REFORM PROCESS AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLEDEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: RETHINKING THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC BUREAUCRACY

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Abstract

The paper interrogates the role of the bureaucracy in the realization and consolidation of the reform process in Nigeria. The study utilized data from secondary sources such as textbooks, journals internet etc to examine the central issues surrounding the reform process and the role of the bureaucracy in it. The analysis was guided by the New Public (Managerialism) Management Theory. The study found out that while any national reform process aimed at achieving sustainable development without positioning the public bureaucracy may not be unsuccessful, the Nigerian public bureaucracy is not properly situated to carryout its role because of some ecological factors. The study suggested ways through which the bureaucracy can be energized to perform very wel such as reducing corruption, and adopting the principles of the new public management with emphasis on accountability, transparency and merit based recruitment and promotion system.
Keyword: Reform Process, Sustainable Development, Bureaucracy, Corruption.

Introduction
Reforming public institutions and strengthening governance is one of the broader efforts which have been widely believed to serve as a springboard to the attainment of sustainable development and coordination of government apparatuses in the modern nation-states (Obiora, 2007). Nations all over the world both developed and developing ones have one time or the other engaged in reform process in order to accelerate socio-economic, political and social development. Reform has always been a process not a destination (Obiora, 2007; Anazodo, 2002). Consequent upon the fact that every nation faces one internal challenge or the other, the importance of involving in

reform process has for years remained so pertinent that it cannot be over-emphasized. Nations all over the world are currently in the struggle to better their existence through the process of good governance, and responsible civil service for effective and efficient service delivery (Anazodo, Okoye and Chukwuemeka, 2012), because the public service is the administrative bureaucracy which occupies an essential position in the political system of nations. All over the world, it is perceived that the contributions of the public service in promoting sustainable and viable macroeconomic development per se are receiving enormous attention.

One thing is to articulate development and another is to attain it. Bureaucracy is one of the major drivers of sustainable development in the modern societies. This is informed by the fact that the role of the public bureaucracy at all tiers of government in the process of economic, social and political development looms large indeed (Okafor, 2005). This could also be one the reasons why Adeyemo and Osunyikanmi (2011), maintained that government in modern times is administered with the aid of bureaucracy. They posited that despite noticeable dissimilarities in form and substance, bureaucratic structure is one of such elements that no developed, underdeveloped, democratic or dictatorial country could afford to neglect. Observing the indispensability of bureaucracy in the modern nations could be one of the driving factors that made Aluko and Adesopo (2004), to infer emphatically that every sphere of modern life has thus become very bureaucratic as people are born into bureaucracies; grow in it, live with it, and even die in it. The position here is that, from being a mere instrument of social order, bureaucracy has taken on a distinctive culture of self preservation and perpetuation, evolving as it were, from the compact to the elaborate. Therefore, efficient and effective reform process that can ensure sustainable development is realizable when bureaucracies in the state are fully and reasonably involved, as some scholars have argued that bureaucracy facilitates rational planning of complex tasks and efficient production by large organizations (Lynn, 1987 in Okotoni, 2001).

Nigeria independence in 1960, the public bureaucracy has witnessed a number of reforms. Nigeria's return to civilian rule in May 1999 after three decades of military rule, was highly welcomed by well-meaning Nigerians. Obasanjo came to power in 1999 amid enormous public expectation of 'democratic dividends' and tangible increases in economic, infrastructural, social and political development. His administration delivered a number of important reforms during his (eight years) in office, including reform of the military; establishing an aggressive anti-corruption commission; paying off the majority of Nigeria's external debt; restructuring the banking sector; and providing a measure of macroeconomic stability (Adetula, et al, 2010). The overall objective of the Obasanjo Administration's Reforms was to put smiles on the face of every Nigerian in the long or medium-term period (Onuigbo, 2007). However, most of the reforms in Nigeria are theoretically aimed at changing the role of the public sector, creating an enabling environment for the private sector to flourish, and establishing an effective and viable civil service by increasing its expertise, competence, efficiency, fairness and quantity and quality of services. Since government cannot solve all the social and political problems in any nation of the world, there is need to promote, particularly the area of service delivery which the bureaucracy represents.

