



# MANAGERIAL SKILLS ON POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION: CASE OF GUBAT ST. ANTHONY COOPERATIVE

<sup>1</sup>Rica May C. Gallano, <sup>2</sup>Maryjean N. Gamba

Sorsogon State University  
Graduate School  
Sorsogon City

*Abstract:* The development and maintenance of a successful organizational structure primarily relied on the cultivation of managerial skills and the enhancement of one's abilities. The foundation in question provides assistance for the comprehensive functioning of an organization, including the advancement and development of its personnel, as well as fostering their commitment to remain and contribute to the organization's objectives. Furthermore, the utilization of capacitated skills facilitates the comprehensive execution of policies, which served as the core principle of a particular business. The present study investigated the managerial competencies of the management team at Gubat St. Anthony Cooperative, with a specific emphasis on their performance in policy development and implementation. By employing a comprehensive data collection methodology and analyzing the obtained results, this study facilitated an evaluation of the existing managerial abilities within the cooperative and their effects on policy execution. Consequently, it enabled an understanding of the long-term implications and sustainability of the cooperative. The study encompassed conducting interviews with employees across multiple departments, with a focus on examining their perspectives and evaluations. The results of the study indicated that effective communication skills played a pivotal role in the successful development and implementation of policies. It was observed that challenges such as misinterpretation of policy content and resistance to implementation significantly hindered the process. The research revealed that a notable inadequacy in communication abilities had a considerable hindrance on the policy implementation system. However, it did not have a substantial impact on the overall functioning of the cooperative. Furtherly, it concluded that there was a need to improve and execute interventions to enhance the effectiveness of policy execution and mitigate unfavorable employee perceptions.

*Keywords:* Managerial Skills, Policy Development and Implementation

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Managerial skills were an essential component of organizational operations because they required workers to work together to achieve specific goals and objectives. This was accomplished through the implementation of policies and the efficient and effective use of existing resources. This was one of the most important components for an organization's success, so it was prioritized and handled accordingly.

The concept of management encompassed the essential functions of organizing, staffing, leading, managing, and directing an organization or endeavor with the aim of attaining a specific objective. Resourcing involved the the utilization and manipulation of many resources, including natural resources, financial resources, human resources, and technology resources.

Ahmad and Ahmad (2021) studied that management could be defined as the deliberate human endeavor, encompassing strategic planning and organizational design, aimed at optimizing the generation of valuable outputs within a system. This perspective was justified by the conceptualization of organizations as complex systems. This perspective provided individuals with the opportunity to effectively regulate their own behavior, a prerequisite for assuming the responsibility of managing others. The management and coordination of an organization's activities, guided by established policies and aimed at achieving well-defined goals, were commonly recognized as key elements in the process of production. These activities encompassed the utilization of

various tools, resources, and financial assets. Upon receiving approval from the shareholders, directors and managers were bestowed with the power and responsibility to determine the operational strategies and management practices of a cooperative.

The discipline of management encompassed a set of interconnected activities that involved the implementation of organizational policies, as well as the allocation, planning, control, and direction of a firm's resources in order to achieve the objectives outlined in the policy. Furthermore, within the realm of cooperatives and other organizations, there existed a governing body known as the board of directors. This esteemed group was responsible for formulating policies which were subsequently implemented by the chief executive officer.

Croci, et al (2023) once studied at policies, conversely, were a collection of principles that governed the conduct of an organization and constituted an essential element of a company's cultural framework. Regulatory mechanisms were implemented to ensure that the organization operated in alignment with its core values and strategic goals.

Moreover, policies served as guidelines for directing the behavior of staff employees in particular situations. Additionally, they might have served the purpose of providing clients with information regarding the anticipated outcomes or experiences associated with the business. Policies could have guided suppliers in their engagements with the organization. Policies were developed for several aspects of the business, such as hiring, training, and office hours. Additionally, these systems could be tailored to meet the specific needs of individual business departments or divisions.

Except for the most basic tasks, the process of policy creation required continuous collaboration with diverse stakeholders across different levels of policy-making, management, and administration. Additionally, the engagement of local actors involved in the implementation process, sometimes referred to as "downstream" actors, was crucial. These actors encompassed end users, frontline personnel, and other local service agencies. The policy designs should have facilitated the vertical and horizontal connection of players through a collaborative and deliberative process, (Croci, et al (2023).

