. This is where leadership often falls short. Such leadership needs development that will improve competence and will strengthen itself.

Although there are other contributing factors accounting for policy failure, over optimistic expectations, implementation in dispersed governance, inadequate collaborative policy making, and the vagaries of politics can create problems. Even where governance is concentrated rather than dispersed, implementation is often highly dependent on the local context. Policy making tends to be developed in distinct administrative siloes even when most interventions will almost certainly have wider implications that affect external parties. Poor identification around sharing of work, poor referencing, unclear chains of reasoning and failure to consider other policy options (Hudson, Hunter & Peckham, 2019). For this study, poor identification of the expertise appears to be one reason for policy implementation failure. If in all areas of policy implementation, the expertise can be acknowledged and recognized, policy can be turned into delivery. There should also be a clear time frame for the evaluation of the process of implementation.

Successful policy implementation is often dependent on creating strategies broad enough to have a significant impact yet tailored for context and specific issues that can arise. The relationship between policy making and policy implementation ought to be an effort to turn this into interactive and mutual learning process rather than a one-sided relationship moreover the implementation should be an interactive process in which ideas, expressed as policy are transformed into behaviour and expressed as social action (Leal, 2020). For this study, it is envisaged that a policy designer should have plans and strategies in place to turn the policy into delivery. Unless the delivery chain is clear and sufficiently motivational in order to encourage those responsible for the delivery chain, turning policy into delivery will remain absurd. In addition, those responsible for turning policy into delivery should manage their own motivation towards policy delivery. Self-regulatory strategies are fundamental in

turning policy into delivery. The strategies should be tangible enough to encourage those responsible for turning policy into delivery. Implementers need to have a propensity to drive the whole process and the resolution to make positive changes in the institution.

Once a policy is created, thoughtful consideration is needed to implement the policy. However, very little is written about how program implementation occurs and how eligibility for program funding is determined. Furthermore, programs including a framework need to be evaluated for eligibility for financing. The implementation process and criteria for determining which applications are eligible for funding, and under what conditions, require significant effort to succeed even after the policy is passed (Caroline, Julia & Canace, 2014). Policy implementation is not a simple issue; it needs sufficient forward thinking before attempting to implement it. Thorough identification of the capacity for implementing policy needs to lead. Policy evaluation and implementation evaluation should also both be considered for improvement.

## **2. Literature Review**

The literature review helped to familiarize the researchers with the problem. Policies tend to be ambitious, sweeping programs designed to bring about development and social reform. Incremental policies are much easier to implement than ambitious non-incremental ones. The problem of turning policy into delivery could be more widespread than commonly acknowledged. Some of the policy making models do not take the importance of turning policy into delivery seriously. Turning policy into delivery may even generate tensions that trigger changes in other related institutions (Smith, 1973). Policy implementation often uncovers the strength and weakness of the decision-making process. Furthermore, decision-making and implementation of policies are inseparably joined and equally important with policy implementation usually being the duty of various bodies such as government departments, municipalities, courts of law, interested groups and communities (Brauns & Wallis, 2014).

Kosutic (2022), there are several factors that should be taken into consideration when developing and implementing policies in the workplace. At the development stage, one must discuss several factors that would drive the implementation with all stakeholders in a particular institution or organization. Again, policy implementation reflects how an organization achieved a successful introduction to the policies it has developed and the practicability thereof. Over and above, policy development should be designed to respond to the organizational culture, operational requirements and available human and financial resources. All employees should be concerned with developing human rights culture in the workplace.

For this study, this appears to be one of the reasons for failing to turn policy into delivery by some schools. If people are precluded from Policy design, it is hardly possible to develop such aspirations for turning policy into delivery. For this reason, some schools are good at policy design but less so at the implementation. The adherence to egalitarian principles is significant in all institutions, including schools for the improvement of performance. All stakeholders responsible for the education of children should play a vital role in turning

policy into delivery especially educators in that school. Discussions about policy in each school can invariably contribute towards worthwhile decision-making for promoting policy implementation. The researchers agree with Kosutic (2022) that there are several factors that should be considered when developing and implementing policies.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

Policy implementation is defined as actions taken by the public, individuals and groups that affect the achievements of the objectives (Brauns & Wallis, 2014). Turning policy into delivery refers to the implementation of Policies as a means of improving service delivery. This can also apply to the health sector. The health Policies that do not improve the culture of practising doctors, becomes problematic.

