

resources and instruments, and this will lead to good policy performances (also called the output). This phase is aimed at the impact and side effects (also called the outcome). In this phase you assess the policy contents, the execution process and also the achieved results and then you can evaluate the impact/effects of the policy. Finally, the last phase is the feedback. In this phase you try to steer the policy on the basis of information about the contents, the process, the results and the effect of the policy (Ministerie van Financiën, 2003).

I have used these 5 phases as a guideline to see how the Department of Health has gone through these phases. So the understanding of a policy process of the strategic framework will be studied. According to van Heffen (as cited in Hill and Hupe) a study to the implementation of a policy requires a carefully analysis. Therefore it is needed to collect data on a systematic way, and by then I can give recommendations concerning the efficiency or effectiveness of the policy. For this study I have made use of qualitative and quantitative researches. These are complementary and can be used at the same time. With quantitative research I retrieve information of how the framework was initiated, prepared and implemented and while with a qualitative research I can investigate why a certain effect does take place or not (De Jong & Schellens, 2000).

Moreover, the preparation stage can be important in assessing good implementation even independent of their direct influence on the outcome of the framework, because they reflect how well the first stages of policy-making was organized and determine whether the first stages of policy making is properly completed. Whether the policy maker described well how they believe the framework is going to work, prior to its implementation. Such a description is important to predict the success of implementation.

Stages model

To explain the policy process I have used the stages model of Lasswell (as cited in Porter and Hicks, 1995) , because this is one of the oldest and most common approached to study the policy process (Porter and Hicks, 1995). Lasswell was the first that analysed the policy as a process that is organized in time and led by a number of specific mechanisms (Porter and Hicks, 1995). This model, stages model of policy, separates policy process in steps/stages. The stages are as follows:

- The *identification* of policy problems or issues, through demands for action;
- *Agenda-setting*, or focusing on specific problems/issues

- The *formulation of policy proposals*, the initiation and development, by policy-planning organizations, interest groups, and/or the executive or legislative branches of government;

- The *adoption of and rendering legitimate of policies* through the political actions of government, interest groups, political parties;

- The *implementation of policies* through bureaucracies, public expenditures, and the activities of executive agencies; and,

- The *evaluation* of a policy's implementation and impact.

Strengths and limitations of stages model

By breaking the policy process up into different stages brings strengths and limitations to this model. One major advantage is that it reduces the complexity of policy-making. Having stages makes the process manageable, analytical and it facilitate the understanding (Porter and Hicks, 1995). By separating the process into a series of identifiable steps, one can focus on the procedures and activities that are necessary to develop a policy, instead of losing oneself in the complexity of the overall policy process (Porter and Hicks, 1995). However, this model does

17

not primarily focus on the actors and institutions involved in policy-making but it rather focuses on the fact that policy-making is a comprehensive process (Porter and Hicks, 1995). Although this model is extremely important in the policy-making literature and this model is considered as a traditional approach by many authors, it has also been subject to criticism by some authors. The main limitation is that it is seen as a linearity model/policy cycle where the last stage (evaluation) overlaps with the first one (problem identification) (Porter and Hicks, 1995).

Managing the implementation process

Policy implementation is a process that must be managed (Grindle and Thomas, as cited in Sutton, 1999). According to Grindle and Thomas it requires consensus building, participation of stakeholders, conflict resolution, compromise, contingency planning, resource mobilization and adaptation. Plant and Smith has set out several key activities for successful implementation:

- Develop a plan; A skillfully designed plan to carry out the key activities to implement the policy successfully. Because most implementation failures result from lack of attention to how implementation is organized (Brynard, 2005).
- Develop a vision; Make sure the organization share one vision.
- Policy formulation. The writing of a policy has to be done skillfully because one cannot take the risk of wrong interpretations. Therefore clarity in phrasing and content are necessary and it provide clear guidance to those assigned of implementation (Smith, as cited in Brynard, 2005).
- The structure and personnel. The stability of the structure and the qualifications of the personnel who must implement the policy are important to understanding implementation. An unstable administrative organization and unqualified personnel may reduce the capacity to implement.
- The leadership of the administrative organization. It is important to have an individual or an agency that will give direction to the implementation. However, Crosby argued (as cited in Brynard, 2005) that in some situations it is difficult to identify a single individual or agency to lead the implementation. In such circumstances, leadership may be embodied in special task forces, commissions or coordinating committees.
- The implementing program and capacity. The program and capacity of the implementing organization refers to the intensity and care taken to organize the implementation. It also refers to the general capacity of the organization to meet the objectives of program implementation.

2.3 Organization THEORY

In this thesis I am taking an organizational perspective on implementation. I believe that the implementation process is an organizational issue and I want to research whether a failure of implementation is due to a lack in organization.

According to Man and Coun (2004) an organization is collaboration between people with a common goal. In this case, the Department of Health has set up a common goal that was described in the strategic framework in chapter 2. They are aiming to achieve a common result. Man and Coun (2004) stated the key roles of an organization are task allocation and coordination.