The objective was not to engage in a lengthy and onerous pursuit of complete agreement, but rather to seek sufficient shared understanding to facilitate progress. Without this shared understanding, conflicts regarding the legitimacy of organizational goals and policies would persist. Hence, it was imperative that the procedure of formulating and executing policies transitioned from a series of isolated actions. An additional inquiry pertained to the extent to which policymakers possessed the requisite knowledge, skills, talents, and capabilities to address these systemic issues. Given the profound significance and critical nature of overseeing a sizable firm, possessing the requisite abilities and aptitude to effectively manage it was of utmost importance.

This study looked primarily at the Gubat St. Anthony Cooperative as an organizational entity. The cooperative, located in Gubat, Sorsogon, provided services such as savings and credit to a membership base of around 50,000 individuals as of December 2022. As of December 31, 2022, this cooperative had 315 regular employees, with 269 of them coming from the subjected departments, which were the Executive Department, Savings and Credit Department, Finance Department, Sales and Marketing Department, and Human Resource and Administrative Department, accounting for 85% of the total number of the regular employees and being considered the "population" in the conducted interview in this study.

Based on the statistical acquired, the Marketing Department had the lowest percentage for only 2% of the overall population. The Executive Department came close behind at 3% followed by the Finance Department at 5% and the Human Resources and Administrative Department at 11%. As of August 2023, the savings and credit sector had the greatest aggregate workforce accounting for 76% of the entire population. These employees came from branches in Sorsogon, Albay, Camarines Sur, and Northern Samar.

As a major cooperative with a total asset of Php4.5 billion, a net surplus of Php130 million, liabilities of Php3.5 billion, and a liquidity rate of 14% as of December 2022, it had formed two subsidiary corporations: GSAC General Hospital Inc. (GGHI), which provided medical services, and Triple 2 Agri-Industrial Corporation (T2AIC), which specialized in agriculture-related activities. In this single case descriptive study, employees of the cooperative were randomly selected and interviewed. There were a total of 20 informants, 11 of whom were from the subjected departments: Executive Department, Savings and Credit Department, Sales and Marketing Department, Finance Department and Human and Administrative Department. On the other hand, nine people at the management level were also interviewed.

GSAC had the vision of "A sustainable cooperative with socially, spiritually and economically empowered members" and had the mission "to develop and provide quality products and services, enhance the social, spiritual and economic well-being of members and contribute to the sustainable development of the community and environment."

In terms of policy development and implementation, the general assembly had the most influence in a cooperative, with members elected or voted on by the board. The CEO oversaw operations and communicated with key departments. The Philippine Cooperative Code of 2008, By-laws, and Articles of Cooperation granted the general assembly the most policy-making authority. The board made policy decisions, set growth strategies, and reviewed annual plans and budgets. The Ex-Officio/CEO and Management team contributed to the implementation of defined policies and procedures, ensuring that they were implemented throughout the organization. The Ex-Officio/CEO managed daily operations, set annual and medium-term development goals, and reported periodically to the Board of Directors on the cooperative's operating status. They represented the cooperative in agreements, contracts and business dealings, and complied with regulatory requirements.

Given GSAC's broad reach, which had been expanding since 1964, it was critical to consider strategies to maintain its growth and effectively serve a wider number of people in society. This would help the organization achieve its goal of promoting economic improvement and building a sustainable membership base. An effective method was addressing managerial concerns and emphasizing the importance of strong managing skills in policy development and implementation, which served as a foundation for all organizations.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Population and Sample

The subject of this study was the Gubat St. Anthony Cooperative. The employees served as the "population", typically a large group that was the primary focus of the scientific inquiry. The total number of employees from the concerned departments and/or office was 269, which constituted the population of this study. Consequently, the informants included 20 employees wherein nine from the management level and 11 coming from the following departments: Executive, Savings and Credit, Marketing and Sales, Finance and Human Resource and Administrative. These informants represented 7.4% of the total populations.

Based on the gathered data, Marketing Department comprised 2% of the total number of populations, the Executive Department 3%, the Finance Department 5%, and the Human Resource and Administrative Department 11%. The Savings and Credit sector had the largest aggregate workforce, at 76% of the total populations, with branches situated in Sorsogon, Albay, Camarines Sur, Albay, and Northern Samar.

These informants were included in the study because they are directly affected by the implemented policies, and their departments are considered the main ones within the cooperative. Therefore, it was concluded that these informants have direct interactions with policymakers and implementors, allowing them to observe the day-to-day business transactions of the cooperative.

