MPA 842

Public Analysis & Implementation
Module 3

MPA 842 Policy Analysis and Implementation Module 3
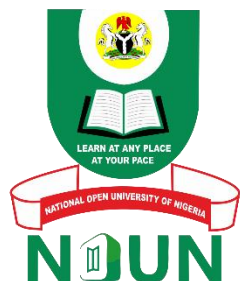
Course Developer/Writer
Martha Oruku, National Open University of Nigeria
Course Editor
Abdukkahi, Mohammed Yamma, Nasarawa State University

Credits of cover-photo: Mr. Gbenga Aiyejumo, National Open University of Nigeria.

National Open University of Nigeria - 91, Cadastral Zone, Nnamdi Azikiwe Express Way, Jabi, Abuja, Nigeria

Unit 1 Institutional and Group Theories

1.0 Introduction

Both institutional approach and group theory approach to the study of public policy analysis are considered in this unit. You will know their relevance to public policy analysis, after you have read this unit.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the institutional approach to the study of public policy
- discuss group theory.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Institutional Approach

The relevance of the institutional approach to the study of public policy analysis was popularised by Dye in 1972. It focuses on the formal institutions of government - legislature, executive and judiciary, while less importance is attached to organisations such as pressure groups or the mass media or to the wide social context within which government operates.

According to Dye, institutions may be so structured as to facilitate certain policy outcomes. They may give advantage to certain interest in the society and withheld advantage from other interests. Certain individuals and groups may enjoy greater access to government power under one set of structural characteristics than under another. In the short run, the structure of government constitutions may have important policy consequences.

If one relates Dye's position to the contemporary experiences in the world, it will reveal that any of the institutions of government can be structured in a way to get predetermined results. For example, in a military government, the tasks of lawmaking and law-execution are fused. Similarly, when a constituent assembly is dominated by government appointees, the end result is to get a constitutional draft that will benefit the ruling body.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Describe institutional approach to the study of public policy analysis.

3.2 The Group Theory

Let us start by defining a group. A group can be defined a collection of individuals who have some characteristics in common and interact with some frequency on the basis of their shared interest (Truman, 1971:23). Harry (1963:391) opines that politics is the process by which social values are authoritatively allocated and this is done by decisions. The decisions are produced by activities, and each activity is not something separate from every other, but masses of activity have common tendencies, in regard to decision. These masses of activity are groups, so the struggle between groups or interests determines what decision are made.

Thus, when a group makes claim upon other groups, it is an interest group. When it makes claims on the government, it becomes a political interest group. However, all groups are interest groups and may become a political interest group at one time or the other. Therefore, to the group theorist, the interaction among groups is the central fact of politics and an important element of the governmental process.

The interaction, competition and struggle between the groups results in policies when articulated by the conversion process. A given policy therefore, at any time, is the equilibrium or the compromises reached in the group struggle. The political system or the institutions of government and policy makers referee the group interaction and enact policies in favour of the most influential group. Government and its institutions are the centers of interest group power and the object of the ends or means of group objectives and interests.

Interest groups focus their attention on the bargaining, compromises, coalitions and other activities that take place within the institutions of government among various groups and interests. To ensure their influence, the groups maintain access to the key points of decision making in governmental institutions of government among various groups and interests. To ensure their influence, the groups maintain access to the key points of decision making in governmental instructions such as the legislative committees, the executive, administration and even the judiciary.

The influence of any groups depends on its leadership, organisation, resources and strategy position. The group activities generate conflicts and controversies. However, these are prevented from causing serious instability or systemic breakdown because of the presence of multiple and overlapping group memberships, competing groups, potential interest groups and unorganised interests.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Define the group theory.

4.0 Conclusion

Instructional approach to the study of politics dominated the study of the comparative politics for many years and focuses on the formal institutions of government; while the group theory emphasises interaction among people with common tendencies to achieve the desired interests.

5.0 Summary

The unit considered the institutional approach and the group theory in the study of public policy analysis. The institutional approach focused on institutions and the group theory targets a collection of individuals with shared interest.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

How effective is the group theory in public policy formulation and implementation in developing countries?

7.0 References/Further Reading

Dye, T.R. (1972). *Understanding Public Policy.* Englewood Cliffs N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

Harry, E. (1963). "Group Theory and the Comparative Study of Pressure Group". In: Apter & Harry (Eds). *Comparative Politics.* London: The Free Press.

Ikegbe, A.O. (1996). *Public Policy Making and Analysis.* Benin-City: URI Publishing Ltd.

