

Implementation Failure : A Framework for Analysis

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1. Introduction

The academic study of policy implementation has expanded since early 1970's, especially since the publication of Pressman and Wildavsky's *Implementation* (1973) (O'Toole, 1986 : 181). Despite this research explosion, two significant gaps exist in the literature : one conceptual and the other strategic. Conceptually, there has been a methodological and analytical change in the study of implementation, from simple "top-down" method to complex "bottom up" approach. Yet neither of them excludes the other. Indeed, while the simple top-down model has been modified, the essential perspective remains. The complex bottom-up approach can explain "the complexity of joint action" and problem orientation of the implementation process very well. This approach, however, is vulnerable to criticism because it does not develop clear standards of implementation success or failure (sabatier & Mazmanian, 1983 : 9~11). If clear standards do not

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exist, the study of implementation will be unable to produce any practical prescriptions. It is important that the implementation of a policy should be evaluated in terms of failure or success, in order to obtain feedback for implementors or fixers who ultimately try to enhance the quality of our lives.

With regard to a gap in strategic thinking, few scholars offer specific ways to bring about desired ends, once they have been decided (Stone, 1985 ; Nutt, 1986 ; Burke, 1987). Of course, scholars reviewing previous policy cases offer some advice along these lines (Sabatier & Mazmanian, 1983 ; Bardach, 1977). However, much of this advice is related to the issue of enhancing productivity within implementing organizations (Ferman & Levin, 1987), and is largely retrospective in focus. Indeed, few studies refer prospectively to the long-term and consistent strategic efforts to enhance implementation success. To increase the possibility of implementation success geared toward improving the quality of life, it is certainly necessary to develop strategies that allow and encourage both individuals and organizations to “learn how to learn” from past experiences.

In this paper, I first conceptualize implementation in two ways : implementation as a series of technical activities, and implementation as a decision making process. Second, I classify implementation structures into hierarchical top-down structures and interdependent bottom-up structures. Third, I present two criteria for implementation that policy implementors should consider—goal achievement and the realization of normative values. These two criteria are essential for measuring implementation success and failure. This allows me to identify and categorize implementation failures in both the top-down and the bottom-up approaches. In the process, four types of implementation failure are identified. Finally, I will discuss how implementors might minimize the possibility of failure by applying theories of operant conditioning borrowed from the learning theory literature.

2. Conceptualizing Implementation

A. Implementation as a series of technical activities : simple execution of a law

For most of our history, implementation has been regarded as the proper domain of the executive branch. According to Hargrove, a new awareness of the importance of implementation began in the aftermath of the Great

Society (Hargrove, 1975). This implies that in the period before the Great Society, implementation was taken for granted as routine execution of legislative mandates. The failure to appreciate implementation as an area of study resulted from the dominance of policy formulation studies in public administration. For example, Paul Appleby emphasized the role of policy making in public bureaucracy instead of paying more attention to the implementation process (Appleby, 1949). He failed to demonstrate a proper concern for implementation by focusing on policy formulation.

Before theories about policy making or decision making in public administration emerged, the administrative process was seen as a series of activities carried out according to the guidelines of a given law. As Woodrow Wilson argued in "The Study of Administration," public administration was the execution of law and a matter of technical efficiency (Wilson, 1887 : 197~222). During that period, implementation was considered a simple technical activity (e.g., delivering goods and services efficiently to the public), because politicians and political scientists preferred to limit the discretion of bureaucrats in order to prevent abuses of power. Administrative officers should be confined to a small, technically feasible amount of discretion by Congress (Finer, 1941 : 337~338). Weber's conceptualization of administration is very similar to the idea of implementation as a series of technical activities, in that his bureaucrats, who possess highly technical and scientific knowledge, are to follow clearly defined behavioral guidelines (Weber, 1947 : 328~335).

B. Implementation as a Decision Making Process

Implementation has been portrayed as a decision making process composed of individual decision-making behavior (Simon, 1947a). This conceptualization differs from the first in terms of implementors' abilities, their discretion, and their task environment. While the rational activities of bureaucrats are assumed in the first conceptualization, the second emphasizes the cognitive limitations of decision-makers in the implementation process. Cognitive limitations on human decision-making are inevitable, thus, implementors have to be satisfied with bounded rationality (Simon, 1947a).

The implication for implementation of bounded rationality is that implementors, as decision makers, require additional information from others such as superiors, subordinates, other agencies, and interest groups to overcome their cognitive limitations. As a result, networks of decision-

making—or implementation structures (Hjern and Porter, 1981)—play major roles in the process.