#### 3.2 Data and Sources of Data

The data presented in this chapter demonstrated its pertinence and interrelation with the research subject of this study. The policies approved for the period of 2019 to 2022 not only specified the number of policies approved each year, but also outlined the different policies and their importance and implications for the overall goal of the Gubat St. Anthony Cooperative, aligning them with its vision and mission in the community.

The management abilities that impacted the authorized policies were revealed via evaluations and observations of workers and/or informants. This phase involved data collection methods such as interviews and group discussions, which were used to gather high-quality, dependable, and current responses and comments. The abilities developed throughout these activities were assessed and examined in terms of their impact on the overall execution of the cooperative's policies. Moreover, the obstacles faced by the policy developers and implementers were appropriately revealed to consider their perspective during the appraisal of the personnel. This research aimed to establish a connection between two variables: workers' appraisal and the experiences of the policy implementers. By obtaining such responses, the study identified potential treatments and interventions to handle the issues effectively and prevent recurring problems and concerns.

##### 1. Approved Policies from Year 2019 – 2022

DEPARTMENT	NUMBER OF APPROVED POLICIES				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL
Executive	1	3	1	1	6
Savings and Credit	5	6	8	8	27
Finance	0	6	2	1	9
Marketing and Sales	0	1	2	1	4
Human Resource and Administrative	4	8	4	8	24
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>70</b>

One should ask questions regarding the objectives and principles that formed the basis of the policy. To gain insights into ideas about the policy arena, it was necessary to analyze the words used and also assess the implications and omissions to form conclusions. It was important to additionally take into account the potential interpretations of the policy from different perspectives. The task of the qualitative researcher involved conducting in-depth and meticulous textual analysis.

Beginning in 2019 and continuing through 2022, a total of 70 policies were adopted relative to the subjected departments. A total of six policies were approved relative to the Executive Department, which accounted for nine percent of the total number of approved policies. These policies were related to the managerial operations, as this department handles the Secretariat, Research and Development, and the Policy Development Office. These departments reported directly to the Chief Executive Officer. To ensure a systematic flow of the system for these concerned departments, policies were essential. Furthermore, since this department played an overall functional role within the cooperative, it acted as the foundation of all policy matters and had a pivotal role.

Next, a total of 27 loan policies were approved under the Savings and Credit Department, which accounting for 39% of the entire policy. Loan policies were the most frequently approved type of policy. Since the Savings and Credit Department is considered the “bread and butter” of the Gubat St. Anthony Cooperative, it could be concluded that the cooperative focused on establishing policies relative to Savings and Credit operations. Additionally, these operations were the main source of resources and internal funding for its sustenance. Thus, it could be inferred that the entity aimed to provide quality and systematic service to its transacting members, especially those availing the credit products and services during the period from 2019 to 2022. Establishing a series of policies related to loans reflected to the current status of the cooperative, as it is now the top performing cooperative in the Bicol Region thereby demonstrating the positive relationship between policy creation and its operations.

The rules pertaining to finances were approved with a total of nine policies, equivalent to 13% of the total. These policies included accounting-related rules and systems for managing key result areas of the cooperative such as liquidity rate, net surplus, asset, liabilities and member deposits (e.g. time deposit, regular and special savings). Implementing financial policies streamlined decision-making processes for organizational management, resulting in reduced time and effort. By having well-defined financial rules in place, the amount of time spent discussing financial matters at management meetings was lowered.

Non-existence of finance policies had the potential to erode members’ trust, giving the cooperative’s tagline “Keeper of Your Trust”. Stakeholders, such as investors or partners, might have experienced a decline in trust in the cooperative in the absence of explicit rules and processes. Ambiguity in financial management, decision-making, and risk reduction could deter prospective investors or partners. By creating such policies, these negative effects were avoided, thus fostering trust and stability within the cooperative.

Policies related to the Marketing and Sales Department comprised of four policies, accounting for only six percent of the total. These policies encompassed various marketing strategies aimed at retaining existing member’s patronage and attracting prospected individuals to expand the cooperative’s membership base. They primarily focused on the products and services established by the cooperative and the creation of various marketing collaterals and schemes. Similar to the policies of the other departments, this marketing policies played a crucial role in product development, enhancement and innovations.

