

THE CORE AND RECENT TRENDS IN GLOBAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: CORRUPT/INEPT BUREAUCRACY AS THE BANE OF NIGERIA EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

Public administration and its bureaucracy involves the formulation/application of relevant policies/rules, methods and principles to ensure the day-today governing/running of modern state. Hence the state does not persist without such a functional system of civil dealings. The principles and methods of administration could be altered and improved upon from time to time, place to place—depending on prevailing needs, programmes and policies in a particular epoch. With the world increasingly becoming integrated (via globalization), issues and trends in public administration have also become increasingly global in nature. Hence there is the need to articulate those basic principles and issues form the core amid the current/recent ones that seem to reshape contemporary global public administration. The goal is to be enabled to evaluate the performance of Nigeria’s public administration and the place of its bureaucracy. Thus this work adopted both the expository and critical analytic theories to examine the issues. In the end, the work discovers that while improved digital/data management and diversity (amongst others) characterize contemporary global public administration; and that the Nigerian experience is lagging in dismal performance. The work concluded that the Nigerian fiasco is a result of a plethora of corruption and other factors connected to inept bureaucracy amid poor policy formulation/implementation. Consequently, the study proffered potentially useful suggestions for the revamping the Nigerian public administration/bureaucracy to advance at par with global best practices for national development.

Key words: Administration, bureaucracy, Nigeria, public administration

Introduction

There are several other governmental organs which specifically function day to day to realize the general aim of state governance ranging from education, sport, agriculture, finance, economy, among others. Such is the province public service and bureaucracy. It is reasonable to think that a state's system and level of justice is inextricably tied the rigidity or fluidity of its bureaucracy. In this way, justice and bureaucracy are intertwined. Public administration and its bureaucracy involves the formulation/application of relevant policies/rules, methods and principles to ensure the day-today governing/running of modern state. Hence the state does not persist without such a functional system of civil dealings. The principles and methods of administration could be altered and improved upon from time to time, place to place—depending on prevailing needs, programmes and policies in a particular epoch. With the world increasingly becoming integrated (via globalization), issues and trends in public administration have also become increasingly global in nature. Hence there is the need to articulate those basic principles and issues form the core amid the current/recent ones that seem to reshape contemporary global public administration. We shall espouse and critically analyze the issues. The goal is to be enabled to evaluate the performance of Nigeria's public administration and the place of its bureaucracy.

Public administration in Nigeria could best be approached by presenting a critique of the bureaucratic theory of management from the civil service perspective and how the role of technocrats in (governmental agency) organization has slowed down various developmental activities in Nigeria. Thus there is presumably a nexus among efficiency, bureaucratic grip and justice in Nigeria's administrative sphere. To the extent that such tie could be determined, we need, first to espouse the province of each.

Administration is a concept mostly used in the context of government or governance; and even though it can, in a more general sense, be described as "a decision-making body, the process or activity of running a business, organization", it, however, differs according to the jurisdiction under which it operates. In all considerations, administration concerns "the day-to-day running of the affairs of a state, company, or organization; it involves the management of public affairs; government.

Bureaucracy A bureaucracy is a process by governmental (public or private) administrative officials whose functions are connected to a series of policies and programs. It is a feature of government in which most of the decisions are taken by state officials. Rather than essentially coercive, a

bureaucracy is a procedure (often called officialdom) in an (usually or commonly public) establishment.

Public Administration, like every other academic term, has been conceptualized from diverse perspectives. That is why Kautilya (1999) observes that the concept has been seen as featuring hetero-doxy rather than orthodoxy. Despite the plethora of conceptualizations, the fact remains that public administration is an aspect of the generic term “administration” whose essence is “determined action taken in pursuit of group/earmarked objectives.” It is concerned with co-operative human efforts geared towards pre-determined goals (Apeh, 2014). Public administration may be considered both a field of action and a field of study (Anifowose and Enemu, 1999). As a field of action, public administration refers to the mechanics and structures through which government policies are implemented. It means the institution of public bureaucracy in a State (i.e. the organizational structure which forms the basis of public decision-making and implementation). At the heart of public administration in modern State is the civil service but it also includes all of the bodies at the national, state and local levels (in a federal system of government) or central and regional levels (in a unitary system). Public administration denotes the arrangements by which public goods or services are delivered. As a field of study, it refers to the academic discipline which studies the mechanics or structures through which government plans and implements its programmes. The main thrust of public administration as an academic discipline is the development of a public sector organization theory different from the intellectual leaning of private sector organization theory and market principle (McLean and McMillan, 2003). Public administration is a field with two parents, namely, political science and management. More appropriately, it can be said that public administration has a parent and a foster parent (Bello, 2005). While the mother discipline is political science, management is the foster parent. However, public administration is a discipline of many forces, the influence of the parent and foster parent notwithstanding.