It is also important to note that while technical conceptualization assumes that little discretion should be given to implementors, the decision making perspective assumes that an adequate amount of discretion must be provided for successful implementation. For example, Friedrich describes the necessity of maximizing an implementor's discretion given the complexity of most social problems (Friedrich, 1940 : 3~24). Long also supports the idea of bureaucratic discretion in implementing policy from the viewpoint of the bureaucratic power paradigm (Long, 1949 : 257~264). Today, most scholars recognize the existence of bureaucratic discretion in policy areas. This implies that implementation should be regarded as a dynamic and discretionary decision process that can not be effectively controlled by mandates and external supervision.

An additional difference bolstering the conceptualization of implementation as a decision making process is that the environment of bureaucracy has changed very rapidly, especially in the 20th century. These changes have transformed the tasks of bureaucracy from simple service delivery activities (e.g., the postal service) to majoritarian politics and third party government (J. Q. Wilson, 1975 : 77~103). Moreover, environmental differentiation due to economic and social development has complicated administrative structures, procedures, and processes further. The interdependence and interaction between implementing agencies and environmental forces such as interest groups and government contractors have necessitated compromise and bargaining, and thus increased the delegation of discretion to implementors. This aspect of politics in public administration inevitably supports the concept of implementation as decision making because politics is composed of a set of decision making processes such as bargaining, compromise, and cooptation. Indeed, terms such as subsystem and subgovernmental politics, iron triangles, and issue networks reflect the complex context in which decisions take place.

In conclusion, although the former conceptualization of implementation—a series of technical activities—may be applied to the mechanics of implementation (e.g., AIDS testing, and mail delivery), it has significant deficiencies when it comes to explaining the strategic dimensions (or “games”) of the implementation process (Bardach, 1977). Instead, the latter conceptualization—implementation as a decision-making process—is more useful because it portrays the implementation process more realistically. It is important to note, however, that the decision-making process has been

viewed in two ways. In general, the top-down approach makes a distinction between formulation and implementation, while the bottom-up approach does not. Both, however, interpret implementation as decision-making processes. We now turn to the specifics of these two distinctive perspectives.

3. Implementation Structures

A. The Hierarchical Top-Down Perspective of Implementation

Sabatier describes the top-down structure of implementation as the process of achieving objectives which are provided by statutes, or policy decisions (Sabatier, 1986 : 21~22). This approach includes administrative units, lower level implementors and target groups in "the boundary of a manageable comprehensive plan of an agency in the pursuit of compliance" (Sabatier 1986 : 25). Basically, the hierarchical top-down perspective results in agency-centered implementation. The main concerns here are the structural characteristics of successful implementation. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to fully elaborate all of the characteristics of this approach, four in particular reveal its merits and limitations.

The first important assumption of the top-down perspective is that mandates are provided by political processes such as congressional decision-making (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1983 : 20). This means that the objectives of implementation are determined externally. Elmore clarified this point by observing that "forward mapping of a federal policy might begin with a statement of congressional intent" (Elmore, 1982 : 19). This means that policy formulation is identified as beyond the implementor's reach.

The second assumption of the top-down approach is that central control is critical for successful implementation. Centralization of power, and limited discretion with clearly defined objectives, are regarded as the basic tools of policy implementation. The idea of centralization in implementation can be supported by the argument that "hierarchical integration within and among implementing institutions" tends to increase the possibility of implementation success (Sabatier, 1983 : 27). In these situations, the views of senior officials are adopted routinely (Dunsire, 1978). The concept of centralization assumes that "policy makers control the organizational, political, and technological processes that affect implementation" (Elmore, 1982 : 20). Critics contend that centralization of structure does not allow sufficient

discretion for street level bureaucrats or lower level implementors (Ostrom 1974 ; Thompson, 1984). In their view, the traditional view of administration for efficiency is closely related to the centralized structure of implementation. In sum, centralization of implementation not only integrates the inner organizational component into a means-end chain, but also constructs the relationship among other relevant agencies in a hierarchical fashion.

The third assumption of the top-down perspective is that an implementation structure composed of fewer actors can increase the chances for successful implementation—an idea consistent with that of centralized implementation (O’Toole, 1986 : 189). From the perspective of the top-down approach, the conventional wisdom is that the greater the number of actors involved, the more the chance of implementation success decreases (Durant, 1984 : 305 ; O’Toole and Montjoy, 1984 : 491).