Lastly, 24 policies pertaining to human resources (HR) were approved, accounting for 34% of the total. Clearly delineated workplace regulations were essential for providing every clarity and order within the organization. These rules establish conducts and serve as a reference framework for various matters. A lack of clear HR policies led to the challenges in establishing and maintaining a strong rapport with its personnel. The HR department served as a mediator between management and workers, facilitating effective communication. Additionally, it provided employees with a platform to express grievances and report any misconduct inside the organization.

Policy context referred to the underlying factors and values that influenced the development and implementation of a policy. This pertained to the socio-political context and necessitated comprehension of the precursors of the policy including the concerns and influences that led to the need for the policy. The focus was on examining the origin and historical development in order to determine the policy backdrop. For instance, it was advisable to research the correlation between government policies in a certain region and their connection to past policies and influential individuals (Bell and Stevenson, 2006 and Busher, 2006).

With the aforementioned studies, the analysis applied to the collected policies aimed to examine the connections between previous and present policies and understand why these policies were created. The policy text referred to the written material included in the policy document, serving as the central focus of analytical efforts. This material required thorough data analysis, particularly in qualitative research, where the focus was not only on word count, but on critically examining the text to find answers. According to Bell and Stevenson (2006), it was necessary to examine the text in order to understand the reasons for its specific structure or framing.

Based on the examination, the policies were member-focused, as evidenced by the largest number of policies (27 relative policies) intended for its members under the scope of the Savings and Credit Department. Moreover, policies were centered on the standard of operations, providing clearer guidelines per service, thus categorizing the documents as service-focused policies. These aspects could be viable factors contributing to the cooperative’s good performance over the past years. The office also focused on HR policies (24 relative policies) aimed at employee-welfare and instilling the discipline of being cooperative employee. These policies had empirical effects on the loan policies implemented across all branches of the cooperative, as employees were protected by the implementing rules and regulations in accordance with the cooperative code and ethical standards.

Policy effects were contingent upon the manner in which a policy was executed. The practice of implementing policies was also influenced by how policy users understand them (Ryan, 1994). In reviewing the cooperative’s policies, it was observed that the wording was more direct, ensuring clarity in the message and its intended connection to the reader (e.g. employees and members). Evaluating the efficacy of established processes that provide consistent guidance on policy implementation was necessary (Ng, 2016).

It was important to actively search for indications of potential obstacles that could have arisen while implementing the policy. These issues might have been associated with individuals, procedures, or the overall organizational framework (Alexander, 2013). Consistently, this portion of the study was similar to assessing the effectiveness of the policy in real-world application and is often referred to in literature as policy review (Kilmister, 1993).

## 2. Managerial Skills Affecting Policy Developers and Implementers

An appropriate use of the fishbowl method was carried out to obtain accurate results and replies. A random selection was made from among the staff members working in the five primary departments (Executive, Savings and Credit, Finance, Marketing and Sales, and the Human Resource and Administrative Department). 11 employees and 9 members of management took part in the interview, bringing the total number of responses to 20.

According to the data, the majority of the participants were affiliated with the Savings and Credit Department, which attributed to its larger staff size. This department in question consisted of 10 individuals who had been providing their services to the cooperative for varying durations. The longest tenure among them spanned nine years, while the shortest duration was eight months. In contrast, it was observed that only one individual from the Finance Department, with a tenure of 15 years, was chosen as a respondent. However, no respondents were selected from the Executive, Marketing and Sales, Human Resource and Administrative Departments.

The study undertaken by Oziegbe and Odien (2022) focused on the corporate controversy involving Enron and Arthur Anderson, with particular attention given to the topics of auditor tenure and independence. The corporate scandals have raised concerns over the independence of auditors. According to Ardhani, Subroto, and Hariadi (2019), the diminished objectivity and independence of auditors towards their clients can be attributed to the perceived "special relationship" or tight bond that exists between them.

The topic of discussion centered on contrasting perspectives regarding the frequency with which firms should switch auditors versus maintaining a long-term relationship with a single auditor to foster client loyalty (Beattie, Brandt, & Fearnley, 1999). Supporters of maintaining a long-term client relationship between auditors and their clients argued that such a relationship enables auditors to acquire a deep understanding of their clients' operations, leading to increased efficiency and enhanced ability to detect irregularities (Barbadillo and Aguilar, 2008; Skinner and Srinivasan, 2012).

However, proponents of regular auditor replacement argue that maintaining a long-term relationship between auditors and clients may lead to the development of empathy, potentially compromising the auditor's impartiality in making judgments (Azizkhani, Monroe & Shailer, 2007; Healey & Kim, 2003; Ardhani, et al., 2019). According to Fairchild (2008), the loss of auditor independence led to the neglect of due diligence and wrongdoing by management or staff, ultimately resulting in a substandard audit report.

