

DEVELOPMENTAL STATE BUREAUCRACY IN NIGERIA: RESTRUCTURING FOR EFFECTIVENESS (1999-2007)

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Abstract

It is axiomatic to posit that bureaucracy occupies a prominent position in the study of public administration. The power and authority over a well-organized bureaucracy is overwhelming and overbearing. The political office holder finds himself always flowing and sinking in bureaucratic interpretations of his action. This sinking and flowing find expression in developmental states. Moreover, the success of developmental state is located in a professional bureaucracy that makes and implies policy in alliance with the elites. This paper examines the socio-economic and political reforms under former President Obasanjo which were efforts made to promote developmental state in Nigeria. It explores conceptual issues in a thematic perspective and identifies the major problems associated with Nigeria's inability to record the success of developmental states across the globe.

Keywords: Developmental States, Bureaucracy, Reforms, Elites and Public Policy

INTRODUCTION

The first major study on the developmental state was written by Chalmers Johnson, in his book "MITI and the Japanese Miracle" (Johnson, 1982). In this path-breaking book, Johnson drew up four constituent parts of a model of what became known as "the developmental state. These four segments were "the presence of a small but professional and efficient state bureaucracy; a political Milieu where this bureaucracy has enough to operated and take policy initiatives independent of overly intrusive interventions by vested interests; the crafting of methods of state interventions by vested interests; the crafting of methods of state intervention in the economy without sabotaging the market principles"; a pilot organization such as Chalmers found in MITI" (Mbabazi and Tylor, 2005:4)

Although certain scholars have questioned aspects of Johnson's work, particularly the historic uniqueness surrounding Japanese development at the time which lay the foundation for the attainment of the developmental state, the success of the other Asian states that used strategic interventions and achieved high growth rates (Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan among others) arguably demonstrates the conceptual prowess of the developmental state. Central to Johnson's thesis was the role bureaucracy plays in development.

According to Wallis (1993) "bureaucracy" is a word, which in ordinary use conjures up negative images in people's minds. It suggests a slow-moving organization, usually associated with government, which serves the public with a mixture of arrogance, deliberate obstruction and incompetence. The word is often employed as an insult, whilst 'bureaucrats' are sometimes seen as figures of fun. This picture is a caricature. Whilst it contains a grain of truth, as most caricature does, it obscures a great deal of reality. In that sense, it is an unfortunate image and is in urgent need of correction.

This paper attempts to present a somewhat more balanced picture, based on academic uses of the concept. It focuses on bureaucracy in what many scholars have variously called "Third World", developing countries', but these differences of expression are subject of debates which need not to be engaged in here. We are concerned with those parts of the world, which are relatively impoverished, and where there is urgent need for progress so as to improve the welfare

needs of the populace. Nigeria is our main concern, but many are in Latin America, Africa, South Pacific, the Caribbean and Asia respectively.

In most of these countries, efforts to bring about improvement in people's lives depend on government administrators or bureaucrats. Foreign assistance is channeled through their offices and taxation creates domestic financial resources, which they control. In return, the bureaucrats are expected to provide services, run projects, make rules and regulations and perform numerous other tasks in order to make development possible. This paper explores the issues involved when bureaucrats execute these demanding tasks in various parts of Nigeria.

This paper considers the federal government bureaucracy transformation embarked upon by the Obasanjo administration. It examines the nature of the crises that laid the foundation of this initiative; the framework and its implementation. The paper equally explores the civil service reform under Obasanjo which will serve as its case study. It will equally highlight the limitations of the reforms and suggests ways required for the sustainability of the reforms in post-Obasanjo era.

DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

There is of course a major puzzle in defining a developmental state simply from its economic performance: not all countries with good growth rates are developmental states. Leftwich (1995:401) asserts that:

Developmental states may be defined as states, whose policies have concentrated sufficient power, autonomy and capacity at the centre to shape, pursue and encourage the achievement of explicit developmental objectives, whether by establishing and promoting the conditions and directions of economic growth, or by organizing it directly, or a varying combination of both.

Leftwich arrived at some defining characteristics of a typical developmental state, which include:

- A determined development-oriented elites with relative autonomy;
- A powerful, competent, and insulated bureaucracy;
- A weak and subordinated civil society;
- The effective management of non-state economic interests; and
- Legitimacy and performance (Leftwich, 1995:405).

It should be noted that in discussing developmental states, we mean "state capitalist" developmental state, following Gordon White's three typologies: state capitalist, intermediate and state socialist (Mbazi and Tylor, 2005:5; and White, 1984).

