

WEBERIAN IDEAL BUREAUCRACY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC: AN ASSESSMENT

S. S. AVIDIME, PhD.

Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Science
Kogi State University, Anyigba, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper discusses public bureaucracy and national development with specific focus on the fourth republic. Thus, the use of Max Weber ideal rational theory has lost its vigour, dynamism and interest because of criticisms that has trailed the role of the public bureaucracy and national development in Nigeria. This is exasperated by the inadequacies policies and programmes that are deliberately national development in Nigeria yet these development areas are still grossly unattractive to live in. This concern is insufferable disheartening because public bureaucracy exists in any society for the convenience of effective and efficient service delivery. The great and dire need for national development areas amidst abundant human and material resources in Nigeria has occasioned the great tendency to blame politicians for the poverty, underdevelopment, and colossal leadership tragedy that best describes the contemporary Nigerian society. This is because from military dictatorship to democratic governments all have conspired to reduce governance to the manipulation of public office to deceive and loot public funds for personal aggrandizement.

Introduction

The development of Nigeria has required major input from its public bureaucracy, the experience of the fourth republic played a major rules in shaping Nigeria's character and, hence, its performance following independence. The bureaucracy in Nigeria in fourth republic was in all respect similar to the British bureaucratic authoritarian system that preceded it. Between 1954 and 1966, the bureaucracy was thoroughly "Nigerianized". The bureaucracy and administrative component of government are employers of a fairly large proportion of professional and technically trained people in Nigeria. The ministries and public enterprises whether the products of colonial administration or of long-standing independent government, these agencies are indispensable instruments for the exercise of governmental authority. If the decisions and the policies of political or military leaders are to be carried out, if the programs launched are to have any effects, it is the administrators who will do it. Otober(1999), Adebayo Adedeji(1981), and William Graf(1988) content that the process of transferring power to "successor elites" in the Nigerian bureaucracy produced several permanent structural deficiencies

- a. A dearth of qualified personnel at all levels
- b. A stratified and ossified bureaucratic structure not interested in popular needs and demands that, moreover, was cleft between senior and juniors and rent by rivalries between the older generalists and the emerging professional –technical cadres
- c. A bureaucratic class separated by training education, and wealth from most of the population;

- d. The nucleus of a self-interested civil servant class that was attempting to transform the political power that the class conferred into the economic power that it could buy-this of course implied the exploitation of ethnicity and sectionalism to entrench one's political power
- e. A network of patrons and clients and, hence, a great potential for corruption.

To Weber, a bureaucracy or organization possessing these features is the most superior from organization. he believed that such an organization is capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency and utilizes the most rational mean of carrying out control over human beings. It is customary to define bureaucracy in ways that associate it with large-scale and complex organizations. The fact that the Weberian concept of bureaucracy has been widely adopted does mean that his ideas have not been criticized. In fact, the attack that has been mounted upon Weber's conceptualizations is formidable, some writer have questioned the rationality of Weber's rational bureaucracy. They have particularly noted the informal organization that often develops within a bureaucracy and the dysfunctional consequences of bureaucracy, for example, its' too rigid adherence to rules (Rosenbloom 1998) other criticisms have been concerned with the cultural and political limitations of administrative rationality, or the absence in Weber's writing of the importance of values and attitudes (Friendrich 1963, 471; Rosenberg 1998). Other scholars who have been particularly interested in issues of change, especially the problems of change in developing areas, have challenges the Weberian conceptualization more seriously. Martin Albrow (1970) asserts that the degree of rationality a bureaucracy might have depend on the cultural context in which it is located (54-61).

Therefore, he considers invalid for developing countries the basis on which Weber constructed his "ideal type" of bureaucracy. Victor Thompson(1964) challenges more seriously the relevance of a Weberian-type bureaucracy to a developing country. He contends that in the Western industrialized country, administrative practices and principle were derived from an established professional occupation and a system of accountability. A result, administrative practices have little value for development bureaucracy where the need is for an adaptive administration, one that has to incorporate changes constantly.

The Statement and Problems

The Nigerian public increasingly has come to view bureaucrats as corrupt and inefficient. There is a general distrust of and public alienation from the bureaucracy. The absence of a strong commitment to professional ethnic standards on the part of the public bureaucracy, together with the absence of business ethics on the part of the private sector entrepreneurs, has produced a situation in which corruption flourishes both in and out of government.

Although, the incumbent President Retired General Olusegun Obasanjo in 2003 has demonstrated the will to expose and punish persons guilty of corrupt practices by creating some organization like the (EFCC) Economic and Financial Crime Commission, and (ICPC) Independent Corrupt Practice Commission.