The fourth assumption of the hierarchical top-down implementation perspective is that management principles or “managerial orthodoxy” can be adopted, and provide the expected efficiency and effectiveness in implementing policy. Linder and Peters describe this characteristic of top-down implementation as closely approximating “perfect administration” (Linder & Peters, 1987 : 463). Quantitative devices of rational decision making such as Linear Programming and Benefit Cost Analysis, and as well as organizational development, causal theory, and decision rules of implementing agencies (Sabatier, 1983 : 25~26) can be regarded as tools for securing implementation success.

B. The Bottom-Up Perspective of Implementation

Just as cultural conditions make people think differently about the same phenomena, the paradigms on which researchers depend lead them to emphasize different aspects of the same phenomena. The interdependent bottom-up perspective is the product of the observation, through a different perspective, of the same implementation process that the hierarchical top-down approach tries to explain. With an open system perspective, the interdependent bottom-up perspective affords a clearer and more accurate understanding of the implementation process in a pluralistic society. It assumes that institutions, organizations, and actors are indispensably interlocked with each other with environmental imperatives conditioning their survival. Furthermore, it argues that important transactions take place among organizations and their counterparts in the environment. Bargaining, compromise, and politics are regarded as the common means that are used

to define and solve complex problems. Gradual changes and evolution should occur on the basis of marginal adjustment.

The first assumption of this approach is that implementation is a problem solving process. Problems are "solved" by street level bureaucrats who have and require discretion and experience. As a result, street level bureaucrats are able to interpret policy and to develop defense mechanisms against possible attack from policy makers (Weatherley and Lipsky, 1977 : 172~196). Several scholars support this assumption by arguing that bureaucratic expertise, experience, and the professionalization of bureaucracy allow for an increase in the amount of power delegated to subordinates for policy making and implementation (Rourke, 1984 ; Seidman & Gilmour, 1986). The autonomous power of subordinates can be derived from discretion in translating orders and vague goals, as well as from the lack of close oversight by superiors (Downs, 1967 : 134~136). Accepting that street level bureaucrats exercise power, Elmore stressed the positive role of bureaucratic discretion for problem solving : "it is not the policy and the policy maker that solve the problem, but some one with immediate proximity . . . problem solving requires skill and discretion" (Elmore, 1982 : 28). In general, the advocates of the bottom-up approach tend to accept the assumption that problems are, in reality, perceived and solved by lower bureaucrats exercising their discretion.

The second assumption of this perspective is that implementation strategies should start with target group reaction or desired outcomes. This is what Elmore (1987) called "backward mapping" or "reversible logic". It is quite different from the top-down or "forward mapping" approach which considers "implements" first and later, the reaction of target groups (Elmore, 1985 : 33~70). Since it is based on "reversible logic", the perception of lower level bureaucrats about the problems becomes important. The interaction between lower level bureaucrats and target groups is the initial focus of the bottom-up structure. As a problem perceiver as well as a problem solver, a lower level bureaucrat is expected to play a crucial role in enhancing the possibility of implementation success. But the problem definition and solving power of street level bureaucrats is restricted by the influences of target groups during the process of "mutual adaptation"

The third assumption of the bottom-up approach is that multiple actors participate in the implementation process, thus forming a structure of interdependence among strategic actors. This aspect is described by many scholars as a "seamless web", a "system of interlocking parochial solutions" (Elmore, 1985 : 33~35), a "network of actors" (Sabatier, 1986 : 31~35), a

combination of “organization rationale and program rationale” (Hjern and Porter, 1981 : 211~217). In fact, the complexity of the implementation process has been very well recognized. Wildavsky and Pressman depicted this as a “complexity of joint action” and Bardach called it the “implementation game”. In addition, broader contexts that can explain the complexity of implementation were suggested by March & Olson as well as Landau. “The New Institutionalism” (March and Olson, 1984 : 734~738) alerted us to two factors : the independence among agencies, and the relative autonomy of separate institutions. Likewise, Landau (1979 : 148~156) implies that environmental “uncertainty” reduces the independence of public agencies from each other and from interest groups. The interdependence between public agencies was well illuminated in the works of Ingram (1977 : 499~527), O’Toole and Montjoy (1984 : 491~503) and Ripley and Franklin (1986). In addition, the internal structure of an implementation agency is not likely to be tightly linked or “coupled”. Because of (1) interdependence among multiactors, (2) professionals with considerable discretion, and (3) uncertainty, nominal subordinates and superiors maintain a reciprocal dependency relationship, rather than a formal hierarchical one.