For this study, turning policy into delivery refers to the implementation of the policies for the improvement of the performance of schools. This performance includes the performance of learners, educators, and management. However, the responsibility should be clear in each policy for practical implementation. All the stakeholders responsible for the education of learners should understand their roles for turning policies into delivery so that the result is excellent school performance. The researchers adopted the framework of the Institute for Government where prioritisation, identification of challenges and ways to handle them were worthwhile considerations. The researchers were motivated by Gray's report of 2022 and worked within a Critical Paradigm for the empowerment of both participants and readers. Qualitative research was used to collect the data for this study.

### **4. Research Design and Methodology**

The researchers adopted a case study approach within a Critical Paradigm as stated above. A Critical Paradigm aims towards the empowerment of the respondents and focuses on the ways to change the situation. A case study is qualitative in nature; that is a systematic study of the phenomenon involving a description and explanation of a phenomenon. The researchers selected five principals of schools randomly, including three female principals of schools and two male principals from the same Circuit Office. The purpose was to understand their experiences in turning policy into delivery and focusing on challenges in their departments as well as in the entire institution. The purpose of selecting respondents from the same circuit area was to ascertain whether or not they had suggestions regarding policy implementation for the acceleration of the process of turning policy into delivery in their departments as well as in their schools. The respondents were interviewed at their respective places of work at convenient time. The same questions were used for the interviews with all respondents in order to learn of their experiences in the implementation of policy in their work environment. Their responses were audio-recorded and then transcribed by the researchers. The responses to the interview questions were presented as an inductive research report.

## 5. Results

### 5.1 *The Individuals' Responses to Interview Questions*

The respondents recalled their experiences to respond to the interview questions. The purpose of the interview questions was to find out whether the respondents knew how to turn policy into delivery as well as the knowing of who was responsible for the policy implementation. The respondents referred to their daily experiences. The aim of the research was to encourage the respondents, and especially those in leadership to aware of policy in their work environment and to implement it for the sake of quality performance.

#### 5.1.1 Who Is Responsible for Turning Policy into Delivery?

The first respondent pointed out that the principal, educators, and learners of that particular school were all responsible for turning policy into delivery. Although they were all responsible, the school principal was alternatively responsible and accountable for whole learning and performance. The second respondent indicated that the district head, Circuit Managers, School Governing Body (SGB), School Management Team (SMT) and educators were responsible for the implementation of policy while the third respondent said that School Management Team was the only team that carried the responsibility for turning policy into delivery. The fourth respondent indicated that only the school manager and the School Management Team were vested with power for policy implementation. The fifth respondent pointed out that turning policy into delivery was the responsibility of the stakeholders in a particular institution. Every organization has a hierarchy of officials, parents, and learners. All these, even learners, as stakeholders had to take responsibility for working together to turn policy into delivery and are expected to adhere to whatever the Policy entailed.

The responses to the interview question showed that all stakeholders of a particular school were responsible for turning policy into delivery. The respondents' views indicated that nobody appeared to have power and authority in a school other than The School Management Team, equal responsibility ought to be taken.

#### 5.1.2 What Is the Significance of Policy in an Institution?

The first respondent indicated that policy guided school principal and educators in what are expected of them. The second respondent pointed out that it gave guidance and a sense of direction and that that this was significant in the decision-making process. The third respondent said that this helped to take a school or an institution forward. The fourth respondent indicated that the significance of policy in an institution was to ensure the smooth running of the institution if outlined the code of conduct for all who work within that institution and guided the procedures to be followed when someone acted in an unbecoming manner contrary to the ethics of the profession and his/her institution. It also helped to maintains consistency in dealing with standards and expected behaviour. A policy stipulated what was required and was expected by the institution while also stipulating forms of punishment and disciplinary measures to be taken against rule breakers. The fifth respondent said that policy played a significant role in all institution and organizations because without policy, chaos prevails in institutions and organizations. People working in an institution

should expect to be governed by policy.