A state is developmental if the economy is "developing"; and equates economic success to state strength while measuring the latter by the presumed outcomes of the state's policies. In Africa, there have been many examples of states whose performance until the mid-1970s would have qualified as "developmental in the sense convened by current definitions, but which now seem anti-developmental because of the recession and in particular political turmoil, brought the economic expansion of the countries to a halt. Recognition of episodes and possibilities of failures leads us to a definition of a developmental state as one whose ideological underpinnings are developmental and one that seriously attempts to deploy its administrative and political resources to the task of economic development (Mbabazi and Tylor, 2005:122).

We observe there is consensus on the ingredients for a successful developmental state. Evans (1995) agrees that a capable and autonomous bureaucracy that makes use of the markets and formulates national goals, and one that has the competence and resources to implement these policies is crucial. Chang adds that successful developmental states have pursued policies that coordinate investment vision, implying that the state is an entrepreneurial agent; that engage in institution building to promote growth and development; and play a role in conflict management, mediating in conflicts that arise out of reactions and counteractions to the development trajectory: between the winners and losers (Chang, 1999:192).

It should be noted that the success of a developmental state is located in a professional bureaucracy that makes and implements policy efficiently in alliance with the elites. This aspect has been absent in Nigeria as a result of failure of the Nigerian state to act as a vanguard of economic prosperity through state-supported private industrial development; provision of a powerful

and competent bureaucracy in implementing and negotiating investment decision (as in Japan and South Korea); and corruption.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF BUREAUCRACY

In the literature on public administration, the term bureaucracy is used as a synonym of administration. This is the usage to be adopted in the paper and the focus is on governmental bureaucracy/administration. The other concepts that are used more or less synonymous of governmental bureaucracy/administration are **civil service** and **public service**. Nuances in the usages of these inter-related concepts are explained as appropriate in the different schools of the paper.

State bureaucracy or the civil service is known to be part and parcel of the executive branch of government. It is the institution that is charged with the responsibility of formulating and implementing policies and programmes of the government. In other words, while it is the duty of the political executive to determine and direct the focus of policies, the state bureaucracy is the administrative machinery through which the objectives are actualized. The state bureaucracy could therefore be described as the agency through which the activities of the government are realized.

There are two main contending views on the study of bureaucracy; namely the Weberian and Marxian. According to the former, bureaucracy is viewed as a large-scale, complex, hierarchical and specialized organization designed to attain rational objectives in the most efficient and effective manner. The realization of such rational goals and objectives is maximized through the bureaucratic qualities of formalism and impersonality in the application of rules and regulations in the operation and management of organizations. This classical bureaucracy of Weber is seen as a very superior organization mainly because of certain qualities such as hierarchy, division of labour anchored on specialization, policy of promotion and recruitment based on merit, in addition to impersonality in the conduct of official duties, security of tenure and strict observance of rules regulations, among others (Weber, 1964).

Shiriji's thesis supports Marx's view on Bureaucracy. On his own part, Karl Marx viewed bureaucracy as an instrument of oppression, exploitation and damnation in the hands of the dominant class who control and manipulate the state and its apparatus in the society. More specifically, bureaucracy is conceived as instrument usually employed by the ruling class to accumulate wealth and maintain their domination and control of the state. This basic driving force of bureaucracy is usually concealed by both the dominant class and the bureaucrats, as efforts are constantly made to project the bureaucracy as a neutral and development agency working for the interest of every body in the society. But this is only a smokescreen to hide its real motive and responsibilities. To a very large extent, the future and interest of bureaucracy are closely interlinked with those of the ruling class and the state.

According to Nnadozie (2007:10):

...due to the fact that bureaucracy is not an integral part of the capitalist ruling class, it has a certain measure of autonomy which makes conflict with its master possible. But in this conflict bureaucracy is always disadvantaged and the conflict itself cannot go beyond certain limits, which are always determined, by the existing social forces and relations of production. From fore going, it follows that bureaucracy does not occupy an organic place in the social structure, as it is not directly linked with the production process. Its existence and development therefore has transient and parasitic character.

The other two Marxist characterization of bureaucracy worthy of note are those of alienation and incompetence. It is by the process of alienation that social forces escape from the control of man, attain an autonomous status and turns against man. In the case of bureaucracy, it is by alienating the populace that it becomes an independent and oppressive force, which is felt by the majority of the people as a mysterious and distant entity that regulates their activities. This attitude is reinforced by the bureaucrats' tendency to create special myths and symbols around it that mystify its action and position. In this processes, bureaucracy become a close system that jealously guards its secrets, prerogatives, and presents to the outside world a united front of silence and hostility (Nnadozie, 2007: 11-12)

In the area of incompetence the Marxist stresses the lack of initiatives and imagination by the bureaucrats who are always scared of taking any kind of responsibility. The bureaucrat is not intimidated by this problem rather believes it is capable of doing anything. Consequently, the bureaucrats continually expand its area of functions and domain in order to consolidate its position

and prerogatives. This “bureaucratic irredentism”, helps the bureaucrat to convince it that it has a statutory duty to perform.