There is also a social context; also called a social structure within the people of the organization operate.

There are 3 organization concepts of how an organization is subdivided (Crosby, 1996):

1. Institutional organization: practical system of people and resources.

2. Instrumental organization: structure in which different parts and people are aligned together.
3. Functional organization: the organizing is central.

Organization as a system

Organizations are seen as a whole, just like systems (Man and Coun, 2004). To understand a system it is important to not only know the parts, but know the relationships of the different parts, as a whole. To fully understand how successful the implementation is, it is important to understand how well the different elements function and what their relation is with each other, then I can judge what their influence on the success of the implementation.

A system is a collection of elements with interrelated relations. The structure is the building of a stable system. The structure includes a set of positions, tasks and planning. The process includes the whole procedure in which the implementation is executed (Man and Coun, 2004).

The implementation process is a collective act rather something individual that employees can do without assistance (Weiner, 2009). It is necessary to coordinate the implementation activities due to job specialization and task interdependence (Weiner, 2009). Organizational issues like administrative coordination, resource allocation and technical support are related to a theory of implementation (Weiner, 2009). According to Weiner (2009) when collective use is important, than it makes sense to conceptualize implementation effectiveness as organization-level construct. Also then attention is given on organization-level determinants.

In this thesis it is assumed that successful implementation is a result of the organization of the process, the quality of the implementation plan and practices of the employees and the degree to which the employees perceive that the implementation of the framework is congruent with their own values (Olsen, 2007).

According to Mintzberg (as cited in Man and Coun, 2004) there are 5 parts of an organization:

- Key operation;
- Techno structure;
- Center line (managers);
- Strategic top;
- Supporting staff.

There are 6 coordination mechanisms according to Mintzberg (as cited in Man and Coun, 2004).

- Direct supervision;
- Mutual alignment;
- Standardization of work processes;
- Standard results;
- Standard knowledge and skills;
- Standard values, norms and beliefs.

Mintzberg (as cited in Man and Coun, 2004) proposes six basic organizational structures; each has a preference for its own form of coordination.

- Simple structure; direct supervision and strategic top
- Machine bureaucracy; standard working processes, techno structure
- Divisional form of organization; standard results, center line
- Professional bureaucracy; standard knowledge and skills, key operation
- Missionary organization; standard norms and values, culture

Adhocracy; mutual alignment, supporting staff

The professional bureaucracy will be the focus of this study, in which coordination comes from the standardization of knowledge and skills of employees. This kind of organization hires fully trained and indoctrinated specialists or professionals for the operating phase. Substantially this gives the specialists and professionals considerable control over their own work (Mintzberg as cited in Man and Coun, 2004). In a professional bureaucracy, the professional employees work independently from the other colleagues, but they work closely with their clients. They also generally resist efforts to standardize their work and they resist direct supervision. In such organizations, the accent is on the operating core (the professionals). There is also a support staff that will serve the operating core. Finally, the middle line of management in Mintzberg's professional bureaucracy is usually quite small, because of the small needs for direct supervision of the professionals. Organizational configuration relates to the grouping of work units, which provides the central aim of coordinating work in an organization (Mintzberg as cited in Man and Coun, 2004). It can be grouped by knowledge and skills (specialty), function, product, client, or place. According to Man and Coun (2004) the selection of a particular method of grouping has implications for the communication, differentiation, and coordination. I will use this type of organization to analyze the Department of Health of Hong Kong.

Having discussed the above theory of Mintzberg, I want to state that there are a number of factors noted in the literature that influence implementation of policies. In this case they are related to the organizational structure. Mintzberg (as cited in Man and Coun, 2004) defines organizational structure as "the sum total of the ways in which an organization divides its labor into distinct tasks and then achieves coordination among them."

Increasing the area of labor of the employees normally also increases the efficiency, but it may do so in an uncoordinated way. Increasing coordination will lead to more integrated efforts of the employees, but it often will reduce the efficiency. Thus, organizations must properly find a balance between differentiation (or specialization) and integration (or coordination) among the different parts to optimize organizational efficiency (Man and Coun, 2004).

Readiness of employees

The readiness of employees refers to the extent to which the employees (especially the implementers) are mentally and behaviorally prepared to make the changes in organizational practices that are necessary to put the implementation into practice (Bozeman and Bretschneider, 1994).

Shared values and beliefs

Problems may arise because implementation can only be successful when employees work together, but sometimes employees feel committed to implementation and some others do not. So according to Bandura (as cited in Olsen, 2007) it is important that employees share the same values and beliefs in their collective capabilities to organize and execute the framework which will lead to successful implementation.

According to Bandura (as cited in Olsen, 2007), the efficiency is higher when people share the same sense of confidence that collectively they can implement a certain policy or framework. I assume that when the Department of Health has a high sense of readiness that it is more likely that this will lead to a more successful implementation than organizations that have a low score of readiness.

