

DRIVERS OF SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES IN NIGERIA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated drivers of successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly. The findings of this study revealed seven drivers of successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly namely the legislature, the executive, the judiciary, the bureaucracy, political parties, interest groups and the citizenry. Numerous factors are affecting successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly, to mention a few are; Lack of need assessments, Lack of transparency, Lack of accountability, Weak system, Poor Technology, Poor evaluation and Monitoring, Corruption, Religion, Too many points of agenda, Inability to properly identify problems, Lack of continuity, Lack of political will and Inadequate resource. Executive Bills, Member Bills and Private Member Bills were identified as the sources of Public Policies bill Sponsor in Nigeria National Assembly. The study recommend that substantial effort is required to follow policy from intention to action; and the resources needed for adequate implementation of relevant policies needs to be provided to realize policy objectives.

Keywords: Drivers, Implementation, Public Policies, National Assembly, Nigeria, National Assembly Nigeria, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The effective execution of public policies within Nigeria's National Assembly is influenced by a range of factors that determine policy results. In a multifaceted governance framework such as Nigeria's, where the legislature is crucial in the development and oversight of policies, the success of policy implementation becomes vital. The National Assembly acts as the foundation for creating laws, sanctioning budgets, and ensuring that public policies correspond with national priorities. Nonetheless, converting these policies into concrete results necessitates more than mere legislation; it relies on multiple elements that either facilitate or obstruct implementation. One of the key elements for achieving effective policy implementation is political will. As highlighted by Ojo and Olaniyan (2023), the dedication of political figures, including legislators, to emphasize and actively pursue the objectives set forth in policies is crucial. In the absence of robust political backing, policies frequently stagnate or fail to achieve their desired goals. Another significant aspect is institutional capacity, which includes the resources, expertise, and infrastructure required for effective policy execution. According to Eze and Ajayi (2022), the institutional weaknesses present in Nigeria have often led to delays and inefficiencies in the execution of policies.

Moreover, stakeholder engagement is essential in ensuring that policies are embraced and maintained over time. When stakeholders, such as civil society, private sector participants, and local communities, are engaged in the policymaking process, it fosters greater transparency and accountability, as noted by Aluko and Hassan (2021). Additionally, legislative oversight is critical for tracking the advancement of policy implementation. The capacity of the Nigerian National Assembly to examine executive actions and confirm that policies are executed as planned is vital for achieving success (Akinwale, 2023). Thus, elements such as political will, institutional capacity, stakeholder engagement, and legislative oversight are essential for the effective implementation of public policies in Nigeria's National Assembly. Recognizing and fortifying these elements can improve policy results and tackle the challenges that frequently hinder policy execution within the nation. Ebienfa and Paki (2013) observes that policies therefore play crucial role in the state and also instrumental to the development and underdevelopment of a given state. Whereas, there has been no lack of public policies formulation in Nigeria since independence, but there have been serious issues with public policy implementation success. Some school of thought holds the views that the actors of public policy implementation are the bane of successful public policy implementation. Therefore, this study is poised to investigate drivers of successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly.

Statement of Problem

The execution of public policies in Nigeria frequently encounters substantial obstacles, resulting in erratic policy results and the inability to meet intended developmental objectives. In spite of the National Assembly's initiatives in crafting laws and approving budgets, the conversion of these policies into meaningful actions remains ineffective. Critical factors that affect the successful implementation of policies, including political will, institutional capacity, stakeholder engagement, and legislative oversight, are often insufficient or poorly managed. Political will is often undermined by competing interests among legislators, while institutional capacity suffers from a lack of resources, expertise, and infrastructure. Additionally, inadequate stakeholder participation diminishes the transparency and accountability essential for effective implementation. Legislative oversight, vital for monitoring and enforcing policy execution, is frequently absent, leading to poor adherence to policies and inefficiencies. In the absence of a clear comprehension of the elements that facilitate or hinder the successful execution of public policies, attempts to tackle Nigeria's socio-economic issues will continue to be limited. This research aims to explore these drivers and deliver an in-depth analysis of how the National Assembly can improve the implementation process for enhanced policy results.