Furthermore, this process of self-aggrandizement is accompanied by what Marx described as the “sordid materialism” of bureaucrats. That is, the internal and continuous struggle for promotion, careerism and infantile attachment to trivial status symbols and prestige among bureaucrats.

The bureaucracy broadly defined, refers to that machinery of government designed to execute the decisions and policies of political office holders. Political leaders make policies. The public bureaucracy implements it. If the bureaucracy lacks the capacity to implement the policies of the political leadership, those policies, however well intentioned, will not be executed in an effective manner (Anise, 1984, Okafor, 2005). It is one thing to promise development and it is quite another to achieve it. Viewed from this strand, the role of public bureaucracy in the process of economic, social and political development looms large indeed.

According to Okafor (2005), the role of bureaucracy is critical to all areas of development process. In Nigeria, public bureaucracy is a very vital element of the development process. Bureaucratic capacity is not a sufficient condition for development, but it is most assuredly a necessary condition. The major puzzles for this paper are – what are those human and structural factors that are militating against public bureaucracy from rendering efficient and effective service delivery in Nigeria and what are the best possible ways out?

However, we will use the term bureaucracy to mean civil service, which has now become part of the agency of the executive branch of government in the newly emergent countries in Africa (such as Nigeria). By definition and for the purpose of this paper, public bureaucracy is used to refer to the administrative machinery, personnel of government at the various tiers of government and the body of rules and regulations that govern the behaviours of these personnel in government.

Put differently, the bureaucracy refers to all organizations that exist as part of government machinery for executing policy decisions and delivering services that are of value to the populace. Also, it is a mandatory institution of the state under the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as outlined in chapter VI of the constitution under the title – The executive, Part I (D) and Part II (C) which provides for bureaucracies at both the federal and state levels of government.

The public bureaucracy is made up of the legislative bodies at the national and State assemblies, the judiciary, the police, members of the Armed forces and Para-military agencies, Parastatals or extra-ministerial departments and agencies (including social service) commercially oriented agencies, regulatory agencies, educational institutions and research institutions among others.

REFORM

A reform, according to Obasi (1993), is simply a purposeful change introduced with a view to totally eliminating (or just attenuating) certain identified vices and imperfections existing in any system or organization. Furthermore, he explained that an administrative reform specially refers to purposeful or goal-oriented change made in order to improve the skills, the standard of performance, and level of productivity of members of an organization.

A useful working definition of administrative reform is the one offered by Wallis (1993). According to him, “it is an induced, permanent improvement in administration. This however requires additional discussion and explanation.

The concept “induced” is employed to indicate that we are talking about a reform of administrative change, which is deliberately brought about not one which just happens by accident or without the masking of a conscious effort. That is, deliberate attempts to introduce better systems of governance. Improvement in governance may happen because there is a change affecting the whole polity. Reform happens only when an institution or an individual such as the president of a country decides that action is needed.

The word “permanent” carries the connotation that the changes introduced will be long-term, not just temporary. The word “improvement” means to make “better”. This concept is value

loaded. This is because one man's improvement may be another man's deterioration or decline (Elekwa and Eme, 2006:2-3).

Background to Obasanjo's Bureaucratic Reform

One of the most significant challenges faced by the Obasanjo administration on assuming office on 29th May, 1999 had to do with the issue of how to effectively address the crises in public management in Nigeria. According to Obasanjo:

... we experienced in the last decade and half, and particularly in the last regime but one, persistent deterioration in the quality of governance, leading to instability and the weakening of all public institutions.... The citizens developed distrust in government, and because of promises made for the improvement of the conditions of the people were not kept, all statements by government met with cynicism.... (Obasanjo, 1999:1).

Aspects of this crisis, as identified by president Obasanjo in his inauguration address, include: inefficiency in social service delivery, insensitivity to general welfare, indifference to the norms guiding the conduct of public offices and grand corruption.

These lapses had led to a situation of the weakening of public institutions, distrust of government by the citizens, collapse and decay of infrastructures and the development of a sense of despair among the populace. This kind of state of affairs posed a crucial challenge to the regime, namely, that of how to transform the polity from a state of chaos and despair to one of order and genuine promise, thereby laying the foundation for, in the words of the president, "the beginning of a genuine renaissance".