As Crosby (1996) noted in his article, organizations are seen as instruments for making and implementing rational decisions. Therefore, one must take into account the understanding and control of organizational actors and organizational leaders. An organization can also be seen as a Weberian bureaucracy and one major concern was to

20

improve the understanding of how organizational structures and process can give a contribution to performance (Weiner, 2009). In this thesis I aimed to prove that the formal and informal structure of an organization (department of health) contributes to the performance (success of implementation). The key actions must be consciously planned. This is the most important key to implementation.

2.4 Policy IMPLEMENTATION THEORY

What is a theory of implementation? It is a theory that uses concepts and arguments to describe a causal change of events that produce an outcome of interest. As mentioned before, implementation can be defined as a course of action taken by the government to put into use a decision, procedure or program. When putting something new into use, like in this case the implementation of the strategic framework, the interest is in the initial phase of the process. Using a theory of implementation is therefore proficient because it uses concepts and arguments to predict or explain how actions taken by the government (initial phase) will result into success or failure of the implementation.

A theory of implementation can be distinguished in 2 types (Maskin & Sjöström, 2001):

- A program theory: predicts or explains how a program is supposed to work. It explains how or why the program activities address the determinants of the problem and generate desired outcomes. It predicts or explains implementation success. A good program theory can explain why implementation activities like planning, training and resource allocation) generated the desired outcome. Like why the strategic framework can reduce the cancer risk and the mortality rate.
- A program planning model: this is a model that is used as a tool to help researchers to identify high-quality programs based on the population needs and interests a plan will be developed for implementation and evaluation. This cannot be used for use as a theory of implementation because it does not offer a set of concepts and arguments that can be translated into testable hypotheses to predict or explain why implementation activities produce different outcomes.
- A theory of innovation adoption and diffusion.

Brinton Milward (as cited in DeLeon and DeLeon, 2002) has argued, "If policy researchers wish to improve the prospects for policy success, they would do well to focus their research on the relationship between agenda-setting and implementation".

According to Maskin and Sjöström (2001) those who make the decision in an organization are often not directly involved in implementing the decision. As stated before, implementation often requires collective behavior change by the employees. Therefore, in organizations, the adoption–implementation gap can be quite substantial. (Crosby, 1996). So using a theory of implementation picks up where the adoption is lacking. The theory seeks to explain and predict what happens after the adoption decision takes place (Maskin & Sjöström, 2001).

Bardach (as cited in Weiner, 2009) argues that policy implementation is much or more like a convention process: implementation is putting actions together from different sources, with perhaps rather different objectives than those were originally introduced and then reshaping those actions into a mechanism that is capable of producing the intended results. In chapter 3 a conceptual model will be designed, with the image of an orderly and predictable set of predetermined steps, leading to the success (or failure) of implementation.

According to DeLeon and DeLeon (2002), the tasks involved in policy implementation are: policy legitimation, constituency building, resource collection, organizational design and adjustment, mobilization of resources and actions, and monitoring impact. The implementation tasks are all strategic and not operational, unlike either program or project implementation (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002).

In the article of DeLeon and DeLeon (2002) they have stated that the first generation of implementation studies usually consisted of case study analyses. These case studies mostly considered the troubles that lay between the definition of a policy and the execution of it. The result of this first generation was

The end product of the first generation was a richness of fascinating idiographic case studies. Each case study has its own defined variables and prescribed lessons, but little in terms of a generic implementation theory (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002).

Kettl (as cited in DeLeon and DeLeon, 2002) stated that implementation research is generally a study of why things go wrong during the policy process. Moreover, implementation research has largely (but not exclusively) been based in intergovernmental programs, where organizational relationships are even more adhesive than usual, where goals are more harder to define than usual, and where success of implementation therefore seems unidentifiable (DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002).

Pressman and Wildavsky (as cited in Hill & Hupe, 2002) has defined implementation as "to carry out, accomplish, fulfill, produce, complete." Van Meter and Van Horn (as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002) provided a more specific definition. They have defined implementation as "a policy implementation encompasses those actions by public or private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions."

Implementation is according to Mazmanian and Sabatier (as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002:7) the carrying out of a basic policy decision.

The early implementation scholars already did research about the relationship between policy formation and the implementation of the policy and this has led to a debate between the "top-down" and "bottom-up" perspectives on policy implementation (Hill and Hupe, 2002).

Top-down and bottom-up perspective

According to Presman and Wildavsky, Sabatier and Mazmenien, the implementation of policy can be seen as a mechanical process which is isolated from the policy formation. According to them, implementation is a rational process that can be preplanned and controlled by the policy formulators. Therefore, these policy formulators keep control over the progression of stages that are described in the policy cycle. When these steps are completed well this will enable effective implementation.

The second perspective is the bottom-up perspectives (Lipsky, as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002). This perspective see policy implementation in a much more dynamic and interactive process. In their view, policy formulation and policy implementation are not strictly separated. Also, they believe that control over people and their behavior is not the way that will improve effective implementation. Instead of seeing human beings as chains in line of command, policy formulators should realize that policy is best implemented by what Elmore (as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002) called "backward mapping" of policies. This involves defining success in behavioral terms and not in the completion of a "policy hypothesis".