Statement of Problem

Despite the volume of reforms in Nigeria, the expected and desired sustainable development is still far to be attained as a result of obvious lingering internal contradictions related to the socio-political milieu of her public administrative systems. For years, various challenges have confronted the Nigerian state such as institutional incapability; pathological public service ethics; deficient social values; immorality in the civil service; politicization of bureaucracy; deep seated

corruption; and over-bearing involvement of the government of the day in the civil service. It has also been observed that programmes and policies made for sustainable development have not been reasonably implemented because the public service has been inflicted and bedeviled by "socio-political bureaucratic viruses." This could be traceable to self-serving tendencies of bureaucrats which have weakened the original conceptual foundation of instituting bureaucratic structures as projected by Max Weber a German Sociologist. As argued by Parson (1999) and Roberts (1997), bureaucrats are just interested in maximizing their own self-interest rather than the public interest hence; the self-serving tendencies of bureaucrats rarely permit them to contest the increasing politicisation of state apparatuses.

Research Questions
Therefore, the probing questions at this point are; to what extent have the reform processes embarked by different administrations transformed Nigeria? Is bureaucracy desirable for the attainment of development in the ongoing reform process in Nigeria? What are the factors responsible for the failure of public bureaucracies in Nigeria to help in accelerating sustainable development as anticipated by many people? To provide answers to these questions, this paper therefore, interrogates the role of bureaucracy in the consolidation of the reform process and achievement of development and in Nigeria.

Methodology
This paper relied on data sourced from secondary sources such as textbooks, journal articles, internet materials, conference papers etc. These were analysed based on their content and empirical reviews were done to identify the gaps that this study sought to fill.

Conceptual Analysis
Reform: Policy reform entails the success and failure of government actions and adopting new and incremental changes to economic technological and environmental forces. The goal of these changes is to create a sustainable world while maintaining current practices (Raskin, 2002). The term was specifically used and influenced by the ideas of John and Keynes an economics (who witnessed the failure of market force during the Great Depression (Keynes, 1936).

Bureaucracy: The concept of bureaucracy originated from the French word, bureau meaning desk or office and the Greek word, Kratos-rule or political power. (Merriam Webster, 2013). It is "a body of non-elective government officials and /or "an administrative policy-making group. Contemporary usage and ideas of bureacurcy is ascribed to Max Weber, a German sociologist who laid down the basic principles of Bureaucracy. He defended it and argued that bureaucracy constitutes the most efficient and rational way one can organize human activity and that systematic processes are necessary to maintain order maximize efficiency and eliminate favourtism (Swedberg, 2005).

Sustainable Development: Since development has been conceived as a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of poverty (Todaro and Smith, 2009:16), sustainable development connotes development that is achieved without compromising future generations. It is the ability to meet basic needs such as food, shelter health and protection (World Bank, 2007).

Theoretical Nexus
Over the years various theories had been adopted to discuss the place and role of public administration in contributing to the desired development in Nigeria. These theoretical explications are perceived to have contributed to the understanding of achievements made in the

public service as well as administrative lapses identified within bureaucratic ecology. However, this paper considered it ideal to adopt New Managerial theory to explain the present work. The choice of this study adopting New Managerial theory as an analytical foundation is to elucidate a clear dimensional framework upon which bureaucratic performance and efficiency in Nigeria can be improved.

The basic proposition of managerialism is on improving the performance and reducing government and its involvement as far as possible. In other words, new managerialism is theoretically based on private management and development of markets and economy, and reducing government involvement in order to ensure higher productivity. Unlike traditional public administration which is founded on (i) the theory of bureaucracy, and (ii) the theory of separation between politics and administration, New Public Management (NPM) is theoretically based on economics and private management (Sapru, 2008). New managerial approach can be likened to another form of "Public Choice Theory" which advocates the maximization of choice by individuals, and a maximum role for market forces and minimal role of the government. The fundamental focus of managerialism is reducing government in general and design market-oriented public policies that are anchored on result and productivity as managerialism could be said to have been derive from economics and largely being influenced by the techniques of private management. Hood (1991), therefore, in Anazodo, et al, (2012) opined that major New Managerialism or New Public Management (NPM) doctrines are that (a) direct public sector costs must be cut, (b) Private sector style management practices must be applied to increase flexibility in decision making (c) competition in the public sector must be increased to help lower costs and better standards (d) the public sector must be decentralized to make units more manageable and productive (e) results should be stressed rather than procedure (f) explicit standards and performance measure must be established because accountability requires clearly stated aims and efficiency requires attention to goals (g) managers must be given powers for professional management, because accountability requires clear assignment of responsibility not diffusion of power.