Olaniyi, J.O. (1998). *Foundation of Public Policy Analysis.* Ibadan: Sunida Publisher Limited.

Truman, D. (1971). *The Governmental Process.* New York: Alfred Knopt Inc.

Unit 2 Models of Policy Making

1.0 Introduction

Models can be described as simplifications and abstractions of the real world, with the purpose of discovery of facts, which enhance our understanding. Therefore, the models of policy making are attempts at simplifying the real world situation of policy making; this is achieved by relating how individuals and groups take decisions, what guides such decisions, what information the decision maker looks for and what influences his decision. The models give answers to the questions of what assumptions and puzzles guide decision making and what frames of reference and scale of relevance do guide and should guide the entire analysis (Ikelegbe, 1996:36).

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the rational-comprehensive model
- describe the incremental model, satisfying model, and the mixed scanning model
- discuss organisational process and political bargaining models.

3 0 Main Content

3.1 The Rational-Comprehensive Model

The rational-comprehensive model of policy making can be described as an approach to system analysis based on principles of scientific investigation and scientific problem solving. It has five features, namely:

- classification of values
- means-ends analysis
- choice of most appropriate means to achieve desired ends
- comprehensive analysis
- analysis that is theory based (Lindblow, 1959:79).

The rational-comprehensive analysis defines the problem, develops alternatives solutions, places values on the consequences of various alternatives, assesses the probability that they will occur, and makes a decision based on logical rules. The model attempts to serve the ideal contained in Max Weber's view of bureaucracy in which decisions are on impersonal rules and techniques. It also draws, heavily, on the economists' vision of how a rational "economic man" should make decision.

In addition, it relies on rational decision-making models developed by mathematicians and psychologists (Olaniyi, 1998:64). The rational-comprehensive analysis assumes a static

situation in which relevant conditions do not change and no new information becomes available during the time period of analysis and decision (Chandler and Plano, 1988:131).

3.2 The Incremental Model

The incremental model was postulated by Robert Dahl and Charles Lindblown as a reaction to the constraints of the rational model. The model abandons economic rationality as impossible and instead posits that decision makers only consider limited values, limited goals, limited alternatives and only realistic solution to the desired goal. It involves successive and limited comparisons. The goal is not the one time, radical, bold and major solution to societal problems, but marginal or incremental polices or changes. According to Lindblown (1959:135), incremental policy-making proceed in chronological series, made and remade endlessly, a succession of incremental changes, building out from the current situations, step by step and in small degree.

Therefore, decision makers do not review the whole range of societal values and problems and the whole range of policy alternatives and their consequences nor calculate, cost and weigh each set of values and alternatives. Mann (1975:158) gave summary of the incremental model as consisting of marginal calculation, consideration of limited alternatives, adjustment of goals to means, consideration of limited consequences, reconstructive treatment of data and remedial orientation of policies.

However, the weaknesses of the incremental model include its subjectivity, failure to realise that new values need to be incorporated, among others; while its main strength is the reflection of the political realities of decision-making (Ikelegbe, 1996:39).

Self-Assessment Exercise
Briefly explain the rational -comprehensive model.

3.3 The Satisfying Model

The satisfying model is the process of finding a decision alternative that meets the decision maker's minimum standard of satisfaction. The model was postulated by Herbert Simon and focuses on the administrative actor in the decision-making situation. To the model, there are so many constraints to rationality that the administrator does not look for economic rationality or net value decision, but for the satisfactory alternative. The ultimate choice is the alternative that is good enough, feasible, satisfactory and meets the decision-makers' standards and expectations. Where no satisfactory alternative is found, the level of aspiration will be reduced so that eventually an alternative that is satisfactory matches the new level of aspiration is found (Simon, 1995:134).

3.4 The Mixed-Scanning Model

The mixed-scanning model is a reaction to both rational and incremental models. According to Etzioni (1967:27) - who is a scholar on this model, none of the two models is, completely, satisfactory in explaining, predicting and guiding decision-making. He, therefore, postulates that the right kind of analysis is a kind of mixed-scanning, which is a mixture of both rational and incremental models depending on the problem, the need and the situation. Thus, in circumstances requiring fundamental decisions, the rational model can be used; while the incremental model will be used in situations requiring incremental policies.

Self-Assessment Exercise
What is incremental model?