Although the top-down and bottom-up perspectives differ in a number of important respects, they both agree on the fact that loyalty or commitment of the policy implementer to the policy is obligated for effective policy implementation. As Sabatier (as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002:44) stated that one of the necessary conditions for effective implementation is that policy implementers must be committed and they must work skillfully. Furthermore, Van Meter and Van Horn (as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002:45) stated that there is a chance implementation may fail because implementers refuse to do what they are supposed to do.

Other recent policy implementation research found that members of an organization can do much to block policy implementation (Ewalt & Jennings, 2004:453).

According to Rist (as cited from Hills and Hupe, 2002), public policies are very often difficult to translate into action. In the 1970s there was a growth in studies that evaluated policies (Hargrove, 1975 as cited from Hill and Hupe). A top-down and bottom-up approach was used in a policy and this was influenced by the question of how to separate implementation from policy formation. The top-down approach came from Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky (as cited from Hill and Hupe, 2002). It was a rational model approach: policy sets goals, whilst implementation research is concerned with considering what then makes the achievement of those goals difficult (Parson and Ryan as cited from Hill and Hupe, 2002). Implementation is clearly defined as the mean for achieving the goals. In brief, the policy-makers had a goal, and this goal needed to be translated into action, therefore an implementation strategy was needed to reach this goal.

A more specific definition is provided by Van Meter and Van Horn (as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002): Policy implementation includes those actions by public or private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in preceding policy decisions. The scrutiny is that impact studies typically ask "What happened?" whereas implementation studies ask "Why did it happen?"

In an ideal policy cycle, policies are first formulated, and then implemented and in the end it will be put into practice. After a policy programme has been implemented it should be monitored and evaluated, which might lead to a reformulation of the policy (Hill & Hupe, 2002).

According to Mazmanian and Sabatier's (as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002) there are three types of variables that affect public policy implementation. I have analyzed the impact of the preparation stage on the strategic framework implementation using Mazmanian and Sabatier's general analytical model, which identifies three types of variables that affect public policy implementation. The advantage of this model is that it allows us to understand the variables activated by the authority to favor policy implementation. These variables are:

- Variables related to a problem's complexity (technical difficulties, behavioral diversity, scope of change);
- Statutory variables that structure policy implementation (clarity and coherence of objectives, clarity of a theory of causality, allocation of initial resources, coordination among institutions, possibility of intervention by outsiders, decision-making rules available to stakeholders).
- Non-statutory variables related to implementation context (socio-economic conditions, support from interest groups and stakeholders, stakeholders' leadership).

Some elements of the variables that are designed by Mazmanian and Sabatier will be used to compose my own conceptual framework, which will be described in chapter 3, that will determine the success (or failure) of the implementation of the strategic framework. Sabatier and Marmanian (as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002) have carried out research concerning the control of the implementation process. In this thesis it is stated that the preparation stage can control the implementation process. The efforts to structure implementation and other factors that may be crucial and have an impact on the implementation process will be highlighted. The interaction or relationships between the variables will be examined.

Van Meter and van Horn (as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002) suggested a model that links six variables to the production of an output. They see implementation as a process that starts as an initial policy decision. According to van Meter and van Horn, policy implementation encompasses those actions by public and private individuals that are aimed at the achieving the goals, like stated earlier in this thesis.

The six variables are:

- Policy standards and objectives: these must be concrete and more specific for measuring performance;

- Quality of inter-organizational relationships of employees;
- Characteristics of the implementation agencies: here you can think of issues such as organizational control, agency's formal and informal linkages within the policy-making;
- Economic, social and political environment;
- Implementers: one must take into account the cognition (comprehension, understanding) of the policy, the direction of the response of the implementers (acceptance, neutrality or rejection), and the intensity of the response of the implementers, and
- *The* decision about who takes on the implementation task. When someone is assigned the principal role in implementation it does not necessarily mean that it is equipped for the task. The actor may not consider the policy legitimate nor support it. Also, the actor may not have the adequate skills, sufficient resources or mechanisms to access resources, nor does the actor have the appropriate organizational structure or plan for implementing the policy.

These six variables have led to factors that are used in the questionnaire that is used to retrieve information (see appendix 2). According to Hill and Hupe (2002), the characteristics of a policy will affect its implementation and determine the success of it.

According to van Heffen (as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002) the first step is to describe precisely and systematically the framework in relation with the policy context. This is necessary because the implementation process is precisely the border line between the policy and the society in which the policy addresses. So when one is analyzing the implementation process it is important to describe an as much as realistic representation of the relations and parts of the framework and the policy field. However, when a policy is well implemented, it does not necessarily mean that the policy was effective. It takes years after the implementation before one can measure the effects. Therefore, the effects are not examined in this study.

The institutional perspective influences the decision-making

The institutional perspective provides a descriptive and explanatory framework for the functioning of coordination mechanisms within a society. The institutional context limits the action of decision-making (Hoogerwerf, as cited in Keman, 1999).