Public Administration

Public administration as a concept is used in both broader and narrower senses. In the broader sense, it embraces the activities of the three branches of government, to wit: executive, legislature and judiciary. It is in this sense that the term is used in this paper. Conversely, in the narrower sense, public administration is concerned with only the executive branch of government. The concept is often used interchangeably with other terms, such as public sector administration, government and administration. Public administration is

concerned with purposes of a society as a whole as opposed to groups within it. It is therefore concerned with the purposes of the State. Administration is carried out in an organization. In this regard, the entire society could be regarded as an organization which is called a State (Ujoh, 2001). As every State has a government which is responsible for implementation of its policies, public administration is often called government administration. Administration as a process can take place in a variety of settings (public or private) for defined goals. It exists in the church, Army, university, prison, courts of justice, rehabilitation centres, remand homes, industrial/business centres or at the local government, state government, national government and even at the international level. Public administration is the aspect of administration found in a political setting and which is primarily concerned with the implementation of public policies as opposed to administration in the private sector. In a nutshell, public administration denotes the application and the study of the principles of administration in a political setting. It is the harnessing and utilization of human, financial and material resources to implement government policies and programmes aimed at achieving specified objectives, such as national development.

(b) National Development The concepts of development and indeed national development are quite nebulous due to the diverse views and perspectives from which they are seen. For example, some people regard development as change while others take it to mean advancement, improvement and progress. Many scholars contend that when there is an upward movement from one position to another, especially if the movement is a positive one, then development has taken place. Some scholars see it in the ethnocentric context as modernization or Westernization. Though others erroneously equate development with growth, as it will be seen here, it goes beyond growth. Many other writers argue that “development” should be related to specific sectors of life for it to be properly understood, such as social, economic, political, industrial, rural, technological developments etc. It is apposite to state here that, in its simplest form, there are two broad perspectives of conceptualizing development – the liberal perspective and the Marxist perspective (Nnadozie, 2004). The traditional or liberal perspective sees development as the capacity of a national economy, whose initial economic condition has been more or less static for a long time, to generate and sustain an annual increase in its Gross National Product (GNP) at rates of, perhaps, 5% to 7% or more (Obi, 2005; Todaro and Smith, 2004). Development in this perspective has economic undertones and index which principally entail growth in income per capital or per capita Gross National Product. It is generally believed that growth in income per capita or Gross

National Product will trickle down in terms of benefits to all segments of the society. This view of development is equated with Westernization. This means that any country that is desirous of development must struggle to be like the Western capitalist countries (Offiong, 1980).

The liberal perspective of development was criticized as being too myopic, cosmetic, ethnocentric and projecting ideas that are untenable. As Obi (2005) acknowledges, the disappointing performance of most countries that pursued development from the traditional or liberal approach led to a new thinking of the concept of development. The liberal approach succeeded in making a few people rich, while a mass of people is left to wallow in poverty. Following the above discovery, there was a re-conceptualization of development to make it people-oriented. This is the Marxist perspective. For example, Goulet (1971) argues that the concept of development embraces economic and social transformation within a country with core values of life sustenance (provision of basic needs), self-esteem (feeling of respect and independence) and freedom (from the three evils of want, ignorance and squalor) so that people are more able to determine their own destiny. Thus, development was redefined to mean the process by which people will create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization in accordance with their own choices and values (Ake, 1981). Development means the ability and capacity of man to adequately interact with his physical environment and other individuals to constantly improve himself and humanity (Nnadozie, 2004). According to Seers (1969), development should be geared towards reduction or alleviation of poverty, unemployment and inequality. As he (Seers) asserts, where these variables decline from high levels, there is development in the country concerned.

Conversely, if the variables rise to high levels (even if only one of them does), it is wrong to call the situation development, even if the per capita income doubles. According to Apeh (2013), this is a paradigm shift from economic progress to alleviation of poverty, unemployment and inequality, though still maintaining economic growth. National development refers to a state of change in conditions or situations within a particular nation to better ones (Adoyi, 2006). It denotes positive changes or improvements in some or all aspects of the national life of a country. National development comprises the holistic array of policies, programmes and actions detailed in confrontation of national challenges, with the intention of improving the internal workings of government, the private sector and the entire citizenry (Achimugu et al, 2013).

Bureaucracy: A Thematic Overview

Etymologically, the term bureaucracy is derived from two others. First, it refers to both a body of non-elected governing officials and to an administrative policy-making group, referred to as bureaucrats; and second, *cracy* (or *cratei*) which denotes a particular form of government or rule. Hence bureaucracy implies a system of government in which most of the decisions are taken by state officials. Rather than essentially coercive, a bureaucracy is a procedure (often called officialdom) in an (usually or commonly public) establishment. A bureaucracy is a process by governmental (public or private) administrative officials whose functions are connected to a series of policies and programs. The source of those policies and programs is usually national constitution or other statute. Pre-modern society or states did not have rigid bureaucracies which have grown to be a major force in political and administrative affairs in modern ones. Hence, today, bureaucracy has become a “specific form of organization defined by complexity, division of labor, permanence, professional management, hierarchical coordination and control, strict chain of command, and legal authority; ideally, it is rational and based on rules but not like informal and collegial organizations—which are frequently based rather on personal and other social ties. For our purposes, public bureaucracy is adapted to include the “administrative machinery, the civil service, (various tiers of) government personnel, and the body of rules and regulations that govern (their) behaviors” (Ugo *et al*, 2015).