3.5 The Organisational Process and Political Bargaining Models

The organisational process model- as postulated by G. Allison, is that decision-making within organisations is different from individual decision-making because decision process in organisations is fragmented among departments and individuals, as are the goals, objectives, values and perception of means for attaining objectives. The inputs into the decision-making process are also disjointed because of their differing sources within the organisation. The number and variety of goals are limited by the need to maintain the organisation might be manipulated to project or project certain interest. Organisational decision, therefore, reflect the standard procedures, regular patterns of behaviour, features and interest of the organisation.

Meanwhile, the political bargaining model, also postulated by G. Allison, emphasises that decision-making in government circles is characterised by conflict, compromise and bargaining. The actors involved- that is, individuals, groups and organisations have interest, which they project or protect when faced with decision-making situations. Each player invests these resources and influences in such a way as to advance his interest and policy is the outcome of the bargaining and tradeoffs between the actors. The policy itself reflects an outcome that has general support, accommodates several interests and is based on the consensus reached.

The model explains, to a large extent, how societal decisions are made and what determines the outcome. It particularly explains how a web of interrelated individuals and groups barging to produce policies congruent to their interests. This enables us to understand why certain policies are made, why governments choose not to act in certain policy areas and why such inaction or non-decision, sometimes, constitutes decisions. (Ikelegbe, 1996:41- 42).

4.0 Conclusion

The models of policy making, namely, rational-comprehensive, incremental, satisfying, mixed-scanning organisational process and political bargaining were analysed. The essence is to enrich your knowledge on policy-making models.

5.0 Summary

Five models of policy making have been discussed in this unit. Some of them are interrelated or mixed. The choice of any of them depends on circumstance and interest attached to a particular policy-making. You should therefore, review them regularly so that whenever you find yourself in a particular situation, you can easily pick the most suitable model to your condition.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

Models are just simplifications and abstractions. Discussion this statement with any two models as examples.

7.0 References/Further Reading

Chanlder, R.C. & Plano, J. C. (1988). *The Public Administration Dictionary*. England: ADC - CL 10.

Etzioni, A. (1967). "Mixed-Scanning: A Third Approach to Decision Making". *Public Administration Review Vol. 27, Vol. 5*.

Ikegbe, A.O. (1996). *Public Policy Making and Analysis*. Benin- City: URI Publishing Ltd.

Lindblow, C.E. (1959). "The Science of Muddling Through." *Public Administration Review*.

Mann, D. (1975). *Policy Decision Making in Education: An Introduction to Calculation and Control*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Olaniyi, J.O. (1998). *Foundation of Public Policy Analysis*. Ibadan: Sunida Publisher Limited.

Simon, H.A. (1955). "A Behavioural Model of Rational Choice." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.

Unit 3 The Policy Process

1.0 Introduction

The policy process refers to the methods, conditions, procedures, activities, interactions and stages by which policies are made It refers to how policies come about or are made and what is involved in the processing of policies from problems identification to the policy outcome. You will be taken through the analyses of policy process and its features in this unit.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

* explain models of policy process

* highlight stages in the policy making.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Model of the Policy Process

The policy process could be examined in general, several or specific terms. At the general level, it relates the pattern of activities, interactions, procedures and methods of making policies at the level of international organisations and state; at the sectoral level, for example, you can talk of health policy process or defense policy process. In specific terms, the process of a particular policy can also be isolated and examined. However, the processes of policies may differ as a result of the context, conditions, the persons involved and manner by which the policies are made. Furthermore, the processes may even be unique by virtue of precedence, choice, tradition and peculiar characteristics to states governments and even policy sectors.

The examination of the policy process as an interactive process can be done from the holistic perspective provided by systems analysis. The process of policies in organisations and government circles can be described from this perspective as consisting of several activities and interactions between the environment which generates demands; the political system or more accurately the conversion process, which converts and translates demands and preferences into policy output; and the implementation system which consists of implementing agencies and activities (Robinson and Majark, 1967:179).

3.2 Stages in the Policy Making Process

The policy process consists of policy generation, formulation, policy output, implementation, performance and impact. Let us consider this now.

Policy generation and agenda

Policy generation system consists of, essentially, the environment. There is physical and human environment. The physical environment consists of the spatial environment, with its peculiarities, problems and strengths and the resources- whether they are physical, economic and industrial or otherwise; while the human environment comprises the citizenry and groups and their peculiarities. The human environment possesses value, attitudes, perceptions and preferences, which in interaction with human conditions and the physical environment generate numerous demands and interests which are transmitted into the political and processes. The environment, thus, influences the level, direction and content of demands and interests.