The responses to the interview question confirmed that the respondents were aware of how significant the policy in each institution or organization was. To manage an institution without policies and human resources is difficult. The responses indicated that policies in each institution were vestals.

#### 5.1.3 Why Do Some People Fail to Turn Policy into Delivery?

The first respondent indicated that some people failed to turn policy into delivery especially when there was no evaluation of the implementation. The second respondent pointed out that lack of knowledge policies by people resulted in failure in turning policy into delivery. People who were not well capacitated usually failed, although there could be contextual factors in each school that could preclude policy implementation. The third respondent maintained that some leaders failed because they did not involve other people in the policy development; to turn Policy into delivery needed involvement of all people in the development. The fourth respondent pointed out that some people failed to turn policy into delivery due to lack of competence as they appeared to have been appointed based on dubious selection proceedings as some appointees seemed to have lower qualifications than those required for good performance. For instance, cadre deployment could be reflected in lack of skills, qualifications, and experience. To become a leader, one needed to have knowledge and appropriate qualifications. Nepotism also contributed to this failure; some appointees appeared to occupy high position because of nepotism and such people failed to turn policy into delivery. The fifth respondent contended that people failed to turn policy into delivery when the management was weak or not performing well. Where there was no effective leadership, turning policy into delivery often failed.

The responses to the interview question indicated that unless a person was competent enough, turning policy into delivery was not easy. An appointee should have appropriate attributes needed for excellent performance. The competence of a person should include knowledge, skills and attitude reflected in qualifications, competence, and experience.

#### 5.1.4 What Strategies do You Suggest for Turning Policy into Delivery?

The first respondent pointed out that there should be an action plan for the policy to be implemented for the effective improvement of performance. An Evaluation Committee should be established in each institution to monitor the implementation of policies. The second respondent indicated that if the policy was relevant in a particular institution, this could be turned into delivery with ease. and this should not necessarily be a replica of policies at another institution. The third respondent suggested that unless staff who were employed at an institution understood policies, some may be reluctant to turn it into delivery. All appointees at an institution should understand and own specific policies. The fourth respondent agreed that cadre deployment and nepotism should be done away with and qualified people who had knowledge and skills for the job be appointed. Managers should be given the responsibility of appointing people who had the capacity to work with them and turn policy into delivery. Furthermore, enough resources should be provided to assist in the

implementation of the policy. Consistency must be maintained while leadership should keep abreast of the legislations so that they can make worthwhile decisions in turning policy into delivery. The fifth respondent pointed out that management of each institution needed to be empowered through workshops and relevant training moreover when designing a policy, all the stakeholders should be involved so that they can also be part of the implementation thereof. Their involvement provides the chance to own it. The policy should also be reviewed annually, if possible, for its efficiency.

The responses to the interview question above indicated that the respondents understood and knew that policy implementation was not one man's duty but a collective effort of individuals. Policy is something that cannot be imposed to an institution but should be designed by the institution itself. In policy design, as noted, all stakeholders should be involved for ownership and effective implementation to happen. It is clear that turning policy into delivery needs knowledge and skills, therefore the respondents suggested capacity building and development. Furthermore, to turn policy into delivery effectively, leadership should have the attributes of leadership to influence and motivate their staff; leadership that adheres to egalitarian principles.