In fact, adopting this model in the present study is informed by the fact that the old traditional model of public administration which pays rigid attention on structure and process while down playing results has become ineffective. Using new managerial approach in the case of Nigeria is likely to significantly enhance productivity, expediency and efficiency, because adopting private sector personnel practices, including the greater use of rewards in the public sector, such as paying more remuneration for good performance and less for poor performance or even terminating staff appointment on the basis of abysmal under performance will enormously improve the performance of public bureaucracies in achieving the desired developmental goals in Nigeria. The import of this is that the bureaucrats who are now managers would take the responsibility of attainment of results or failure to achieve the desired results upon themselves, consequent upon the fact that they are directly involved in matters of policy rather than the master-servant relationship construed to be in practice in Nigeria today. Finally, this development can encourage direct relationship between the public officials and the public. In a situation like this the anonymity of the bureaucratic managers would be reduced and productivity that could enhance development is most likely to take place.

Review of Literature

Various efforts had been made in the past by various administrations in Nigeria to prosecute economic, political and administrative reforms that could launch Nigeria to sustaineable development. Bureaucracy as one of the largest organizations in Nigeria that occupies a

prominent position has also passed through reform processes in order to improve its performance. In fact, the reform process is ongoing which are targeted to positively affect all facets of the economy. The reform process includes the following as posited by Eme and Ugwu (2011),

> *restoring of confidence among the citizenry in their government; its policies, programmes and activities; restoring of confidence within the international community in Nigeria's commitment to good governance and sound economic and political programmes; greater stability and better understanding within the polity; efficient and effective service delivery; accelerated political and socio-economic development; and a better and happier existence of the average Nigerian.*

According to Ndue (2005), administrative reform is political rather than merely organizational. It is "a political process designed to adjust the relationship between a bureaucracy and other elements in society or within the bureaucracy itself" (Montgomery, 1967). In an elaborate manner Ndue, (2005) posits that:

> *Administrative reform has a "moral content" in that it seeks to create a "better" system by removing faults and imperfections. It is usually undertaken to change the status quo for the better. It aims at making the administrative and political structures and procedures compatible with broader goals. Administrative reform sets additional political values to be used as yardsticks against which administrative performance may be judged. The crux of administrative reform, therefore, is innovation and wealth creation that is, injection of new ideas and new people in a new combination of tasks and relationships into the policy and administrative process.*

Ndue (2005), further asserts that development is enhanced by administrative reform programmes in four ways. First, reform proposals challenge bureaucratic inertia and reactionary administrators and although "defence" mechanisms may temporarily suppress change, things can never quite be the same and "peace tokens" have to be made if the situation is to be kept in hand. Second, reform programmes attract enterprising administrative talent and provide valuable experience for a new generation of administrative aspirants. Third, reformers promote badly needed administrative modernization which is likely to set off a chain reaction in functional reforms as changes in techniques, skills and attitudes in specialized fields seems more attainable than possibly the harder changes to carry through in administration. Fourth, administrative reform introduces some inventiveness in outmoded systems, obsolete institutions, inert bureaucracies and in an environment of official indifference, technical ignorance, political intransigence and public apathy. Hence, administrative reform demands most of administrators in countries unable to sustain administration at minimal and unacceptable levels.

Reform is often aimed at bringing significant development in the state by adjusting or total overhauling of the existing administrative and technical structures and institutions. At the end, the welfare of the people remains supreme in every sincere reform process. In agreement, Gboyega, (2003), argues that in a different and simpler form, development implies improvement in material well being of all citizens, not the most powerful and rich alone, but everybody in the society. It also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced. It seeks to improve personal physical security and livelihoods and expansion of life chances (Tolu and Abe, 2011). Development involves both socio-economic and political issues. It should be noted at this juncture that series of reforms have been carried

out in the public service over the years. These reforms are put in place to bring sanity to the system and to effectively position the public service for effective service delivery capable of ensuring sustainable development in Nigeria. Most of these reforms are also implemented at state and local level so as to generate development in the grassroots (Tolu and Abe, 2011).