The final assumption of the bottom-up structure is that implementation depends on evolution by mutual adjustment or natural selection rather than by programmed or artificial feedback processes. Since the bottom-up perspective emphasizes the value of bargaining and compromise, it tends not to be driven by an overarching goal, but rather by an adaptation process among competing goals. Bargaining and competition among multiactors may result in learning which is useful or functional to an organization. However, we can not guarantee that learning will occur.

4. Two Criteria of Implementation

As the preceding has illustrated, implementation does not occur in a vacuum. Implementation is oriented toward realizing certain desirable and expected states of affairs as determined by either legislative decision or by bottom-up processes. For convenience, this “end-state” can be called, “desirability”. Desirability, however, is such an abstract and vague concept that we need to break it into more concrete dimensions applicable to implementation study. Two criteria are inferred from desirability. The first is instrumental and refers to goal achievement, while the second is normative and refers to the value implications of implementation.

A. Goal Achievement

In theory, goal achievement means that implementation provides highly desirable outcomes in terms of performance and productivity. It concentrates on what implementors have done, rather than what they should do. The administrative efficiency model, borrowed from Yates (Yates, 1982 : 20 ~32), may be a good instrument to explain this imperative because it favors the priorities of efficiency and professional expertise. This imperative stems from classical managerial concerns ("the managerial orthodoxy") and from recent studies of governmental productivity. To understand this imperative further, one might review the managerial tradition of bureaucracy as outlined by Rosenbloom (Rosenbloom, 1983), Goodsell's empirical study of bureaucratic efficiency (Goodsell, 1983), and contemporary studies of productivity in the public sector (Burkhead and Hennigan, 1978, Poister and McGowan, 1984, Quinn, 1978, Poister and Greiner, 1985, Adams, 1979). All show the importance and the necessity of discussing rationality, effectiveness, productivity, and efficiency in the process of achieving public goals.

In practice, one might expect to identify the goal achievement imperative by reviewing stated statutory objectives. In reality, however, goals are often unclear, contradictory, and unranked in priority given the nature of the legislative bargaining process. Still, identifying and evaluating various objectives is possible. For instance, in the EDA program of Oakland, the goal achievement imperative was to create as many jobs as possible with given resources, —i. e., maximization of efficiency. In the case of New Towns In Town, begun in 1979, the objective was to create the maximum number of model new communities on federally-owned land in large urban areas.

In sum, goal achievement is best operationalized as satisfactory problem solving, efficiency, productivity and effectiveness. However, this is not a necessary and sufficient condition of implementation success ; goal achievement does not tell us how consistent successful implementation is with normative values in a democratic society.

B. Normative Values

Most students of public policy would concede that statutes, mandates, or agreements usually include politically and socially integrated values within them. Thus, even though the implementation goals are decided by public officials, they reflect decision makers' perceptions of societal values and

justice. In terms of valuative decisions, “bureaucratic decisions are deeply value-laden” (Yates, 1982 : 83 ; also see, Albrow, 1970 : 55).

The normative aspect of implementation is present whenever we ask the question “(efficient) implementation for what?” Several subfields offer answers to this question : political philosophy, social justice theory, critical theory, interpretive theory, and the new public administration. From the public administration perspective, it is useful to examine the critical values or norms relevant to implementation discussed by Denhardt, Harmon, Frederickson, Lowi, and Rawls.

Rawls conceptualizes justice as fairness by arguing that we should begin with the original position as the basis of modifying present inequality (Rawls, 1949 : chapter 1). Equal basic liberties and distributive justice derived from the logical device of “the veil of ignorance” must be a central pillar on which public policy firmly rests. Lowi fiercely criticized the pluralistic style of policy making and implementation, especially in the regulatory policy area by arguing that “politics is the problem” and that interest group liberalism undermined the true democratic ideal (Lowi, 1979 : 22~63). He depends on the legal justice model as a solution to overcome interest group liberalism. Likewise, in “Action Theory”, Harmon basically shares the normative orientation of Rawls. Nonetheless, his assumption of the individual is sharply different from that of Rawls. Criticizing Rawls’s concept of the self as one of rational self interest, Harmon asserted that values such as equal justice, social equity, and responsibility ought to be derived from mutuality (1981 : 91~93). In fact, he argued that public decision making or policy must be decided by the processes of internal democracy and mutuality (Harmon, 1974 : 16~17). Similarly, Frederickson (1980) very clearly describes the values which ought to be reflected in policy formulation or implementation. These include responsiveness, responsibility, equality, participation, and equity. Finally, Denhardt urged consideration of the values of critical theory. From the perspective of radical humanism, he warned of the bureaucratization of society and the overrepresentation of strong interest groups in policy making and implementation. He asserted the need for human emancipation (Denhardt, 1981 : 828~835). Critical reflection, based on sound reasoning, is his prescriptive key to making decisions in bureaucracy.

