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Article:

Begley, P, Bochel, C, Bochel, H et al. (6 more authors) (2019) Assessing policy success and failure: targets, aims and processes. *Policy Studies*, 40 (2). pp. 188-204. ISSN 0144-2872

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01442872.2018.1557134>

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Assessing Policy Success and Failure: Targets, Aims and Processes

Abstract

Assessing policy success and failure is a significant challenge. This article seeks to address this by utilising two case studies of legislation from the United Kingdom Parliament, the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 and the Academies Act 2010, so as to develop a nuanced understanding of how and in what ways policies have been successful, or otherwise. Drawing on these two case studies, and the work of a variety of authors, the article illustrates the complex nature of the challenge, but suggests that by identifying ‘targets’, ‘aims’ and ‘processes’ it is possible to make reasonable judgements about the relative success of a policy. It concludes that this framework therefore has considerable potential utility.

Keywords

Policy success, policy failure, UK Parliament, legislation, evidence

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Acknowledgement

We would like to thank the University of Lincoln for financial support in relation to this research.