Most bureaucracies have hierarchical and clearly defined chain of authority, command and control. Bureaucratic structure usually takes its highest authority from top to bottom. Its methods are commonly established in governments and large organizations, such as corporations, ministries, agencies and establishments. A bureaucracy is a way of administratively organizing large numbers of people who need to work together to achieve some end in a governmental sector. Hence in government or large industrial organizations, bureaucracy may be thought of as essential in administering rules and regulations. That is why a bureaucracy is an administrative group of professionals and technicians which collaborate to function as a unit in governance, and it is characterized by complexity, division of labor, and permanence. The four typical kinds of bureaucracy are cabinet departments, government corporations, independent agencies, and regulatory agencies. In Nigeria, for instance, all government ministries, Federal bureaucracy abound in Cabinet departments; Independent executive agencies; Independent regulatory agencies; Government corporations; Presidential commissions, agencies, commissions are examples of

The Core and Recent Trends in Global Public Administration: Corrupt/Inept Bureaucracy as the Bane of Nigeria Experience

bureaucracies. Sometimes a bureaucracy can fit into more than one type of bureaucracy. The Federal Character Commission, for instance, could be called an independent agency and a regulatory agency.

There are four types of bureaucracy: the Weberian, the Acquisitive, the Monopolistic, and the Enabling/Coercive Models. The foremost bureaucratic theory of public administration owes its existence to Max Weber. Nevertheless, according to Morstein Marx, bureaucracy has four typologies, which are: Guardian, Caste, Patronage, and Merit Bureaucracies. What however bind all four types together are certain basic characteristics, which also portend their paradoxes and encumbrances. Max Weber, one of the foremost German sociologists, foremost theorist of bureaucracy, postulated its basic features and offered an account of the historical emergence of bureaucratic institutions. In his account, Weber differentiated bureaucracy, “the most technically proficient form of organization, possessing specialized expertise, certainty, continuity, and unity”, from other organizations which are based on non-legal systems of authority. Weber argues that the preference for bureaucracy emerged as a result of the emergence of capitalism which marked the discovery of money-based economy and the attendant need to ensure impersonal/rational-legal transactions. Instrumental organizations (e.g., public-stock business firms) soon arose because their bureaucratic organization equipped them to handle the various demands of capitalist production more efficiently than small-scale producers—a semblance of the dominium and efficacy of feudalism and caste system (Ugo *et al*, 2015).

In the pure form of bureaucratic organization universalized rules and procedures would dominate, rendering personal status or connections irrelevant. In this form, bureaucracy is the epitome of universalized standards under which similar cases are treated similarly as codified by law and rules, and under which the individual tastes and discretion of the administrator are constrained by due process rules (Ugo *et al*, 2015).

Bureaucracy conveys ideas of “red tape, excessive rules and regulations, unimaginativeness, a lack of individual discretion, central control, and an absence of accountability. Far from being conceived as proficient, contemporary Nigerian bureaucracies are “inefficient and lacking in adaptability” (Ugo *et al*, 2015).

(a) Jurisdictional Competence (JC)

One of the key elements of bureaucratic organization is jurisdictional competence. This quality implies delineation of job specifications into units with clearly defined responsibilities based on skill/competence. JC implies division of labor. In other words, JC refers to specializations in both the organization and the

structure of duty or role, leading to efficiency—with the opportunity to upward rise in official status (Ugo *et al*, 2015).

(b) Command and Control (C and C)

Bureaucracies “have clear lines of command and control. Bureaucratic authority is organized hierarchically, with responsibility taken at the top and delegated with decreasing discretion below” ((Ugo *et al*, 2015). It has already been established above that bureaucracy may lead to “organizational parochialism produced by limited and specific JC”. Yet there is the need for coordination and control in the organization (C and C) (Ugo *et al*, 2015).

(c) Continuity (C)

Every bureaucracy has its system of record keeping (filing, for instance) which “provides it with organizational memory, thereby enabling it to follow precedent and standard operating procedures.” This practice ensures that similar conditions are treated in fair tunes—as it concerns procedures, attitudes and personnel records. This allows for continuity, leading to the capacity to earn an identity and maintain its culture grounded in the law (Ugo *et al*, 2015).

(d) Professionalization (P)

Sometimes, officials’ major “attention is devoted exclusively to its managerial responsibilities”. Civil servants (as they are commonly referred to) are the one vested with professionalization—they attain such positions as a result of their respective skills and experience. And the job of the civil service is relatively permanent. Professionalization could also be found in other businesses and organizations. In all cases, competent professionals help to maintain continuity in organizations/agencies (Ugo *et al*, 2015).

(e) Rules (R)

Principles/rules form the basic cluster of norms on which any society, including bureaucratic organizations. Rational and moral authority is based on sound precedencies and articulated principles for sustainable bureaucratic and social order (Asekhauno and Ugbaja, 2019). Rules guide technocrats and restrain arbitrariness agencies and government.

State Bureaucracy: Public Policy-Formulation and Implementation

Public policy, for Carl (1975) is the proposed course of action of the government or one of its divisions. Public policy is what idea government chooses (not) to implement. It is the integrated courses and program of action that government has set, and the frame work or guide it has designed to direct actions and practices in certain problem areas. Generally, public policies are meant to enhance societal problems particularly those considered to require public or

collective action (Ikelegbe, 2006). The policy process is a sequential pattern of action, a complex web of structure, activities and interaction relating to techniques, strategies, resources, costs, benefits and policy goods and services among persons, groups and agencies. It consists of several activities and interactions between the environment which generates demands, the political system or more accurately the conversion process which converts and translates demands and preferences into policy output and the implementation system which consists of implementing agencies and activities (Larkey, 1979). State bureaucracy or the civil service is known to be an integral part of the executive branch of government. It is the institution charged with the function of formulating and implementing policies and programmes of government. It therefore becomes the agency through which the activities of the government are realized. Public bureaucracy possesses the necessary expertise, skills competence and experiences (Ikelegbe, 2006; Onyekwelu *et al*, 2015).

