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# THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF THE PUBLIC POLICY TO PROMOTE AND DEVELOP THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE DISABLED IN THAILAND

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**Abstract.** The objective of this research is to study 1) the implementation process of the public policy to promote and develop the quality of life of the disabled in Thailand as carried out by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. The findings are as follows: 1.) The implementation process of the public policy concerning disabled persons (or persons with disabilities) has to follow specific bureaucratic procedures of the Royal Thai Government including those specifically of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. It has been found, however, that concrete support from the relevant “political” circle is of some importance, e.g. as regards amount of budget allocation and through the upgrading of certain personnel, particularly those involved directly in the implementation process, since higher rank means higher authority to get things done for the disabled 2.) The success in implementing the policy depends on the administrative skills as well as attentive dedication of various units of the official bureaucracy and those of the private sector, particularly in various organizations of the disabled 3.) Bureaucratic mechanism puts much emphasis on hierarchical line of control and detailed regulations. To follow strictly such rigid line and rules would naturally impede the policy implementation in the interest of the disabled. Thus certain conscientious officials to discreetly resort to alternative ways which work but to be sure, does not strictly follow the letters of officially prescribed procedures, albeit not glaringly illegal 4.) The implementation process is more than simplistically following written bureaucratic procedures. It has been found that due to limitations of resources, e.g. “Man, Money, and Material” the Management i.e. implementing officials, “street-level bureaucrats”, to use Pressman and Wildavsky’s (1979) key phrase, have at times to resort to their own particular way of adapting to the circumstances in order to come up with certain measures of success and report practical problems to the higher authorities for future remedial measures and 5.) Despite a variety of obstacles in the implementation efforts the outcome has been on the plus side, e.g. as regards higher percentages of those who officially registered as “disabled” or “persons with disabilities” which legally entitles them to be beneficiaries of the policy of the Royal Thai Government in allotting opportunities, things and services in fulfillment of the quality of life of those with different categories of disabilities, in urban or rural areas, male or female, young or elderly in significant number to be eligible for proper service toward their better standard of living.

## INTRODUCTION

One cannot choose where to be born and to what family and to be fully endowed with a healthy body or with physical handicaps. In a democracy it stipulates that the government must treat every citizen as equal, and is obliged to take proper care of those with disabilities, physically or mentally.

In Thailand’s Constitution there are stipulations that the Government through its various agencies must take due responsibilities in the matter.

The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security is the key organization to act by itself and to coordinate with other units - - both public and private, in the promotion of the quality of life of the handicapped.

## Objective

The implementation process of the public policy to promote and develop the quality of life of the disabled in Thailand as

carried out by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security.

## Scope of the Study

Matters concerning the physically challenging are vast. The present research limits the scope to the study of the implementation process of the one Thai Government agency, namely the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Official statistics as of 2009 from the Bureau of the Promotion and Development of the Handicapped reported that in the Bangkok Metropolis there were 40,475 disabled persons, 24,795 of were male and 15,680 were female. The total picture of the 4 Administrative Areas of Thailand (513,000 sq. kms) was 195,943 disabled persons in the Central and Eastern region;

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in the North 195,729 disabled persons; in the Northeast 326,404 disabled persons and in the South 97,422 disabled persons. Problems faced by the handicapped are various, e.g. lesser opportunities in getting proper education and in acquiring proper jobs. The Thai Government, through the Ministry Labor has made it a policy, enforceable by law since 2007 that a workplace must hire at least one physically disadvantaged for over 100 employees. In the event that an appropriate disabled person cannot be found the employer must pay an equivalent of the salary to a central Welfare Fund.

The study began by searching relevant literature as well as seeking up-to-date assessment of the situation by attending seminars, visiting exhibitions and discussing with those who are familiar with the situation of the disabled.

The research takes as a starting point the model and functioning of bureaucracy as theorized by Weber (1947) due to the fact that the Ministry is a governmental bureaucracy. Another significant inspiration is the pioneering work of Pressman and Wildavsky (1979) concerning jobs creation by the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Government for the unemployed in Oakland, California. One very important finding by the two authors is that "implementations must know what they are supposed to do in order to be effective". The second finding and subsequent advice for successful implementation is to counsel "street-level" bureaucrats or field workers to be aware of the larger purpose of the policy and the sense of knowing or being aware that not every detail can be achieved. It is very insightful of the two authors and very useful for the researcher in the writing following sentence "implementation is completely divorced from policy success or failure." The important thing is to do the job.

