NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

MPA 842

Public Analysis & Implementation
Module 4

MPA 842 Policy Analysis and Implementation Module 4
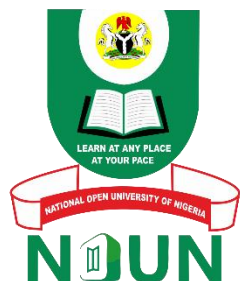
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Unit 1 Actors in Policy Analysis

1.0 Introduction

There are persons, groups and institutions that are active in the policy process. These actors influence the environment, the political system and every stage of the policy process. The actors make policy or influence policy and the direction and level of implementation activities. This is the focus of this unit.

2.0 Objectives

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

- state the roles of governmental actors such as the legislature, executive, and the judiciary in relation to policy analysis

- explain the roles of non-governmental actors in policy analysis.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Governmental Actors in the Policy Process

The governmental actors occupy formal public positions and are therefore directly connected to and very influential in the policy process. These are the actual policy makers who occupy the policy making position. They are mainly the acceptors and converters of environmental demands and pressures into policies. However, they have their own institutional individual perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and interests which are brought to bear on policy making.

3.1.1 The Legislative Bodies

The legislature's influence over policy ranges from initiation and formulation to its implementation, control and review. The influence over policy emanates from the legislative function for representation and expression of power opinion, law making, control and oversight of the executive branch and control of expenditure.

The legislatures therefore enact the laws, which set up policy programmes and consequently determine the content, extent and timing of policies; the legislature also determine the personnel, mode and intensity of implementation and sources and level of funding. Apart from these, most legislative bodies also have power to monitor, oversee, control and review policy programmes. This is done through relevant legislative committees; the annual appropriations; the power to investigate, pass resolutions and motions, ask questions and hold deliberations.

The legislature's influence over policy varies from state to state and depends on constitutional provisions, the party system, regime type and the legislatives leadership. For example, in liberal democratic systems, legislative influence over policy tends to be high, while it is low in authoritarian and socialist regimes.

3.1.2 The Executive

The executive includes the president, ministers, top political office holders, advisers and assistants. The executive has responsibility and power for the implementation of policies. The executive possesses enormous influence on the initiation, enactment, implementation, performance and modification of public policies through its powers, responsibilities. The executive branch is, clearly, a major actor in the initiation, drafting and formation of public policies. The executive influence on policy formation is because of its primary and resources in the political process. It provides leadership to the public bureaucracy and manages it to accomplish lows. Moreover, as policy implementation agents, the managers of governmental administration, the executive possess and control enormous funds, facilities and other resources through pronouncements as to the propriety, fairness, legality and constitutionality of laws or proposed laws.

3.1.3 The Judiciary

The judiciary can make laws, kill laws by declaring them null and void and unconstitutional. It can also change the course of policy activities and action, enhance policy choice by tending the weight of legality and propriety to a policy alternative and moderate implementation activity, particularly the conduct and manner of bureaucratic officials and implementation. The judiciary is a moderator, an umpire and mediator of conflicts and judge of propriety in the policy process.

The judiciary, however, does not initiate or propose policies. It does not formulate policy neither does it implement policies. Rather, it only reacts to policy proposals, enactments, implementation and conduct of services and personnel. This reaction may lay the bases for policy decisions, legitimising policies and modifying them. The judicial response is not, independently, prompted but intervention is based on cases brought before it by arms of government, institutions, groups and individuals. Thus, judicial influence only becomes operative when conflicts in the policy process are brought before it for interpretation and review.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Mention government actors in the policy process.

3.1.4 Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is a major organisational content within which policy making implementation and evaluation takes place. The traditional conception of bureaucracy in public policy is that of bringing to bear on policy making and implementation, expertise, skill and competence.

Bureaucracy is, strategically, placed to generate; and it does generate or initiate a large part of public policy. The policy making power of bureaucracies is also inherent in its being the administrative organisation for implementing policies. Bureaucracy is, therefore, the most important actor at the level of implementation; it constitutes the administrative machinery for executing public policy. Bureaucracy comprises the structures processes and staff for effectuating public policies.