Ayeni (2002) adds that the principles necessitating the need for the reform of the public service are that:

1. *The Nigerian Public Service is crucial but deficient*
2. *The public service faces enormous problems and challenges which must be addressed*
3. *A reform civil service is key to meeting the development challenges of the 21st century*
4. *Nigerian's dream of a better future can only be realized by modernizing the machinery of government – the public service, and*
5. *Reform provides the platform for applying a combination of strategies and approaches to resolve the crises of governance and underdevelopment (FRN, nd.; 3-4).*

Put differently, following the re-establishment of democracy in Nigeria in 1999, president Obasanjo had to respond to a checklist of internal and external challenges which made reforms inevitable. The political, social and economic environment needed to be altered considerably in order to infect some confidence in government by citizens who had helplessly withed the declining fortunes of the polity over several decades. There were challenges posed by the massive wave of globalization that needed to be addressed. Globally the role of government had also changed dramatically. Accordingly, a combination of internal and external challenges made it inevitable for the new administration to effect changes in the machinery of governance (Adeoroye, 2006, El-Rufai, n.d and FRN, n.d).

Arising from this and in order to set the tone for the change Process in the Federal Civil Service, President Obasanjo approved the organization of a 10-day Seminar for Federal Permanent Secretaries a week after his inauguration. The Seminar was coordinated by Professor Adebayo Adedeji and supported by distinguished Public/Civil Servants and elder statesmen and women among who were Chief Allison Ayida, Alhaji Liman Ciroma, Alhaji Adamu Fika, Mallam Adamu Ciroma, Madam Teju Alakija, Professor Grace Alele-Williams, Chief S.B. Awoniyi and Mr. Jeremy pope of Transparency International.

At the closing session of the seminar, the president reiterated the need for Federal Permanent Secretaries to lead the change process in the Civil Service so that the Service could effectively support his administration in translating its ideals into action. He emphasized that the Civil Service could no longer continue to conduct its business in the usual way it did in the past and that the top hierarchy of the Civil Service should be more accountable and transparent in its actions in order to enthrone in the system a new culture of probity, accountability and transparency. The seriousness of the new administration to overhaul the Civil Service was soon demonstrated after about 50% of Permanent Secretaries inherited from the previous Administration were disengaged from the Service while new ones were appointed. The process of enthroning a new order in the public service was further consolidated with the organization of several retreats for ministers,

Special Advisers and Permanent Secretaries between 1999 and 2001. Probably the most noteworthy of these special retreats was the 4th Presidential Retreat held at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru, Jos from 23rd – 25th February 2001 under the theme “The New Orientation”. One major outcome of the Retreat was the Kuru Declaration, a series of statements of commitments embodying a new national ideology and code of ethics for Public Officers.

Under the leadership of Mr. Abu Obe, as Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, the Civil Service was given the opportunity to critically examine itself commencing with a series of two-week Orientation Workshops for Directorate Level Officers in the Federal Civil Service, coordinated by Professor Adebayo Adedeji. Between 1999 and 2001, 20 editions of the Workshop, attended by 1,902 officers, had taken place under the general theme: **“Preparing the Nigerian Public Service for the 21st Century, beginning with the 4th Republic under Civil Administration”**. The Harmonized Report of the 20 editions of the workshop and the final Communiqué reads to Mr. President by Dr. Goke Adegoroye (then, director – Special Duties to the Government of the Federation), on behalf of the 1,902 participants identified, among others, the following issues which set the stage for a Nigerian Public Service Reform Strategy:

- (i) *Massive expansion in the size of the Service which had risen 350% between 1960 and 1999 compared with a national population increase of 160% over the same period*
- (ii) *Decline in the institutional capacity, efficiency, effectiveness and commitment of the service,*
- (iii) *Renewed focus on ethical and moral issues, and in particular, addressing the popular perception that the Civil Service was corrupt,*
- (iv) *Placing more emphasis on training and retraining of officers and increasing the annual budget on training and development,*
- (v) *Reviewing Civil Service rules and regulations and Ensuring their uniform application in the entire Public Service,*
- (vi) *Restructuring and streamlining the service,*
- (vii) *Establishing a Public Service capacity Assessment and Administrative Reform Council to lead the process of injecting freshness and dynamism into the Civil service.(FRN,nd:13)*

Indeed, the Communiqué recognized and commended the President that some of the above-mentioned issues were already being addressed. For example, the erstwhile civil service rules and financial Regulations were reviewed and later issued as Public Service Rules and Financial regulations to make them applicable within the entire public service. Massive training of civil servants was undertaken while the morale of the service was boosted by clearing the backlog of delayed promotions. A salary increase of between 250-350% was also granted to officers in the Public Service. Steps were also being taken to deal with Civil Service restructuring and the declining capacity of the service as well as raising its moral tone by way of promoting ethical and integrity concerns.