According to Visser and Hemerijck (as cited in Keman, 1999), there are three ways that the institutional context will influence the rules of policy-making:

- The political system is determined in an institutional context, where the amount of power of actors will be defined;
- The relationship of the actors in the decision-making process has an influence on how policy will be made. For example, in a system where consensus is important there will be a different kind of policy than in a system where representation of interests are important;
- The content of the policy and the instruments that are used depends on the way politics is practiced, because the content and structure are strongly policy related.

Policy implementation is a relatively little studied phenomenon compared to policy formulation and decision making (Hill, 1997). The reason for the little research to implementation is because of the difficulty of separating the processes policy implementation from policy formulation. As mentioned before in Chapter 2, the top-down approach says that the formulation phase and the implementation are happening in different stages, but in practice there is often no sharp division between these two phases (Hill and Hupe, 2002). Policy-makers see the implementation phase as an extension of the decision-making process. And therefore, I have used the phases of the stages model as theory where the steps formulation, implementation, evaluation are clearly separated. In

practice, it is difficult to distinguish where formulation ends and implementation and this may causes difficulty. This problem was solved by using the stages model as frame of reference.

Implementation can be studied from several different perspectives, including that of the policy maker, those responsible for actually implementing the policy, or target groups at whom the policy is directed (Mazmanian and Sabatier, as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002). When analyzing the implementation I have used the perspective from the policy maker. My basic concern is the extent to which the preparation stage is completed, this includes all actions are carried out exactly as planned, clear objectives, well completed process, and to gather information from the policy makers I can judge whether the implementation was a success or failure.

Analyzing the policy implementation, a nine step model of policy implementation can be considered (Hogwood and Gunn, as cited in Comtois Rodrigue & Slack, 2009):

1. When implementing a policy there must be an adequate time frame and resources for the implementation. The policy may be well prepared and appropriate, but it may fail because the implementation of the policy took longer or it was more expensive than budgeted. Also, the implementing organization must have adequate staff and resources to carry out the policy.
2. The assumption of policy and theory must be compatible. A theory may be a valid option in come circumstances but sometimes not politically acceptable.
3. The cause and effects of relationships in the policy must be direct and tidy. A successful policy must be based on clear and unambiguous relationships to prevent misunderstanding.
4. Dependency relationships should be kept to a minimum. If the organization in charge of implementing the policy has to rely on other actors to it carry out, the more fragmented will become the authority. This will lead to a situation where the organization has to be dependent of other actors which sometimes not share the same interest.
5. The basic goals of the policy need to be agreed upon and understood among all the actors. All actors in the policy process must possess a clear understanding of the policy and what is required to carry out the implementation. All actors must understand the policy and have knowledge about their tasks and roles in carrying it out.
6. The tasks of the actors must be specified in an appropriate cycle process. Implementation is seen as a process with connected steps from conception till the end. If the steps are not carried out in the correct sequence the policy implementation may fail.
7. Communication and coordination among the actors need to be on the same distance. Those implementing the policy have to possess the same information. Also, they have to interpret it in the same way, and they have to communicate well with each other for the implementation to succeed.
8. There must be compliance among the actors. Those agencies involved in implementing the policy must work towards total compliance. It is stated that often policies are formulated but their compliance is lacking. This results in a failure of implementation.
9. Policy evaluation and maintenance. The implementation stage is not the final step in the policy cycle process. The effectiveness of the policy needs to be evaluated after a certain period of time, and the steps must be taken to ensure that there are resources to maintain a successful policy. This has to be done in order to prevent that a policy would be replaced by other newer initiatives.

So it is assumed in this paper that successful policy implementation depends on several factors. This also includes the following factors that enhance the policy implementation and are linked to the initial policy decision. The following three factors are identified by Keuning et al. (2004):

Structure of the organization. The way that an organization has been divided into departments, the level of (de)centralization and the level of involvement of advisory board members and others in the decision-making process.

Quality of communication. The communication process can negatively affect the quality of decision making. It is important that there are adequate and open communication channels within the organization. Great care must be taken when interpreting information or messages from other actors.

Motivation of employees. An individual's motivation plays an important role in decision making. The organization should strive for the employee's motivation that is in line with the objectives of the organization.

Other important factors that influence the implementation are (Hill and Hupe, 2002):

A policy must have clear and consistent objectives;

The expected results of the policy must be shared by the key actors of the policy process;

An adequate causal theory is needed; unless the policy is based on a clear and accurate theory that is needed in order to achieve the desired goals as described;

An institutional structure of implementation influences the implementation and;

Coordination and monitoring of the policy. In the literature, these are considered to be highly related to policy implementation.

So policy analysis consists of the understanding of the forces that influence why and how policies are initiated, formulated, negotiated, communicated, implemented and evaluated (Hill and Hupe, 2002). It is a systematic study of the policy process that looks at the goals that can be achieved when actors behave strategically.

Doing implementation research helps to establish a well-defined body of literature that can be retrieved by others. Moreover, it will be subjected to replication and critical to examination whether it was done correctly or not. As other researchers have done before me, with this thesis I want to make a contribution toward the understanding of policy implementation.

