**Policy definition, Development steps and Policy Implementation**

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**Abstract:**

This chapter discusses about policy, different approaches to policy advocacy policy implementation and challenges.A policy is a statement of intent and implemented as a procedure or protocol. Policies are generally acquired by a governance body within an organization. Advocacy is a strategy to influence policy makers when they make laws, regulations and distribute resources. A policy can be simply followed by everyone in an institution and is revised and updated periodically to accommodate changes in institutional philosophy, mission, and newly emerging issues and face challenges to policy implementation are referred to as “implementation barriers.” They can be rooted in a variety of causes, including opposition from key inadequate human, stakeholders, lack of clarity on operational guidelines and financial recourses etc.

**INTRODUCTION**

A policy is a principle, rule or action which is proposed and execute by an institution and governing body. These governing bodies take their decisions based on the opinions and prospect of a community or institution under the guidance of the government, similarly a government also sets some laws and policies for its citizens. The purpose is to exercise their executive powers to govern and ensure the well being of its citizens. So government policy is a law or custom that guides the decisions of people and results in a positive outcome for the entire community. Example, the government policy to not sell liquor to underage minors is for the benefit of the whole community. Government policies can be about a variety of issues like taxes, immigration, customs, pensions, traffic rules, school, college education, sanitation, pollution laws, environmental factors, forest conservation, etc., policies aren’t exactly laws per se, but they lead to laws in certain cases.

**Keywords:** Policy, Advocacy, Policy implementation and Challenges

**Policy Definition:**

 Policy is a deliberate system of guidelines to guide decisions and attain rational outcomes. A policy is a statement of intent and implemented as a procedure or protocol. Policies are generally acquired by a governance body within an organization.

Advocacy is an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions.

Advocacy is a strategy to influence policy makers when they make laws and regulations, distribute resources, and make further decisions that affect peoples’ lives standards. The principal aims of advocacy are to create, design policies, reform policies, and ensure policies are implemented. Several advocacy strategies can be used to influence and impact the decisions of policy makers, such as discussing problems directly with them, delivering messages through the media, strengthening the ability of local organizations to advocate.

The Oxford English Dictionary describes Advocacy as “pleading in support, supporting or speaking in favour of (someone, a cause or policy).”

**Policy advocacy**

Policy advocacy refers to advocacy tactics initiatives and strategies which target changes to policies and legislation. These advocacy initiatives seek to establish new policies, improve existing policies and challenge the development of new policies that could lead to less desirable results.

The most basic meaning of advocacy is to represent, promote, or defend some person(s), interest, or opinion. It is a broad idea encompasses many types of activities such as rights’ representation and social marketing, but the focus is on the approaches adopted by organizations and coalitions in trying to change or preserve specific government programs, that are approaches focused on influencing decisions of public policy.

A policy is a set of statements of principles, usefulness and intent that outlines expectations and provides a basis for consistent decision-making and resource allocation in respect to a specific matter.

Policies are one of the chief tools of governance for an institution. Museums have long relied on them for acquisitions, collections, de-accessions, loans, personnel and other areas that require institutional oversight.

## How do policies provide governance?

* They communicative institutional respect and responsibility about a particular issue.
* They protect institutions from accusations of wrongdoing and allow them to address matter before disputes arise.
* They inform employees of institutional do's and don'ts.
* They hold institutions accountable and set a high standard for an institution to follow.
* They enable institutions to manage relationships that will magnify the institution's role and perception, as well as its productivity.
* They allow institutions to craft practical mechanisms that address subject that the law does not address.

### A good policy is:

* Clearly and understandably written
* Inclusive and holistic in its approach to the issue topic it addresses
* Acknowledges institutional culture and values
* Technology-independent.

A policy can be simply followed by everyone in an institution and is revised and updated periodically to accommodate changes in institutional philosophy, mission, and newly emerging issues. Although the elements included in a policy will depending upon the needs and required of an institution, sound policy will always include the following components:

* Statements about what is allowed and disallowed
* Statements about how the institution will ensure policy is being followed (monitoring)
* Identification of the consequences for failing to follow the policy (enforcement)
* Links to other relevant policies
* Links to procedures and practice <https://www.canada.ca>

**Different Approaches to Policy Advocacy**

Many people are prone to immediately associate the term advocacy with media campaigning, high profile legal challenges, the street-based activism of posters, petitions, and demonstrations. This is because these are the most visible actions of actors attempting to make policy change in order to further situate the process of policy advocacy and develop and define concepts that are commonly associated with the process, in this section we look at these followings:

1**. Advising**

Think tanks, researchers are commissioned by a client to investigate a certain policy problem. This usually entails working with those in authority and producing new empirical research to assist them in making a policy decision. Even when commissioned, there is still an advocacy process of selling the ideas developed through the research to the client, although the hurdles are obviously lower than working from the outside. Ex: the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR).

