

MODELS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION IN ROMANIAN CIVIL SERVICE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

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Abstract:

Implementation is one of the stages of public policy process which refers to the putting into practice of policies projects. It is a purely practical step involved in administrative, organizational, political issues and not only and, therefore, it is extremely difficult to achieve successfully. Paper aims to identify the main models of implementation (the implementation as system management, the implementation as bureaucratic process, the implementation as organizational development and the implementation as negotiation), with their pluses and minuses and to outline a design process at the administrative level.

Key words: public policy, implementation as the system management, implementation as the bureaucracy, implementation as the organisational development, implementation as the negotiation

JEL Classification: D21, D22, D23, D71, D72, D73

1. INTRODUCTION. IMPLEMENTATION, DEFINITIONS AND THE OUTLINE OF DISCURSIVE UNIVERSE

Implementation is a step of interest at the level of the cycle of a public policy which contains inside the term, a multitude of senses and tones intercepted by various authors.

The implementation represents “the commissioning of a certain public policy” (Pasquino, 2002). It is the process “underlining the outputs which are congruent to the original intentions” (Lane, 1987) (if we are to regard the systemic vision on public policies, as developed by Easton). To execute, to implement, to apply are synonyms. “Execution represents the step of the policy process by which one must reach the set targets. Within this step, the decisions become enforceable and must be applied” (Howlett, Ramesh, 2004). Implementation represents that phase of a long public policy which generates deeds and effects starting from a normative framework of intents, texts or political speeches. Implementation refers to two meanings: the meaning to have practical effects or enforcement and fulfilment” (Lane, 1987). In order to talk about implementation, we must take into account the following variables specific to the term: its purposes were clearly defined and understood, the necessary resources were made available, a command chain able to assemble and control the resources has been drafted, the system efficiently communicates and there are no organizational controls to prevent the concerned process (Miroiu, 2001).

Referring to the implementation models in the literature, authors such as Brown and Robert (1982), Giacchino, Kakabadse (2005), Vroom (1996), Minogue (1997) have differentiated between the implementation as management system, as the bureaucratic process, as organizational development or as negotiation.

Implementation becomes the process by which they assign certain resources for applying public policy projects they agreed upon, which involves the existence both of control and communication system.

Beyond the definitions of the term, implementation – as step of public policy cycle – is a dynamic process, getting into contact with practical realities, which assumes an institutional adaptation, as well as mechanisms. Hence, various models of implementation.

2. MODELS OF IMPLEMENTATION

It can distinguish between: the implementation as management system, the implementation as bureaucratic process, the implementation as organizational development and the implementation as negotiation .

The implementation models have been developed by different schools of thought: the implementation as the management system has been theorized by rationalist tradition of public policy analysis, the implementation as the bureaucratic process is predominantly sociological view of organizations, the implementation as the organizational development model is a combination of sociological with psychological theory (which focuses on the conflict between individual and organization's needs) and the implementation as the negotiation that analyses the situations from an individual psychological perspective (trying to bring to the same level the individuals with different interests) (Elmore, 1987).

Implementation as management system is based on a number of initial claims with axiological role. The organizations have reason as main value which they pursue to maximize. Their conduct is target oriented, their targets being built on a teleological dimension. The organizations are structured according to the principles of hierarchy and control and, hence, each department is carefully monitored, and its performance is considerably quantified. Its liabilities are divided at the level of each organizational component in order to increase the performance. Implementation assumes the definition of a detailed set of targets which underline the intentions of a given policy, the correlation of these target-purposes with the responsibilities recouped at the level of all organizational components, as well as monitoring these activities at the level of department, "the imposition of adjustments where they seem to be necessary, pursuing their performances and functionally integrates collections of parts which are able to act focused on one joint purpose" (Brown, Robert, 1982). Functional integration is identifiable at the level of organizations from the highest levels to the lowest levels and are grounded on rules clearly defined at an institutional level which lead to a firm hierarchic control so that, the lowest levels receive fixed directives for the policies to be implemented. Such a system is complex and many times hardens the decision-making or implementation process of policies. There must be and develop, between this dimension of hierarchic control and the subunits of the organization, "a suboptimization process" (Minogue, 1997) which shall grant the managers of the organization subunits the possibility to make decisions at their level which they shall subsequently present at a central level. They must decide first of all the "sub-issues" (Minogue, 1997), and afterwards the issues in the exactness, precision and understanding manner of preliminary policies. An unsuccessful implementation would mean a faulty management, that is, responsibilities which are not totally assumed, badly defined purposes of the policies, low performances which are not correlated to the expected results.