Based on the findings of this study, it was inferred that individuals with longer tenures possessed a greater depth of knowledge about the organization, leading to increased empathy as a result of their diverse experiences and prolonged engagement with the entity. The potential for biased judgment could develop; nevertheless, in this study, the researchers took cautious measures to require and evaluate questions that might introduce bias. As a result, the study cultivated reliable feedback.

The present study conducted by SMEDA (2019) examines the outcomes of a research investigation. Based on the findings of this study, it can be inferred that the analytical competencies of managers, specifically their capacity to develop structured plans and organize ideas, significantly influence the overall assessment and evaluation of employees. These factors are also associated with the growth, production, success, and development of a particular organization.

The data gathered showed the different managerial skills affecting the policy implementation. Based on the result of the interview, communication skills were identified as the top skill influencing the policy development and implementation. One informant responded, "In the communication skill aspect it affects the implementation in such a way that this is the key on how would we know the new, current and past policies that we should follow. In that said, communication skills are really important in this matter (Informant, 10)." This implies that the communication skill is a vehicle in connecting the previous policies to the updated ones and using the skill to inform the employees.

Another informant also stated "Communication skills really affect the implementation of policies in Gubat St. Anthony Cooperative in a way that if these policies are not properly disseminated/communicated, there will be misconceptions that could possibly affect the operation of GSAC (Informant, 11)". This statement emphasized the critical importance of effective communication within the cooperative and on how this skill should be utilized in the workplace. It implies that while communication skills have the power to inform, improper use or unsuccessful delivery can lead to misconceptions, which, can ultimately disrupt policy implementation.

Additionally, an informant stated that "misunderstanding between the employees" is the effect of having a lack of communication in the workplace. This was duly seconded by a response "*May mga pagkakataon na hindi sya masyado na communicate*". In this statement, the word "*sya*" pertains to the policies being implemented in the office. This response also further emphasized on communication as a crucial managerial skill that affects the policy development and implementation in the cooperative.

To furtherly analyze, this response verified that the management struggled to effectively communicate the essence and the procedures indicated in the policies. The informant also said that “*Magkakaroon ng hindi organize sa pag bigay ng detalye sa mga member* (Informant 14)” as a result of the uncommunicated policies and details to each of the employee. This response was seconded by another comment, that “Communication Skills, without communication can cause to misunderstanding and arguments (Informant 15)” and “Being a leader who knows how to lead and knows also how to listen and be a follower to his employees (Informant 16).” These statements reflected an employee’s inherent desire for a good communication process regarding policy implementation.

Another informant commented that “Communication skills and conceptual skills played a pivotal role in policy implementation in GSAC. Successful communication helped us overcome complexity and diversity. Better communication and timely dissemination of each policy would have help immensely in successful implementation”. With this response, they insisted that possessing communication and conceptual skills were highly necessary for a successful implementation, as well as the timely dissemination of the policy.

Furthermore, according to the study by Abraham et al. (2018), healthcare settings were characterized by high levels of stress due to various reasons such as psychosocial, work-related, and environmental stressors. The presence of these stresses had the potential to exert a negative influence on the morale and performance of staff members. This, in turn, could lead to a rise in absenteeism, burnout, diminished staff retention rates, and reduced levels of job satisfaction. The recent media coverage surrounding the deaths of doctors in Australia underscored the importance of prioritizing wellness within the healthcare profession. These issues had the potential to negatively impact patient satisfaction and the quality of care provided.

Conceptual skills were highlighted by the employees as the second skill affecting policy development and implementation. One informant responded, “Conceptual skill is the ability to understand complex policy and situations is resolve matters at hand. Before we implement a good policy, we should fully understand what the policy is and situation is in order for us to develop creative and collective solutions (Informant 18).” This response emphasized the need to foresee probable circumstances that may affect the cooperative operations, being pro-active in conceptualizing policies as a preventive measure.

Moreover, it was duly stated that “For the conceptual skills there are some policies which we think that are not so suitable for all the branches and to the members and employees so in conceptualizing policies it should also be consulted from the members and employees (Informant 19)” and “Communication skills and conceptual skills play a pivotal role in policy implementation in GSAC (Informant 20).” In policy development and implementation, there was also a need of critical evaluation and analysis on the relevance of each policy, which was part of the duties and responsibilities of an individuals in managerial position.