In the next chapter, chapter 3, a combination of the different elements/factors as described in this chapter will be used for the design of a conceptual framework. In this framework the factors that contribute to the success of implementation are included.

3. Conceptual framework

3.1 Conceptual MODEL

The previous chapter gave an overview of the Hong Kong health system and discussed the literature and theories used for this thesis. This section will attempt to expose a self-designed conceptual model to better understand what issues need to be addressed to answer the research question. The model, where this research is based on, is developed on behalf of the used theories and it can be found in figure 1. With this model I tried to predict the success of implementation. There are many factors concerning implementation that can be identified that still need more research. Nevertheless, this study will only look at a certain aspect of implementation – the preparation stage. The hypothesis is verified through interviews with policy makers and implementing agents and other actors (citizens, nurses, and doctors) involved in the process of implementing the strategic framework. Also questionnaires were used to verify the hypothesis. It is obvious that the success of policy implementation should be assessed on the basis of particular criteria.

This study employs the extent to which the preparation stage was organized and prepared. The preparation stage and the initiated activities occur as the main criterion for successful implementation of the strategic framework. In order to visualise the research question and give a clear overview of which variables are involved and how they are interlinked, the research idea of this thesis can be translated into a conceptual model as can be seen below. It is assumed in this thesis that the succes of implementation is dependent of six variables e.g. clarity and coherence objectives, participation, internal communication, structure and desired outcome.

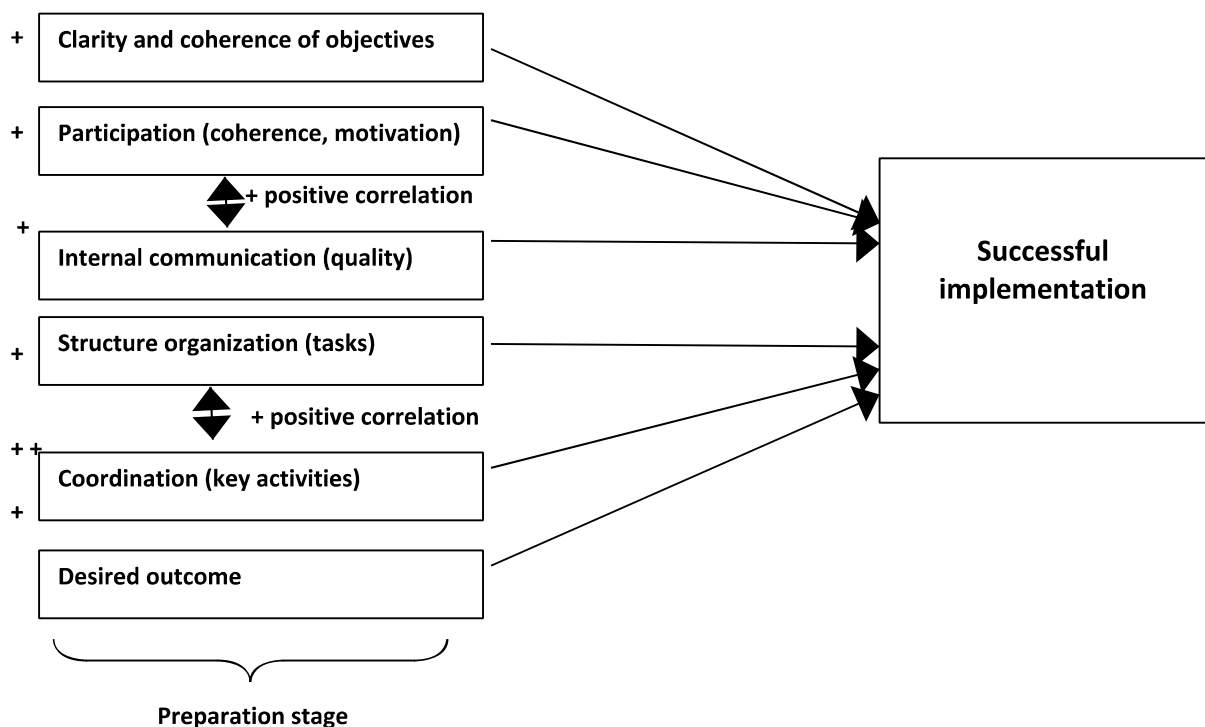


Figure 1: Model with the proposed relationships between the six independent variables and the dependent variable successful implementation.

Determinants of successful implementation:

- Clarity and coherence of objectives
- Participation (coherence, motivation)
- Internal communication (quality)
- Structure organization (tasks)
- Coordination (carrying out of the key activities)
- Desired outcome

The variables will be described and explained in the next section.

3.2 Definition Variables

This section of the paper identifies and describes variables which are believed to be related to the success of a policy in achieving its goals. The variables identified draw heavily upon a model of the policy process developed by Mazmanian and Sabatier on the work done by Keuning et al., and on the policy analysis research of van Meter and van Horn, and the policy cycle model.

