Planning of the implementation of public policy: a case study of the Board of Studies, N.S.W.

Michael J. O'Mullane

University of Wollongong

Recommended Citation
NOTE

This online version of the thesis may have different page formatting and pagination from the paper copy held in the University of Wollongong Library.

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

COPYRIGHT WARNING

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study. The University does not authorise you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site. You are reminded of the following:

Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright. A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. A court may impose penalties and award damages in relation to offences and infringements relating to copyright material. Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.
PLANNING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE BOARD OF STUDIES, N.S.W.

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

from

The University of Wollongong

by

Michael J. O'Connell, B.A.(N'S.W.),
B.Ed., M.Ed.(N.E.), Dip. Ed.(N'S.W.),

Graduate School of Education
1994
TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures. ........................................ xii

List of Tables. ........................................ xiv

Acknowledgment ........................................ xv

Declaration .............................................. xvi

Abstract ................................................ vxi

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION. ........................... 1

  Background and Purpose of the Study. .............. 1

  Overview of the Policy. ............................ 2

    Curriculum Reform. ................................ 4

    Credentialling Reform. ............................ 8

    Establishment of a New State Curriculum and Credentialling Authority. 10

  Paradox of the Reform Policy. ....................... 14

  Reforms and Implementation Planning. ............... 18

  Present Study in Outline. .......................... 19
Types of Implementation Plans     148
Corporate and Strategic Plans     157
Performance Agreements (Plans)    159
Management Plans                  160

Relationships among Plans         161
Plans Constitute a Hierarchy      161
Structure of the Plans is Similar 170

Relationship of the Implementation Plans and the Public Policy 171

Orientation of the Implementation Plans                          174

Conclusion                                                        175

CHAPTER 5 IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING PROCESS                         177

Overview                                                          177

Outline of the Data Collected by the Three Methods                177
Documents                                                        178
Interviews with Informants                                       186
Modified Participant Observation                                 191

What Planning Processes Have Occurred ?                          196
Planning and Designing of the Board’s Organizational Structure to Implement Curriculum and Credentialling Policy 196
Macro Planning Process                                             199
CHAPTER 6 FACTORS INFLUENCING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING.

Overview. 224

Sources of Data. 224

Documents. 225

Interviews. 230

Modified Participant Observation. 231

External and Internal Factors Influencing Implementation Planning Processes. 233

Reasons for the Particular Policy Implementation Planning Process Undertaken. 237

Expectations for Significant Reform within a Short Time Frame. 238

Dynamic Nature of the Expectations. 241

Lack of Detailed Government Planning Guidelines. 246
CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS.

Overview.

Restatement of Research Questions and Findings.

What Are the Characteristics of the Public Policy Implementation Plans Developed by the Board of Studies, N.S.W. ?

How Has the Public Policy Implementation Planning Process Been Undertaken by the Board of Studies, N.S.W. ?

What Factors Influence the Public Policy Implementation Planning Process Undertaken by the Board of Studies, N.S.W. ?

The Findings in the Context of Theory.

Concepts of Policy and Policy Implementation.

Public Policy as a Set of Expectations.

Sources of Public Policy.

Types of Plans.

Models of Implementation Revisited.

Closed or Open Models.

Orientation of the Implementation Plans.

Influences on Policy Implementation Planning.
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Linearly related phases in the implementation of public policy. 56

Figure 2.2 A schematic view of a rational, linear model of the relationship of public policy formulation and public policy. 68

Figure 2.3 Schematic representation of a relatively closed systems model. 80

Figure 2.4 Schematic representation of a relatively open systems model. 82

Figure 3.1 Hypothetical relationship of observed phenomena obtainable from three data collection instruments. 135

Figure 4.1 Hierarchical relationship of the plans of the Board of Studies, N.S.W., up to the time of the formation of the Corporate Services Unit in 1991. 151

Figure 4.2 Hierarchical relationship of the plans of the Board of Studies, N.S.W., after the formation of the Corporate Services Unit in 1991. 152

Figure 4.3 Hierarchical relationship of the plans of the Board of Studies, N.S.W., after the formation of the Product Development and Marketing Unit in 1991. 153

Figure 5.1 N.S.W. Office of Public Management strategic management cycle. 184

Figure 5.2 Board of Studies annual planning cycle. 185
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Key learning areas for students kindergarten to year 12 in N.S.W. ........................................... 5

Table 1.2 Number of government and non-government schools, teachers and students in N.S.W. from 1990 to 1992 ........................................... 12

Table 2.1 Classification of the uses of the term *policy*. ................................................................. 27

Table 2.2 Derivation of research questions for the present study in terms of theory and previous research ........................................... 101

Table 3.1 Comparison of hypothetical limitations of the three data collection techniques used in the present study and how they have been addressed ........................................... 140

Table 4.1 The main plans of the staff of the Board of Studies, N.S.W. .................................................. 154

Table 4.2 Illustrations of the linearity of relationships of one corporate objective, related strategic targets and related president’s undertakings given in the hierarchy of plans ........................................... 167

Table 6.1 External and internal factors influencing policy implementation planning ........................................... 226
I am indebted to many people for support and co-operation in the period of my research, especially Professor Carla Fasano, who has been my main supervisor for the entire period and whose advice has assisted me greatly. I also acknowledge the contributions of Visiting Professor Bob Winder who gave me considerable advice and feedback during the period of developing my thesis topic.

To the staff of the Board of Studies, N.S.W., especially senior and middle management and the Board of Studies Liaison Officers, I owe a great deal as it was the planning decisions of the staff of the Board which were the main areas of focus of my work. They all gave me considerable time as willing informants and provided details of plans and their involvement in producing them.

In particular, I acknowledge the continuous support of the President of the Board, Mr John Lambert, who gave permission to use the Board and its plans as a case study of public policy implementation planning, and who generously gave time to conduct a number of interviews with him and provided considerable written and oral information not available from other sources.

Michael J. O’Mullane

March, 1994
Abstract

O'Mullane, Michael Joseph. 1994). Planning of the Implementation of Public Policy: A Case Study of the Board of Studies, N.S.W. A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Graduate School of Education), The University of Wollongong, N.S.W.

This case study of the implementation of 1990 N.S.W. curriculum and credentialling reform policy by the Board of Studies, N.S.W. explores the planning involved in converting the intentions of public policy into more specific guidelines.

The analysis is conducted within a conceptual framework developed from relevant theories and prior findings on the nature of public policy, of planning, and of organizational processes which bring policy and planning together.

Specific research questions investigated relate to the characteristics of implementation plans, implementation planning processes undertaken, and the factors which influence the planning process.

A multiperspectivist approach is taken to data collection and analysis, combining the assumptions of logical-positivism and non logical-positivism through the use of three different instruments: documents, interviews and participant observation.

The findings include the recognition that implementation plans constitute two hierarchies, one based on corporate level plans, the other based on the personal plans of managers. The plans are highly compatible with the policy but there is a tendency for
lower level plans to relate less directly to the policy intentions.

Three implementation planning processes have been recognized: organizational planning and design, macro-planning and micro-planning. Planning processes have been found to involve a high degree of negotiation among managers, between managers and the Board, and between the President of the Board and the Minister. Consequently, consistency among plans is achieved through both consensus and compliance.

A range of external environmental and internal organizational factors have been identified as influencing planning. The latter are found to have a more significant influence.

The study relates the findings to existing theory and indicates the emergence of a theory of implementation planning.

Finally, a number of proposals are made in the areas of public policy implementation planning, curriculum and credentialling policy implementation planning, and epistemological and methodological choice in implementation research.