3.2 Non-Governmental Actors

Non-governmental actors influence policy through governmental actors. They seek access to these actors, lobby and mobilise them to support and convert their interest and demands into required policy output. However, their access and influence depend on their professional or other connections to the policy area, their strategic importance in the policy process and their strength in terms of membership, leadership and resources.

3.2.1 Political Parties

Political parties help in the articulation and aggregation of policy issues and in the initiation and formulation of proposed policies. Political parties articulate the needs, demands and interests of their members and supporters and mediate, comprise and aggregate them into course of policy action. The party machinery researchers and considers policy issues and alternatives and decide on course of action. These policies constitute the programmes, manifestos and positions on policy issues.

Political parties are sometimes, considerably, influential in the execution of public polices, particularly, when in control of the government apparatus. They ensure the implementation of their manifestos, policies and programmes by their influence on their candidate in office because their election, support and continuity depend on their faithful adherence and proper implementation of their programmes. The party influence on policies tend to be high where they are ideological committed because in such case, the ideology guide policy action.

3.2.2 Interest Groups

An interest group is a collection of individuals with some common characteristics, interests and interactions. They exist, principally, to project, pursue and protect their common interest; group influence on the policy process occurs at every stage. They are active in the initiation, generation, formation of public policies and in the determination of their content and direction. Groups constitute a linkage between the public and the government. They articulate the interests and demands of their members to governmental actors in the policy process and seek to influence them to enact their demands and choices into policy actions. Interest groups, actually, initiate policies by suggesting and recommending policy solutions to problems that pertain to their activities and interests. Sometimes groups cooperate with governmental actors in the design and formulation of policies.

Interest groups may mobilise the public and other groups to support its policy positions and interest. They may use the mass media to build up public support. This enhances their

resources and strength may increase their access and influence with governmental actors. Furthermore, interest groups influence is reinforced by the consequences of their reactions to negative or poor response by governmental actors to their desired policy positions. Groups can embark on certain actions such as protests and strikes to back up their demands.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Name the non-governmental actors in the policy process.

3.2.3 The Citizenry

The citizenry are important actors in the policy process. They constitute the human environment of policies, make the demands for public policy and are the beneficiaries of public policies. Citizens influence the policy process through political parties, interest groups, elections and the mass media (Ikelegbe, 1996:89-101).

4.0 Conclusion

The roles of both governmental and non-governmental actors in the policy process are important, which made them to be, basically, analysed here.

5.0 Summary

The unit considered governmental actors in the policy process; such actors are the legislature, the executive, the judiciary. The unit also focused on the roles of non-governmental actors in the policy process.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

The citizens have no contribution in the public policy process Do you agree?

7.0 References/Further Reading

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

Key, V.O. (Jr.) (1967). *Public Opinion and American Democracy.* New York: Knopf.

Ronke, F.E. (1976). *Bureaucracy, Politics and Public Policy.* Boston: Little Brown and Company.

Unit 2 System Analysis, Cost Benefit Analysis and Cost Effectiveness

1.0 Introduction

There are techniques or tools, which are used in the planning, analysis, evaluation and management of policies and programmes. These tools include systems analysis, cost benefit analysis, cost effectiveness, efficiency, programme effectiveness, management by objective, planning, programming-budgeting system, zero-based budgeting, among others. In this unit, systems analysis, cost benefits analysis,, cost benefits analysis and cost effectiveness are discussed, while some others are discussed in subsequent units.

2.0 Objectives

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

- explain system analysis
- describe cost benefit analysis
- discuss cost effectiveness.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 System Analysis

System analysis is an attempt to apply the scientific methods to public problem solving by suing a method that is open, explicit, verifiable and self-correcting, it is therefore described as a qualitative approach to problem solving using analytical methods to identify alternative solution. System analysis, also sometimes called system theory, is a way to dealing with the basic economic problems of how best to use limited resources by specifying degree of effectiveness for the least cost or the greatest effectiveness for a given cost (Olaniyi, 1998:71).