Based on the findings of SMEDA (2019), it was observed that the aforementioned category represented a significant proportion, specifically 90%, of the overall 3.2 million small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Pakistan. Currently, SMEs in the nation were generating a significant contribution of 40% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Nevertheless, in comparison to neighboring nations like China, India, and Bangladesh, this statistic exhibited a relatively lower value. Bhatti and Akram (2020) had seen a steady decline in productivity and performance within SME company sector in Pakistan, as evidenced by discernible trends in firm performance. Researchers and policy professionals had raised concerns regarding the dearth of managerial skills and strategic planning inside SMEs in Pakistan.

On the technical skill front, one response was elicited. An informant once stated that “A good leader must possess multiple skills, therefore technical skills are required. Being resilient in the face of adversity is a good point (Informant 11).” Moreover, he added that “*Kailangang hindi masyadong teknikal ang pagbabaalangkas ng mga policy para lubos na maunawaan ng lahat* (Informant 11).” In policy development and implementation, it is significant to have and initiate an equal footing of the idea, concept and statement. Thus, in this type of response, it could be inferred that technical skill is high appreciated thereby having an in-depth understanding. Lastly, interpersonal skills were signified by an employee. He said that “*Interpersonal skills sapagkat kailangan magkaroon ng ganitong skills ang managerial para mas madaling maicomunicate ng maayos ang mga policy sapagkat marinong syang makihalubilo sa mga empleyado*” (Informant 15). In the reason of management, technical skills pertain to proficiency in handling concrete tasks or activities, whereas interpersonal skills focus on fostering relationships with others. Effective decision-making necessitates a blend of both mental and technical competencies. Nevertheless, there was a widespread recognition that interpersonal skills hold paramount importance in evaluating a leader’s effectiveness. Acquiring soft skills or interpersonal qualities was indispensable for achieving success in managerial roles. Beenen et al. (2018) highlighted the imperative for a comprehensive resolution of interpersonal skills.

The collective responses from the informants highlight a significant communicative challenge within cooperative, that needs to be addressed to ensure a unified on the understanding of each policy’s content. As one informant expressed, “*One coop one policy implementation dapat* (Informant 16)”, emphasizing the importance of unity and coherence in policy implementation as the foundation of the cooperative. This sentiment is echoed by another response stating, “*Magkakaroon ng hindi organize sa pag bigay ng detalye sa mga member* (Informant 17)”, suggesting that disorganization in providing policy details to members can lead to misconceptions and ultimately affect them the most. At an organizational level, the cooperative must establish feedback mechanisms and utilization of effective communication processes in the workplace as an integral part of its operation.

### 3. Challenges Encountered by the Policy Implementers

The management team was questioned about their individual experiences as members of the team holding a pivotal position within the cooperative. The goal of these discussions was to arrive at a definitive conclusion in this regard. Nine (9) people were successfully interviewed, all of whom provided responses that were deemed adequate to the guide questions.

The data demonstrated and established the result of the interview. The entirety of the responses was consolidated based on the similarities, frequencies and connections drawn between the various concerns and responses that surfaced.

As a result of the newly implemented policies within the Gubat St. Anthony Cooperative, policy implementers encountered a limitation imposed by human factors, necessitating subsequent action to solve the issue. This implied that in policy implementation, collaborative undertakings had a significant impact, as well as empowerment and capacity-building activities for each policy implementers thus providing clear direction and being goal-oriented.

According to the data, the two most common challenges that the management team faced were misinterpretation of policy content and ambiguities within the policy. Misinterpretation refers to mistaken interpretation of anything that has been said or done, or an example of a mistaken interpretation of something that has been presented or performed. Moreover, this misinterpretation was associated with to the ambiguities on the policy content. As per one informant, this was due to the “Different interpretations due to lack of effort to read and grasp the content of the policies (Informant 1).” In this sense, it could be inferred that the management was having challenges related to the behavior or attributions of the employees.

Moreover, one informant also said, “During the implementation of strict observance of punctuality, many employees found it hard to comply due to lenient application in the past. Based on the same policy, employees had different interpretations of some provisions due to lack of clarity or presence of ambiguities (Informant 2).” With this, previous practices, culture and traditions were entailed and associated with the current policies implemented, which presented another behavioral challenge on the part of the management.