Implementation as bureaucratic process is grounded on the following features: the central attributes of the organizations are discretion and routine, the organizational conduct is reducible to the own action exerted by employees in their daily work, to make decisions and to "operational routines" (Giacchino, Kakabadse, 2005) which they develop, in order to keep their position within the organization. It leads to power fragmentation among the control units which develop a strong control on their specific area of action. The structure of the organization becomes more and more complex and the units more and more specialized if holding power monopoly in their scope of action. All the proposals of change are judged by the units of the organization in disagreement terms against interiorized *patterns*. The decisions tend to get an incremental aspect. Implementation consists of identifying the focusing degree of the employees' actions and in identifying the need to change the routines, to define alternative routines. The model starts from the meaning offered to the term of bureaucracy by Max Weber. We deal with a "fractional power" (Minogue, 1997). The individuals or units at the level of the organization spare their action space created by discrete actions, as this conduct guaranties them the keeping of the status at the level of the organization. Routine allows the simplification of daily work but capitalizes as well the specialization they work on, which grants safety to action. "One of the raised issues is that of

controlling the employees' own actions" (Minogue, 1997). It is needed in a series of directions, like: budget planning and adopting, staff dismissal procedures, general assessment of the organizational system. In all these cases, they apply the standard technical procedures as well as a hierarchical vertical control. The difference involved if we correlate this model with the one of implementation as system management is that, if in the previously mentioned case, the organizations respond to the changes needed at the level of policies, in this case, organizations are reserved regarding change. If in the first case, the organizational units do what they are told, in the second, they continue what has been previously done.

The issue bureaucrats have to face is the concern to the method to express the policies in the law adopted at the level of rules or of needed guides to implement a policy. Despite it, the central level regulations get various valences at the applied level, or in the working groups within the organization.

Implementation as organizational development is grounded on the following assertions: the organizations should work in order to satisfy the basic social and psychological needs of the individuals, which should be able to be part in the decision making process. Organizations should be built so that they maximize the control of individuals. The effective decision depends on the current creation degree at the level of each and every group. The quality of interpersonal relations inside the organization determines the quality of the made decisions. Decision-making assumes first of all, the fulfilment of the consensus and the establishment of close relations amongst the members of the group. The implementation has fundamental structures like the consensus on purposes, concomitantly the individual autonomy, but also the responsibility assumed by the implementers.

An implementation with no success may mean an implementation which only regards the programs, without going beyond the regulations strictly clinging to them. The implementers strictly comply with the limits of programs and the circumstances generated by them, without marching on individual decisions. They have noticed the existence of a conduct beyond the limits of the organization itself, arisen from the autonomy need of individuals, activated by personal self-motivation, which is grounded on individual feelings and values. However, at the internal level of the organizations, we expect the individuals to manifest a dependent and passive behaviour to their superior managers, suppressing their feelings and values. A reasonable theory is to find a way to start from individual needs in order to reach the abstract properties of organizations. Open communication assumes "interpersonal skills" which are distinguished from "purely technical skills" by the fact that they give a fair expression of the feelings, values and attitudes of individuals, which they transpose to new ideas or which remain open to new ideas (Vroom, 1996). This kind of opening determines the transfer of responsibilities at the lowest levels of the organization. Implementation assumes a new vision which consists of the control management of these units and work groups, but also reaching the consensus at the level of groups. The presence of activated values, of motivations is necessary as their absence leads to the imposition of a hierarchic control. Work efficiency translates in work related to the members of the work groups. The criticism of this model assumes the lack of trust on the coordination and cooperation capacity among individuals in order to agree upon it. This model does not discuss on the elements related to power distribution at organizational level or on the changing nature of public policies, or on the negotiation and blocking processes which can appear at the level of the implementation stage.