#### 5.1.5 Does Policy Implementation Affect Effectiveness or Improvement of Institution? Substantiate Your Views

The first respondent indicated that policy implementation had a serious impact on the improvement of each institution. An institution may have a policy in place, but if not implemented, there will be no improvement at all. The second maintained that there could be uncertainty and indecisiveness if there was no policy implementation. This could result in no clear processes to be followed and some conflicts could remain unresolved. Policy implementation is crucial in each institution for improved performance. The third respondent contended that a well communicated policy was easy to implement and could ultimately result in an improvement in the institution rather than mere mediocrity. The fourth respondent indicated that there were so many institutions that appeared to have policy in place, but the performance was not commensurate with policy. With no implementation of policy there is no compliance. Poor policy implementation also results in lack of coherence and consistency in the institution. The fifth respondent said that where everybody was aware of rules and regulations, everything moved smoothly thus paving the way for better performance. In addition, it should be leadership that engage everybody in the implementation of policy for the improvement of the whole institution.

The responses to the interview question indicated that the respondents agreed that policy design without implementation could not improve performance in each institution. An institution can operate with minimum policy implementation, this can result in lack of coherence and consistency in that institution and failure can have a negative impact on both community and Department of Education hence Policy implementation is crucial and invariably leads to the improvement of performance in each institution.

## 6. Discussions

Implementation problems can be defined by the failure to turn public policies into practice and thereby not delivering the intended results. The effects are pervasive and highlighted by the new focus on performance measurement. Public decision makers spend a great deal of time and energy creating public policies and then leaving policy implementation to public administrators. The failure to deliver public policies is highly problematic as it undermines the governing capacity of democratically- elected politicians and tends to leave social problems unsolved. The problem is not merely that the policy makers suffer from cognitive limitations but rather that they lack evidence that the new programme theory will work or that they fail to anticipate implementation problems such as lack of skills and insufficient budget allocations. In most cases, the policy implementation problem goes much deeper as it rooted in the failure to align problems, solutions, actors, and resources and integrate local knowledge about the conditions on the ground (Ansell, Sorensen & Torfing, 2017).

A great deal of recent literature has addressed policy implementation, sometimes so labelled and sometimes not, such that the boundaries of the study of implementation have become less clear. Implementation is the carrying out of a basic policy decision, usually in coordinating with a statute. Implementation can also be based on important executive orders or court decisions. The decision identifies the problem to be addressed in various ways or structure the required implementation process. The process normally continues through several stages beginning with the passage of the basic statute, followed by the policy outputs of the implementing agencies, the compliance of target groups with those decisions, the actual impacts of agency decisions and important revisions in the basic statute. Policy implementation is what develops between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of government to do something, or to stop doing something, and the ultimate impact felt in the world of action (de Leon & de Leon, 2002).

For this study, policy implementation refers to turning policy into delivery which means putting policy into practice. This is a process which is to be carried out mainly by leadership so as to execute mandates or orders as prescribed by the policy. If the policy is clear and bodes well for a successful outcome, all Those involved should comply. Furthermore, the identified problems should be addressed by the right level of management to drive reform in the institution. Every stakeholder is expected to comply to effect improvement in the institution, therefore, fallacious ideas should not be accommodated if turning the institution around is based on a sound idea. It is clear that if the institution targets are sound and included in the policy, everybody involved should be proactive and be prepared for strategic planning.

## 7. Conclusion

Policy design solely is not enough for the improvement of performance in each institution, but the implementation thereof is fundamental. All stakeholders are responsible for policy design and implementation, but the leadership including The School Management Team, should drive the whole process of policy implementation. If a policy is designed to lead to a successful outcome, all those responsible can turn it into delivery. The policy should describe



what should be done and state who is responsible for a particular activity hence the time frame ought to be as well. Leadership should comprise comprehensive attributes to drive and underpin the process of turning policy into delivery. A truly empowered leadership reflects on the future and a synergistic approach should be adopted towards understanding the institution's policy rather than a cascade approach for holistic analysis. It is significant to evaluate Policy implementation annually or quarterly, depending on the capacity of the institution, for the betterment of implementation that could ultimately result an improvement in the institution. This could presumably preclude naïve argument and enhance intellectual argument for better performance. The people should have responsible time frame and feasibility should be a hallmark of the policy design. The aspirations and zeal of all responsible can contribute much towards turning policy into delivery. In conclusion, both the findings of the respondents and the literature review confirm that all stakeholders are ultimately responsible for turning policy into delivery.

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