In Nigeria, the place of bureaucracy in ensuring the desired sustainable development is very large. As opined by Okafor (2005), the role of bureaucracy is critical to all areas of development process. In Nigeria, the 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 (Okafor, 2005). The success of a government is dependent on to a large extent the way the public bureaucracy functions. An efficient and neutral public bureaucracy is a *sine-qua-non* to a healthy democratic system, and a healthy democratic system is critical to efficient public bureaucracy (Adamolekun, 1986). In support of the above positions, Heywood, (2006), succinctly argued that public bureaucracy is still a standing institution and the wheel upon which progressive movement of the state is made possible. Political leaders make policies, the public bureaucracy implements them. 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) (Eme and Onwuka, 2010). Underscoring the importance of the bureaucracy, Downs (1967), states:

> *It is ironic that bureaucracy is primarily a term of scorn. In reality, bureaus are among the most important institutions in every part of the world. Not only do they provide employment for a very significant fraction of the world's population, but they also make critical decisions that shape the economic, educational, political, social, moral, and even religious lives of nearly every one on earth...The ability of bureaus to outlive their real usefulness is part of the mythology of bureaucracy.*

In Nigeria, the wider society looks up to the civil service not only to implement development goals and administer government policies on a day-to-day basis, but also to play significant roles in formulating development strategies, policies and programmes in such a way that will stimulate accelerated social and economic changes (Tolu and Abe, 2011). The failure of bureaucracy to contribute to their development as anticipated by many people has far-reaching implications in Nigeria. According to Akume (2012), the failure of the bureaucracy has had serious consequences on the development process of Nigeria thus, necessitating the applications of series of reforms to correct the problem, yet neglecting the imperative of taking seriously the relevance of continuous training of bureaucrats. The failure of the public bureaucracy to deliver the expected output to the society informed the series of reforms that have come to form the policy thrust of successive Nigerian governments since the 1980's (Gbenga and Ariyo, 2006). In the same vein, Akume, (2012) maintained that one of the major challenges to the effective working of the Nigerian state has been the gross inefficiency associated with its public bureaucracy. In his view, this is not to say that there are no good hands to effectively carryout assigned task. On the contrary the problem has been that of using inappropriate methods to meet current challenges; the result has been failure due to incompetence. In Nigeria, where bureaucratic ethos are unfamiliar and imperfect, clients of social provisioning express less support for their bureaucratic institutions than government (Eme and Onwuka, 2010). The challenges inherent in the Nigerian bureaucratic organization were brought upon it by it historical legacy, as pointed out by Akume, (2012), that it was due to the involvement of the military in government, who used the bureaucratic institution as an instrument for balancing, acceptance, representation, control and consolidation of political power in Nigeria's polity.

Pattern and Challenges of the reform Processes in Nigeria

Since independence in 1960, the post colonial Nigerian state has been under the attack of serious socio-political, economic, and administrative pathologies. The state apparatuses, the political and administrative institutions have been for years facing chaotic and perpetual structural dilemmas. The political elites who inherited political power from the departed colonialists had been accused of having no genuine intention of restructuring Nigerian economy in such a way it could withstand both internal and external shocks. This has been traced to their unending quest for primitive accumulation of wealth. Consequently, the post colonial Nigerian state was brutally captured and battered by the politicians who were prematurely handed over the baton of leadership of Nigeria. This ugly situation was regrettably and conspicuously exacerbated by the military and their accomplices; and Nigeria was left at the middle of sea by a group of political, industrial and commercial buccaneers. As a result of this precarious trend Nigeria became porous and therefore vulnerable. The failure of most of the previous administrations to initiate and prosecute enduring reforms in the public service starting from the 1963 till date left the nation undeveloped. Consequently, ensuring sustainable development in Nigeria has been elusive and public administrative system have performed below expectations.

