

Stakeholder Involvement And Public Policy Implementation In Local Governments: A Case Of Prohibition Of Counterfeit Agriculture Inputs, Ntoroko District, Uganda

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Abstract

The study examined how involvement in problem identification, policy adoption, and policy analysis affects implementation of prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs in Ntoroko district. The study employed case study design and used qualitative and quantitative paradigms. The sample size was 266 people of Ntoroko District Local Government and other stakeholders and the sampling techniques employed were purposive and simple random sampling. Consequently, the data collection methods were survey, interview and document review. Data was collected using self-administered questionnaires and interview guides as well as reviewing scholarly documents. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics to test the magnitude of effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Qualitative analysis was done through thematic analysis and generation of themes in a narrative procedure. The study findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between stakeholder involvement and public policy implementation. It was established that involving stakeholders in problem identification, policy adoption and policy analysis has had a positive and significant effect on the implementation of prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs in NDL. It was concluded that improvements in stakeholder involvement (problem identification, policy adoption and policy analysis) would lead to improvement in policy implementation of counterfeit agricultural inputs policy in Ntoroko district. The study recommends that all stakeholders should be consulted during the process of identifying the problem as well as be involved in designing the ordinance and in discussion-making before implementation of the ordinance. All stakeholders should be sensitized about the counterfeit agricultural inputs policy and their views should be considered during the counterfeit agricultural inputs policy adoption. Both the technical and political wings should make an input into future final policies before adoption and implementation.

Keywords: policy adoption, policy analysis, stakeholder involvement, counterfeit, agriculture.

Introduction

Public policy implementation is drawn from the dichotomy of politics-administration between 1887-1926 by Woodrow Wilson. He proposed the separation of politics from administration and distinguished between those involved in policy development and those charged with the implementation of the public policies. (Basheka, 2012). Woodrow asserts that politicians express state will, while other stakeholders

and administrators have to do with the execution of public policy (Faith et al., 2023).

Additional attempts at implementation of public policies again surface in the public-management paradigm between 1970 and 1990. According to Behn (1998), the public-management paradigm answered the gaps of the public-administration paradigm, especially bureaucracy and corruption, in the

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execution of public duties. (Faridah et al., 2023) scorn the bureaucratic ideal that seeks to centre public policy implementation on stiff rules and administration structures. The implication seeking to increase public participation and minimise micromanagement of public affairs and solve the problem of poor performance consequent to implementation challenges. In Europe, the economic reforms and reformation of the continent anticipated to be grounded on a well-organized, more advanced civil service with new economic and social functions. In Africa and Asia, the trend of post-war independence gave rise to new States, in which Public Administration had to be restructured conferring new judgements and appropriate execution of duties (Paul et al., 2023). As African nations gained independence during the 1960s, the desire to transform and discard colonial rule promoted new reforms in public administrations that were based on indigenous values and some adopted from the colonial masters for public policy implementation. However, according to (Faith et al., 2023) the reforms were short-lived because of the prevalence of neo-colonialism and international aid, but also governance systems were weak and corrupt, and patronage was rampant.

Though Green (2010) views Public Service reforms in Uganda since 1989 as just lavish attention given to the

Statement of the Problem

Effective involvement of different stakeholders is increasingly becoming a central component for public policy implementation world over (Gracious, 2023). Indeed, in Uganda the central government and other public institutions attach utmost significance to stakeholders as a strategy of stepping up their sense of belonging and subsequent public policy implementation for instance, the constitutional reform of 1992 that centred on the extensive involvement of the

reforms, citing challenges faced with it such as patronage politics, the Government of Uganda has been determined to initiate reforms like Performance and programme-based budgeting, Sector-Wide Approach, Monitoring and Evaluation driven by the neo-liberalism of the New Public Management aiming at improving efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of Public duties (Wegulo et al., 2023).