2. **Media campaigning**

Many advocacy organizations and institution decide to include a public dimension to their campaign as they feel some type of public or external pressure on decision makers and policy makers is required to achieve results. This type of approach is commonly used by watchdog organizations that monitor government action. Ex: Human Rights Watch (HRW), International Crisis Group (ICG), and Transparency International.

**3. Lobbying**

Face-to-face meetings with decision makers or influential people are a commonly used approach for many organizations that are defending the profits and interests of a certain group of people, such as business. These types of organizations tend to have ready access to powerful people and focus their efforts on being present and visible during government and public discussions concerning their interests. Ex: the American Chambers of Commerce Abroad, Unions, Professional or community associations.

4. **Activism**

Petitions, posters, public demonstrations, bulletins, folders and leaflet dis-semination are common approaches used by organizations that encourage a certain value set. The main work of the latter groups centers on providing a service to their constituency, but they also have a policy advocacy function. Ex: environmentalism in the case of Greenpeace, or have a defined constituency and represent or provide a service to a group of people who are not adequately included within government social service provision like the victims of domestic violence or refugees.

**Information Education & Communication (IEC)**:

 Information Education and Communication, abbreviated as IEC, is a strategy to increases awareness through communication channels to a target audience to achieve a desired positive result. It is a strategy of sharing information through the broadcast or the print media, or appropriate to the target group’s culture and values, interpersonal communication in a manner. These channels of communication and IEC materials are either printed or broadcasted media such as leaflets, brochures, booklets, radio broadcast, posters, flyers, and TV spots.

**Beneficial Attributes of IEC:**

1**. Diversity of Channels:**

 IEC programs engage on different and variety of channels of communication, which is exceedingly advantageous for the dissemination of message to varied target groups.

2**. Cost Effective**:

 Printed IEC materials are inexpensive and cheap, thus are suitable for low level of budget programs. Messages intended for the masses are conveyed on broadcast medium like television, which are effective in disseminating the information to a large audience.

3**. Building Capacity:**

IEC programs ushers in information, skills and knowledge to the target groups which is essential for positive health measures.

4. **Target Specific:**

 The participatory nature of IEC programs provides a sublime opportunity to engage with the local communities, establish good rapport and to define their specific needs. This enhances the effectiveness of the programs, provides ambient environment for evaluation, improvement and sustenance.

**5. Feedback:**

IEC programs have feedback which is vital for clarifying and answer the questions, reinforcement and solving issues.

**6. External Support:**

These programs can avail support from other counterparts, government, community leaders, opinion leaders, local leaders and local support groups which are tremendously helpful in monitoring, sustaining and achieving success of the programs being implemented.

**7. Logos and symbols:**

Certain IEC campaigns have established outstanding logos and symbols, which has helped sustain their movements and campaigns. For example the ‘Red Ribbon’ and the ‘White Ribbon’ logos are instrumental in spreading awareness about HIV and AIDs and elimination of violence against women.

**8. Entertainment:**

Messages catering to the needs of the individuals and groups can be conveyed through the channels in an entertaining manner captivating the attention of the audience. Ex: Jingles in radios, bulletins in televisions, pictures and graphics are entertaining.

**Strategies for Effective IEC Program Implementation in Rural Areas:**

The several developmental programs intended for rural areas demand efficacious IEC strategies. The effectiveness of the strategies depends on building a good rapport with the community, the medium of communication, the message appeal, the feedback and the provision of supplies. It is advisable to present your message in a factual, accurate, and easy to understand manner. Pictorial representations for texts are recommended as they have lasting memory impact. Taking on board the various levels of government, local support groups, extensive media coverage, providing supplies, NGOs, and training IEC workers are predictors of a successful IEC campaign.

**Role of IEC in Rural Development in India:**

The government and social organizations have used IEC extensively as an integral medium for social development and change especially in the rural areas. In the rural areas, the dire need for resources, lack of awareness, illiteracy and unsuitable economic conditions, have made these communication programs inevitable. IEC has become an effective and productive medium for providing information, eradicating mythical beliefs, bringing awareness, and championing the cause for development.