Rourke (1976) noted that: the policy making power of bureaucracies is also inherent in her being the administrative organization for implementing policy. The implementing function enables bureaucratic policy influence in two ways. First, it sets the range within which policies could be made. The bureaucratic abilities, experiences and orientations sets, restricts or facilitates policy choices. Political leaders make policies that their bureaucracies have abilities to implement. Second, political leaders also know that implementation success will be facilitated, if the appropriate bureaucratic agencies are well disposed towards policy. Sometimes such discretionary action constitutes new policy thrusts, or forms the basis for new policy actions (Onyekwelu *et al*, 2015).

Another source of bureaucratic influence in policy making is the secrecy with which, it operates and the inattention which, society often gives most policy issues. The secrecy in policy deliberations precludes society from giving adequate attention to bureaucratic policy activity. Bureaucratic reaction to policy choice may not always be that of neutrality, subservient support and acquiescence. Bureaucrats are responsible for co-coordinating, monitoring and enforcing implementation activities (Ikelegbe, 2006). Also the capacity of the bureaucracy also determines to a large extent which policies can be well implemented. Thus, the vitality, leadership, discipline, skills and expertise of the bureaucracy may further or mar implementation of state policy (Onyekwelu *et al*, 2015).

Classical/Enduring Trends of Public Administration

Already by the 4th century, Aristotle had remarked that the State (public governance) is the conclusion of human development (*teleologism*). He viewed the polis, or city state, as the highest form of human social and political development, allowing its citizens to find and live the good life. For him, the family and the village existed for the sake of life and the polis (state) for the good life (Mazi-Mbah, 2006). That is to say that governing or administering an organization, society, nation or a community of nations is basically because there is the common need to evolve, execute and maintain or improve on the policies that would ensure that people in that group or nation have a common goal. The plan, execution and controls aimed at achieving and upholding those goals constitute what administration is all about (Ichima, 1998). One of such goals could be national development which Nigeria imperatively desires. National development and transformation, according to Achimugu *et al* (2013) are the most compelling challenges confronting the Nigerian state. With these and other resources, Nigeria stands the chance of being one of the world's most prosperous nations.

However, about 70% of Nigerians today live on less than US\$1 per day as against 15% in 1960 (Ani, 2017). Besides, of all Nigeria's power generation potentials, only 40% of its citizenry have access to electric power supply, which is often very epileptic. Ironically, these and other poor conditions of living prevail in Nigeria in spite of the hundreds of billions of US dollars that the country has earned in the last four decades from crude oil alone. Little wonder, the San Francisco Chronicle (2007) painted a picture of Nigeria as a paradox, when it remarked that "Nigeria is a rich nation floating on oil wealth but almost none of it flows to the people." The situation at hand is so complex that attempts to reverse it must be both systematic and strategic; hence the need for Nigerian public administration, with which national development is intricately interrelated, to be re-invigorated and repositioned for better performance, because a strong bureaucratic/administrative machinery can enhance genuine efforts at national development, and vice versa. The media (both print and electronic) are replete with cases of bureaucratic/administrative fragility, corruption, inefficiency and unethical behavior which often render policy implementation difficult and sometimes impossible. For example, for the issuance of national identity cards in Nigeria, US\$214 million went down the drains with nobody to account for it (Daily Sun, 2010). Another instance concerns an Inspector General of Police (the highest position in the Nigerian Police Force) who was convicted and sacked for corrupt enrichment (Adegbe *et al*, 2013). These and similar deficiencies which

are widespread and systemic permeate public institutions in Nigeria. In the words of Achimugu *et al* (2013), any attempt at meaningful sustainable national development must begin with reforming, repositioning and developing the internal capacity of public administration to support and drive the process of national development.

Contemporary/Current Trends in Public Administration

Historically, public administration professionals have always deployed energy to emergent issues. For instance, public administrators around the world have been navigating through the heavy economic and social pressures they've faced since the start of the COVID-19- pandemic, and they've learned about the need for flexibility and adaptability within multi-level governance systems. In the U.S., public agencies at the federal, state and local levels (and governments across the world) have reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic in various ways. Although the pandemic has caused many issues and challenges in public administration, there are also other prominent/current trends.

1. Increased Digital Governance

The complications of the COVID-19 pandemic have ushered in the next generation of government digitization. For many public agencies, digital transformation went from "good to have" to "must-have." Governments have sped their digital journey along three important dimensions to accommodate the spike in service demand while working virtually:

- a. Building a more digitally-skilled staff.
- b. Growing their digital infrastructure.
- c. Investing in citizen connection.

2. Improved Data Management

Within and beyond government, data is becoming increasingly important. Public agencies are developing new ways to maximize the value of the data they have, including sharing it correctly and ethically. The trend toward fluid, dynamic data is transforming how government and its partners in academia, charities and the commercial sector utilize and exchange data around the world. This can include repurposing data to acquire fresh insights into the past and present, as well as making informed projections about the future. Organizations can create programs that are based on an intelligence architecture. Past performance, along with real-time data, can help public administration officials make better decisions for the future.

