Policy Evaluation on Promotion Projects
Implemented by the Public Relations
Department’s Regional Offices

By

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ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: Policy Evaluation on Promotion Projects Implemented by The Public Relations Department's Regional Offices

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This research aims to study the achievement or failure of the promotion projects implemented by the Public Relations Department's Regional Offices. The objectives of this study are two fold. First, to evaluate the three promotion projects: Democracy Promotion Project, Drug Prevention and Solution Promotion Project, and AIDS Prevention and Solution Promotion Project under the Action Plan of the Public Relations Department, fiscal year 2000. Second, to investigate the factors relating to the achievements or failures of these three promotion projects under study.

The conceptual framework is developed by applying the Mazmanian and Sabatier criteria conditions for policy evaluation. As policies are interpreted in terms of promotion projects, the output is the dissemination of knowledge and information to the target groups. In order to find out whether and how the knowledge and information effect the target audiences in their implementation, Rogers's theory of Diffusion of Innovations is used to support the study.

The research methodology is an integration of qualitative and quantitative approached. In the conceptual framework there are two sub-models of study. The qualitative approach for data analysis based on Mazmanian and Sabatier's criteria conditions for policy evaluation is one part of the framework. The variables for the qualitative data analysis are commitment and skills of the officials, hierarchical integration, changing socioeconomic conditions, diversity of target groups, level of clarity of the objectives of projects, causal theories of projects, and budget and resources. They are the causes of the outputs which are types of media, frequency of message and
characteristics of message. The quantitative approach for data analysis, the other part of the model, is based on Rogers's theory of Diffusion of Innovations. The sub-model of the quantitative approach is at the other side of the general conceptual framework. The variables of the quantitative data analysis are knowledge, comprehension, attitude, decisions and implementation.

The research results indicate that the officials have moderate commitment and skills in attaining the target goals of the policy of the promotion projects. By having commitment and skills, especially skills in communication and media selection they can implement the promotion projects under the constraint of budget and resources, as well as under the political interference. The level of clarity of the objectives of the promotion projects is perceived as moderate and the causal theories are perceived as highly significant by the public relations officials and frontline implementors. This enables them to understand how to select the type of media use which is moderately successful in disseminating the knowledge of the promotion projects and their activities appropriate to the target groups who are upper secondary students. In summary, the implementation of the policies which are interpreted in terms of promotion projects and activities are moderately successful. Two factors are found. They are political interference and the constraint of broader participation. They are significant to the success or failure of an implementation of policy in the Thai bureaucracy.

Based on the findings, the researcher suggests that at the policy level, the National Public Relations Policy should be more recognized in its importance by the top executives and should be implemented more frequently than it is actually at present. The National Public Relations Policy should be put in every national economic and social development plan. In the past, it was put in the Sixth National Economic and Social Development Plan only. At the implementation level, training courses in public relations campaign planning are particularly needed. There should be also more participation from the frontline implementors in decision making at the national level because they are the persons who are close to the local situation.
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