In year 2001, at the 33rd meeting of the Federal Executive Council (FEC), the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF), through the Management Services Office, was mandated to design the strategy for far reaching reforms of the Civil Service. Under the leadership of Alhaji Mahmud Yayale Ahmed, the new Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, a diagnostic study was undertaken which revealed the messy state of the civil service in the light of the following findings:

- *An aging workforce, with 60% of serving officers consisting of officers who were 40 years old and above,*
- *The preponderance of unskilled staff in the service in a highly demanding knowledge age with 70% of the entire workforce constituted by officers on Grade Levels 01 – 06 while only 1.7% of the workforce was made up of officers in the strategic thinking Directorate Cadre (GL. 15 – 17),*
- *A prevalence of “ghost” workers, symptomatic of poor personnel records and payroll control systems,*

- About 60% of Federal Government spending was deployed to servicing the Federal Government spending was deployed to servicing the Federal bureaucracy (including the National Assembly),
- Pervading low moral, especially at the higher levels of service, resulting from non-professional Human resources Management Practice,
- A highly centralized, hierarchical and rule-driven system which stifled individual initiative and muffled corporate accountability,
- Ministries, departments and Agencies (MDAs) were without Mission and vision Statements, or clear corporate and individual schedules of duties,
- Public institutions were under-resourced and therefore lacked the capacity to make optimal use of technological changes to modernize,
- Working tools required to operate a modern management system for effective service delivery were grossly inadequate,
- Professionalism and esprit de corps had been significantly eroded,
- Policy making had degenerated to a routine response to addressing urgent problems rather than a structured initiative involving painstaking analysis, consultation and monitored control,
- There were serious capacity gaps at all levels due to prolonged absence of systematic training, needs identification and serious commitment towards updating skills,
- The procurement system was fundamentally flawed as it was neither transparent to bidders nor to the public. (FRN, nd:14-15)

Profoundly, these inadequacies only confirmed the level of decadence of the service over the years in addition to reinforcing the changing public perception of the Public Service as being: (i) lethargic and slow, (ii) insensitive and unreliable, (iii) unhelpful and wasteful, (iv) slow to change, (v) unresponsive and discourteous to the public, (vi) corrupt, (vii) over-bloated, (viii) insensitive, (ix) parochial and often ethnically-biased processes, contract award, etc. Further work in the OHCSF led to the development of a Strategy document for the Reform aimed at remedying this ugly situation.

In June 2003 following his re-election for another four years tenure, President Olusegun Obasanjo declared a programme of wide-ranging reforms, covering broad areas of economic, financial, governance and public service issues. Accordingly, all the series of the Administrations multi-sectoral reforms were put together and translated into a coherent medium-term national development strategy called the National Economic Empowerment and Development strategy (NEEDS). It became apparent that an efficient and effective Public Service was required to achieve success in the four focus areas of NEEDS that were fundamental to the realization of sustainable development namely: (i) wealth creation, (ii) employment generation, (iii) poverty reduction and (iv) value re-orientation and ethics, Public Service reform was incorporated as one four major planks namely:

- (i) *Economic management reform, to foster macro-economic stability, through fiscal discipline, Public resource Management/Utilization, financial Sector Reforms (Banking, Insurance, etc), Tax reforms, Customs Restructuring and Accelerated privatization and Liberalization of the Economy,*
- (ii) *Governance reform and Institutional strengthening,*
- (iii) *Public Service Reforms, with focus on efficiency, responsiveness and service delivery, and*
- (iv) *Transparency, Accountability and Anti-Corruption Reforms, carried out through the work of the following: Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) and Fiscal Responsibility Initiative. (FRN, nd:17)*

Obasanjo's Bureaucratic Reform: Components and Strategic Foci

The Civil Service Renewal Programme Component

In the civil service sub-component, the strategic foci of reforms are:

- *To reprofessionalise as a means of creating a new generation of officers and technocrats with sufficient skills, knowledge and motivation to innovate and make same applicable to government operations and management of institutions.*
- *The conduct of vigorous and systematic evaluation and reporting of professional performance to make policymakers accountable for resources used and for results.*
- *Getting the public service to focus its core functions by withdrawing from commercial activities.*
- *Modernize core operations and systems using ICT; reorientation to get the public service to serve the public as clients under strong accountability and responsibility; creation of a number of more specialized cadres; putting in place a system of capacity utilization wherein core skills are better matched with jobs; injection of high skills and competencies available in other sectors of the economy into the public service, using a range of incentives; strengthening policy and research synergies through enhanced collaborative projects, including public-private partnerships; spirited statistical reform to bridge knowledge and information gaps; review of current national policy for generation, application and exploitation of knowledge and intellectual property. The principles that underline the strategy of reforming the civil service involve:*
- *The reprofessionalisation of the Service to create a new generation of officers and technocrats with sufficient skills, knowledge and motivation to innovate and make same applicable to government operations and the management of institutions.*
- *Monetization of fringe benefits and reduction of waste and inefficiency, within an incentive structure that supports competitive private sector development.*
- *A fiscal rule and budgetary reforms operated in the context of a move towards a medium-term public expenditure framework that is linked to a properly functioning stabilization account with set budget envelopes within which agencies will have to operate.*
- *Setting clearly the organizational and personnel objectives within a concern with results rather than process and expenditure.*
- *The conduct of rigorous and systematic evaluation and reporting of programme performance to make policy makers accountable for resource used and for results.*
- *Re-engineering existing processes to make them faster, modernized and more efficient using ICT.*
- *Striking the appropriate balance between direction, control and the autonomy energy of department and public managers through reforms of central agencies.*
- *Creating a process in policy work to encourage decision-makers to periodically look at the longer and wider issues, and to draw the right people and the best information available to the various points of decisions.*
- *Changing the mind-set of officers so that they are conditioned by strong professional ethics.(Olaokpa, 2008:172-173)*