Researchers should adhere to the concept of Denhardt and Denhardt (2008), divided into different types of policies. Policies governing the organization (regulatory policy) are designed to limit the actions of individuals or groups in order to protect the public. Nakamura and Smallwood (1980, p. 9) explains that education policy implementation (policy implementation) can be divided into two periods: the classical and post-classical era. Attewell and Gerstein (1979) studied the failure of the policy to treat those addicted to the practice in the United States since 1979. The federal government has set a measure to evaluate the success of the project and impose strict rules to abide by local authorities directly. But when local practices led to finding that failure. Bardach (1977, p. 9) for implementation of the political process, and that is the game.

Dewey (1959, p. 119) argues the weakness of the bureaucracy. "Profession of psychiatry" is based on, as well as noted that the prototype is the result of doing things repeatedly every day,

which would allow developed liking or disliking of the discrimination either, the focus pretext or in any way one. Edwards (1984) stated that the success of the implementation depends on 1. The adequacy of resources 2. The level of support. Sebring (1977) studied the problem of the policy cooperation between public universities and the Ministry of Social Welfare (department of public welfare). The United States failed to find the cause of the failure. To carry out such a policy stems from not understanding the problems and obstacles in the operation of each party. Sorg (1983) said the standard for measuring the degree of cooperation of miners lower and those who are affected by the policy. Which relies on observations and data collected from the cooperative behavior of miners lower.

Information from the Master Plan aimed at increasing the capacity of the Government of Singapore enabling Master Plan 2007-2011 to indicate that the physical disabilities refer to deficiencies such as amputation. And the effects of polio as the sensory disability (United Nations Escap, 2010).

Law or Act 1992, a law on services for disabled Australians in 1986, which was later modified in 2007. This law aims to encourage disabled people to participate as a regular member of the community. Moreover, it aims to promote services that allow for independence (Independence), and is likely to increase more and more in obtaining employment and to promote a positive image of people with disabilities (Australian Government, 1986). Gouldner (1954) Criticism of Gouldner says that when a supervisor or department Supervisor cares, he noted, the attention inevitably causes stress among individuals and leads to conflict between the Supervisors and subordinates. World Health Organization (1980) mentions disability (disability) as the disruption of any one person caused by a malfunctioning or a person with disabilities and cannot be played or what the appropriate action based on age, gender, and social and cultural environment. Maslow (1970, p. 35) explains that the motivation demand levels are as follows:

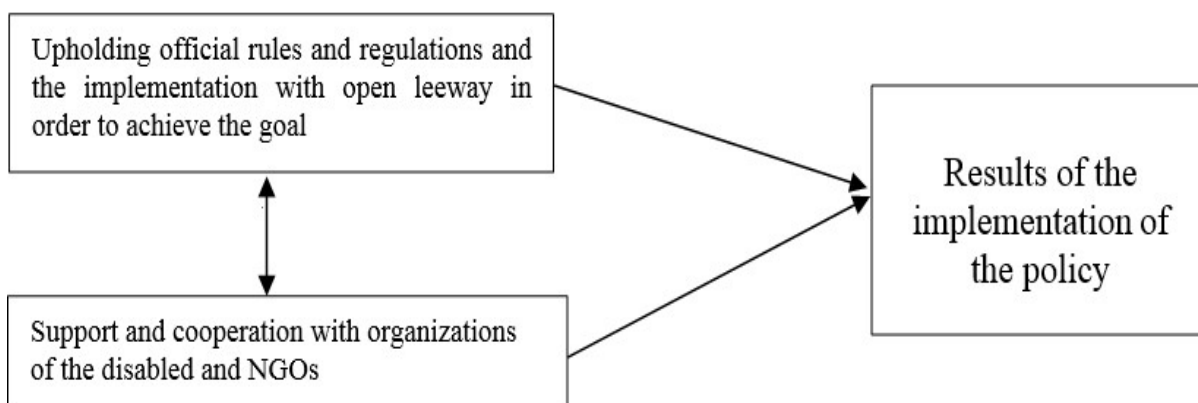
1. The physiological needs.
2. Safety needs
3. The belongingness and love needs
4. The esteem needs
5. The need for self-actualization needs
6. Human curiosity needs
7. The aesthetic needs.

The Persons with Disabilities have needs as well as the common man was to the four factors and is recognized by the group. Since the first group of families, communities and the nation.