In order to test the hypotheses, a dependent variable (success of implementation) and a set of independent variables that were believed to be related to and cause the success of policy implementation are defined. There are two main variables that can be distinguished in this framework. The **Independent Variable** *Preparation stage* and the **Dependent Variable** *successful implementation*. The meaning of these variables will be explained in this section.

It is suggested in this thesis that the preparation stages of the public policy process affect policy implementation in a significant way. And if the steps of the policy cycle are not completed well, then there will be no success guaranteed when implementing the policy. A description of the variables will be given that affects the success of implementation.

Variables and their measurement

Independent variable

A measure of the level of policy implementation was needed to construct the independent variable. As I have described in chapter 2, implementation will be judged as successful when the guiding principles which include: Revision of NCD targets through the setting up of specific committees, provision of balanced health-care, disease prevention and health promotion. These tasks must be carried out well and in order to judge that, I have used the information from the interviews. However, to achieve the above, a well completed preparation stage is required through the unified actions of different committees and stakeholders working together. So the 'preparation stage' is seen as the independent variable in this thesis.

Dependent variable

The dependent variable in this conceptual framework is *successful implementation*. This variable entails how successful the implementation is when the preparation stage is carried out well. The visualised relationships between these variables have to be tested in order to be able to justify the conceptual model itself. Before any tests or analysis can be carried out, hypotheses are being formulated in section 3.3.

Successful implementation

Before discussing the *factors* that are influencing the successful implementation of a policy decision, it is necessary to define what is meant by 'success' or 'successful policy implementation'.

It could be defined as the policy implementation initiative, that was considered by the Department of Health, to have delivered the *intended* policy decisions and to have achieved the *intended* outcomes as described in the Strategic Framework. So in order to qualify the implementation as successful, the policy decision must be carried out and been delivered in a manner in the society that it achieved the expected objectives and the intended outcomes. In addition, the role of the manager can play a role in increasing the chance of achieving a successful outcome (Turner, as cited in Hill and Hupe, 2002).

The definition of success factors includes both *controllable* and *uncontrollable* factors that have the power to influence a successful outcome. The key to a successful policy implementation programme is therefore, knowing the success factors and make a good and well defined preparation plan to implement the program or policy.

Objectives

Literature has stated that the formulation of the initiative is related to policy implementation. Longest (as cited in Weiner, 2009) states that one factor that contributes to successful outcomes for policies is "the clarity of the policy itself, its solution, and the particular actions directed by the policy, and in the inherent language expressing its goals and objectives". Because the success of a policy implementation depends upon establishing clear goals. If there are multiple objectives they must be consistent in order to prevent misunderstanding. So a clear defined vision and objectives are important. I have included a question to measure the clearness (CLEAR) "how clear were the vision and goal defined in the framework? " Answers on a five-point scale ranged from "not clear at all" to "very clear".

Participation

Participation is one of the key elements for successful implementation. In some cases, research has shown that when workers voluntarily participated in the process, implementation was much higher than when the intervention was forced upon them (May, 2003). When using implementers in the policy development process, this may lead to deeper understanding of and commitment to the new policy. It can also provide lead time for those who are responsible for the implementation. Bunker (as cited in Stine & Ellefson, 1995) has stated that if policy implementers are not used in the policy development process, the operational plans are likely to meet resistance, either out of resentment or ignorance of intent.

However, by communicating procedures, intent, and other information, it is possible to foster an atmosphere of participation in the organization, even though not everyone may be directly involved in every decision that is made in a policy. Therefore, besides measuring direct involvement, participation in a broader sense can also be evaluated by measuring the levels of understanding and agreement about particular issues.

The most direct method of participation is actual involvement in the policy development process. Direct participation in the policy making process (INVOLVED) was measured by asking, for each of the six policies, "How involved were you in the development of this framework?" Responses on a five-point scale ranged from "not involved at all" to "involved very much."

By formulation a policy it is important that the actors agree with each other to set up a strategic framework and therefore, agreement (AGREE) was measured by the response to the statement "Indicate your overall level of agreement with this framework," choosing from a five-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

Finally, I have noticed that not only implementers were involved in the first stage of policy making, but also academic, professionals etcetera were involved and therefore it is important that the understanding (UNDERSTAND) was measured by asking "How well do you understand the issues related to the implementation this framework?" Answers ranged from "no understanding" to "full understanding."

Communication

Communication, both vertical and horizontal, is viewed as a key factor in policy implementation. The quality of communication can affect the decision-making positive or negative. In general, the more communication that occurs within an organization, the greater the adoption of a policy (Scheirer, as cited in Stine & Ellefson, 1995). Communication provides linkages among units and can take several forms, for example written reports and memos, direct contact. But also phone and face-to-face conversations), liaison position and task forces (Galbraith and Nathanson, as cited in Stine & Ellefson, 1995). It is a gestalt based on employees' shared information, discussions and experiences about the implementation of the policy.