In sum, the appropriate normative values for policy implementation are clear. From Rawls, we can use equality, and fairness ; from Lowi, legalism ; from Harmon, equal justice, social equality, and responsibility ; from Frederickson, responsiveness, responsibility, equity, participation, and

equality ; and from Denhardt, the use of sound critical reasoning.

Indeed, even though there is variation among these normative values, the central idea is clear. Equality and fairness are the broad criteria. These include responsibility, responsiveness, and participation, since all are instrumental values for achieving equality and fairness. But equality and fairness may sometimes be incompatible because these two values have very different assumptions about distribution. Explaining the differences between these two values is beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, this essay argues that equality and fairness should be the normative criteria which dictate policy implementation as well as public decision making. By analyzing the intentions and goals of individual mandates, statutes, and policy, we can to a degree recognize the dominance of one value over another.

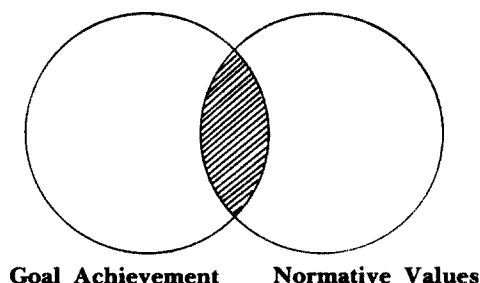
C. The Relationship between Goal Achievement and Normative Values

The discussion concerning the separability or inseparability of goals and normative values is reminiscent of the controversy over the fact-value distinction. This is because goal achievement is defined here as pursuing efficiency, effectiveness, and satisfactory problem solving during implementation, while the normative dimension is concerned with what values should be achieved during policy implementation. According to Simon, facts can and must be separated from values in order to develop the study of administration into a science and to set up a value-free concept of efficiency for public decision making (Simon, 1947 a, Yates 1981 : 83).

But many other scholars have been very skeptical about Simon's facts-values distinction. They argue that most decisions are essentially value-laden. Lindblom directly indicated the inseparability of values and facts in public policy. He said, "do not separate the analysis of values or objectives from the empirical analysis of means or policies" (Lindblom, 1971 : 3). Contrasted with these two authors, Dahl, a positivist, paradoxically demonstrated the inseparability of values and facts in public administration by asserting that "the first difficulty of constructing a science of public administration stems from the frequent impossibility of excluding normative considerations from the problems of public administration" (Dahl, 1947 : 2).

Even though Simon insisted that it was possible to distinguish facts from values in decision-making in the pursuit of efficiency, he conceded that the standard of efficiency was applicable largely to low-level decisions (Simon, 1947a : 149). He suggested two clearly distinguishable sciences of administration : pure science, based on value free investigation, and applied

**Figure 1. The Relationship Between Goals and Values
in the Implementation Process**



science, usable for “any particular (complete) system of values” (Simon, 1947b : 200~201). In one respect, Simon and Dahl share the same position since they both believe that facts and values can be separated. However, they did not share the same opinion about whether or not values pervade public policy making and implementation. They do, however, agree that public policy making and administration are dependent on two fundamental dimensions : facts and values. What is more, postbehaviorist and critical theorists stress the inseparability of facts and values in public policy making. The nature of this relationship is portrayed in Figure 1.

4. Conceptual Framework of Implementation Failure

Regardless of whether the hierarchical top-down structure or the interdependent bottom-up implementation structure is used, in practice both experience problems in their effectiveness. These limitations arise from the basic assumptions and strategies adopted in designing implementation structures, and implementation failures involving both can be conceptualized along two dimensions : goal achievement and normative values. Thus, as Figure 2 suggests, we can imagine four types of possible failures in policy implementation.

As mentioned previously, goal achievement is not totally separate from normative values : significant overlap exists between the two. Therefore, failure to achieve goals may have an impact on the realization of particular values. For example, “simplification failure” (cell I) between the hierarchical top-down and the goal achievement imperative is related to “responsive-

Figure 2. A Typology of Implementation Failure

	Goal Achievement	Normative Values
Top-Down	Simplification Failure	Responsiveness Failure
Bottom-Up	Timing Failure	Responsibility Failure

ness" failure (cell II) between the hierarchical top-down and the value imperative. However, we can make an analytical distinction between the two kinds of failure in that failures in goal achievement are related to instrumental (or means-ends) relationships, while normative failure is related to difficulty in achieving particular societal values. From this perspective, I will now describe the four possible types of implementation failures in detail.