### Conceptual Framework

The research project is based on the following model:

**FIGURE 1**  
**Fostering Cooperation with Associations for the Disabled and Public Interest Organizations**



## METHODOLOGY

In this qualitative research investigation, the researcher collected data from government documents, academic documents and from in-depth interviews conducted with key informants. These key informants consisted of three groups of subjects. The first group consisted of high-ranking administrators implementing the policy under study at the National Office for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (NEP) and the Department of Social Development and Welfare (DSDW), MSDHS.

The second group consisted of operational officials, i.e. those concerned with providing assistance to those having social problems under the auspices of DSDW, MSDHS in Bangkok Metropolis and those working in Provincial Social Development and Human Security Offices (PSDHSO) in the greater Bangkok Metropolitan area.

These offices were in the following provinces: Nakhonpathom, Nonthaburi, Pathumthani, Samutprakan, and Samutsakhon. The third group consisted of representatives from a variety of organizations for the physically challenged.

These representatives were from organizations for the visually impaired, the hearing impaired, and the mobility impaired.

## Data Collection

The present researcher in Thai case garnered relevant information from the Center, i.e.

- 1) from Bureau or Office of the Promotion and Development of the Handicapped and the Department of Social Development and Welfare, and
- 2) from the Bureau of Social Development and Welfare at the operating level, i.e. Bangkok Metropolis and adjacent Provinces, namely, Samutprakarn, Nonthaburi, Samutsakhon and Nakhonpathom. In the research for comparative literature it

is noteworthy to refer to an article by Tagaki (2011) of the Osaka Prefecture University entitled "Men's short-term Experience of Acquired Physical Disabilities in Japan" which stated that the development policy in welfare and social norms started after the end of the second World War in 1945 to be followed by enacting a law specifically for the disabled. In the decade of 1960-69, the Japanese Government initiated the policy of allowing the disabled to have their own way of life, independent of those who are physically able.

## Instrument

The instrument of research was an in-depth interview form. Major data were collected from interviews with high-ranking administrators, operational personnel who were members of the civil service, and those who were members of private sector organizations as well as those from organizations for the physically challenged.

## Data Analysis

Having set the above diagram as a road map for gathering and interpreting the data the researcher proceeded to interviewing key informants and participating in relevant seminars organized by various agencies as well as doing the observation on the actual performance of several public places, e.g. special toilet rooms for the disabled at various petrol stations.

Apart from the in-depth interview with Thai personnel the researcher also contacted the Asia Pacific Center on Disability (APCD) located in Bangkok for a larger source of information. It has been revealed that those carrying out the implementation must possess a sense of duty.

Furthermore, private companies show their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in overtly supporting the implementation.

## FINDINGS

The findings are as follows: 1.) The implementation process of the public policy concerning disabled persons (or persons with disabilities) has to follow specific bureaucratic procedures of the Royal Thai Government including those specifically of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. It has been found, however, that concrete support from the relevant “political” circle is of some importance, e.g. as regards amount of budget allocation and through the upgrading of certain personnel, particularly those involved directly in the implementation process, since higher rank means higher authority to get things done for the disabled.

2.) The success in implementing the policy depends on the administrative skills as well as attentive dedication of various units of the official bureaucracy and those of the private sector, particularly in various organizations of the disabled.

3.) Bureaucratic mechanism puts much emphasis on hierarchical line of control and detailed regulations. To follow strictly such rigid line and rules would naturally impede the policy implementation in the interest of the disabled. Thus certain conscientious officials should discreetly resort to alternative ways which work but to be sure, does not strictly follow the letters of officially prescribed procedures, albeit not glaringly illegal.

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adapting to the circumstances in order to come up with certain measures of success and report practical problems to the higher authorities for future remedial measures and

5.) Despite a variety of obstacles in the implementation efforts the outcome has been on the plus side, e.g. as regards higher percentages of those who officially registered as “disabled” or “persons with disabilities” which legally entitles them to be beneficiaries of the policy of the Royal Thai Government in allotting opportunities, things and services in fulfillment of the quality of life of those with different categories of disabilities, in urban or rural areas, male or female, young or elderly in significant number to be eligible for proper service toward their better standard of living.

### CONCLUSION

The successful policy implementation depends not significantly on the formal position or assessment. The flesh and blood of the success depends significantly on the implementation, or “street-level” bureaucrats as mentioned by Pressman and Wildavsky (1979). Furthermore, the success of the implementation depends on the absorption of the philosophy that the disabled have their own dignity and worth and should be treated accordingly.

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