3. Anticipatory Public Services

Citizens are increasingly receiving tailored, seamless and proactive services in their daily lives, and they expect the same from government entities. For example, state and local agencies are exploring the increased use of digital tools – such as automated text message reminders – when administering the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. In order to transform their services and realize this idea of seamless service delivery, governments are pursuing several strategies, such as:

- a. Committing to entirely digital services.
- b. Constructing infrastructure to enable such seamless services.
- c. Establishing proactive services based on life events.

4. Comprehensive Cybersecurity Measures

With government agencies investing more in digitization – including more efforts in using data and anticipatory services – cybercriminals now have more potential targets in the public sector. Improving the nation’s overall cybersecurity is a national priority, as a single cyberattack on one government target can pose a danger to a whole industry or sector. Government officials are working to break down internal silos, identify vulnerabilities, and employ skilled cybersecurity professionals at all levels.

5. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Another concern related to increased digitization and data usage is ensuring that government agencies also prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion. Responsible organizations are now concentrating more on the underlying causes of systemic inequalities and examining how their policies are produced, implemented and reviewed. Some of the approaches being used are:

- a. Accessible design of government services.
- b. Co-creation and citizen engagement.
- c. Data sovereignty and equity.
- d. Equitable access to public goods.

6. Flexible and Remote Workplaces

Organizations are rethinking how to carry out their missions. The pandemic brought the future of government employment into the present, from remote labor to telemedicine and online classrooms. This direction coincides with the rise of flexible and remote workplaces, including methods for managing a distributed workforce and providing high-quality citizen services remotely.

7. Agile Administration

Again, the COVID-19 pandemic underlined the importance of rapid, flexible and mission-driven governance, and public administration offices across

The Core and Recent Trends in Global Public Administration: Corrupt/Inept Bureaucracy as the Bane of Nigeria Experience

the globe have demonstrated that they are up to the task. Government entities must be able to make quick judgments and move ahead with confidence, especially during emergencies. Policymaking, legislation, procurement and the workforce are all examples of where this is needed.

8. Rebuilding Government Trust

In the U.S., trust in the government has hovered near historic lows for years. One of the keys to rebuilding this trust is understanding that “the government” is not one entity; it’s composed of many different agencies that fulfill different roles and offer different services.

Deloitte Insights, a global research agency, proposed the following six “archetypes” of government agencies, each with their own set of considerations and strategies for restoring trust:

- a. Educator: Impart knowledge, skills and resources to inform, influence or drive an outcome (example: Census Bureau).
- b. Enforcer: Enforce rules and regulations by detecting wrongdoing and enacting consequences (example: law enforcement agencies).
- c. Innovator: Drive new ways of thinking and doing or support the innovation of others through investment (example: NASA).
- d. Regulator: Develop rules and regulations that effectively deter undesired or illegal behaviors (example: Food and Drug Administration).
- e. Retailer: Offer goods and services to external customers or staff in a competitive environment (example: U.S. Postal Service).
- f. Retailer-Like: Provide a service, often for a fee, but no competitive alternative exists (example: Department of Motor Vehicles).

Government agencies can identify their archetype, focus on their public perception, study what has worked for other agencies within their archetype, and build strategies to strengthen their perception. It can be a complicated challenge, but rebuilding government trust is possible.

Analysis: Bureaucratic Encumbrances as the Bane of Contemporary Nigerian Public Sector

Although Nigeria adopts the American presidential system since 1979, bureaucracy-democracy relations continue to be shrouded with seven fundamental historical issues that are unique to Nigeria thereby adopting a stringent bureaucratic tradition. Originally, “State bureaucracy is thought to bolster development and good governance by providing fair mechanisms for social provision in the third world”; has this been so in Nigeria? The answer,

certainly, is in the negative. Thus, the characteristics that make bureaucracies proficient paradoxically also may produce organizational pathologies.

Most generally, and beyond those outlined in the preceding paragraph, in Nigeria there is so much other encumbrance to bureaucratic efficiency. Let us highlight the challenges of the state bureaucracy in policy- formulation and implementation in Nigeria.

In the first place, the Nigerian public bureaucracy is synonymous with delay, red-tapism other bottleneck, formalism, inefficiency, failure, corruption, and nepotism, to say but a few. Discrimination on the basis of social status indication such as education, wealth, ethnicity, and religion is rife everywhere in unimaginable tones. Corruption eats deep in all of this. Corruption is the act of doing something with intent to give some advantage inconsistent with expectation (and often ignoring others' rights). Corruption is "...depravity, perversion, or taint; *it is* an impairment of integrity, virtue or moral principle" (Garner, 2009, 397). Corruption is impropriety and indicates impurity and debasement. The manifestations of corruption in Africa are multidimensional and obvious in religious, political, social and individual circles. At the religious level, for example, both leaders and their followership of religious groups, at 'baptism' or indoctrination, swear and promise not to violate or act contrary to canonical, biblical or divine/sacred laws. But alas, this promise is merely verbal but ineffectual. There has not only been a commoditization of the church, it has also become a Centre for crime, corruption, and immoralities. Religious leaders are no longer preachers of hope; they have become unassailable agents of concealed cheat, corruption, adultery, and fornication. What they vociferously condemn, they surreptitiously practice. Criminals, corrupt politicians, and other successful *evil* practitioners, after successful plundering, now come to the church for charity, succor and 'reinvestment'. Here again, the oath fails. This could explain the thrive in churches today, there couldn't have been any more compelling reason; otherwise, the growth in religiosity, especially in Africa today, is enough to pull down even the most docile of gods! But, as ASUU (the Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities) has argued,

