

Policy Implementation of a New Public Governance Approach: Creating a Network of Local Government in Thailand

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This article explores the implementation of a new public governance approach to create a network of local government in Thailand. This network is based on an effective structural policy which promotes collaboration for Thai local government. A qualitative approach is taken in this study including in-depth interviews with 10 practitioners as key methods of data gathering. The study then employs content analysis of this data to explore the experience of constructing collaborative government. Results indicate that three elements of collaborative co-management exist: 1) the collaborative government process, 2) the collaborative implementation process and 3) the collaborative worker process. Findings suggest that within the process of collaborative co-management policy implementation, these three outcomes generate particular interest. The collaborative government process occurs between public and public governance, for example co-management information, administration, enacted regulations and supportive actions. The collaborative implementation process refers to co-management across sectional public staff, and the strategies and actions involved in conflict management. Finally, the collaborative worker process describes the partnership between stakeholder and beneficiary and involves guideline implementation, communication and mutual understanding and process engagement. Implications of constructing a collaborative government policy are also discussed in this study.

Key words: *Thailand, policy implement process, inter-local, co-operations.*



Introduction

Collaborative governance process, when appropriately and effectively implemented, has a significant and positive effect on policy support for practitioners. Prior studies have recognised that collaboration with practitioner communication is increased in six ways: through public agencies; non-state figures; consultations; formally organised processes; decision making, and practice (Adams et al., 2005; Hersey et al., 2012). Choi, Park & Rho (2017) define three levels of policy combination to set practitioner guidelines, including setting criteria, developing strategies and planning for practices and evaluation. In creating combined policies for labour migration, countries must be transparent to form stability and capacity within government dealings (Burnside & Dollar, 2000; Harttgen & Klasen, 2012).

Collaborative policy surrounding local development plan management has far-reaching implications, though is not yet sufficiently utilised or researched. Current detailed policies deal with location practice in area point of entry Thailand. Problematically, the implementation processes are conflicted due to practitioner operational procedures. Because local development plan management policies are varied and at times unstable, conflicts arise in the implementation process and stakeholder benefits are affected (Jernsittiparsert, Atsadamongkhon, & Sriyakul, 2015). The information behind such policies, and how a collaborative system may impact government procedures, must therefore be investigated further. This study suggests that achieving effective collaboration may be mediated by combining several other organisations (Chinnasri & Amornsiriphong, 2018).

Spatial phenomena issues may negatively affect government and other related public sectors involved with the policy, and are considered necessary components of data when devising policy proposals. These issues comprise two crucial aspects, the first involving policy stakeholders and the second focusing on the importance of the management process. From the issue of spatial phenomena, researchers can summarise the critical points that may cause damage to the government as well as to various sectors related to the policy. Firstly, lack of cooperation in the policy implementation process causes lack of continuity. Secondly, ineffective processes involved in policy implementation lead to lack of participation in decision-making. As a result, the implementation of existing policies does not correspond to the phenomena that occur in the operating area. A flexible process within the government structure of Thailand will therefore improve the quality of local management processes.

Literature Review

In order to define an actual framework that connects the core conceptual issue of collaborative policy concepts, existing literature concerning policy implementation processes between government, organisation and practitioner is reviewed. From this investigation, key

elements of policy implementation are noted in relation to public sectors, engagement processes, decision making and execution. Ostrom (1990) suggests that overlapping policy through practice increases conflict and limits resources.

Analysis of Policy Implementation

An explanation of the factors affecting policy implementation focuses on the importance of related contextual factors in each policy implementation model. Each different model will therefore be used to best explain the various economic, social and political contexts and situations in question.

The implementation of public labour policy involves three significance approaches, each of which holds various limitations: 1) top-down, 2) bottom-up and 3) combined top-down and bottom-up. The top-down approach focuses on the importance of the policy maker, with the notion that once a policy is good, the policy maker would be able to control all process in the policy cycle. This approach represents a theory in which policy practitioners and policy-interested parties are overlooked. Conversely, the bottom-up approach pays more attention to policy practitioners, but simultaneously presents difficulties for the representative of the group in manipulating the policy where needed. The combined approach therefore strikes an effective balance to find common points of agreement in the process of policy implementation by reducing gaps and limitations. While this combined approach holds more efficacy than its singular counterparts, however, limitations exist with its interactions between policy strategy and policy implementation, as well as the size of policy structure and the levels of policy actions. Barrett and Fudge (1981) divided policy implementation methods used during the years prior to 1980 into two minor approaches, the policy-centred approach and the action-centred approach.