Another response stated “There is a different application of policies. For example, policy in membership on geographical area that led to dual memberships causing significant expense for transportation, time limitations, and effort, which resulted in delinquency. It also affected the retention of membership due to high withdrawal rates (Informant 3).” In line with the misinterpretation of policies, the actual operations of the cooperative were affected. The employees tend to do actions that were incorrect and in conflict with the actual policy indicated.

The study conducted by Munzhedzi (2020) highlighted a common assumption within the field of public administration. This assumption posited that the enactment of a law or policy leads to the establishment of bureaucratic structures and the allocation of financial resources, with the ultimate aim of achieving the intended objectives of the law (Thornhill, 2012; Rabbie & Cloete, 2018). It was commonly argued that when a government embraced a specific policy stance, allocated suitable financial resources, recruited personnel, and undertook activities aimed at realizing the policy objectives, the resultant impact of the policy would be experienced by the broader population (Dye, 2011). Although it might have been essential to engage in these activities, it was imperative to acknowledge that each policy must undergo ongoing scrutiny and assessment (Thornhill, 2012). Policies were typically formulated to effectively respond to the prevailing societal requirements.

The inclusion of all pertinent stakeholders in the development of the municipal Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and the resolution of societal requirements, particularly in terms of service delivery, was of utmost importance for the administration. It was imperative that these stakeholders were engaged not only in the development phase, but also in the execution, assessment, examination, and appraisal of these policies. The development of a culture of participatory government was mandated for South African municipalities under the legislative framework, namely the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000). The government bore the task of empowering local communities to enable them to make substantial and well-informed contributions.

Another challenge raised was the resistance and hesitation to practice new policies. Related to this was the issue of lenient compliance. One informant said “The common problem of our department is as much as we want to strictly implement the policies given to us, there are times that other department heads or management staff ask for consideration or sometimes do not follow what is stated in the policy. As a result, those employees with disallowed transactions question why other employees are permitted to do so. In addition, our department will be subjected to audit (Informant 4).” This could be seen as an infraction of gravity since the challenge was not merely with the staff or employees but also with other concerned department heads and management staff.

“Some employees are resistant to implement new policies due to established procedures, practices and cultures. Policy issues were often complex, and the unintended consequences of a policy could be difficult to predict. This could lead to implementation challenges as policy development personnel might need to adapt or revise the policy as issues arose (Informant 5)”, stated another informant. Culture-based resistance and adherence to traditional practices evitable within the organization as manifested in the response from one of the management team members. New practices indicated in the policy were hard to follow, especially for those employees who had been accustomed to the old ones. Another informant supported this by saying, “Hesitations, No to Changes (Informant 6)”, and added “Due to the misinterpretations to the policies (Informant 7)”.

The optimization of human potential in the execution of duties was closely linked to the proficient, cost-effective, and impactful utilization of resources, as stipulated in section 195 (1) (b) of the 1996 Constitution (Munzhedzi, 2011). According to

Van der Waldt and Du Toit (1999), the 1996 Constitution included provisions that aimed at ensuring the efficient execution of administrative tasks. The linkage between individual performance and municipal performance was of significant importance, as it underscored the collective responsibility within the context of governance and development in the African Journal of Governance and Development (2020). Therefore, in policy development and implementation, it should be taken into account the personnel or manpower needed to ultimately achieve the policy's goal. "Compliance and ambiguities (Informant 8)", are the challenges that being encountered during the implementation of the policies. This was seconded by another response by another informant who stated, "Communication different interpretation of the policy (Informant 9)".