A. Simplification Failure

Simplification failure means that in the hierarchical top-down structure, the implementors or bureaucrats intentionally or unintentionally ignore the existing and potential political dynamics of the policy environment during the implementation process. Implementors in hierarchical top-down structures are expected to use officially established guidelines, regulations, and Standard Operating Procedures to achieve the clarified goals. Their behaviors and preferences are affected by "a number of legal and political mechanisms" (Sabatier, 1986 : 25). Political and legal oversight is deemed to be "a requisite of successful implementation" (Thompson, 1984 : 4). Thus, discretion of street level bureaucrats is regarded as an impediment to effective implementation. Weatherley and Lipsky recommend that policy makers monitor the behaviors of street-level bureaucrats clearly to make their behavior consistent with policy intentions (Weatherley and Lipsky, 1977 : 196). Given this strong distrust of discretion, it is deemed desirable for implementors to apply uniform standards or "programmed regulation" to constrain the behavior of actors within policy environment.

As Elmore suggests, however, uniformity of implementation by "standardized solutions are notoriously unreliable" in complex implementation situations. Indeed, the assumption that policy makers can oversee even technical implementation seems to be a "noble lie" (Elmore, 1982 : 20~

26). In fact, most scholars concede that the implementation process is affected by many environmental actors, and that success can not be obtained without adequate consideration of their interests, preference, and willingness to act. In addition to the unrealistic assumption of tight control over implementors, the stress on “clear and consistent policy objectives is a mistake” (Sabatier, 1986 : 29). When policy objectives are unclear and inconsistent, risk-averse implementors tend to fall back on their “organizational rationale” or rules and regulations for protection from political sovereigns. This leads implementors to apply official guidelines of policy implementation uniformly across the target groups regardless of their distinctive needs or wants. Unfortunately, as Martin Landau suggests, implementors are apt to make “type II errors” when they assume that the environmental situation is simple, when in fact, the situation is quite uncertain (Landau, 1979 : 148~156). Similarly, Bardach and Kagan contend that “the imposition of uniform regulatory requirements” causes absurd results in terms of “unreasonableness” (Bardach and Kagan, 1982 : 58).

In sum, the pursuit of policy goals or objectives without considering the political context of implementation in the hierarchical top-down structure can be called simplification failure. In the case of the EDA in Oakland, this type of failure occurred when the EDA’s top-down intervention during implementation resulted in the creation of a very small number of jobs in Oakland. Ignored at the time was the particular political context of Oakland. For example, when EDA Washington decided to go ahead with the project in an efficient manner while simultaneously pursuing strict employment guidelines, it failed to consult political actors adequately in the city.

B. Responsiveness Failure

Responsiveness failure refers to occasions when hierarchical top-down implementation slights traditional democratic values during implementation. Certainly, the values underlying a policy seldom appear in policy statements due to the nature of the legislative bargaining process. Implicitly, however, equality, fairness, equity, responsibility, responsiveness, and participation are given to implementors as moral standards. In the example of the EDA in Oakland, one important aim of the program was to realize the value of justice as fairness : creating jobs for economically disadvantaged minorities. If implementors embrace this value, this normative end can be achieved. Nonetheless, the success of achieving justice as fairness also depends on the

success of goal achievement. That is, the best of intentions will result only if technical objectives are met. In practice, however, the top-down implementation perspective sometimes makes it very hard to meet normative goals because implementation is restricted to "organizational rationales," and rigid legal or procedural criteria. For instance, in the case of the EDA in Oakland, if the jobs which were newly created (even if they were small in number), were adequately allotted to the minority unemployed, we could say that the program satisfied the normative requirements of that policy. But this did not occur because of the limitation of bureaucratic control mechanisms. This situation is highly illustrative of what the "New Public Administration" worried about. The risk-averse implementor's view tends to be procedurally, or inner-oriented, and he tends to ignore the broader normative context of implementation. In his insightful discussion on bureaucratic dysfunctions, Merton notes that lower level bureaucrats—focusing on organizational imperatives—find themselves enmeshed in conflict with their clients in a hierarchical system (Merton, 1945 : 404~415). In this perspective, responsiveness toward the demands of target groups, among other values, is seriously threatened by bureaucratic rigidity, inertia, or bureaucratic dogmatism.