System analysis evolved from systems engineering and operations research. It was first developed between late 1950's and early 1960's and the origin is traced to the United States Department of Defense's investment through grants and contracts on systems analysis and quantitative techniques for analysis of systems, methodologies, techniques and approaches for weaponry (Alan and Gregory, 1980:4-5).

System analysis involves the application of explicit, systematic comprehensive and quantitative analysis to decision problems, requiring decisions, particularly, governmental problems and programmes. It involves systematic collection of relevant data and comprehensive analysis, using sophisticated, quantitative and rigorous methods, models and techniques and rational criteria to aid policy makers and programme managers in arriving at rational, efficient alternatives. The emphasis is, therefore, quantitative methods and analysis.

System analysis is used to advise public officials on most favourable alternatives or combination of alternatives based on the model (Ikelegbe, 1996:44).

Self-Assessment Exercise
What is system analysis?

3.3 Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA)

Cost benefit analysis is an analytical technique for analysing decision, policies, programmes and projects. It serves two purposes in public administration and public policy analysis- to determine the most efficient policy or decision alternative. *CBA* helps to determine the policy or decision with the highest social benefit. It is also important for prospective evaluations. A particular project is evaluated to enable decisions on its choice, benefits, level of operation and feasibility.

Secondly, *CBA* is also useful in process and summative evaluation. The analysis, "*ex-post"*, is undertaken after the act to determine the efficiency and performance of a programme or project. The purpose is to determine how the project is doing in relation to objective, resources and net benefits, such that decisions could be taken whether the programme should be terminated or continued or modified. It is useful as an analytical technique for decision making and evaluations. Furthermore, *CBA* involves the systematic examination of all the gusts of a programme, whether they are tangible or not, quantifiable and measurable or whether they are real of opportunity costs.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Describe Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA).

3.3 Cost Effectiveness

Cost effectiveness is analytical tool for determining the least cost alternative to achieving policy objectives or accomplishments. Cost effectiveness has some similarities with the cost benefit analysis. The main difference is that cost effectiveness emphasises lest cost for same or higher benefits, rather than net social benefits. Cost effectiveness requirements are on the realisation of the obvious difficulties of quantifying and monetising the benefits of public policy programmes. In cost effectiveness, the benefits are assumed and the search is for the lower cost (maximally effective) alternative to attaining the benefits. Cost effectiveness, therefore, does not require the quantification and monetisation of benefits; neither is the calculation and criteria of net social benefits given any much importance.

Cost effectiveness requires the clear statements of objectives and output, and the objectives should be operationalised. It also requires the enumeration of alternative for achieving the operationlised objectives. Furthermore, it requires the determination of the costs, benefits and impact of each alternative and the quantification of costs in achieving the stated objectives. The benefits and impact need not be quantified. However, it requires the comparison on alternative in relation to the objectives. The criteria for the choice of an alternative is effectiveness in achieving stated objectives at relatively same or lower projected costs.

The alternative that achieves most, at same cost is preferred. Cost effectiveness is quite suitable and applicable to policy makers and project managers in situations, where the objectives and benefits of a programme accomplishment are fixed and identical and the issue is only the determination of the least cost alternative with highest effectiveness. Cost effectiveness is very useful because of the limited and inadequate resources available to governments and corporations amidst so much problems, demands and needs.

4.0 Conclusion

Some tools in policy analysis have been discussed in this unit and more are discussed later on in this study. It is hoped that you will understand the tools, very well, after the subsequent units have been read.

5.0 Summary

The unit considered system analysis, cost benefit analysis and cost effectiveness, which are among the techniques or tools in policy analysis. More techniques would be discussed to enhance your understanding of the concepts.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

In what ways can cost effectiveness be a useful technique of policy analysis?

7.0 References/Further Reading

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

Ikelegbe, A.O. (1996). *Public Policing Making and Analysis*. Benin: City.Uri Publishing.

Olaniyi, J.O. (1998). *Foundations of Public Policy Analysis.* Ibadan: Sunad Publishers Limited.