These reform programs are further elaborated as follows:

(i) **Civil Service Reform**

The Civil Service reform is being implemented at three (3) fronts namely, the general staff audit and payroll clean up; Ministries, Departments and Agencies/Parastatals changes based on restructuring; and cross-cutting Service-wide changes. Restructuring at MDA level involved at the pilot phase, ten Ministries. These MDA's are, however, at different levels of implementation. The restructuring was conducted with the aid of two generic Guidelines: one for Ministries and the other for Parastatals. The entire effort started with verification and validation of staff numbers on the payroll ostensibly to eliminate ghost workers and create the critical baseline information for conducting subsequent workforce analysis.

What followed was a functional review which essentially answered two critical questions: how many people do we need to do the job and what type and with what skills? And, what is the best way to get this work done? The functional review helped each restructuring MDA to get the functional structure of Government right, while the skills required for the MDA to perform in its redefined function was also determined. The required new skill when aligned with what the MDA

currently has, formed the basis for determining its retraining and severance proposal. The later in the first phase was compiled on the bases of eight criteria.

MDA's designed as pilots that have implemented their restructuring plans included the State House, the National Planning Commission, and the Federal Ministries of Finance, the defunct Federal Capital Territory and Solid Minerals. Following the directive of the President that five other MDA's be included, the Federal Ministries of Education, Health, Foreign Affairs, Transport and Internal Affairs are also implementing restructuring plans.

In concrete terms, the State house has a new structure. Its field offices have been round up, while its business units have been computerized. Within the new framework, strategic policy intelligence is being reinforced through the creation of a clearing house for policy analysis and research. The Federal capital Territory bureaucracy has been abolished and replaced with a Federal capital Territory Administration. The different sectoral responsibilities have been differentiated and put under the purview of Secretaries which are equivalent to State Commissioners, with payroll computerized along with such business operations as land administration, education, educational and health services, among many others.

As for the finance Ministry, a new organizational structure which rationalized its former thirteen departments into ten and the deployment of economists/financial management professionals to man them have so far been implemented. Similarly, the National Planning Commission's old eleven departmental structure has been rationalized into seven, all manned by professional staff. The Commission's six Parastatals have also been rationalized with the former Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) absorbing the National Data Bank and transformed into the National Bureau of Statistics. The National Manpower Board merged with the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Management and Administration (NCEMA) merged with the Centre for Management Development (CDM). Moreover, the Ministry of Solid Mineral Development now operates a new structure with four technical departments instead of the old order of four service departments and one technical Department. Its Mining and Licensing/Administration system has also been re-engineered and the staff profile has changed from a preponderance of generalist administrative officers to professional staff.

In determining the staff currently being disengaged by the Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC), the following criteria were approved by President Obasanjo for MDA's to apply:

- (i) *Officers appointed without due authorization;*
- (ii) *Officers with cases of serious misconduct;*
- (iii) *Officers that are medically unfit;*
- (iv) *Staff in jobs which services are monetized, outsourced or abolished (cleaners, drivers, cooks, security men, messengers, etc);*
- (v) *Staff that have become redundant due to the scrapping or restructuring of their organization/department;*
- (vi) *Officers without entry qualification or mandatory skills for their jobs;*
- (vii) *Staff adjudged to be inefficient or have unsatisfactory character; and*
- (viii) *Officers wishing to proceed on voluntary retirement. (Olaokpa, 2008:178)*

The first batch of officers that were retired involved a total of 35,700 officers. The FCSC has already issued over 20,000 disengagement letters to the affected officers. In compliance with the directives of President Olusegun Obasanjo, social assistance/pre-retirement training was organized for the disengaged officers at the conclusion of which cheques covering severance payments were issued to the retirees.