It is matter of ordinary human psychology that those who have benefited immensely and who derive political power from fraud are morally, politically and otherwise too weakened and too compromised to deal ruthlessly with corruption. Unfortunately in Nigeria ...compromised leaders determine who is accused and punished and who is not, and this has created severe credibility problems and handicaps in the struggle to defeat the cancer of corruption... They have made corruption in Nigeria an inevitable feature of the political

The Core and Recent Trends in Global Public Administration: Corrupt/Inept Bureaucracy as the Bane of Nigeria Experience

culture...into an art and a political industry ...the abandonment of social welfare by a government that was sworn in to protect the people. ...Corruption is so systematic that superficial, occasional arrests and dismissals will not make a dent in fighting it. A major problem is that the processes/mechanisms and organs established to address corruption are, themselves, suspect...(emphasis mine). No public investigation has been established.... Public support for any anti-corruption campaign depends on the public perception of the institutions involved and the credibility of such institutions (2005: 2-4).

Remarkably, it could be claimed that the public bureaucracy in Nigeria has been hounded by colonial legacy, off-shoot of the civil war (1967-70), the prolonged military interregnum, unstable political environment amid economic/physical underdevelopment and bureaucratic bottlenecks. Corruption epitomizes in Nigerian bureaucracy.

Accordingly, Nigerian bureaucracy seems alienated from the society it meant to serve. Notably, there are two ways of bureaucratic influence on implementing function. The first one is that it sets the scope to manage policies within. This means that bureaucracy experiences orientations, sets, restricts or facilitates policy choices. Regrettably, Nigerian political leaders make policies that their bureaucracies find difficult to implement. The second way obtains in that political leaders also realize that the success of implementation of policies will be facilitated if the appropriate bureaucratic agencies are well disposed towards policy. This is not the Nigerian case. Persons have to “sort” to get their forms signed; individuals have to “settle” and go the bottle-neck to get their files out or into an establishment; citizens have to bribe (10%) to get contracts approved or paid for. Instances of all these abound all over Nigeria.

The exercise of discretion is crucial in implementation process since administrative officials have to make decisions knowing that they have to fill in details, interpret the policy and apply it to specific cases and situations. Sometimes, such discretionary action constitutes new policy thrusts or forms the basis for new policy actions without which “effective government would be impossible in the infinitely varied and rapidly changing environment” (Rourke, 1976). Another source of bureaucratic influence in policy making is the secrecy with which, it operates and the inattention which, society often gives most policy issues. The secrecy in policy deliberations precludes society from giving adequate attention to bureaucratic policy activity. But the Nigerian bureaucratic reaction to policy choice is usually not always that of-neutrality, subservient support and acquiescence. Bureaucratic opposition to policy recommendations in Nigeria thwarts or even precludes certain policy options, or slows down and

sabotages their execution. Thus, Rourke (1976) rightly noted that when administrators cannot achieve their own goal they may be able to prevent others from achieving goals to which they are opposed. The capabilities and disposition of the Nigerian state bureaucracy in terms of expertise, ability, orientation and experience (including ethnicity, religion, political leaning, or interest) determine to a large extent the success of implementation (Ikelegbe, 2006). Regrettably, Nigerian bureaucracy lacks the vitality, leadership, discipline, skills and expertise needed of an adequate one (Apeh, 2018). According to him, a plethora of

Problems have been hindering Nigerian public administration over the years from playing its role as an instrument of national development. Such challenges include the following factors: Bribery and Corruption the Nigerian public service is so grievously plagued by bribery and corruption that the country now ranks very high on corruption ranking (Transparency International, 2017). This problem ranges from public servants accepting bribes, grafts and gratifications for carrying out their lawful duties to inflation of contract awards so as to collect kick-backs from contractors in return. It also ranges from embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds to direct looting of the treasury (Achimugu et al, 2013; Igbuzor, 2015; Arthur, 2016). For example, the sum of five billion Naira (N5b) was allocated to non-existent agencies in the 2010 national budget (Nigerian Tribune, May 20, 2010). Furthermore, crude swaps due to subsidy and domestic crude allocation from 2005 to 2012 indicated that 11.63 billion US dollars were paid to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), but there was no evidence of the money being remitted to the federation account (Wikipedia, 2015). In fact, the problem of corruption in Nigeria is not peculiar to the public service; it permeates the private sector too. For example, some bank officials are reported to have defrauded their employers or customers, while some firms falsify records in order to evade tax and other payments.