Policy-centred approach

This approach considers the policy in question as the foundation of all implementation procedures, with the policy maker acting as the primary operator in all stages. The policy maker also monitors all actions and decisions made by other policy practitioners within the implementation process.

Action-centred approach

This approach refers to the importance of policy practitioners and their practices, in which authority is enforced in decision making and the process of implementing policy can be adjusted to suit the context of the implementation process. An effective action-centred approach in policy implementation depends on environmental limitations, interactions between policy makers and practitioners and successful negotiation procedures.

Within the political, parliamentary and centralised administration networks, parties and branches use governmental mechanisms as political tools to advance their election voting bases. Such misdemeanours eventually lead to manpower policy losing stability and clarity. Manpower policy directly affects bureaucratic institutions and increases resistance from government sectors, especially those dealing directly with citizens. Claiming that missions are required and in response to the needs of state policy may indicate that political advantages, successes and budget increases are controlled by in-house government officers. Due to the reciprocal relationship between the political and bureaucratic systems, political and government officials reject the manpower policy and deny its practicality or success.

The results of the study indicate that policy clarification does not impede policy implementation. Successful implementation of manpower policy, however, is seen to be influenced by resistance from government institutions across four ministries. Such resistance occurred through governmental claims of performing rightful missions while ignoring the needs for manpower in their own organisation. In practice, no collaboration exists for political or government officials to appropriately implement manpower policy.

From a contextual review of Thailand, institutional structures influence public policy processes. This means that the Thai institution has been constructed with the implementation of public policy in two forms of law manipulation: firstly, legislators hold legal authority, and secondly, Thai citizens can countersign petitions for the abolition of unfair laws. There are also significant gaps in the relationship between policy maker and actor, referring to the potential of the organisation to pursue policies in accordance with determined government policies, and the potential of policy practitioners. This gap in relationship dimensions thus creates disparity between policy formulation and policy implementation.

Within Thailand's structural context and the dynamic of the local development plan management policy, the study of public policy implementation as a societal process has undergone changes. Countries governed by political structures experience difficulties in controlling stakeholders and laws, factors which political institutions cannot avoid as the phenomenal point of analysis mentioned above.

This research synthesizes the factors of local development plan management policy implementation on the basis of a combined approach by identifying such factors in compliance with policy indicators. Firstly, factors related to policy makers are contained with significant conditions, namely the policy source and clarity, and are considered the first elements of failure in policy implementation. Moreover, consideration should be given to the relationship between mechanisms in the process of policy formulation. Secondly, the complexity in managing policy compliance and successful policy application are closely related to the administrative structure of the organisation. Further, the nature of the agency

implementing the policy should be considered in terms of hierarchy of authority and the leader's ability relate to the agency in question. The attitudes of policy practitioners should also be factored into the direction and potential achievement of policy objectives. In practice levels, the complexity of administration, the sufficiency of resource allocation and the relationship between implementation mechanisms policy should also be taken into consideration. Finally, factors related to other policy actors such as questioning the advocacy of promoting the policy, support from the elite groups that relate to the policy and the time period of binding completion must be clarified for appropriate policy implementation.

One of the most important elements of the collaborative policy implementation process is the broad issue of investigation. The process has emerged from co-managing cooperations between policy makers and the application practice of local development plan management (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Within broad implementation, Emerson, Nabatchi & Balogh (2012) and Emerson & Nabatchi (2015) developed a process with three key characteristics. This process first applies knowledge management, such as public administration and conflict resolution. Secondly, it aims to connect co-management regimes like public networking, participatory practitioners and civic engagement. Lastly, it organises pathways of collaborative governance procedures, including settings, strategizing, procedures, evaluating and practicing.