Implementation as negotiation affirms that the organizations are real areas of conflict where the individuals and subunits have specific interests which pursue fulfilment of certain own advantages or the maximization of personal power or of organizational unit, the distribution of power at the level of the organization has an instable character, depending on the personal-individual capacity to gather resources which shall be used to mobilize the other members of the organization and to manipulate their behaviour. "Power is given less by the formal position at hierarchic level, but by the specialty knowledge, access to resources and capacity to control them, to mobilize the external political support" (Minogue, 1997). Decision-making at the level of the organization assumes a negotiation process among the subunits or among the individuals in the organization. Negotiation appears due to the fact that actors have different opinions, values,

motivations, interests. The process of negotiation does neither assume the existence of clearly determined strategies or purposes nor the involvement of all the actors existing at the level of the organizations. The actors involved in this process must agree to adjust their behaviour. The behaviour of those involved will change so that it sediments that negotiation relation through the agency of which they assign resources in a manner desired by the unanimity.

The implementation consists of a continuous negotiation process which reflects in each and every step the desires of the actors. A faulty implementation cannot be analyzed starting from initial declarative policies, correlated afterwards with the obtained results as there is no initial aggregation of purposes but they reflect personal needs and interests. The implementation seems a zero-sum game with losers and winners, a successful implementation being the implementation of the successful party.

The discussions regarding this model start from the idea that it is pretty difficult in a plural society to talk about a sole group created *ad-hoc*, able to determine and orient the policies on one direction. The coalitions created as a consequence of such negotiation process will not have a permanent and fixed character, being dominated by various conflicts. Negotiations can be explicit or tacit at the level of organizations or organizational units. 'Implementation becomes a true game of strategic movements in order to obtain access to and control of resources. Implementation is strongly connected with party interests, most of the times different, parties which pursue the conquest of power or its preservation' (Wilson, 1995).

This model assumes no hierarchic control, assumes that individuals are little predictable in their behaviour, goes beyond the bureaucracy routines and assumes no consensus in making decisions or peaceful cooperation. All these elements make the difference between this type of implementation and the others, previously presented.

Defining a successful implementation is difficult to determine within the development process itself. Saying that implementing a policy was successful is an assumption which can only be made temporarily. This model underlines a reality and that is, the one according to which, without taking into consideration the levels we talk about, the implementation process is mainly negotiation among the individuals found on equality positions or on different positions, between individuals and groups, between individuals and the organization, among organizations, between organizations and subunits, between units and subunits. From this point of view, the criticism of rationalists regards the confusion state provoked by this model and the fact that they reach results which do not satisfy, on long term, nobody and which do not offer any base to the implementation process.

These theories can be turned operational on a series of dimensions, like: actors involved, type of relationship among the involved actors, the decision-making process, decision-making criteria (Table no.1 and Table no. 2)

Table no. 1. The models of implementation - indices

	Implementation as management system	Implementation as birocractic process
1. Who are the actors involved?	Existing working group	Individuals in a single
2. Who makes the decisions?	Taken into upper directions and transmitted to the lower ones	Taken individually in accordance with daily routine
3. What is the distribution of responsibilities?	Clear distributed and monitored by higher levels	Relatively distributed among employees
4. At the division / service / office:	There is hierarchical control from superiors	Employees are not controlled, but does not cooperate
5. How is taken the decision?	Through clear planning and discussion	Individually
6. What are the criteria by which a decision is made?	Maximizing performance	Preservation of individual status within the working group
7. The projects proposed for implementation include:	Partial changes in the working stages	Do not make changes
8. The relations in the Department / service /	Non-confrontational	Non-confrontational in the division

office where you work are:		/ service / directorate but conflicting with other departments / offices / services
9. The information transmitted is:	Precise	No precise or imprecise
10. The time allocated for the implementation of an administrative decision has a duration:	Short	Long
11. Successful implementation of an administrative decision depends on:	Professional support	Policy support from higher centers