With this background in place, the current government must ensure that wages, salary, and benefits meet the needs of all public employees. Good labour relations are also necessary, and the political rights of each employee must be recognized and honored. The current regime should also ensure that all levels of the civil service, including the military, are complying with the code of conduct policies. All heads of ministries and government agencies should be

delegated as principal instruments in the execution of national accountability policy and Code of Conduct. A strong disciplinary system is also required to effectively enforce the policy. It should be noted that when government policies on accountability are clearly defined and communicated to all civil servants and when the policies are strictly enforced the need to invoke disciplinary procedures is greatly reduced. Unfortunately there are many bad actors in the Nigerian government who will not respond well to the policies and procedures outlined above. Consequently, the public trust requires that the government also develop policies and procedures that protect its operations against fraud and other types of criminal behavior.

The use of internal and external audits often provides this extra measure of protection. In combination with well-developed sense of organizational unit, public entities can reach the high degrees of efficiency, economy, and effectiveness that are demanded by their ever watchdog constituencies.

Theoretical Framework

The ideal legal rational bureaucracy of more Max Weber would serve an analytical tool for unfolding the pattern of public bureaucracy and national development in Nigerian fourth republic. Max Weber an eminent German sociologist gave a systematic of bureaucracy. He developed a typology of authority, is the most effective form of organization.

Weber goes in details a Theory of Domination. He refers to three types of Domination-traditional; Charismatic and legal. Domination is founded on the belief in the desirability of rational principles. He opines that legal is best exemplified by bureaucracy.

The position of bureaucrat, his relations with political bosses and his colleagues are governed by the impersonal rules. Max Weber refers to ideal type model bureaucratic form of organization. He opines that ideal type is not achievable in the real sense. He considers the ideal type of bureaucracy as a mental construct that is not achievable in the real sense. He considers the ideal type of bureaucracy should be accepted in modern state system.

“Bureaucracy is by far the most efficient instrument of large scale administration. The modern social order has become overwhelmingly dependent on it. This type of organization is in principle applicable to a wide variety of different fields.... Profit making business charitable organizations.... Political and religious organizations

Power and Autonomy of the Nigerian Public Bureaucracy; A Thematic Exposition

The Government organizations in Nigeria fourth republic serve variety of development purpose. The setting of objectives or goals to be achieved, the resolution of policies, the formulation of plans and their translation into programs and projects, the preparation and administration of budgets for programs implementation, and the mobilization and utilization of a nation’s resources in the execution of programs.

It is axiomatic that public organization in Nigeria should be designed specifically for the purposes to be served. Different purposes require different types of organizations. According to Rodinelli (1992) and Esman (1991) the administration of development is a radically different function that the maintenance of law and the conduct of routine public tasks. Sustainable development and public management tasks are concerned with producing change. The machinery of public management in Nigeria in the future must therefore be designed to execute pragmatic change.

Management principles such as setting goals or objectives, strategic planning cost benefits analysis, program evaluation and accountability have become commonly accepted values in most societies, just as rationality, neutrality, scientific management are to public administration, rational administration according to David Rosenbloom (1998) involves running government in the image of business; using cost benefit analysis, rapid computerized information feedback loops, systems analysis, and quantitative models. The main contention of a good administration is that certain fundamental management principles and practices exist in all-governmental operations in order to obtain efficiency, accountability and economy.

Rational administration is also epitomized by Luther Gulick's famous acronym POSDCORB (1937), and Max Weber idealized organization form bureaucracy (1922). Bureaucracy is the means of transforming social action into rationality organized action" (Weber, 1968; cited in Rosebloom 1988). The views associated with these scholars also stress the objective of efficiency and the technical problems of specialization of functions and division of labour.

In the fourth republic, since the introduction of the democratic rule in Nigeria in May of 1999, a new form of intergovernmental relations has emerged. Otobo (1999) pointed that a number of administrative consultative forum bring together senior policymakers at the federal, state and local levels. For example, conferences of accountant generals, and conferences that bring together ministers (heads of federal ministers) and commissioners (political heads of agriculture). These forums have enabled public administrators form all levels of government to explore mutual interest that could lead to sustainable development in the future. Nigeria's bureaucracy is activity engaged in the decision making processes.

The power and autonomy of the Nigerian public bureaucracies have expanded enormously during the years that the military has dominated the political system and since 1999 when the civilian administration was sworn in. the public administrator role in policy making has increased since the end of the civil war in 1970. In the absence of a legislature and elected representative, the federal and state public bureaucracies have acquired wide management and formulation. Social, Economic, Educational, and Political objectives.