In 1999, when Olusegun Obasanjo assumed office as the first president in Nigeria, he initiated a reform agenda in order to reconstruct, rehabilitate and transform the economy so that the desired socio-economic development could be attained. As Onuigbo (2007), argued, the search for reasons for her stunted economic development growth made the Obasanjo administration to scout around the globe in search of a solution.

With a heterogeneous social environment characterized by powerful contenders for state authority, Nigeria, perhaps more than any other country in Africa, faces greater challenges of development and rational allocation of societal resources (Nwosu, 1997). In Nigeria, the wider society looks up to the civil service not only to implement development goals and administer government policies on a day-to-day basis, but also to play significant roles in formulating development strategies, policies and programmes in such a way that would stimulate accelerated social and economic changes (Utomi, Duncan, and Gareth, 2007). Such desired changes are naturally expected to include reduced unemployment, increased social products and a more equitable redistribution of income. The reform process is particularly interesting because, there are enormous political and economic challenges facing the nation. Some of the policy and institutional reforms that are necessary for development began to occur during the Obasanjo administration. These reforms are mainly to the sphere of economic management and democratization of democratic institutions for effective service delivery, mainly at the level of federal government.

In fact there are multiple areas for sustainable reforms, including from politics, administration, and conflict related to oil and to ethnicity. Religious and political divides, as well as economic arrangements are of paramount importance for the reforms. A range of measures, long, medium and short-term, are needed to improve the prospects for sustaining reforms. In line with this, Utomi, Duncan, and Gareth, (2007), believed that a range of measures for reforms include:

Long-term structural economic change; Strengthening accountability systems; Accelerating progress in passing legislation; Emphasizing transparency and public information; Generating wider benefits from reform; Extending reforms to state and local governments; Addressing violent conflict alongside underdevelopment; Strengthening technical capabilities; and Working with external stakeholders.

Bureaucracy, Reform Process and Sustainable Development in Nigeria

Bureaucracy is one of the largest organizations in every society whose importance in formulation and implementation of policies has been appreciated by many people. The bureaucracy as one of the longest standing institutions in Nigeria continues to be relevant to governance despite its shortcomings. In most political systems, it has been widely argued that without the inputs of bureaucracy in the policy execution process the policies made by the political actors may be frustrated as the bureaucracy can make or mar any administration. Perhaps, this is the reason why every form of government, is it autocratic or democratic has never relented in acknowledging the role of bureaucracy and bureaucrats in ensuring that there would be smooth running of administration of the government. As Okotoni, (2001), put succinctly, the public bureaucracy has significant role to play in the administration of government - whether autocratic or democratic. As such, it is obvious that one may be tempted to believe that the quality of governance is dependent on the quality of bureaucracy a particular political system possesses. Therefore, the place of bureaucracy is largely recognized, and the importance of it cannot be over emphasized. In recognition of this, Tolu, and Abe (2011), posited that bureaucracy is almost the most important institution of Nigerian state affecting the life of citizens daily. As a matter of fact, quite a few aspects of modern society can be studied without reference to bureaucracy (Weber, 1946). The Nigerian Public Service is an important institution of the state. It is essential to modern life because of the roles it plays. Therefore, the quality of the Public Service is important to the quality of modern life. To Weber, to whom much of bureaucracy is associated with; bureaucracy is an inevitable feature and the outcome of modernization and the increasing complexities of human institutions (Aluko, and Adesopo, 2004). He saw the bureaucracy as the decisive feature of modernity, the key to change in economics, politics, law and even cultural life. It is the effort to run large organizations with greater effectiveness that brought bureaucracy. The success of a government rests as much as the way the public bureaucracy functions (Okotoni, 2001), while a neutral public bureaucracy, however ideal, is both a precondition and a vital by product of healthy democratic system of governance (Adamolekun, 1986)

An effective and efficient public bureaucracy is a *sine-qua-non* to the success of modern democratic system, and a viable democratic system is important to efficient public bureaucracy. In Nigerian, the role of the state bureaucracy has come under severe criticisms within the context of that gap that exists between its anticipated role and its actual output in guiding the society along the course leading to the desired goal – development (Gbenga and Ariyo, 2006). The failure of the public bureaucracy to deliver the expected output to the society informed the series of reforms that have come to form the policy thrust of successive Nigerian governments since the 1980's. According to Gbenga and Ariyo, (2006), there is a linkage between the transparency and probity of the political leaders as well as bureaucrats of a nation and its level of development. Based on the positions of different scholars, for Nigeria to achieve sustainable development in the reform process both political leaders and bureaucrats must appreciate the fact that new managerial method should be adopted to ameliorate some of the identified obstacles militating against bureaucracy such as nepotism, impersonality, corruption, red tapism etc., in order to suit the present modern system of administration.