The effective implementation of aims and targets by any organization relied on the collective efforts of individual employees. A further crucial aspect was the necessity of conducting periodic assessments of the performances, policies, and initiatives. The assessments of both policy effectiveness and performance could aid in determining whether deficiencies lay within the policy itself or with the individuals responsible for implementing it. The efficacy of a policy could be compromised by the insufficient execution of its implementation, thereby influencing the overall impact and success of the public policy.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Abraham, L., Thom, O., Greenslade, J., Wallis, M., Johnston, A. N., Carlström, E., Mills, D., & Crilly, J. (2018). Morale, stress and coping strategies of staff working in the emergency department: A comparison of two different-sized departments. *Emergency Medicine Australasia*, 30(3), 375–381. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1742-6723.12895>
- [2] Croci, G., Laycock, G., & Chainey, S. (2022). A realistic approach to policy formulation: the adapted EMMIE framework. *Policy Studies*, 44(4), 433–453. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2022.2077925>
- [3] Culkova, K., SEŇOVÁ, A., TEPLICKÁ, K., & TAUŠOVÁ, M. (2022). Journal of Management and Economic Studies. Practice of the Managerial Skills and Tools in the Selected Company, Vol.4(No.3, 261-274). <http://doi.org/10.26677/TR1010.2022.1059>
- [4] Krutwaysho, O., & Bramwell, B. (2010). Tourism policy implementation and society. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37(3), 670–691. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2009.12.004>
- [5] Maurya, C. D., & SHARMA, A. K. (2017). THE ROLE OF MANAGERIAL SKILLS IN SUCCESS OF AN ORGANIZATION: Vol. Vol. 8 Issue 6, p12-14. 3p. <https://shorturl.at/egpz3>
- [6] Oziegbe, D., & Odien, R. (2022). Auditors' Independence, Audit Tenureship, Firm Characteristics and Audit Quality: Evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Accounting and Management*, Vol. 12, No.2 (I S S N : 2 2 8 4 –9459J A M). <https://dj.univ-danubius.ro/index.php/JAM/article/view/1721/2167>
- [7] Radtke, L. (2022) Principles of Leadership and Management: Kat's Three Skills. <https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/leadershipandmanagement/chapter/1-8-katz-three-skills/>
- [8] Williams, K. (2022). Managerial Competencies: Core Skills, Importance and Example. *Survey Sparrow*. <https://surveyssparrow.com/blog/managerial-competencies/>
- [9] Alshenqeeti, H. (2014). Interviewing as a Data Collection Method: A Critical Review. *English Linguistics Research*, Vol. 3(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.5430/elr.v3n1p39>
- [10] Chanda, A. (2021). Key methods used in qualitative document analysis. *Social Science Research Network*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3996213>
- [11] Eshetu, S. B., Yeshitela, K., & Sieber, S. (2021). Urban green space planning, policy implementation, and challenges: The case of Addis Ababa. *Sustainability*, 13(20), 11344. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132011344>
- [12] Harrison, H., Birks, M., Franklin, R., & Mills, J. (2017). Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, Volume 18, No. 1, Art. 19. <https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/2655/4080>
- [13] HOWLETT, Michael, MUKHERJEE, Ishani, & WOO, Jun Jie. (2015). From tools to toolkits in policy design studies: The new design orientation towards policy formulation research. *Policy and Politics*, 43(2), 291–311. [https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3776&context=soss\\_research](https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3776&context=soss_research)
- [14] Ibay, S., & Pa-alisbo, M. A. (2020). An Assessment of the Managerial Skills and Professional Development Needs of Private Catholic Secondary School Administrators in Bangkok, Thailand. *World Journal of Education*, Vol. 10(No.1). <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1247743.pdf>
- [15] Mthethwa, R. (2012, June 1). Critical dimensions for policy implementation. <http://hdl.handle.net/2263/20618>
- [16] Müller, S., Šafářová, V., & Villavicencio, M. (2014, June 2). Analysing the Communication Gap in a Business-to-Business Setting. <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:727461/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- [17] Munzhedzi, P. H. (2020). Evaluating the Efficacy of Municipal Policy Implementation in South Africa: Challenges and Prospects. *African Journal of Governance and Development*, Vol. 9(No. 1). <https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.10520/EJC1ef2708982>
- [18] Ngwenya, V. C. (2019). Curriculum implementation challenges encountered by primary school teachers in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, Zimbabwe. *Africa Education Review*, 17(2), 158–176. <https://doi.org/10.1080/18146627.2018.1549953>
- [19] Oziegbe, D., & Odien, R. (2022). Auditors' Independence, Audit Tenureship, Firm Characteristics and Audit Quality: Evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Accounting and Management*, Vol. 12, No.2 (I S S N : 2 2 8 4 –9459J A M). <https://dj.univ-danubius.ro/index.php/JAM/article/view/1721/2167>
- [20] Policy Development Guidelines. (2008). Local Government Natural Resource Management Project. [https://www.emrc.org.au/Profiles/emrc/Assets/ClientData/Documents/Page\\_Content/Environmental\\_Services/NRM-Policy-Development\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://www.emrc.org.au/Profiles/emrc/Assets/ClientData/Documents/Page_Content/Environmental_Services/NRM-Policy-Development_Guidelines.pdf)
- [21] Sutton. (n.d.). THE POLICY PROCESS: AN OVERVIEW.