Information Education and Communication (IEC) came into practice in the early 1990s. IEC as stated by the World Health Organization “is an approach which attempts to change or reinforce a set of behaviors in a target audience regarding a specific problem in a predefined period of time. It takes for granted that creating awareness will automatically leads to action and is made with the assumption that one size fits all. IEC gradually evolved to BCC and it is a part of BCC. IEC is substantially concerned with awareness generation while BCC goes one-step forward and it’s action-oriented. BCC is based on an analog which symbolizes emotional side as the elephant, rational/analytical side as the rider and environment as the path. . Thus, BCC is primarily concerned with creating a conducive environment which will enable people to change their behavior from the negative to the positive side.

It caters to the different needs of the people through various communication tools such as brochures, radio broadcasts, posters, and TV spots.

**BEHAVIOUR CHANGE COMMUNICATION (BCC):**

* BCC (Behavior Change Communication) is a communication strategy which encourages individual and community to change their behavior.
* It is a strategy that triggers people/society/communities to adopt beneficial, healthy and positive behavioral practices.
* BCC is an effective communication approach which helps to promote changes in attitudes, norms, beliefs, knowledge and behaviors
* BCC is an interactive process with communities (as incorporated with a general program) to create custom-fitted messages and methodologies utilizing an assortment of correspondence channels to create positive practices; network and cultural conduct change; advance and support individual, and keep up suitable practices.
* BCC is a powerful and fundamental human interaction – communication – which positively influences dimensions of health and well-being.
* BCC is a direct approach towards changing behavior. It is different to traditional IEC materials as IEC materials are not considered for creating awareness and giving information as compared to BCC.
* BCC is described by its straight approach towards changing behavior.

**Importance of BCC:**

* Increase in knowledge and attitude of the people
* BCC helps to trigger and stimulate people for adopting positive behavioral approaches
* BCC promotes appropriate and essential attitude change
* As BCC strategies and messages are tailored for specific target groups, these strategies are efficient and effective.
* BCC approaches are more sustainable and acceptable
* BCC helps to increase learning and skills
* It improve aptitudes and feeling of self-adequacy

### ****Importances of BCC at different levels are:****

1. **At individual-level**

BCC helps in learning, mindfulness, convictions, and sentiments about wellbeing practices. It plays a significant role in deciding wellbeing conduct.

1. **At community-level**

BCC approach stimulates community to take ownership towards the approach. Additionally, it will also help the community to replicate the positive practices in bigger level.

1. **At national level**

BCC will play a significant role in lobbying & advocacy of certain practices. These approaches will support and encourage government and other stakeholders to bring a positive whim among all the citizens for adopting positive behavioral practices.

**The guiding principles of BCC are:**

* BCC should be integrated with the objective and goalof the program
* Formative BCC assessments must be carried out while developing BCC messages
* Target population must participate during BCC development
* Key and direct stakeholders need to be involved from the design stage of BCC
* Pre-testing must be done for effective BCC materials
* BCC programs must involve planning for monitoring and evaluation.
* BCC strategies must be positive and action oriented.

**The Stages of Policy Development**

The stages of policy development can be normally categorized into five stages. Most policy models generally include the following stages:

 (1) Identifying the issue to be addressed by the proposed policy,

(2) Placement on the agenda,

(3) Formulation of the policy,

 (4) Implementation of the policy,

(5) Evaluation of the policy.

This is similar to the community police response acronym scanning, analysis, response, and assessment (SARA) and uses some of the same techniques, but on a much bigger, national level.

**1. Identifying the Problem and Agenda Setting**

Identifying the problem involves addressing what is happening and why it is an issue matter. In criminal justice, this might look at the increase of opioid (drugs, opium and others) use and overdoses or acts of youth violence. Once the issue is identified, there can be a serious debate about the plans of the policy. Once it is decided what the policy will look like and it is placed on the agenda. This is perhaps the most politicized part of the process as it involves many different stakeholders. It involves identifying the judicial, legislative, regulatory or other institutions responsible for policy formulation and adoption.

**2. Formulation and Adoption**

The next stage involved formulation and adopting of the policy. Depending on the nature of the policy, this could involve an executive order and a new law. Implementation of the Policy Implementation is about moving forward, taking action, and spending money. It involves hiring new staff or additional police officers. This is where policies often stall because of the lack of funding. Ex: a popular program in 1990, Weed and Seed, involved “weeding” (targeting arrest efforts) out criminals and “seeding” (instituting after-school programs, drug treatment facilities, etc.) new programs. The weeding portion of the program was a great success, but the program ultimately failed because of a lack of funding to adequately seed new community programming. Funding is a major roadblock for proper policy implementation.