During the colonial administration, the role of the bureaucracy was basically concerned with the maintenance of colonial law and order and collection of taxes and levies. The colonial bureaucracy was created mainly to prosecute imperial policies. At Independence on October 1, 1960, things were not the same again, as the post independence era witnessed "the transformation and redefinition of the role of the civil service to that of nation building that is

assisting the new government to plan and accelerate the pace of Nigeria's socio-economic development." (Nigeria Tribune, 1985, in Okotoni, 2001). For instance, in Okotoni, (2001) and Oyovbaire, (1989), highlighted the following functions of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (who is also a bureaucrat) as

- Coordination of the activities of Federal Ministries and Extra-ministerial departments.
- Advising the Head of Government on the appointment and deployment of Permanent Secretaries.
- Formulation of policies on and allocation of office accommodation and staff quarters.
- Provision of staff for newly established and *ad hoc* bodies.
- Management of the careers of officers in the administrative cadre and all Senior Management Staff on GL 14 and above.
- All functions at present performed by the Federal Ministry of Establishments and the Public Service Department of the Cabinet Office.
- Liaison with Heads of State Civil Services.
- Providing leadership and direction to the service, maintaining high morale and *esprit-de-corps*
- Reviews of machinery of Government, restructuring and re-organization of Federal Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments
- Promotion of good relations between Ministries and Civil Servants.
- Relations with the following special bodies:

From the fore-going, we can summarize the role of the bureaucracy as coordination of federal ministries, advising the political officials, formulation and implementation of government's policies, gathering and supplying of data for policy makers, ensuring continuity of services and public relations services. All the roles highlighted above are so crucial to the smooth running of any administration to the extent that one may be tempted to conclude that bureaucracy is indispensable (Okotoni, 2001).

The arrangement of effective and efficient bureaucratic organizations in Nigeria is of paramount importance in actualizing the desired goal of the government in attaining the anticipated development within the context of human and national well-being. In the reform process which is perceived by many can entrench socio-political and economic development of the Nigerian state if all the important institutions are reorganized and complement each other. The role of bureaucracy in the reform agenda becomes indispensable. Nigeria as plural state comprising different ethnic groups requires bureaucracies that possess the technical capacity to ensure that the diverse interests within the heterogeneous climate of Nigeria are harmonized in order to accelerate the long awaited sustainable development many citizens have been longing for. In the area of economic reform the input of bureaucracy cannot be under estimated. This is because, without a focused and viable bureaucracy the economic policies formulated by any administration are likely to be frustrated by the same bureaucrats who were once conspicuously indispensable during the military regime. (Obiora, 2007)

Challenges of the Bureaucracy in the Reform Process and Achievement of Sustainable Development in Nigeria

In her quest to achieve national and human development, there are various conditions that affect the effectiveness, performance and productivity of public bureaucracy in Nigeria which include, though not limited to the following: too much emphasis on structure and procedure, lack of accountability and transparency, politicization of bureaucracy and corrupt practices. In fact, there is this traditional model of public administration in Nigeria which pays rigid attention on

structure and process while down playing results in the public bureaucracy. It has reduced the performance of public sector due to direct government involvement, and ultimately conditioned the attainment of expected development in Nigeria. Bureaucracy is so often used as a derogatory term, that one forgets that it "was coined by a distinguished sociologist to describe an institutional development that he believed would be of great benefit to modern society" (Lynn, 1987, Okotoni, 2001). The institution is seemingly resistant to dynamic change, and has become the object of constant public criticism. Bureaucratic organizations have one time or the other resisted change and continued to operate within the context of there traditional methods. Bureaucrats have often deemphasised the importance of results and always lay more emphasis on structural configurations and procedural observations. Consequently, the term 'bureaucracy', in many parts of the world, is often associated with pejorative expression, and used to decry the inefficiency, rigidity and lapses that characterize public services (Okotoni, 2001). According to him, some have attacked the term bureaucracy as "contrived, ambiguous, and troublesome". Sadly, those who view bureaucracy with this lens refer the bureaucrats as "simultaneously timid and ineffectual, and power-seeking and dangerous." Say the word and everyone immediately thinks of red tape, stupid and rigid rules, waste, and coldly impersonal lazy clerks" (Woll and Zimmermann, 1989).