C. Timing Failure

When goal achievement is obstructed by the stalemate of multiactor decision making, timing failure occurs. In the interdependent bottom-up structure, interaction between implementors, target groups and interest groups becomes very important. Thus, street level bureaucrats have substantial power to influence the quality of implementation. They are expected to perceive and to solve problems through contracting, compromise, and bargaining with target groups. In contrast to the hierarchical top-down structure, the interdependent bottom-up perspective does not necessarily value faithful compliance with stated goals. Instead, it emphasizes satisfactory problem solving via mutual adaptation among participants. The first stage of this structure is the identification of as many relevant participants as possible. Implementation is portrayed as a "game" that results in the "complexity of joint action."

Pressman and Wildavsky described the difficulty of "joint action" by developing a probability model for multiple clearance points, and apply it to the EDA case in Oakland (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984 : 102~112). Expressing an extremely skeptical viewpoint about the chances of imple-

mentation, they appropriately showed the difficulty of “complexity of joint action” in terms of the “anatomy of delay” (Ibid : 113~122). Even though Bowen criticizes the weaknesses of Pressman and Wildavsky’s probability model, she admits that delay is inevitable with multiactor decision making. However, she also indicates out that the chances of successful implementation may be increased by packaging and persistence (Bowen, 1982 : 1~22). Moreover, others have suggested that delay, especially in regulatory policy, can be used as an effective strategy to protect the “organizational rationale” by means of “non-compliance” (Durant, 1984 : 305~315). Clearly, the success of policy goals (or goal achievement) is largely dependent on timely implementation. If delay becomes a problem, the chances of successful implementation will be impeded. Of necessity, however, the interdependent bottom-up structure very often causes delay and noncompliance as Hecló’s issue networks further exacerbate the “complexity of joint action.” (Hecló, 1978 : 87~124).

D. Responsibility Failure

Responsibility failure occurs largely within the interdependent bottom-up structures. Basically, the interdependent bottom-up structure prefers democratic values such as participation over accountability. Since direct participation of all affected citizens is impossible, institutionalized participation by interest group representation replaces direct democracy. For this reason, interest group politics dominates implementation. In this situation, interests groups, implementors, target groups, and other public agencies are expected to represent and advance their interests by playing the implementation “game”. These actors are “fluid participants. For example, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development and the mayor of the city in the Oakland in the EDA experience were replaced during the implementation process. In addition, fragmentation of responsibility for policy implementation occurs because “parts” of programs fall within the responsibility of different agencies. Ripley and Franklin insightfully conclude that “no one is clearly in charge of implementation” (Ripley and Franklin, 1986 : 2). In sum, this accountability problem basically arises from the “complexity of joint action” and the “implementation game”. In a broader view, pluralistic society’s assumption that a public interest emerges out of the group struggle seems native. Lowi appropriately showed how the noble idea of pluralism deteriorated into the anomaly of “interest group liberalism” (Lowi, 1979). There is no guarantee that bargaining and

compromise among actors can provide clear direction for policy, let alone a democratic ideal. If no single organization is clearly responsible for implementation success or failure, accountability become problematic. Moreover, organizations have little incentive to learn more to enhance policy implementation.

Thus, although the interdependent bottom-up structure is implicitly or explicitly based on democratic ideals, practical policy implementation situations provide obstacles to realizing normative values. These cause irresponsibility, difficulties of collective action (e.g., self-interest maximization), and free rider problems (Olson, 1971).

5. Conclusion : How can we minimize possible implementation failure?

As noted, implementation is a decision process that can be viewed from either a hierarchical top-down or interdependent bottom-up structure. Implementation is expected to realize both goal achievement and normative values. Nonetheless, each type exhibits characteristics that undermine both goal and value achievement. As a result, efforts have been made to minimize implementation failures.

Learning is the most important process for preventing failure and enhancing the chances of implementation success. Organizational learning in implementation happens only when the organization avoids "an unquestioning, uninquiring, myopic stance" (Wildavsky and Pressman, 1984 : 255). In line with this view, many scholars recommend that agencies undertaking implementation use the technique of "exploration" (*Ibid.* : 254~256). Elmore's idea of "backward and forward mapping" can be interpreted as intending to institutionalize learning during implementation. He stressed that implementors' behaviors can be changed by both mutual adaptation with target groups and with top-down "implements" (Williams et al. 1982 : chapter 2 ; Elmore, 1985 : 33~70). Sabatier emphasized the importance of learning in organizations in terms of "policy oriented learning," a process "involving the internal feedback loop as well as increased knowledge of the state of problem parameters and the factors affecting them" (Sabatier, 1986 : 40~44). He suggested that a critical variable which affects implementation learning is the structure of the belief system of policy elites.