After Uganda thrived in making policies more rigorous following the 2005 multi-party political dispensation, it is exalted that Uganda has good laws and policies, but despite having these brilliant policies, there are governance implementation failures (Victoria et al., 2023). As Muramuzi and Obbo assert, government prefers to enforce the draconian laws to gag the media and limit public participation in their governance (Collins et al., 2023). The agriculture sector is well noted for being a source of livelihood for many Ugandans. Ampaire et al (2015) note that Farmers' adoption of policies aimed at promoting the sector is still constrained by limited enforcement of the policies and regulations. Ampaire et al. (2015) assert that policies are formulated through top-down approaches where NGOs and Local governments are minimally involved while local communities are largely excluded.

general public in the preparation of the 1995 Constitution; the Decentralization Statute of 1993 that formalized and deepened decentralization through handing over decision-making authority to district councils (Faith et al., 2023).

Ntoroko district, for example, has in the recent past taken on several interventions for stakeholders to involve in public policy implementation which include: Public Private Partnership; Delegation and Tendering of some functions. These are intended to provide a rich view, a strong and sustained ground upon which stakeholder involvement in the implementation of public policies can be drawn (Christopher, Muhindo, et al., 2022).

In spite of the preceding determination, stakeholder involvement in policy processes in Ntoroko district is still a distant reality; the fact that there is inappropriate budgeting for agriculture sector, as the sector had a 10% funding in FY 2019/20 of which Mushemeza and Mushemeza (2019) cite poor resource allocation as a whole 8% of the 10% was spent on salaries and welfare for agriculture officials of Ntoroko district local government than executing policies. Therefore, by current commitments and trends, achieving the target of Uganda Vision 2040 and transition from subsistence farming to commercial farming may be dismal (Allan et al., 2023).

The failure to bring stakeholders on board in the policy implementation process is affecting the overall operations of Local governments in executing ordinances (Ceccaroni & Piera, 2019), leading to poor service delivery and poor performance of local government entities. If the situation does not improve, it may result into extreme poverty, unbearable diseases like cancer and persistent poor-quality agriculture output in Ntoroko district (Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022).

The negligible involvement of stakeholders in public policy implementation in local governments urged the researcher to carry out an investigation concerning stakeholder involvement and public policy implementation in local governments of Uganda using the case of Ntoroko district local government because if the situation continues this way, persistent corruption and poor service delivery will reign local governments of Uganda (Paul et al., 2023).

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to examine the effect of stakeholder involvement on public policy implementation in local governments of Uganda taking a case of Prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs ordinance, Ntoroko district.

Study Question

How does involvement in problem identification affect implementation of prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs ordinance in Ntoroko district local government?

Study Hypothesis

Stakeholder involvement in problem identification has a significant effect on implementation of prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs ordinance in Ntoroko district local government.

Methodology

The study used a case study research design. The design was used because it enabled narrowing down a broad field of research into an easily researchable study area that provided an in-depth study and detailed information to extrapolate key themes and results that helped predict future trends (Rashid, Rashid, Warraich, Sabir, & Waseem, 2019). Case study design was also used because it is flexible, richer and superior in collecting exhaustive information from the respondents through several diverse methods of data collection such as interview, questionnaire survey and document review (Tetnowski, 2015).

Study population is a pool of people the study intends to generalize the research findings to (Bergan, 2021). The study population was 353 people of Ntoroko district local government and it consisted of population categories responsible in the implementation of the ordinance (Prohibition of counterfeit agriculture inputs) in Ntoroko district local government. The population categories comprised top management {CAO (1), Deputy CAO (1), ACAO (1) and PAS (1)}, Senior Management {Heads of departments (25)}, Agri-based Civil Society Organisations {NGOs (35) and CBOs (55)}, Agri-input Suppliers (7), Leaders of famers' associations and groups (194) and Committee Councillors (33). The study used both non-probability (purposive) and probability (simple random) sampling techniques to choose the respondents for this study.