Table no. 2. The models of implementation - indices

	Implementation as organisational development	Implementation as negotiation
1. Who are the actors involved?	Only some groups of professionals	Some groups who share the same values
2. Who makes the decisions?	Exclusive by all individuals, if it concerns the management of a given situation	Taken by some employees of the office through negotiations held with other offices / services / directions
3. What is the distribution of responsibilities?	Clear distributed among working group members	There aren't distributed, each employee is adapting to the situation
4. At the division / service / office:	Employees are not controlled, but each associate and cooperates in different situations	Employees are not controlled, each is assigned according to personal preferences within the group
5. How is taken the decision?	By consensus	By negotiating the interests of stakeholders
6. What are the criteria by which a decision is made?	Meeting the needs of the working group	The benefits gained at a time
7. The projects proposed for implementation include:	Total changes of the existing order	Changes to the beneficiaries or to achieve goals
8. The relations in the Department / service / office where you work are:	Non-confrontational in the division / service / directorate but conflicting with other departments / offices / services	Conflict between members of division / office / service
9. The information transmitted is:	Imprecise	Imprecise
10. The time allocated for the implementation of an administrative decision has a duration:	Variable, depending on how quickly is establish the consensus among members	Long
11. Successful implementation of an administrative decision depends on:	Working group support	Ideological values

3. METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Self-questionnaire survey, used as a tool, operationalizes the theories of policy implementation: the implementation as the management system, implementing as the bureaucratic process, organizational as the organisational development or the implementation as the negotiation using the following items: the actors involved, the type of relationships between stakeholders, decision-making process, decision criteria. Research sample size is forty-two persons employed in local administration.

From 42 questionnaires randomly distributed within the period October-November 2010 to a "convenience" and "snowball" (Henry, 1990) sample of civil servants in Iași area (North-Eastern Romania), employees at the City Hall Iași, 42 questionnaires were filled in.

The sample is probabilistic, assuming the limits related to the size and the degree of representativeness. Research sample is composed of 35.7% men and 64.8%, women; 42.9% were between 20-30 years, 42.9% between 31-40 years, 14.3% between 41-50 years; 50% are married, 42.9%, unmarried, 7.1% divorced; 2.4% are high school graduates, 2.4%-college, 58.6% -

university, 36.6% - postgraduated. From this point of view is a prescriptive study, in the future, such other studies horizontal or vertical can be realised.

4. RESULTS

Regarding the actors involved, 76, 2% said that the existing working group is dealing with the implementation (the implementation as management system), 11.9% - the single individuals (implementation as bureaucratic process), 7.1% - only some professional groups (implementation as organizational development), 4.8% - the groups that share similar values (implementation as negotiation).

According to 42.9%, the decisions are taken in the upper directions and transmitted to the lower hierarchical level (implementation as management system), 33.3% - by all individuals, if it concerns the management of situations (the implementation as organizational development), 14,3% - by some employees of the office through negotiations with other offices (implementation as negotiation) and 9.5% - are individually taken in accordance with daily routine (the implementation as bureaucratic process).

Regarding the distribution of responsibilities, 42.9% say they are clearly distributed at higher levels (implementation as management system), 35.7% - clearly distributed among working groups (implementation as organizational development), 19% - fairly distributed among employees (implementation as bureaucratic process), 2.4% - not distributed, every employee adapts to the situation (implementation as negotiation).

According to 92.2% there is a hierarchical control from superiors (implementation as management system), to 2.6% - there is no control, but employees do not cooperate (implementation as bureaucratic process), to 2.6% - of employees are not checked, each associates and cooperates depending on the situation (implementation as organizational development), to 2.6% - employees are not checked, each is assigned according to personal preferences within the group (implementation as negotiation).

66.7% say that the decision is taken by clear planning and discussion (implementation as management system), 11.9% - by consensus (implementing as organizational development), 16.7% - through negotiations between different stakeholders (implementation as negotiation) 4,7% - individually (implementation as bureaucratic process).

The criteria according to which decisions are taken are to maximize performance - 76.2% (implementing as management system), meet the needs of the working group - 11.9% (implementation as organizational development), preservation of individual status within the working group - 9.5% (implementation as bureaucratic process), the profits earned at a time - 2.4% (implementation as negotiation).

71.4% said that policies involve partial changes at the phases of the work (implementation as management system), 26.2% - goals changes goals or goals of beneficiaries (implementation as negotiation), 2.4% - no changes (implementation as bureaucratic process) and any respondent does not support total changes (implementation as organizational development).

For 92.9% the relations between members of an office, directorate or service are non-confrontational (implementation as management system), for 7.1% - non-confrontational between members of the same structure but conflicting relationships with other offices, divisions, services (implementation as organizational development and implementation as bureaucratic process) and implementation as the negotiation has not received any percentage (as conflicting relationships).