Even though these three scholars advocate the value of learning in implementation, they do not suggest any concrete devices which guarantee

successful learning. Indeed, the literature suggests that organizations tend to resist learning (Dery, 1984). One potentially useful strategy for overcoming this resistance lies in the techniques of operant conditioning. Here, organizations might be encouraged to “learn” by the granting or withholding of political and / or economic resources. The instruments of operant conditioning can be divided into positive reinforcers (rewards) and negative reinforcers (punishments). Positive reinforcers are used to encourage implementors and their organizations to become reflective or self-critical in terms of both goal achievement and normative values. Negative reinforcers are used to “extinguish” habits that reduce these tendencies. These two kinds of reinforcers originate from both within and without organizations. As a result, four types of implementation learning strategies can be pursued. These are portrayed in Figure 3.

Overall, incentive strategies and control strategies are neutral stimuli intended to establish learning habits of an agency to encourage two things : (1) implementors’ compliance and commitment to policy goals and normative values, and (2) creative search behavior by implementors seeking better alternatives for achieving goals and objectives. Incentive strategies focus on enhancing an implementor’s (or an agency’s) commitment to policy goals and normative values through positive rewards. They also stimulate implementors’ search behavior to find better ways to meet policy goals. Control strategies are mainly concerned with reducing dysfunctional behavior by implementors. These strategies focus on promoting implementors’ compliance with policy goals and normative values by means of economic and political coercion.

Cell I. Organizational incentive strategies involve public managers motivating their subordinates by tangible and intangible rewards to “learn” that their commitment to policy goals and creative search behavior will be rewarded. For example, a local implementing agency manager can use the agency’s economic and political supports to reward street level implementors who show a commitment to policy goals and to searching for better alternatives for realizing them. We can expect that faithful and consistent use of this strategy will help the manager inspire his subordinates to (1) greater policy commitment, (2) to a search for better alternatives, and (3) to avoiding risk-averse behavior during implementation.

Cell II. Institutional incentive strategies involve the strategic use of external rewards upon organizations, rather than individuals. Here, econo-

Figure 3. Types of Learning Strategies

		Locus	
		Internal	External
Focus	Positive	Organizational Incentive Strategy I	Environmental Incentive Strategy II
	Negative	Organizational Control Strategy III	Environmental Oversight Strategy IV

mic and political resources are used to motivate an implementing agency to commit to policy goals and to search for better alternatives for achieving those goals. A local implementing agency has many institutional factors such as state and federal level agencies, legislatures, courts, mass media, interests groups, and concerned citizens. Among these institutional factors, state and federal level agencies and legislatures can use economic and political supports to encourage an organization's search behavior and commitment to policy goals for better implementation. For instance, EPA can provide economic resources to induce commitments to policy goals and search behaviors of local environmental agencies.

Cell III. Organizational control strategies occur when public managers use the internal economic and political resources of an organization to terminate behavior by subordinates that does not contribute positively to policy goals. They emphasize subordinates' compliance to policy goals, and thus pursue legal or formal standards of goal achievement. This strategy will lead implementors to seek better alternatives to achieve policy goals if the punishment is applied to risk averse behaviors of implementors.

Cell IV. Institutional oversight strategies occur when external organizations "check" a focal implementing agency by threatening economic and political supports. The strategies aim at inducing an agency's compliance to policy goals. For example, congressional oversight, hearings, or investigations of an implementing agency will increase the level of compliance to policy goals. Furthermore, the implementing agency may attempt to intensify its search behavior to find better alternatives in order to avoid blame. This will occur, however, only if oversight is viewed as likely and negative

sanctions are expected and credible limits on agency discretion will not be imposed.

It is important to note that four strategies need to be exercised repetitively ; otherwise they lack credibility. According to learning theory, habits develop only through the persistent exercise of reinforcers : incentives and punishment.

Obviously, these strategies need more development. Still, they suggest possible ways for achieving policy success—either goal achievement or normative ends. They can compensate for the obstacles to learning associated with implementation structures. The hierarchical top-down structure—based on an organizational control strategy—can obtain insights from the other three types of learning devices. The interdependent bottom-up structure—based on the institutional incentive strategy—can also learn from the other three strategies. There is not one definitive strategy in implementation. The most effective learning strategy is dependent on the particular contingencies encountered during policy implementation. Hopefully, the framework presented above will aid us in developing further a contingency approach to implementation analysis.

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