Objectives of the Study

This study is aimed at investigating drivers of successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly. Other objectives are as follows;

- i. Identify the drivers of successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly.
- ii. Find out the factors affecting implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly.
- iii. Discover the sources of Public Policy bill sponsor in Nigeria National Assembly.
- iv. Recommend on actionable measures for successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly.

Research Questions

1. Identify the drivers of successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly.
2. Find out the factors affecting implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly.
3. Discover the sources of Public Policy bill sponsor in Nigeria National Assembly.
4. Recommend on actionable measures for successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly.

Review of Literature**Public Policy Implementation**

Public policy implementation has been described as the major problem confronting Nigeria in its effort to achieve national development. Implementation often turn out to be the graveyard of many policies. From experience, little attention is paid to the subject of policy implementation by policy makers. It is often taken for granted that once a policy is adopted by government, it must be implemented and the desired goals achieved. And in most cases little or no attention is paid to the problems and complexities associated with execution of policies. Large amount of energy and resources are spent on designing and preparing plans for all kinds with little or no thought given to the complex chains of reciprocal interactions and variables required and this can be seen usually in the widening gap between intentions and results.

Drivers of Public Policy

Drivers of Public Policy are the designers and actors of public policy making process implementation or execution. Execution or implementation stage in the public policy process is very crucial. This is the point where the intentions of the designers of the policies are often undermined by a constitution of powerful forces of politics and administration. The analysis and assessment of the implementation process is a pre-requisite for a successful public policy execution or implementation. kelegbe (2016) observes that implementation involves the committal of funds, the establishment of structures and methods, the hiring of personnel, the administering or executing of activities, and the security of policy goals, services, and other intended outcomes. It involves conversion of human as well as material inputs to realize goods and services. The execution of public policies is an essential process that significantly influences the degree to which government goals and initiatives achieve their intended effects. Various factors, from institutional characteristics to political, social, and economic variables, play a crucial role in the successful implementation of public policies. Grasping these factors is vital for enhancing governance and ensuring that policies yield concrete outcomes. Recent research has investigated these factors across various contexts, particularly in developing nations such as Nigeria.

Political Will and Leadership

Political will is frequently regarded as the most pivotal factor in determining policy success. Ojo and Adeoye (2022) assert that political leadership needs to exhibit a strong dedication to the objectives of the policy and provide the essential resources and backing for its execution. When political will is insufficient, policies may face delays or be

compromised by clashing political interests or a lack of urgency. Ofori and Adebayo (2023) further point out that continuity in leadership is significant, as shifts in leadership can disrupt policy initiatives.

Institutional Capacity

The success of policy implementation is heavily reliant on the capability of the institutions responsible for executing the policies. Eze and Akintola (2021) contend that weak institutions, characterized by insufficient financial resources, technical skills, and infrastructure, pose significant challenges to effective public policy implementation in Nigeria. Enhancing institutional capacity necessitates investment in human resources, technology, and administrative reforms that facilitate smoother policy execution.

Stakeholder Engagement

Participatory policymaking and engagement with stakeholders—including the public, civil society organizations, and private sector participants—are crucial for cultivating ownership and accountability in policy implementation. Aluko and Hassan (2021) highlight that stakeholder involvement enhances the transparency and legitimacy of public policies, ensuring they align with the needs of those they impact. By establishing forums for discussion and feedback, governments can modify policies to respond to evolving situations and challenges.

Legislative Oversight and Accountability

The function of legislative institutions in monitoring policy implementation is vital for ensuring adherence and addressing obstacles within the process. In Nigeria, the National Assembly is tasked with examining executive actions and ensuring that public policies conform to the approved legislative framework. Akinwale (2023) emphasizes that legislative oversight curtails policy distortions and inefficiencies by holding implementing agencies accountable for their performance.

Economic and Fiscal Conditions

Economic circumstances and fiscal capacity are crucial factors that affect the availability of resources for policy implementation. Ojo and Olaniyan (2023) observe that policies frequently falter due to financial limitations, particularly in developing economies like Nigeria, where budget deficits and the mismanagement of public funds restrict the resources necessary for effective execution. Stable economic conditions, prudent budget allocations, and effective financial management are essential for bolstering public policy initiatives.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are vital for assessing the progress of policy implementation and pinpointing areas that necessitate modification. According to Okoro and Adewale (2022), a comprehensive M&E framework enables policymakers to evaluate the efficacy of policies and take corrective measures when appropriate. The absence of thorough M&E systems in Nigeria has been recognized as a significant obstacle to successful policy implementation.