In the fourth republic the emergence of democracy in Nigeria on May 1999 ended 16years of consecutive military rule. Olusegun Obasonjo inherited a country suffering economic stagnation and the deterioration of most democratic institutions. Obasanjo, a former general, was admired for his stand against the Abacha dictatorship, his record of returning the Federal Government to civilian rule in 1979, and his claim to represent all Nigerians regardless of religion.

The new President took over a country that faced many problems, including a dysfunctional bureaucracy, collapsed infrastructure, and a military that wanted a reward for returning quietly to the barracks. The president moved quickly and retired hundreds of military officers holding political positions established a blue-ribbon panel to investigate human rights violations released scores of persons held without charge, and rescinded numerous questionable licenses and contracts left by the previous regimes. The government also moved to recover millions of dollars in funds secreted to overseas accounts.

Most civil society leaders and Nigerian witnessed marked improvements in human rights and freedom of the press under Obasanjo. As Nigeria works out representational democracy, conflicts persist between the Executive and Legislative branches over appropriations and other

proposed legislation. A sign of federalism has been the growing visibility of state governors and the inherent friction between Abuja and the state capitals over resources allocation. Communal violence has plagued the Obasanjo government since its inception. In May 1999 violence erupted in Kaduna State over the succession of an Emir resulting in more than 100 deaths. In November 1999, the army destroyed the town of Odili, Bayelsa State and killed scores of civilian in retaliation for the murder of 12 policemen by a local gang. In Kaduna in February-May 2000 over 1,000 people died in rioting over the introduction of criminal sharia in state. Hundreds of ethnic Hausa were killed reprisal attack in southeastern Nigeria. In September 2001, over 2,000 people were killed in inter-religious rioting in Jos. In October 2001, hundreds were killed and thousands displaced in communal violence that spread across the states of Benue, Taraba, and Nassarawa. On October 1, 2001 Obasanjo announced the formation of National Security Commission to address the issues of communal violence. Obasanjo was re-elected in 2003.

The new president faces the daunting task of rebuilding a petroleum based economy, whose revenues have been squandered through corruption and mismanagement. Additionally, the Obasanjo administration must defuse longstanding ethnic and religious tensions if it hopes to build a foundation for economic growth and political stability, currently there is unrest in the Niger Delta over the environmental destruction caused by oil drilling and the ongoing poverty in the oil-rich region.

A further major problem created by the oil industry is the drilling of pipelines by the local population in an attempt to drain off the petroleum for personal uses or a source of income. This often leads to the major explosions and high death tolls.

Particularly notable disasters in this area have been

1. October 1998, Jesse, 1000 death
2. July 2000, Jesse, 250 deaths
3. September 2004, near Lagos, 60 death
4. May 2006, Ilado, approx. 150-200 deaths (current estimate)

Two militants of an unknown faction shot and killed Ustaz Ja'afar Adam, a northern Muslim religious leader and Kano State official, along with one of his disciples in a mosque in Kano during dawn prayers on 13 April 2007. Obasanjo had recently stated on national radio that he would "deal firmly" with election fraud and violence advocated by "highly placed individuals". His comments were interpreted by some analyst as a warning to his Vice President and 2007 presidential candidate Atiku Abubakar.

In the 2007 general election, Umaru Yar'Adua Goodluck Jonathan, both of the People's Democratic Party, were elected President and Vice President, respectively. The election was marred by electoral fraud, and denounced by other candidates and international observers.

Eventually elected President Yar'Adua died and his Vice Goodluck Jonathan continue until 2011 when Goodluck Jonathan was elected the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the removal of fuel subsidy as thrown the nation into turmoil were the people clamour and envisage if there will be hope in the future.

Prof. Dabie in his advice to Goodluck Jonathan on sustainable development in Nigeria ascertained that efficiency effectiveness, transparency and accountability improved ethics orientation could transform the Nigeria society into an instrument for attaining sustainable development in Nigeria is to enable people without any public administration training to understand the way the civil service function in Nigeria. It is an essential text if you want to

understand why public policy and industrial development failed during the military regime in Nigeria. Professor Dibia argues that the task of developing managerial manpower is not only imperative, it is urgent. Until Nigeria evolves its endogenous managerial talents, economic development and structural change will continue to be elusive, and the process more agonizing and traumatizing. His analysis has useful implications for researchers who are doing comparative studies elsewhere. Public administration scholar, graduate and advance, undergraduate students, and University Libraries would enrich their holdings in comparative public administration with this first empirical study of Nigerian Bureaucrat. Our current leader a lesson for thought.