The public bureaucracy in Nigeria has suffered many setbacks due to the numerous problems associated with the type of political environment they operate. The involvement of government has most often that not negatively affected the results the citizens expect from the civil service. One of the major factors conditioning the public bureaucracy in Nigeria is politicisation. Several offices in the public service were at one or the other politicized and militarized by the military. These includes the offices of the Permanent Secretary and Head of Service. Although, there may be nothing totally wrong with the bureaucracy performing political functions, but the fear is that this has negative multiplier effects on the system. Unfortunately, politicization of bureaucracy in Nigeria has not only affected their outputs but has also made bureaucrats irresponsible while dealing with the public. Observing this trend Amucheazi, (1980), argue that politics entered into the spheres of administration and in the process the whole bureaucratic apparatus is disrupted and put into disarray. The whole public bureaucracy which ought to be a non-partisan and neutral body with no permanent loyalties to any group has had to take sides in many instances. In the area of service delivery, many citizens have lost confidence in the bureaucratic institutions charged with the provision and delivery of public goods and services (Okotoni, 2001).

There is a linkage between the transparency and probity of the political leaders as well as bureaucrats of a nation and its level of development (Gbenga and Ariyo, 2006). Politicization of Nigerian public bureaucracy has been assumed to have contributed to it lack of transparency in their management of public affairs. While trying to please politicians, the bureaucrats have in many occasions fallen into temptation of hiding useful information to the public. This, therefore, has often had negative implications both in the public sector and the society at large. According to a World Bank (1995), report, "Nigeria's public sector lacks transparency and accountability." Tolu and Abe, (2011), has also argued succinctly that the civil service today is a battered institution, which has virtually lost its attributes of anonymity, neutrality and security in tenure, an institution in which moral has reached its nadir, in which excessive caution, undue bureaucratic practice and in terminable delays have become the hallmarks.

The ideology of bureaucratic accountability contends that accountability is the foundation of any governing process (Thomas, 1991) "Accountability and responsibility represent important features of *democratic* societies. In Thomas's view, political leadership is held accountable to the

citizens by regular, free and competitive elections. Ultimately, in the democratic polity, accountability of the administrators and the bureaucracy is to the citizens of the country - the citizen is sovereign. Accountability for the administrators and the bureaucracy is essential to ensure legitimacy of rule and to promote the concept of the public administrator as the servant of the people. He further argued that the citizen's role is clear. It is the absolute necessity and right of the individual to complain against insensitive or callous treatment by the bureaucracy on the grounds that each individual has basic human rights regardless of the form of government that may exist. As in the case of Nigeria it is believed that these ideological perceptions have been woefully bastardized. The public bureaucracies are militarized to the extent they have appeared to the public as institutions of deprivation and alienation.

In Nigerian, the role of the state bureaucracy has come under severe criticisms within the context of that gap that exists between its anticipated role and its actual output in guiding the society along the course leading to the desired goal – development (Gbenga and Ariyo, 2006). The efforts of the Nigerian government to achieve sustainable development in the ongoing reforms have not yielded the much expected results due to the problem of corruption that has eaten deep to the fabric of the Nigerian society and the public bureaucracy as one of the most institutions in the political system is not spared. It is obvious that corruption has permeated all the nooks and crannies of the Nigerian society as Achebe (1983), bluntly affirms that anyone who can say that corruption in Nigeria has not yet become alarming is either a fool; a crook or else does not live in this country. Due to the abysmal high level of corruption in Nigeria which has over the years remained so pervasive, unleashing severe blows at every sector of the economy, in 1993, Achebe (1983), remarked that 'keeping an average Nigerian from being corrupt is like keeping a goat from eating yam. Onigu, (2000) as cited in Gbenga and Ariyo, (2006), In his own attempt at defining corruption, states that, "corruption is the perversion of integrity or state of affairs through bribery, favour or moral depravity". He further states that corruption takes place when at least two parties have interacted to change the structure or processes of society or the behaviour of functionaries in order to produce dishonest, unfaithful or defiled situations".