Through means of self-administered questionnaires, the questionnaire contained listed alternatives from which respondents selected answers that best suited the situation and relevant to this investigation. The views of the respondents were ranked on a five-point Likert scale, and categorized into strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). This technique was virtuous because questionnaires were filled conveniently by research participants. The researcher-administered questionnaires allowed collecting complete and precise data in a logical flow. The researcher defined the intended study populations from which data or was collected to meet the research objectives and further minimized unanswered queries about the topic (Patten & Newhart, 2017). Data was analyzed in form of tables, frequencies and percentages using SPSS & STATA (Nelson et al., 2022)

Results

Table 1: Public policy implementation

Statements measuring public policy implementation	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
The policy is being implemented at minimum cost	59	25.0	50	21.2	25	10.6	78	33.1	24	10.2
The policy is being implemented according to the plan	63	26.7	28	11.9	6	2.5	67	28.4	72	30.5
There has been an increase in agriculture production	9	3.8	39	16.5	25	10.6	128	54.2	35	14.8

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The quality of agriculture output has improved	43	18.2	56	23.7	30	12.7	61	25.8	46	19.5
Farmers and other stakeholders are satisfied with the outcomes of the ordinance	28	11.9	50	21.2	11	4.7	95	40.3	52	22.0

Source: Primary data (2023)

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Non-committal, D=Disagreed, SD=Strongly Disagreed,

Table 1 shows that whether the policy is being implemented at minimum cost, the highest number of respondents, 46.2%, were in agreement; 25.0% strongly agreed and 21.2% agreed. However, a substantial number, 43.3%, were in disagreement; 10.5% strongly disagreed and 33.1% disagreed. This means that there were mixed reactions on whether the policy was being implemented at minimum cost.

In regard to whether the policy was being implemented according to the plan, the majority of the respondents, 58.9%, were in disagreement; 30.5% strongly disagreed and 28.4% disagreed. This implies that the majority of the respondents were of the view that the policy was not being implemented according to the plan.

On whether there had been an increase in agriculture production, the majority of the respondents, 69.0%, were in disagreement; 14.8% strongly disagreed and 54.2% disagreed. This means that the majority of the respondents were of the view that there had not been an increase in agriculture production.

Asked whether the quality of agriculture output had improved, the highest number of respondents, 45.3%, were in disagreement; 19.5% strongly disagreed and 25.8% disagreed. However, a substantial number of respondents, 41.9% were in agreement; 18.2% strongly agreed and 23.7% agreed. This implies that there were mixed responses on whether the quality of agriculture output had improved.

Furthermore, on whether farmers and other stakeholders were satisfied with the outcomes of the ordinance, the majority of the respondents, 62.3%, were in disagreement; 22.0% strongly disagreed and 40.3% disagreed. This means that the majority of the respondents were of the view that farmers and other stakeholders were not satisfied with the outcomes of the ordinance.

In line with the descriptive finding above, responses from interviews generally pointed in the same direction. In an interview to describe whether this ordinance is being implemented according to plan and a minimum cost, a committee member on drafting the ordinance, noted:

“Before any ordinance is brought before the council and to being passed, we look at the financial part of it. With our local revenue which is very little it will be difficult for this ordinance to be implemented

especially in this period after lockdown where limited local revenue is being collected it will therefore be hard to implement it as it was planned”.

On agriculture production, quality of agriculture output and satisfaction of farmers with the outcomes of the ordinance, one of the key informants observed thus

“Generally speaking, in the past over 5 years in the district there has not been any increase in agriculture production and this is because of several factors including lack of rainfall and this has greatly affected the quality of agriculture output. The farmers have not realized any tangible benefits as a result of the ordinance”.

However, another key informant had a contrary view on the quality of agricultural outputs:

“The quality of agricultural outputs has improved in some parts of Ntoroko district and some of the improvement can be associated with the policy”.