Sedgwick (2017) defines the policy implementation process in terms of five underlying collaborative frameworks, including governance process; administration; norms of trust; mutuality, and organisational autonomy. Core conceptual issues of collaborative policy implementation through the practice of law enforcement agencies are seen as imperative in cross-boundary management (Wright 1988; Kettl, 2006; Nicholson-Crotty and O'Toole 2004). Bardach (2001); Daniels & Walker (2001) suggest that these protocols are built on collaboration to effectively share resources, missions and cross-section processes. Shrestha (2013) defines the success of the collaborative policy implementation process as reliant on the relationship between public and organisational bodies, as well as on the support of cohesive partnership subgroups.

This research is conducted on the basis of a combined approach under the dynamic political contextual structure. A significant argument in the study of public policy implementation suggests that the old public policy utilises the top-down approach, which focuses solely on policy makers and maintains that effective policy application is determined by procedure. Conversely, the bottom-up approach posits the importance of the policy practitioner, maintaining that the success of policy application depends on the individual who implements that policy. Opportunities should be available for policy practitioners in the process of denying this top-down approach. That is, a combined approach to public policy implementation can be utilised to suit both policy maker and policy practitioner, paying

significant attention to interactions and collaborations in the implementation process without ignoring the support or knowledge of either party. Investigations into potential resultant stakeholder benefits or conflicts for practicing from local development plan management policy must therefore be investigated.

Methods

This study employed qualitative research methods with in-depth interview guidelines (Borrill, Lorenz & Abbasnejad, 2012; Couturier & Imoussaten, 2015; Elliott et al., 2017). A purposive sampling method was used with a targeted population from specific organisational levels. The primary purposive sampling analysed 10 key informants, including policy makers, organisational level personnel, implementers and stakeholders. For data analysis, interviews were conducted and recorded for 30 to 60 minutes with each key informant. For data collection procedures, these interviews were digitally recorded as MP3 files and transcribed as field notes, and instruments used were noted in the proceedings. Due to concerns regarding data accuracy, contextual content analysis was implemented to cross-check the coding, grouping, theming and summarising of results (Rapport, 2010; Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017; Chantavanich, S., Laodumrongchai, S., & Stringer, C. (2016)). Quoting code references consisted of categorising all interview statements into particular domains and creating a concept map.

Results and Discussion

The study's qualitative research method focused on in-depth interviews conducted with 10 key informants sourced from at least four groups involved in collaborative policy implementation. These groups included public sectors, private sectors, entrepreneurs and stakeholders. The empirical evidence outlines three key components of contextual content analysis, including the collaborative government process, the collaborative practitioner process and the collaborative private process.

Collaborative government process

As previously mentioned, collaborative policy application is vital in understanding the regulations, methods, time and place, frameworks and stakeholders regarding the policy in question. Of particular note in this study is the public collaborative government process between the provincial employment office and immigration police. Political components like power, rules and resources must be deemed appropriate for and agreeable to laws and countries when put into practice. In this regard, co-public workers perform more effectively when duties are shared or conducted cooperatively. Similarly, Roth & Loë (2017) suggest that collaborative processes in the public sector can lead to positive impacts. Szkuta,



Pizzicannella & Osimo (2014) posit that collaborative governments are created to co-serve, co-produce, co-support and co-manage, though these shared interests and collaborative dimensions may differ depending on level of involvement [Interview #02, Head of Provincial Office, June 2019].

In the collaborative government process following a top-down structural policy implementation, difficulties in practices arose within the provincial employment office. Building upon the collaborative process Ansell & Gash (2008); Eldor (2017) of the public sector, work engagement acted as a key policy mechanism. The top-down process is important due its efficiency in formal organisation, co-management, decision making and implementation. Notably, the key collaborative government process in Thailand was attentive to a policy framework.

Considering a cross-sectional collaborative context can also help administrative capacities to process within public sectors. A set of coordinated cross-sector collaboration protocols are thus required in the public sector to remedy complex public problems (Bryson, Crosby & Stone, 2006). This elemental collaborative process involves attention to shared motivation, joint action and strategic planning. Finally, adopting a collaborative government process over time further develops integrative practice across various systems.

Collaborative implementer process

Cases in which practitioners interconnected between policy strategies saw issues concerning planning time and place for implementation. In addition to cross-collaboration, framing a policy for implementation of authority required coordinated actions, reshaping strategies and appropriate planning and frameworks for application (Coburn, 2006). The policy specified that skilled practitioners were to follow implementation procedures in line with the central government.