**3. Evaluation**

The evaluation stage examines the efficacy and impact of the policy. There are three different types of evaluation:

 1. **Impact (outcome) evaluations**

Impact evaluation is focus on what changes after the introduction of the new policy. Changes in police patrol practices aimed at reducing the level of residential burglaries in terms of subsequent burglaries an area are evaluated. Example: after the implementation of curfew laws for juvenile crime decreased and juvenile offenders. Can we say that was because of curfew laws? The entire crime rate for America decreased at the same time. Attributing a single outcome based on a solitary intervention is problematic.

**2. Process evaluations**

It is consider the implementation of a policy or program and involve determining the procedure used to implement the policy. These are detailed, descriptive accounts of the implementation of the policy including the level of training, the goals of the program, who is involved, the number of clients served, and changes to the program over time. Unfortunately, process evaluations do not address the actual impact policy has on the crime problem,

**3. Cost-benefit evaluations**

Analysis seeks to determine if the costs of a policy are justified by the benefits accrued. Using a cost-benefit analysis, is that a good use of money to support an ineffective program? Policy formation is often a knee-jerk reaction to the current problem. Many policies are the result of grassroots efforts to change something in their communities and targets groups. Example, let us pretend the issue is youth crime in our city. If parents are responsible, then they will take better care of their kids, right?

**Policy Implementation and Challenges**

**Definition**

Developing a policy is the first step; for policies to contribute to the successful delivery of services and resources, they must be effectively implemented. Challenges to policy implementation are referred to as “implementation barriers.” They can be rooted in a variety of causes, including opposition from key inadequate human, stakeholders, lack of clarity on operational guidelines, financial resources, roles and responsibilities for implementation, conflicts with other existing policies, lack of coordination , lack of motivation, collaboration between parties responsible for implementation and political will.

**Key capability**

 The ability to address policy implementation barriers is a key capability for government, policymakers, and civil society. Addressing policy barriers requires individual and institutional skills and competencies to understand the policy environment governing the policy, the configuration of the policy in the context of the government structure, and the needs of beneficiaries/ clients and implementers. It requires the ability to critically assess the true root of policy implementation barriers— whether it is sociological, political, structural, institutional, or cultural—and to craft targeted solutions to address them.

**High capacity for addressing policy implementation barriers includes being able to**

 1. Gather and synthesize different types of information from various sources

2. Elicit feedback from implementers, partners, and beneficiaries to identify barriers to successful policy implementation and explore root causes

3. Identify solutions to challenges and advocate for corrective action

**Challenges in policy implementation**

**Policy challenges**:

 Policy Challenge workshops bring together academic experts with stakeholders from government, business and civil society to provide senior decision makers with fresh insights on, and practical recommendations for, some of the problems they face. Some implementation problems identified in the study include corruption, lack of continuity in government policies, inadequate human and material resources, all of which often lead to implementation gap, i.e. the widening of the distance between stated policy goals and the realization of such planned goals. The factors are: lack of cross-functional working, lack of alignment of projects to strategy, lack of coordination between projects, conflicting project objectives, defining clear mission for the programme, lack of programme delivery infrastructure and lack of relevant training.



**Lack of capacities:**

1. **Institutional capacity**.

This covers gaps related to coordinating the Agenda 2030 implementation including the lack of or a need for a central coordination agency, horizontal (multi-sector) and vertical (national and local) collaboration, mention of any need for partnerships with civil society, academia, private sector and or engagement with the public.

 **2. Monitoring and reporting capacity**.

This relates to gaps and challenges in localizing targets/indicators, data collection/availability, data information systems/monitoring platforms and quality of reporting/progress monitoring. **•**

**3. Human resource and leadership capacity**.

This relates to the lack of or need for human resource capacity, both technical and managerial and the need for sensitizing policy makers/decision makers to support the Agenda 2030 implementation. •

4. **Financing capacity.**

This relates to the challenges of financing SDG implementation and the capacities needed to address financing gaps through resource mobilization and strengthened public finance processes.

5. **Information and technology capacity.**

This relates to capacities to generate information, knowledge sharing, technology and innovation to accelerate SDG implementation.

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