The above findings were echoed by some stakeholders especially farmers that were interacted with during data collection, that noted that they were yielding more than what they were getting some 5 years ago. They were however non-committal on whether the improvement was because of the implementation of counterfeit agricultural inputs policy in the district.

Table 2: Problem identification

Statements measuring problem identification	SA		A		NS		D		SD	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
I was consulted during the process of identifying the problem	33	14.0	11	4.7	12	5.1	52	22.0	128	54.2
I was involved in designing the ordinance	9	3.8	4	1.7	19	8.1	70	29.7	134	56.8
The policy answers the needs of the intended beneficiaries	93	39.4	43	18.2	21	8.9	55	23.3	24	10.2
I was involved in discussion-making before implementation of the Ordinance	15	6.4	30	12.7	22	9.3	50	21.2	119	50.4

Source: Primary data (2021)

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Non-committal, D=Disagreed, SD=Strongly Disagreed,

Table 2 Shows that whereas the respondents were consulted during the process of identifying the problem, the majority, 76.2%, were in disagreement; 54.2% strongly disagreed and 22.0% disagreed. This means that the majority of the respondents were not consulted during the process of identifying the problem.

In respect to whether they were involved in designing the ordinance, the majority, 86.5%, were in disagreement; 56.8% strongly disagreed and 29.7% disagreed. This means that the majority of the respondents were not involved in designing the ordinance.

On whether the policy answers the needs of the intended beneficiaries, the majority, 57.6%, were in agreement; 39.4% strongly agreed and 18.2% agreed. This means that the majority of the respondents were of the view that the policy answers the needs of the intended beneficiaries.

Furthermore, on whether they were involved in discussion-making before implementation of the Ordinance, the majority, 71.6%, were in disagreement; 50.4% strongly disagreed and 21.2% disagreed. This means that the majority of the respondents were not involved in discussion-making before implementation of the Ordinance.

In an interview to describe whether the stakeholders were consulted during the process of problem identification, key responses were captured and analysed on stakeholder consultation. One key informant noted:

Problem identification was among the first steps we performed to involve the stakeholders. A team was set up that went on ground, inquired more of the problems, brought these problems on table that we looked at on finding the solution. Basically, we looked at the lower management staff including some political officials like the local council ones. These guided so much in reaching the common person in getting their problems on ground. However, most farmers are not accessible because they are in their gardens most of the time and consultative meetings are usually held in urban settings that most constitute the trading community”.

Another key informant explained;

“We also had a technical team that got in touch with the political leaders for example the village leaders but before all this we carried out mass sensitization because our people are not easy. The purpose of the mass communication was for the technical team to reach people on ground to capture their views and ideas that are affecting them”.

Another key informant added:

“The initial step was largely to receive information irrespective of whom or where it came from as long as the stakeholders were within our locality. Afterwards, the committee convened to sort out information that they thought might be of help. Then the committee selected out some stakeholders that they thought were in line with what they wanted. The committee went back to the communities and still sat with some stakeholders

to seek more of their views about the information they received. All this was intended to involve all the stakeholders. However, raising quorum during most of these meetings was difficult but we tried put best to involve as many as was possible”.

Based on above qualitative findings, it is evident that all effort was made to involve stakeholders in problem identification before implementing counterfeit agricultural inputs ordinance in Ntoroko district. However, council was not able to involve substantial numbers and could be to this particular sector being informal and the fact that the majority of farmers were not easily accessible because of the nature of their work.

Table 3: Multiple regression results for stakeholder involvement and public policy implementation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.687 ^a	.471	.454	.40470

a. Predictors: (Constant), Problem identification, Policy adoption and Policy analysis

Source: Generated from primary data

Table 3 shows Pearson Correlation Coefficient (R) =0.687, R Square = 0.471 and Adjusted R Square (coefficient of determination) =0.454 (Nelson et al., 2023). A Pearson Correlation Coefficient = 0.687 means that stakeholder involvement had a moderate positive relationship with public policy implementation. A coefficient of determination (Adjusted R Square) = 0.454 is an indication that the regression model with all the three dimensions of stakeholder involvement; Problem identification, Policy adoption and Policy analysis accounts for 45.4% of the variance in public policy implementation. Since these variables are not accounting for 100% of the variance, its means there are other factors which explain public policy implementation.