Furthermore, the drivers of successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly, according to Ikelegbe (2016), include: Governmental Actors - the Legislative; the Executive; the Judiciary; and the Bureaucracy Non-Governmental Actors – Political Parties; Pressure/Interest Group; Mass Media, the Citizens among others.

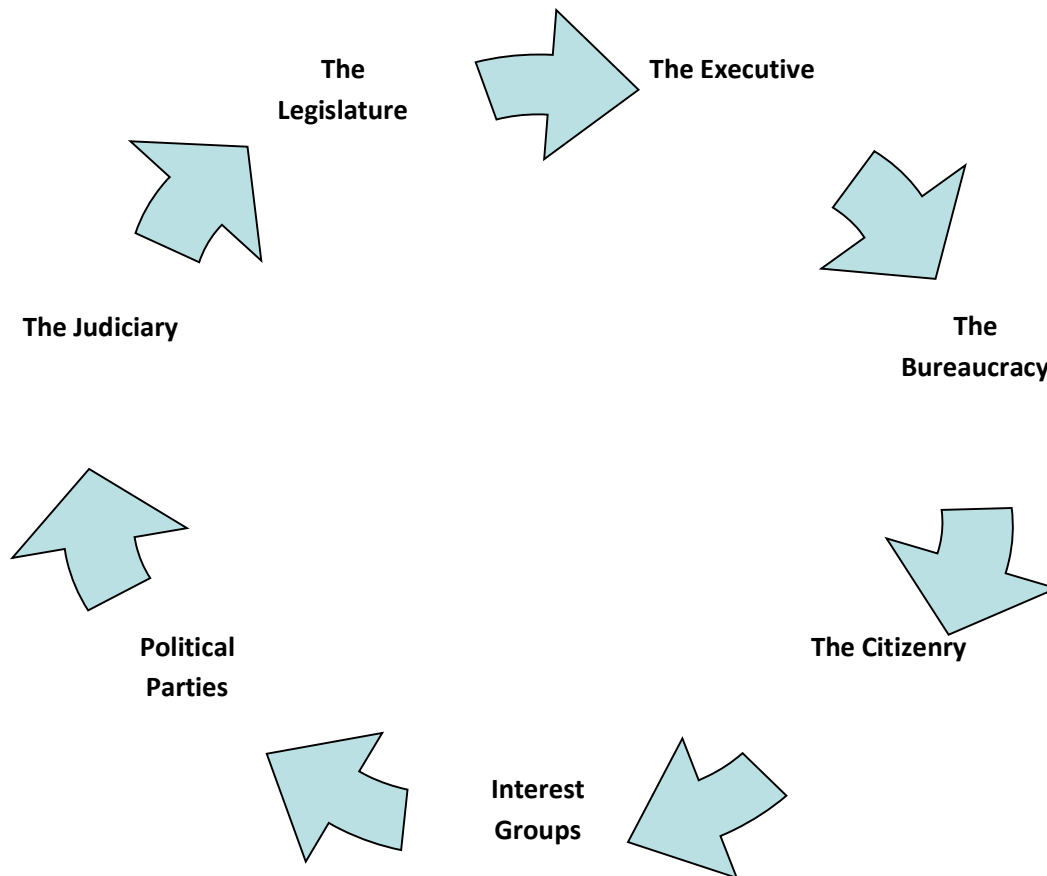


Figure 1: Drivers of Public Policies Implementation in Nigeria National Assembly, Source: Field Survey (2019)

The factors affecting implementation of Public Policies

There are factors affecting successful implementation of public policies in Nigeria National Assembly. These factors include:

- a. Political rascality
- b. Ethnicity
- c. Lack of need assessments
- d. Lack of transparency
- e. Lack of accountability
- f. Weak system
- g. Poor Technology
- h. Poor evaluation and Monitoring
- i. Corruption
- j. Religion
- k. Too many points of agenda
- l. Inability to properly identify problems
- m. Lack of continuity
- n. Lack of political will
- o. Inadequate resources
- p. White elephant or unrealistic policy goals
- q. Lack of clarity in policy definition
- r. Weak democratic values and institutions
- s. Lack of good governance
- t. Lack of popular commitment
- u. Lack of input from the people
- v. Paucity of data
- w. Policy instability
- x. Lack of thoroughness in policy execution

The Sources of Public Policies Bill Sponsor

Modern societies cannot exist and function well without a system of laws. William cited in Mbaya, Tella and Adole (2013) asserts that before an item of legislation becomes a law, it exists as a bill proposed to National Assembly. A Bill is a draft of an Act, which is introduced in parliament. A bill is like a proposal or an idea that has to be deliberated upon and passed into law by the National Assembly. Before a bill is introduced, a compendium of its financial costs must be calculated and attached. A Bill will not become an Act until parliament passes it and the president gives assent to it. The sources of public policies bill sponsor in a democratic setting are: Executive Bills: This is the most common type of bills introduced into the parliament. It deals with matters of general public interest. Public bills may be introduced by either a minister or secretary to the Federal Government on behalf of the government. A number of bills are often initiated by the executive branch of government. This is due to the fact that the executive comprises the President and the ministers. Policies must be enacted to allow them carry out their responsibilities. Hence, any bill initiated by a minister or the president himself falls under the category of an Executive Bill. Money Bills also falls under this category. Money or 'Appropriation' bills are public bills which set a tax or propose the spending of money for a particular purpose. Money bills follow the same passage through both Houses as other bills. Basically, government bills stem from party policies, pressure from community

groups, the media or public opinion, advice from government departments or even because of court decisions.

When the Government decides that laws are needed, the minister concerned submits a proposal to the Federal Executive Council (FEC) (a meeting of all ministers) for approval. A draft bill is prepared by the Parliamentary Counsel acting under instructions from the minister and the minister's department (Dicey cited in Mbaya, Tella and Adole, 2013). This draft may go through several revisions before being finally prepared for introduction to the National Assembly. The primary functions of legislatures are to make laws. So, any bill introduced by a Senator or a member of the House of Representatives falls under this category. The idea for a bill may come from a party manifesto or a promise made during the members' campaign for election. A private member bill: Private members can also initiate a bill in response to pressure from their constituents, community groups, the media or public opinion. In short, these are bills that are initiated by an individual or a group of people or organization. However, a bill initiated by an individual or a group of people can only be introduced in the Senate or House by a member. After community consultation, the member introduces the bill into the Parliament.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined drivers of successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly. The findings of this study revealed seven drivers of successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly namely the legislature, the executive, the judiciary, the bureaucracy, political parties, interest groups and the citizenry. Numerous factors are affecting successful implementation of Public Policies in Nigeria National Assembly, to mention a few are Lack of need assessments, Lack of transparency, Lack of accountability, Weak system, Poor Technology, Poor evaluation and Monitoring, Corruption, Religion, Too many points of agenda, Inability to properly identify problems, Lack of continuity, Lack of political will and Inadequate resource. Executive Bills, Member Bills and Private Member Bills were identified as the sources of Public Policies bill Sponsor in Nigeria National Assembly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Monitoring of Project:** There should be provision for adequate monitoring of projects, to stop the problem of abandoned projects and to ensure the realization of policy goals.
2. **Adequate Resources:** Adequate material and human resources needed to implement the policy should be provided.
3. **Effective Communication:** There must be effective communication between the target beneficiaries and the implementers of policy programmes.
4. **Encourage the Culture of Continuity:** The culture of discontinuity of policies should be discouraged. The national and state assemblies should enact laws that will guarantee continuity of policies made to enhance growth and development. There should be continuity in policy, except when the policy is found not to be useful to the people.
5. **Substantial Effort and Continuity of Efforts:** Policy implementation will not automatically follow from policy decisions but needs to be treated as a positive

purposeful process in it. Consequently, substantial effort is required to follow policy from intention to action; and the resources needed for adequate implementation of relevant policies need to be provided to realize policy objectives.

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