Based on the above conceptualization of corruption, it is clearly an evidence of absence of sincerity, due process, accountability, law, order etc. Corruption in the Nigerian public bureaucracy is perceived to have hindered the anticipated and desired development. Since bureaucracy is believed to be the engine of growth of the Nigeria state, the pervasiveness of corruption in the institution has the capacity of undermining and eluding the nation's development. Fundamentally, the orientation of bureaucracies of not being responsible to the public is a factor difficult to conquer in Nigeria. Therefore, the omnipotence of the government in Nigerian government has obviously affected the effectiveness, expediency, productivity, and efficiency of public bureaucracies within the context of the Nigerian state (Obiora, 2007).

Conclusion and Recommendations

There is no doubt that, there is a nexus between effectiveness and efficiency of the political leaders and bureaucrats of a nation and its level of development. In other words, where there is a weak bureaucracy, the level of development will also be weak. Achieving sustainable development would remain a mirage if the public bureaucracy in Nigeria is not transformed in such a way it can withstand both internal and external pressures. The reform process which is believed to contribute to laudable development in Nigeria has faced many administrative and political challenges as a result of bureaucratic indifference, corruption and traditionally induced bureaucratic inflexibility, which have made bureaucratic institutions; federal, state, and local

governments to perform below expectation. By and large, to make public bureaucracy in Nigeria more proactive, the following measures are to be taken.

The Nigerian bureaucratic institutions should be repositioned in such manner their performance and productivity can be appreciated in present globalization process. This means that bureaucracy should be made responsible and public friendly. There is need for a paradigm shift. The traditional ideological orientation that over emphasizes on structure and rigid procedures should be replaced by a New Public Management (NPM) in order to create Market-based Public Administration which possesses the capacity to respond positively to the challenges of globalization, international competitiveness, and technological dynamics. The reform process targeted to improve both human and national development can be actualized when there reduction of government involvement as far as possible. The anonymity of the bureaucrats which has often exposed them to unfriendliness and indifference to the public plights need to be discouraged. In concurrence with Okotoni, (2001) view, a gradual process is required to de-militarise the civil service and embark upon an aggressive acculturation to civil rule. An important area of the acculturation is the military language that has become part and parcel of the civil service. For example, according to him, expressions such as "with immediate effect", "report immediately", "must comply with", "without delay" should be gradually replaced in the civil service with more dignified, decorous and prudish vocabularies and dictions. Therefore, it is ultimately pertinent that the political leaders must create a conducive socio-political atmosphere devoid of rancour, prejudice, and rivalry so that bureaucrats can operate efficiently.

The bureaucratic corruption which has permeated every nook and cranny of Nigerian bureaucratic institutions has to be addressed. It can be deduced that any reforms geared towards improving the performance of the bureaucracy must as a matter fact in the first instance address the problem of corruption or else, such efforts will be truncated by corrupt practices (Gbenga and Ariyo, 2006).

For the public bureaucracy to contribute effectively to the attainment of sustainable development in Nigeria, far-reaching reforms are needed. First, recruitment, and promotion of civil servants should be based on merit system as opposed to spoils system (Eme and Onwuka, 2010).

In the final analysis, a leader's no nonsense reputation might induce a favourable climate but in order to affect lasting change, it must be followed up with a radical programme of social and economic re-organisation or at least well-conceived and consistent agenda for reform which Nigeria stood, and stands, in dire need of (Achebe, 1983). When these are in place, it is optimistically believed that the desired development could be achieved in the ongoing reform process. This is in line with the central argument of this paper that the public bureaucracy in Nigeria would continue to under-perform and public bureaucracies re-structured in such a way they can suit Nigerian socio-political and economic environment, rather than sticking sheepishly to the colonial model of civil service, which has been believed to have yielded poor results.

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