Fiscal Federalism

Fiscal Federalism is still a salient aspect of Nigerian public administration. Since independence in 1960 to date, the allocation of revenue to regions and later states and local governments has often been a major problem to Nigerian Federalism. In an attempt to solve the problem of revenue allocation the National Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission was established in 1989 (Gboyega, 1999). This institution was required to design and effectively mobilize all sources of public sector revenue, as well as prescribe a revenue allocation formula.

This formula is what is now used for sharing money among federal, state and local governments. Since 2007, the revenue allocation formula has been adjusted twice to the disadvantage of state governments. On the one hand, the state share of the national revenue decreased from 25 percent to 35 percent in 2007. On the other hand, the local governments share of the national revenue account increased from 10 percent to 15 percent in 2007 (Gboyega 1999).

Bureaucrats

Bureaucracy is looked upon with ridicule and the civil servants are contemptuously called "**Bureaucrats**". Harold Laski defines bureaucracy as "a system of government the control of which is so completely in hands of the officials that their power jeopardizes the liberties of the ordinary citizens". Prof. W.A. Robson has summarized its problems in the following words: the maladies from which bureaucracy most frequently suffers are an excessive sense of self-importance on the part of officials or an undue idea of the importance of their office; an indifference towards the feeling or the convenience of individuals citizens; an obsession with the binding and inflexible authority of departmental decisions, precedents, arrangements or how badly or with what injustice they may work in individual cases; a mania for regulations and formal procedure; a pre-occupation with the activities of particular units of administration and an inability to consider the government as a whole; a failure to recognize the relations between the governors and the governed as an essential part of democratic process.

The major flaws in the Nigerian bureaucracy in the fourth republic are not found in the collection of data or the identification of long-term objectives but in the shortage of qualified personnel, especially in scientific and technical fields. More significant, the shortcomings are seen in the lack of reliable census data, ineffective coordination within and outside the government and most of all, in bureaucratic corruption. Further, the deferral character principle is another flaw that contradicts the unity and representative bureaucracy that the civil

service ought to promote. The first flaw of the federal character is in the area of freedom of movement the second flaw is that of freedom from discrimination. In both cases, the expansive interpretation of movement which includes career choice and upward mobility abridges career movement and stunts self-realization in a discriminatory manner. Subjecting appointment and promotion to federal character discriminates against merit and therefore unfair to certain sector of the Nigerian society (Ayoade, 1999). The promotion and appointment of persons to various civil service positions should be made from the best available in the group or section in the nation. Recruitment to positions which require specialist training such as medical professionals, architects, engineers, professors and pilots should be based on merit. Further, to ensure merit, efforts should be made to give equal access to education to all the citizens of Nigeria. This will help to abridge the educational disparities between North and South as well as give opportunities for further professional training. Finally, in spite of Nigeria's desire to accelerate economic development, bureaucratic accountability is still a distant goal.

Conclusion

The fourth republic played a critical role in development of government bureaucracy in Nigeria. Apart from the deficiencies of inherited techniques and procedures, a review of public bureaucracy ineffectiveness includes the following. The first is low productivity, which is seen sometimes as the result of the pursuit of private business activities, by public bureaucrats and sometimes as the result of resources-wasting rivalries between department and interethnic group civil servants. It is also seen as the result of narrow bureaucratic perspectives that place a premium on controlling resources, particularly public expenditures, rather than on output or social and economic benefits expenditure. The second is poor policymaking or decision-making. The third is low execution or implementation capacity. The fourth is defective structures, usually a reaction to over centralization.

The doctrine of political neutrality in the Nigeria on public bureaucracy has been discarded, and public administrators have ceased to be non-partisan and neutral. Today's civil service is a formidable political force with a strong role in policy formulation. "In the distribution of patronage, and the allocation of resources, The Nigerian public administrators have vital role in economic matters because most military and political leaders have little alternative but to rely on their advice."

Unfortunately, however, Nigeria's bureaucrats have not used their power to improve the management of government but rather to satisfy their individual and collective ambition. Bureaucrats in the nation have been playing the role of informal brokers between the national government and their ethno-regions engaged in cover politics. Ayoade (1999) contends that the only solution to the problem of integration is adherence to true federalism and a reduction in power of the national government. A decentralization of critical nation institutions and political power will result in a relax bureaucracy, less-heated inter-ethnic relations and an efficient and accountable civil service.

A major question in Nigeria therefore is whether public administration in Nigeria can be transformed into a self-motivating but rationally responsible institution that is concerned with the country's modernization needs. The structural adjustment/maker-or-buy technology policy was intended to begin this kind of transformation.

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