The information transmitted is precise for 90.5% of respondents (implementation as management system), for 7.1% - no precise or imprecise (implementation as bureaucratic process), for 2,4% - inaccurate (implementation as organizational development and implementation as negotiation).

The time allocated for the implementation of a policy is short for 9.5% (implementation as management system), extended for 57.2% (implementation as bureaucratic process and the

implementation as negotiation), variable, depending on how quickly establish consensus among members for 61.9% (implementation as organizational development).

Successful implementation depends on the backing of professionals - 28.6% (implementation as the management system), the support of the working group - 38.1% (implementation as the organizational development), policy support from advanced centers - 23.8% (implementation as bureaucratic process), ideological values - 4.8% (implementation as negotiation), the rate of non-responses was 4.7% (Table no. 3).

Table no. 3. The results of indices

	Implementation as management system		Implementation as bureaucratic process		Implementation as organisational development		Implementation as negotiation	
1. Who are the actors involved?	76,2%	32	11,2%	5	7,1%	3	4,8%	2
2. Who makes the decisions?	42,9%	18	9,5%	4	33,3%	14	14,3%	3
3. What is the distribution of responsibilities?	42,9%	18	19%	8	35,7%	15	2,4%	1
4. At the division / service / office:	92,2%	39	2,6%	2	2,6%	2	2,6%	2
5. How is taken the decision?	66,7%	28	4,7%	2	11,9%	5	16,7%	7
6. What are the criteria by which a decision is made?	76,2%	32	9,5%	4	11,9%	5	2,4%	1
7. The projects proposed for implementation include:	71,4%	30	2,4%	1	0	0	26,2%	11
8. The relations in the Department / service / office where you work are:	92,2%	39	3,5%	1	3,6%	2	0	0
9. The information transmitted is:	90,5%	38	7,1%	3	1,2%	1	1,2%	0
10. The time allocated for the implementation of an administrative decision has a duration:	9,5%	4	13,3%	5	61,9%	26	13,3%	6
11. Successful implementation of an administrative decision depends on:	28,6%	12	23,8%	10	38,1%	16	4,8%	2

Therefore, from the total of 11 items of implementation models, 9 achieved the highest scores on the dimension of implementation as the management system, and 2 for the implementation as organizational development. Two step-level values has the following distribution: 2 scores for the implementation as management system, 6 for the implementation as organizational development, 4 for the implementation as negotiation and 2 for the implementation as bureaucratic process. The implementation as the negotiation and the implementation as bureaucracy process have not obtained the maximum percentage to any item (Table no. 4).

Table no. 4. The distribution of the scores

	Implementation as management system	Implementation as bureaucratic process	Implementation as organisational development	Implementation as negotiation
1. items of implementation models - the highest scores	9	0	2	0
1. items of implementation models – The two step-level values	2	2	6	4

5. CONCLUSIONS

Concluding, we can talk about a combination of the implementation as management system with the organizational development implementation. They combine the same type of planning supported from the superior decision-making centres existing at the level of the institution, that type of management of given situations with the personality of work groups from the level of

the institution, which is identified with the existing offices or services and which develop at a certain degree of freedom regarding the own planning of actions at the level of the existing structures, beyond the directions offered by the superior decision-making centres, but also a type of communication and to establish the relations amongst the members of the group. One can talk about the existence of classical rationality of the actors pursuing the fulfilment of their actions purposes, maximization of performances. This type of rationality gets close to what can be named the new public management as well, which mainly pursues the performance. This view must not be generalized as we do not deal with a strictly economical transposition on the implementation process. We can however talk about implementation as management and the rules of managerial planning are identified at the level of the institution by: maximizing the performance, by planning the actions, by establishing a hierarchy for the general action directions. The motivation of actors becomes, in this context, the motivation to reach performance at institutional level.

Therefore, the implementation of public policies becomes a process pursuing classical lines but one must not forget the contingent aspects, institutional, group, individual aspects, as they can make the difference from one administrative unit to another, offering specificity to the process itself. However, the manner the implementation process is profiled is a creation of each and every institution, the causes of such explanatory step being a potential topic of subsequent research.

ENDNOTES

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