Communication plays a crucial role in defining the success of implementation, because it features the written communication and direct contact between the policy makers and implementers. How many meetings, how many face to face contacts (discussions) they have, written memos and reports show the degree of effort in which the employees implement the framework. Is the communication mostly sent from above? Respondents were asked how many times they communicate with people within the organization? (COMMU) Response points on the five-point scale included: none, about 1-3 times per month, about 1-3 times per week, about 1-3 times per day, and 4 or more per day. Was this someone with a function higher or below you? (Yes/no). But I also included a question "What was a more usual medium?" Possible answers were: face-to-face, documents (memos or reports), phone, discussions, and meetings.

Structure organization (Position and tasks)

Ewalt and Jennings (2004) mentioned the importance of administration when implementing policy. Position and tasks could be defined as the ability to make decisions about the kind of work to be done and how the work will be accomplished by the employers (Ellefson, 1992). The variables in this category were divided into the categories of influence, reliance, and authority. The position, motivation and task of the employer is also an important key factor for the success of the implementation, because it is dependent on how the implementer (employer) divide and coordinate their work, what the position is of the implementer(s) within the organization, and how good they are motivated (top down coordination) to deliver good work (successful implementation). What is also important is to know what steps are taken and in what order to implement the framework. Question asked: "Were clear rules and regulations that address directly the intend of the policy developed" Answers could be: "yes" or "no".

Influence measured how much say people in various units had on the work that was done. Two questions were asked regarding influence, "How much direct influence does each of the people below have on the implementation of the framework?" Are we expected to do this? The five possible responses were "none", "a little", "some", "quite a bit", and "very much".

Is there agreement on the problem? If there is no agreement that a problem exists, it is unlikely that a strong policy response will be forthcoming. Policies are more likely to succeed when there is widespread recognition of a problem and its causes of the problem.

Reliance was a measure of how much the respondents were depended on various people to accomplish their task. Two questions were asked to measure the level of reliance, "To obtain the materials, clients, or information needed to do your job, how much do you rely on other people?" (RELY) and "To fulfill your work responsibilities, how much do you depend on other people?" (DEPEND). Again, the five possible responses were "none", "a little", "some", "quite a bit", and "very much." And if so, can you name some of the people you rely and depend on?

Authority looked specifically at how much control individuals had over their work. They were asked "How much authority do you have to make decisions. Answers could be "none", "a little", "some", "quite a bit", and "very much". What does the institutional context look like? Answers could be "formal decision-making procedures", "communication rules", and "informal relations between the several actors involved". And "were appropriate accountability procedures instituted in the organization" Answers could be "yes" or "no".

Coordination (carrying out of the key activities)

It is important to know how the key activities are carried out and how these are coordinated. It is stated in chapter two that among the actors it is important that they are on the same level to make the implementation work. This is also agreed by the organization theory as described in chapter two.

Desired outcome

Desired outcome was defined as whether the initiated activities actually occur. To measure this I have included the question (OUTCOME) "Did the activities initiated in the framework occur?" Response choices were "None occur", "a little occur", "some activities occur", "quite a bit", "all occur". Having implemented a policy or framework, this may lead to short-term and/or long-term outcomes. When the intended outcomes are not achieved, than this may lead to the development of new policies or changes in the current implementation approach. So it is important to not neglect the aspect of determining the extent to which the policy was implemented as intended in the analysis.

3.3 Hypothesis

In this section the hypothesis of the study will be described. A hypothesis is a testable statement (van Thiel, 2007). Research may confirm or reject a hypothesis. According to van Thiel (2007) a hypothesis contains the following elements: the conditions under which a particular factor by a certain mechanism leads to a result.

A conceptual model has been set up, and specific hypotheses are formulated for testing the framework. The results of these tests will show if the hypotheses are true or false and thus, can either be accepted or rejected.

The first hypothesis (H1) of this thesis is: *The preparation stage that is in theory considered important for the success of the implementation will be seen as important in the actual implementation process.*

Consistent with the information as described in chapter two, six indicators were chosen that will influence the success of the implementation. The main construct is the preparation stage. And this is divided into five indicators which are:

- Clarity and coherence of objectives
- Participation (coherence, motivation)
- Internal communication (quality)
- Structure organization (tasks)
- Coordination (carrying out of the key activities)
- Desired outcome

Since the variables will have an impact on the success of implementation, I will put them into a regression model. Dependent variables are indices of the policy formation. The “X” are the determinants: in this case it are the objectives, communication, structure, coordination and desired outcome that will have an impact on the success of the implementation. So the “Y” is the success of implementation. I have involved semi-structured interviews to gather information about the framework, and used questionnaires to identify the organizational aspects. By doing so I have tested the following hypotheses:

H2: Coordination is the most important aspect of the implementation and has a significant effect on the success of implementation.

Even though the implementation process can be divided in different parts, coordination is considered the most important element of which the implementation consist of. It is the carrying out of the activities and whether these are coordinated well.

H3: There is a positive relationship between the variables participation and communication.

H4: There is a positive relationship between the variables structure and coordination

In order to answer these hypotheses data is gathered and analyzed.

The relationship between the variables have to be tested with SPSS in order to answer the main research question and the sub-questions. And also, with the retrieved results, the formulated hypotheses can be either accepted or rejected.