This ugly situation undoubtedly retards national development. Paucity of Training and Development Opportunities Many public sector organizations in Nigeria do not realize the importance of staff training and development, hence they send few (if any). The fact however remains that an untrained employee is a liability to a dynamic organization, as he does not only apply the wrong skill but also imparts the wrong knowledge or ideas to his subordinates and subsequent employees. According to Nwachukwu (2008), “no nation is known to have attained sustained high level of economic growth and development without an ample supply of qualified manpower.” Of all the factors that unlock the force of economic growth and development, a country’s human resource is the most vital,

The Core and Recent Trends in Global Public Administration: Corrupt/Inept Bureaucracy as the Bane of Nigeria Experience

for without it, all the other factors will have to wait... Where the need is realized and staff trained or developed, they are often not properly utilized. It is trained administrators that can be effective in national development. Rigidity and Red Tape Bureaucracy in Nigeria is marked by excessive adherence to official routines, laws and procedures. In other words, it is characterized by gross inflexibility (Ezeani, 2005). Strict adherence to rules, policies and procedures produces timidity, conservatism and technicism in the public servants. Besides, formalism and ritualism prevail in societies or organizations in which members cling tenaciously to bureaucratic principles and practices. Such is the case in Nigeria. In the words of Ezeani (2005), inflexibility not only stifles innovation; it also leads to waste of time and delay in the implementation of public policies. There abound other issues with the performance of bureaucracy in Nigeria.

Ineffective Leadership The wider trouble with Nigeria is the failure of leadership (Achebe, 1983). As Ukaegbu (2010) asserts, "...Upon deeper reflection on the development policies of Nigerian governments, there is evidence that Nigerian leaders (past and present) exhibit fatalistic orientation, have a high level of dependency mentality, and lack a sense of personal or group self-efficacy. Consequently, the type of leadership they provide continues to stall the country's development...). It is clear from the foregoing discussion that one of the major challenges staring Nigeria in the face regarding national development is the lack of firm and purposeful leadership, that will be full of integrity, hard work and sound knowledge of what to do, where, when and how. This condition hinders bureaucratic performance.

Poor Remuneration The salaries and wages paid to public servants in Nigeria are very low compared to the amount paid in the private sector in the country and other countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Besides the paucity, the meager income is often eroded by the persistent rising rates of inflation. Therefore, to ameliorate the situation, a number of ineffective attempts have been made since independence. Even though paltry increment is often in Nigeria, Salisu (2001) posits that suchs effort at wage increases could achieve little or nothing because they soon get eroded by very high inflation. This situation does not only demoralize the average Nigerian public servant; it also results in poor attitudes to work which retard national development.

Inadequate Provision of Energy Resources/Public Utilities Only about 40 percent of households in Nigeria have access to potable water supply. The available water for industrial and other uses is also inadequate. Moreover, electricity is in short supply to both residential and industrial houses, and the increasing demand outstrips the current rate of electricity generation in Nigeria

(Ukwenya *et al*, 2016). These problems invariably constitute an albatross to quality public officials.

Crimes and Insecurity Safety and security of lives and property are necessary for the development of a nation. However, Nigeria is currently bedeviled with criminalities, immorality and insecurity. The vices manifest in frequent cases of armed robbery, pen robbery, religious riots, inter-ethnic clashes, youth restiveness, political thuggery, rape of women, Boko Haram insurgency, ethnic militias, secret cult activities, herdsmen attacks, child trafficking, kidnappings and a host of others (Njoku, 2007; Adegbe *et al*, 2013; Ugwueze, 2014; Ani, 2017). Therefore, citizens (public servants) approach public duty with trepidation and disinterest.

Recommendations

In the first place, there is the need to empower anti-corruption institutions. Such empowerment involves equipping one with the ability to act or do something, control or exercise rights or authority in one's sphere of responsibility (Apeh, 2013). It is synonymous with capability or enablement. Anti-corruption institutions in Nigeria that require such empowerment include the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Public Complaints Commission (PCC), the Public Accounts Commission (PAC), to mention but a few. The existence of these institutions notwithstanding, corruption in Nigeria continues to increase, especially in the public sector. Little wonder, the Transparency International in her latest Corruption Perception Index (CPI) released on Wednesday, 21st February 2018, ranked Nigeria 148th out of 180 least corrupt nations of the world. Therefore, there is the need for the government to garner the necessary political will, finance and the training and re-training of staff needed to ginger those institutions into more acceptable performance.

Human Capital Development Education is the catalyzing factor in both human and national development (Dike, 2002; Alhassan, 2007). Ghandi (1988) puts it this way: Good education is the key to development of our most valuable assets, and our human resources. It is through education that hard bound traditional age-old prejudices give way to reason and the scientific spirit. It is through good education that society is modernized. Good/quality education involves educating for character change, good moral values and civic responsibility. It is this type of virtues that shapes the character of nations. The need therefore, is for Nigeria to, as a matter of urgency, invest heavily in education-driven human capital development cannot be over-emphasized.

Moreover, introducing information and communication technology in public governance has become imperative in Nigeria to obviate the problem of over-bureaucratization, and thereby ameliorate government performance. Doing so will also reduce the existence of red-tapism and rigidity. The essence of this point lies in the fact that public administration in Nigeria is still characterized by traditional administrative principles and practices in a fast-moving world in which speed and accuracy are the order of the day. An ICT-driven public sector could revamp the extant slow and weakened policy-implementation into from passivity to modicum success (Achimugu *et al*, 2013).