Within a commitment to improve the quality, capacity, productivity, and business operating system through removal of structural bottlenecks to system's turn-around, the first round of efforts to revise the Public Service rules, regulations and procedures, as well as the Financial Regulations have been completed. On the basis of this review, the transitional arrangement for current restructuring was approved by Government. The transitional arrangement created a lever of continuous revision of the processes of recruitment, appointments, deployments, discipline, performance management, pay and the incentive system.

Goals, Challenges and Expected Results of Reforms

In view of the above explanation, the reform objectives of government, among others include the following:

1. *Reinvigoration of the economy*
2. *Better development of infrastructure*
3. *Poverty reduction*
4. *Jobs and wealth creation*
5. *Entrenchment of fiscal discipline in public budgeting and expenditure and Motivation of private effectiveness (www.nigeria-direct.org.com).*

Reforms, when accepted and implemented, should be monitored and evaluated. In course of implementation process, many problems and difficulties are likely to arise. Elekwa and Eme (2006:8) identified a checklist of challenges or problems envisaged in a reform process to include:

1. *Entrenched practices and prejudices that need to be changed;*
2. *Lack of adequate public understanding and awareness;*
3. *Inadequate statistical data for planning*
4. *Anticipate fight back by apparent losers;*
5. *Lack of enough commitment to the total realization of reform; and*
6. *Political instability*

The result expected from the reform process includes the under listed:

1. *Restoring of confidence e among the citizenry in their government; its policies, programmes and activities;*
2. *Restoring of confidence within the international community in Nigeria's commitment to good governance and sound economic and political programmes;*
3. *Greater stability and better understanding within the polity;*
4. *Efficient and effective service delivery;*
5. *Accelerated political and socio-economic development; and*
6. *A better and happier existence of the average Nigerian (Elekwa and Eme, 2006:8).*

The organization must be prepared to receive them and make necessary adjustments to the original proposals. This presupposes a plan of implementation in a phased manner. At each stage, the expected result should be predetermined; and as the implementation process gets into actual results should be compared with the expected ones.

Problems of the Bureaucracy in Nigeria irrespective of Reforms

The problems besetting the civil bureaucracy in Nigeria could be discussed in three thematic formats: Structural, Administrative attitude and behaviour, and Political and economics respectively.

According to Nnoli (1980), Adebayo (2001) and Yusufu (1992) who posited that the structural problems besetting the civil service in Nigeria fall roughly into four basic categories, namely, personnel regulations, personnel qualifications, organizational structure, and work environment. Each plays its role in diminishing the administrative capacity in public bureaucracy. The personnel regulations state requirements for entry into the bureaucracy as well as procedures for promotion and dismissal. Public service in Nigeria stipulates a checklist of requirements for entry, including federal character. Theoretically, positions are supposed to be filled on the basis of merit. However, political, family, ethnic and religious factors are relevant considerations in achieving bureaucratic appointments.

Okafor (2005) adds:

... Once ensconced in a bureaucratic position, officials are promoted primarily on the bases of seniority. Rules for promotion fail to differentiate between productive and non-productive workers. Dismissal is rare except during the mass purge of Murtala –Obasanjo administration in 1975-1976. it is hard to lose a government job in Nigeria (Okafor, 2005:67).

Riggs (1963) expresses this negative aspect in this way:

Bureaucrats tended to use their effective control to safeguard their expedient bureaucratic interests – tenure, seniority, rights, fringe benefits, toleration of poor performance, the right violate official norms rather than to advance the achievement of programmes goals. Hence the carrier bureaucracy in the developing country fails not only to accomplish the administrative goals set for it but also stands in the way of political growth.

Adebayo (2001) and Otobo (1992) added that as regards personnel qualifications, employees entering the public and civil services through the use of spoils system might lack the required technical skills for their positions. Moreover, on-the-job training programmes are weak and ineffective. The fallout of this process is the emphasis on filing slot rather than matching employees' skills with the needs of the position.

In addition to the above factor, most public bureaucrats are poorly paid and as a result resort to multiple job-holding in the informal sector thereby impacting negatively on their attitude and commitment to work, (see Onyeonuru, 2004, Okoh (1998) and Okafor (1998). Ejiofor and Anagolu (1984) Ejiofor (1987), Onyeonuru, (2005) and Okafor (2005) added that the attitudes and behaviour of public bureaucrats in Nigeria are not conducive to the efficient administration of the affairs of their government organizations. This is because most bureaucrats are overly concerned about the security of their positions and as such are not inclined to the initiative thus, more concerned with status since authority breeds status.

Moreover, petty corruption or "black market" bureaucracy continues to flourish in Nigeria's public service and other counter productive attitudes also continue to flourish. For example, the work habit and motivational levels of most junior and medium level bureaucrats are not substandard. Ejiofor (1987) concludes that as a result of the above, the performance of public bureaucrats tends to be sluggish, their coffee breaks prolonged, and their need for supervision constant.