To assess the overall significance of the regression model for stakeholder involvement and public policy implementation in local governments of Uganda, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was done and the results are presented in the Table 8

Table 4: ANOVA for stakeholder involvement and public policy implementation

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	29.461	3	9.820	59.962	.000 ^b
Residual	20.145	123	.164		
Total	49.606	126			

a. Dependent Variable: Teacher effectiveness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Problem identification, Policy adoption, Policy analysis

Source: Generated from primary data

In terms of statistical significance of the model, the analysis of Variance (ANOVA) result shows that the p-value for the F-statistic was 0.000 which was less than 5% (0.05) significance level. This result implies that stakeholder involvement (Problem identification, Policy adoption and Policy analysis) significantly affects public policy implementation. In other words, improved stakeholder involvement shall lead to improved public policy implementation and vice versa. It also implies that the problem of public policy implementation in Ntoroko district is partly brought about by gaps in stakeholder involvement (Problem identification, Policy adoption and Policy analysis).

Table 5: Regression coefficient for stakeholder involvement and public policy implementation

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.013	.171		11.807	.000
Problem identification	.402	.032	.389	3.467	.000
Policy adoption	.399	.044	.386	3.765	.000
Policy analysis	.335	.043	.314	6.609	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Teacher effectiveness

Source: Generated from primary data

Table 5 shows that each of the independent variables were significant since their respective p-values were each less than 5% significance level (Problem identification =0.00, Policy adoption =0.000, Policy analysis = 0.0001). This led the researcher to accept the three hypotheses as stated in Chapter 1.

Hypothesis Number 1: Stakeholder involvement in problem identification has a significant effect on implementation of prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs ordinance in Ntoroko district local government

To establish the effect of problem identification on implementation of prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs ordinance in Ntoroko district local government, the researcher considered the corresponding Standard Beta – value for problem identification. A Standard Beta value = 0.389 means that every one unit increase in problem identification shall lead to an increase of 0.389 units of implementation of prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs ordinance in Ntoroko district local government. The researcher therefore accepted hypothesis number 1 and concluded that problem

identification has a positive significant effect on implementation of prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs ordinance in Ntoroko district local government.

Discussion of Finding

The findings indicated that stakeholder involvement in problem identification has effect on implementation of the prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs. Therefore, stakeholders' participation in problem identification was found to be critical in ensuring implementation of prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs in Ntoroko District. The study still found out that consulting stakeholders during the process of identifying the problem, policy design and involvement in decision making before the implementation of ordinance was crucial in ensuring implementation of ordinance.

It was deduced that stakeholder involvement in problem identification was one of the major factors explaining the variance in the implementation of public policies in Uganda; this may be a key point for immediate action. Findings of the study concur with Fishkin, (2011), who proclaims that consultations give voice to "we the people" and further advocates to include all the people and provide a footing for the people thinking about issues the government decides to implement.

Conclusions

The study established that involving stakeholders in problem identification has a significant effect on policy implementation of prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs in Ntoroko district local government. The study therefore concluded that improvement in problem identification in terms of consultations and needs assessment shall lead to improvements in policy implementation of the prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs in terms of project cost, timeliness, project quality, project output and stakeholder satisfaction.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings and for stakeholder involvement in problem identification to have an improved effect on the implementation of the prohibition of counterfeit agricultural inputs, the study makes the following recommendations:

- All stakeholders should be consulted during the process of identifying the problem.
- All stakeholders should be involved in designing the ordinance.
- All stakeholders should be involved in discussion-making before implementation of the ordinance.

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