Policy agenda are the public opinions that government gives or intend to give serious attention. Therefore, policy agenda refers to public problems awaiting response in the present or in the future. Policy agenda denotes the phase in the policy process when government begins to think about policy problems and the probable nature of response.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What is a policy process?

Policy formation and formulation

Policy formation consists of the policy-making structures and interactions- which in the case of the political system are the institutions and structures of government such as the legislative bodies, the executives, judiciary, bureaucracy and the officials of ruing political parties. The policy formulation system acts on the expectations demands and interests generated by the environment and take certain actions. The actions are policies. The policy may be backed by funds and personnel or it may be merely a symbolic response.

In other words, policy formation refers to the identification of the policy problem, the development and analysis of policy alternatives and the choice or selection of an alternative and the choice or selection of an alternative, which is then the policy. It is all the activities that go in before the policy is declared. Policy formation refers to the development of relevant policy in relation to public problems and to the proposition, consideration and enactment of the policy. This refers, specifically, to the consideration of policy alternative, the recommendation of a policy enactment by legislative bodies of the policy proposal.

Policy formulation is important because the fact that government considers responses to a problem is not enough. Government may decide to respond through a non-decision or defer action and it may as well take action to resolve the problem. The nature of action will depend on the nature and circumstances of the public problem.

Policy implementation, performance and impact

Policy implementation is the process of translating policy mandates into action, prescription into results and goals into reality. It refers to the processes and reality. It refers to the processes and activities involved in the application, effectuation and administering of a policy. It is the actions taken to carry out, accomplish and fulfill the intents, objectives and expected outcomes of public policies. It is the act and process of converting a policy into reality and

of enforcing a policy (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1979:181). Meanwhile, the implementation process consists of the implementing organisation, the environment particularly the political and economic environment, the policy target group, the objectives and the enunciated method of implementation and policy resources.

Policy performance refers to how well a policy is doing in relation to intended purposes, objectives target and intended accomplishments. It relates to whether intended services have been delivered, intended outcome or other desired and state is achieved, or whether the target problem or situation has experienced the desired changes. Performance answers the question of how the policy has fared in its interaction with the environment. The degree of achievement of the aforementioned aspects, determines the level of performance.

Performance encompasses effectiveness and efficiency. While effectiveness refers to the level of attainment or realisation of programme goal, efficiency relates the input or resources invested to the results obtained. An efficient programme is one that achieves a high output with minimum input. Policy impact refers to the consequences of public policy in the environment. It can be defined as the measurable changes in the social or physical environment that the policy programme was designed to produce (Dye, 1972:312). It can also be described as the effect of a policy on real world conditions.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Describe policy formation and policy formulation.

Policy outcome, output and evaluation
Policy outcomes refer to the results or products of policy-making. Policy outcome is the total results or products of the entire policy activity of process. It is the sum of outputs of policy activity. It is policy outcomes that impact the environment and produces policy effects.

Policy output refers to tangible manifestations of public policies. Policy output comprises all actions, activities and concrete achievements of things done, in the pursuance of policy objectives or in the course of effectuating a policy. It refers to actual things done to back up a formulation policy or statement of intentions (Ikelegbe, 1996:82).

Policy evaluation can be described as an analysis of operating programmes designed to assess impact or effectiveness in attaining objectives or to assess their efficiency (Alan and Gregory, 1980:60). Evaluation enhances data availability on the state of programmes and provides feedback on the results of programme, activity and impact.

4.0 Conclusion

This unit has exposed you to the stages and models of policy process. This is to further enhance your understanding of the policy making process.

5.0 Summary

This unit has considered policy generation, agenda, formation, formulation, implementation, performance, impact outcome, output and evaluation. You should review them, regularly, for better understating.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

How can you differentiate policy outcome from policy output?

7.0 References/Further Reading

Alan, S. & Gregory (1980). *Performance Administration.* Lexington: D.C. Health & Co.

Dye, T. (1972). *Understanding Public Policy.* Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Inc.

Ikelegbe, A.O. (1996). *Public Policy Making and Analysis.* Benin-City: URI Publishing Ltd.

Pressman, J.C. & Wildavsky, A. (1979). *Implementation.* Berkeley. University of California Press.

Robinson, J.A. & Majark, R.R. (1967). 'The Theory of Decision-Making'. In: Charles, J.C. (Ed.). *Contemporary Political Analysis.* New York: Free Press.