Furthermore, the ethno-religious hostilities in Nigeria and the crisis of confidence from the populace tends to reinforce and compound the problems of Nigerian public bureaucracies. As identified by Okafor (2005) while quoting Soley (1989) "public bureaucrats, regardless of their dedication to national goals and the norms of professionalism, tend to be viewed as biased and self serving by the masses" (Okafor, 2005:68). Nnoli (1980) adds – "the masses tend to make the basic proposition that bureaucrats are influenced by religious, ethnic and other parochial considerations and act accordingly. As a result of the above thesis, the populace became ignorant of the role of the bureaucracy occasioned by their poor orientation and see government jobs as 'no body's job and which must provide for every one'".

Finally, a politically neutral, professional core of senior administrations is rare in Nigeria (Ejiofor and Anagolu, 1987, Soloye (1989) and Okafor (2005). Okoh (1998) and Okafor (2005) provided reasons that account for this practice. First, political leaders in Nigeria are under intense pressure to reward their supporters. Second, few political leaders accept the premise of a neutral civil/public service. As most change of regimes were a result of military coup, it is only logical to expect that incoming leaders would view incumbent senior bureaucrats as part and parcel of the regime they had just overthrown. Third, incoming political leaders, and particularly leaders who would want to shape the ideological direction (if any) of the public/civil service for their easy control (Okoh, 1998).

In other words, there is a problem between civil service and political leadership. In Nigeria, for instance, there has been a certain amount of frictional resistance between the ministers, commissioners and the executive departments under them due to difficulty of reconciling their respective spheres of responsibility. The carrier civil servants tend to assume an air of superiority and self-relevance and often have contempt for the politicians many of whom as appointed lack academic background which some of the carrier civil servants possess.

Katako (1971) observes that "however, the politicians are also partly to be blamed for not remedying the situation. Their educational and professional background may be the reason, some of the politicians, of very humble origins, who have never had the chance to work with administrative and professional contributions, they tend to make a valuable and effective contribution to the process of nation-building, then it is absolutely essential that a certain amount of confidence should exist between civil servants and the politicians" (Katako, 1971:417).

In the economic environment of public bureaucracy in Nigeria, two points are worthy of note. First, public and civil service salaries constitute a major component of most budgets over the years. Except on few occasions, marked increases in salaries are a fiscal impossibility without a major reduction in civil service staff (The Guardian, May 11, 2005). The present democratic

administration has come to grips with the hard reality that the efforts to attract the most highly skilled personnel to bureaucratic position will necessitate slimming the size of their bureaucratic establishment. Second, as noted above, governments do not always have sufficient funds to finance all the programmes that they promise. Most development and social service projects in Nigeria are severally under funded (New Age, June 17, 2005).

CONCLUSION

Available evidence shows that the Performance of the public service in virtually all tiers of government and in extra-ministerial departments in Nigeria has remained very abysmal, hence the present state of underdevelopment (Obasi, 1987, Jike, 2003, Adebayo, 2001 and Okafor 2005). The abysmal performance of parastatals and agencies of government, like the former National Electric Power Authority and the Nigerian Telecommunication is very obvious in this regard. Nigerians are demanding more and better improved services and their demands are not being met, by all indications on the basis the score cards of the civil service and the Parastatals (The Guardian, May 1, 2005). In effect, this has slowed down the process of socio-economic and political development of Nigeria.

Recommendations

If the civil service is to attain the described result in Nigeria, a far-reaching reform is needed. First, recruitment, and promotion of civil servants should be based on merit system as opposed to spoils system. This is because the enthronement of federal character principle of recruitment and other spoils system techniques have sacrificed efficiency and effectiveness in the Nigerian public service. Second, while rules and regulations are sine qua non for systematic and orderly government, they should be flexible and pragmatic. To ensure this, there is a need for the rules and regulations, which were designed to serve colonial policies, and interests are to be revised (updated or repeated) to meet the demands of the 21st century.

Again, there is a need for the mental attitudes and beliefs of the civil servants to be reoriented, so that they can cope with the policies of the new governments. Furthermore, there is a need for a strong political elites, who are able to articulate political goals and to establish and maintain a framework of both political and legal institutions. They must also maintain communications with the major social and political group in order to sharpen governmental objectives/programmes. Nigeria equally needs a bureaucracy that is characterized by a high degree of deconcentration and decentralization of the decision-making process, a bureaucracy in which there is effective communication and coordination in which appreciate the thoughts and feelings of the people when formulating and implementing policies.

Finally, corrupt officials should be sacked, the behaviour of civil service personnel must change, they must be trained and retrained to embrace the spirit of achievement, and prudent use of material and human resources instead waste that have characterized public bureaucracies over the years.

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