Contrary to typical collaborative norms between three levels of practitioners in policy application, McGuire (2006) highlights the importance of practitioner shared administration. This strategy has been used as a policy guideline for implementation activities across the organisation, including tasks like shared decision making, planning, network management and conflict resolution (Daniels and Walker 2001; Agrawal and Lemos 2007). Exchanged information was typically associated with the processes involved in these collaborative activities, and the policy practitioner thus described the collaborative process as significantly underplayed in policy application procedures.

The guiding framework of practitioner collaborative processes is controlled by the policy timeline. In addition, Schmidt (1999) found that status of formal constructs plays a key role



in cooperative work. Nevertheless, collaborative policy application processes can be beneficially constructed with cooperative workers. Firstly, this process encourages cooperation in cross-sectional organisation practices. Secondly, operation systems can implement nature into construction. Lastly, the key driver framework in collaborative practices surpasses other framework options in the distinguishing implementation process.

Collaborative worker process

The collaborative worker process can be described as cooperative group work dealing with cross-sectional tasks concerning both public and private organisations. These processes fundamentally involve the sharing of public resources and management, such as staff and government office assets, as well as co-managing decision making and other key duties. Practitioners and entrepreneurs of this collaborative process achieve important evaluation outcomes.

An interviewee form typically manifests in features like facilities, tools and places. Diaz-Kope & Miller-Stevens (2015) point out that government-created and agency-based partnerships achieve consensus within collaborative policy implementation schemes. At the same time, the implementation process here is not solely focused on the policy maker, but equally considers the practitioners involved in all policy procedures [Interview #, construction sectors, June 2019].

As noted in a study interviewee, the collaborative worker process indicates that roles and duties are designated and performed with high interest in the group, the institution and the agenda setting (Cairney, 2009). Further, practices involved in the process are deeply embedded in the policy action plan and centred on the cross-sectional partnership between organisation practitioner stakeholder.

Attention has focused on the mode of publicly-driven practices to implement collaborative worker processes. More generally, the policy implementation and cross-culture approach are both inherently suited for capturing and understanding the implementation process. Blackstock, Waylen, Dunlinson & Marshall (2012) suggest that various levels of stakeholder involvement always clearly identify the implementation process across cultural practices. The case thus indicates that collaborative policy implementation typically and effectively employs a combined approach which is co-managed between public practices.

Conclusion

A qualitative research approach was conducted using in-depth interviews with 10 individuals employed in the public sector, private sector, as entrepreneurs and as stakeholder. Within the transitional border area point of Thailand, it was hypothesised that core conceptual issues of co-management policy implementation would be effective for use in cross-organisation practices. This process was thought to achieve more specific implementation based on partnerships and cooperation rather than utilising forced labour law agencies. Collaboration in local government policies for a variety of dynamic contexts would typically involve efficient and effective practice, management and, of course, cooperation.

The study was conducted on the basis of a combined approach under the dynamic political contextual structure. While the top-down approach is currently suggested as typical in public policy implementation, this process only focuses on the policy maker in achieving results while neglecting the policy practitioner or actor. A bottom-up approach conversely centres on the practitioner as the sole contributor to effective policy application. Opportunities should be available to policy practitioners in opting for a combined approach over a top-down approach, which would allow for both policy makers and policy actors to equally and significantly assist with implementation practices.

In the specific case of the co-management collaborative policy implementation process, three outcomes generated particular interest. The first involved public to public government processes like co-management, administration, enacted regulation and support. The second involved collaborative practices like co-management across sectional public staff, applied strategies and conflict management. Lastly, the collaborative private process is driven by a partnership between stakeholder and beneficiary and involves guideline implementation, communication of processes and equal participant engagement.

Findings reveal an equalised implementation process between the public sector, such as immigration police and the provincial employment office, and the private sector, such as employers and workers. The implementation process of practitioners is focused on here rather than policy regulations. All key interest stakeholder groups were found to engage in and benefit from higher participation of collaborative policy implementations. As this implementation process is developed in a variety of different contexts and platforms, however, this study suggests that a co-management collaborative implementation process should be developed in line with causal models that confirm specific policy application capacity and effectiveness.

Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest existed in this study.



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