Nigeria needs purposeful leadership, leaders knowledgeable, intelligent, honest, hardworking and ready to face and tackle challenges with an apparent sense of commitment. Therefore, for national development to take place, the government should ensure that men and women of sound pedigree are appointed to the helm of affairs. They should be outstanding Nigerians whose integrity and sense of dedication to duty are unquestionable and who, in the words of Stogdill (1974), are "...characterized by a strong drive for responsibility and task completion, vigor and persistence in pursuit of goals and originality in problem-solving, drive to exercise initiatives in social situations, self-confidence and a sense of personal identity, willingness to tolerate frustration and delay, ability to influence other persons' behavior, and capacity to structure social interaction systems to the purpose at hand."

It is axiomatic that the most important input for achieving national development is the human resource. There is therefore the need to have such human capital sufficiently motivated especially in terms of improved remuneration because, according to Lethbridge (2004) and Apeh (2014), a vital element in the motivation of human capital is undoubtedly the quality of its remuneration packages.

Adequate Provision of Energy Resources/Public Utilities Development is strongly linked to the availability of energy for heat, light and mechanical power (Sambo, 2010). Therefore, these aspects should be revamped and revitalized to enhance capacity building in Nigeria.

For a revamped bureaucratic system in Nigeria, the government should take steps urgently to re-orientate Nigerians on the need to be patriotic, sincere, hardworking and committed to nation-building. These virtues can be taught as core values in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in form of civic education. It can also be taught to Nigerians generally through a national orientation Programme. Catering for Nigerians is the first step to safeguarding the

State because when the government considers people first in terms of welfare, they will in turn safeguard the State.

In some way, respective governments have since Independence claimed to fight against those factors militating against effective bureaucracy in Nigeria; they have all proved futile, either as a result of lack of the will to bring culprits to book or lack of effective deterrent measures. Thus were the issues with Buhari's WAI (1985) and current activities of ICPC or EFCC of present contemporary national/state administrations. Consequently, an effective mode of oath-taking (based on African tradition and spiritual experience) be introduced so as to ensure justice to defaulting (government or bureaucratic) officials and forestall corruption.

Since, "regrettably, Nigerian political leaders make policies that their bureaucracies have had abilities to implement", altruistic policies reflective of modern developmental strides be substituted. Political leaders must realize that the success of implementation of policies will be facilitated if the appropriate bureaucratic agencies are well disposed towards policy.

Similarly, since "the capabilities and disposition of the Nigerian state bureaucracy in terms of expertise, ability, orientation and experience (including ethnicity, religion, political leaning, or interest) determine to a large extent the success of implementation", Nigerian bureaucrats, on their part, must be trained to learn to live above primordial sentiments in favor of public ethos. The training should reflect basic developments in modernity such as in computer applications and technology. Such would ensure higher skill and expertise.

Finally, admittedly, the military incursion and dictatorship at various points in Nigeria's political trajectory thwarted development of effective bureaucracy soon after independence. One could only suggest now that since the nation currently operates on democratic theory, state officials should abandon dictatorship and coercion to enforce control; bureaucrats should be taught to uphold those democratic principles—especially those dealing on accountability—the core of public administration in a democracy.

Conclusion

This study has revealed that there are many challenges obstructive of national development in Nigeria, which include bribery and corruption, inadequate education/training opportunities, rigidity and red tape, ineffective leadership, poor remuneration, inadequate sources of energy, increasing rates of crimes and insecurity and national cake mentality. These are the factors that stand in the way of Nigerian public administration in its bid to play its catalyzing role

The Core and Recent Trends in Global Public Administration: Corrupt/Inept Bureaucracy as the Bane of Nigeria Experience

in national development. Possible solutions to these problems have also been proffered, and they include the revitalization of the organizations and agencies providing the various resources of energy and water, empowering the anti-corruption institutions, introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) in public governance, efforts to be made to have effective leadership and improved remuneration packages. The government should also endeavour to address the material poverty (needs) of Nigerians as a deliberate move to curb crimes and insecurity. These suggestions are capable of repositioning Nigerian public administration so as to play its role in a way that will effectively engender national development.

Bureaucracy is the acme of procedural justice. The most basic elements of pure bureaucratic organization are its emphasis on procedural regularity, a hierarchical system of accountability and responsibility; specialization of function, continuity, a legal-rational basis, and fundamental conservatism. The emergence of capitalism and the emphasis on standard currency transactions over and above barter systems created the need for bureaucratic forms of organization in both the private and public sectors, as also the Nigerian system inherited from the colonial experience. However, the critical elements of the bureaucratic form of organization also can conflict with one another and are often at the base of criticisms that regard bureaucracies as dysfunctional. In sum, what makes bureaucracy work also may work against it. In this way, unfortunately, the characteristics that make bureaucracies proficient paradoxically also may produce organizational pathologies. Yet despite the widespread derogatory stereotypes of bureaucracy, a system of government grounded in law requires bureaucracy to function. Regrettably, Nigerian bureaucracy is exacerbated by the prevalence of greed, hunger and poverty necessitating widespread multifaceted corruption; the development and introduction of tendentious, therefore disjointed (and often times ostensive/exaggerated) policies mostly unacceptable to or unimplementable by the (sometimes incapable) bureaucrats; social considerations (such as ethnicity, religion, personal/political interest); and the obvious or veiled high-handedness, amongst the many other encumbrances—which respective governments purport to attempt to extricate it from. Regrettably, those mar Nigeria's procedural justice; and they are surmountable.

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