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Bureaucratic Dysfunction and the Crisis of Nigeria's Public Administration

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Abstract:
The nature of Nigeria's public administration system and the myriad of responsibilities it is expected to accomplish in the nations quest for attainment of development makes it imperative that Max Weber's legal rational bureaucracy be adopted. Scholars have noted that when the bureaucratic structure becomes fail to meet the established goals of the organization, it is said to be dysfunctional. Nigeria's public administration system over the years has been stated as having been inefficient leading to many reforms of the public service. The study examined bureaucratic dysfunction and the crisis of Nigeria's public administration system. The study, a desk research utilized qualitative secondary data. Data were sourced from relevant textbooks, scholarly peer reviewed journal articles, official government publications, and materials downloaded from the internet. We argue in the paper that there many extraneous and ecological factors that affect the Nigerian Public administration system which are not really bureaucratic dysfunction, such as politicization of the administration system, socio-cultural factors and federal character principle, corruption by elected public officials and indiscipline in the public bureaucracy. The national assembly should review section 14 of the 1999 constitution to make appointments and promotions purely by merit in line with the tenets of bureaucracy, as well as strengthen institutions for curbing public sector corruption.

Keywords: Bureaucracy, bureaucratic dysfunction, corruption, public administration system

1. Introduction

The principle of social organization which characterized the twentieth century industrial societies was driven by a system of rational coordination also referred to as bureaucracy (Mullins, 1999). Bureaucracy is a form of organization in which people are brought together in formal and complex settings which are run by highly trained professionals and experts referred to as bureaucrats. The need to have bureaucracies in the management of the affairs of societies arose as a result of the need to apply scientific management approaches to the organization of the affairs of the state.

Musgrave and Musgrave (1989) write that the trajectory and vagaries that characterized post-colonial states in Africa necessitated the conception of an activist and developmental-welfarist paradigm of public administration rationalized on the premise of heavy state intervention to correct market failures, thus providing social and public goods that benefit the generality of the people. The need to ensure efficient and effective delivery of public goods and services led to the strong state bureaucracies and institutions.

Olaopa (2008) writes that the developmental state anchored on the old paradigm of public administration (big government) had been criticized by scholars for creating a situation in which the individuals have become dependent on the government instead of creating the enabling environment for them to achieve self sufficiency. When the bureaucratic structure becomes unable to meet the established goals of the organization, it is said to be dysfunctional. This dysfunctional state has sometimes arisen as a consequence of its very large size that led to assumption too many responsibilities which it lacked the capacity to effectively discharge. It also created the dominance of elites and privileged groups within the system, whose aim was to further the interest of their group members instead of that of the society as a whole.

Nigeria's civil service has been criticized for inefficiency right from the colonial period leading wide ranging reforms that have implemented at different times to bring about improved efficiency. These reforms include; 1934 Hunt Committee, Tudo Davies Commission of 1945, Walter Haragin Commission (1947), Hugh Foot (1948), Gorusch Commission (1954), Mbanefor Commission (1959), Morgan Commission (1964), Adebo Commission (1971), Udoji Review Commission (1974), Onosode (1982), Dotun Philips (1988), Ayida Panel (1994), and Obasanjo Civil service Renewal Programme (2000 – 2007) (Nnamani, 2009).

The fact that some of the reforms commissions were established to reform areas of the civil service that had been targeted by earlier reform commission underscores the level of success of the reforms. Most of the times the government either failed to accept the recommendations of the reform committees or refused to implement them fully. This has shown evidence of the inability of the

political leadership to tackle the systemic problems in the society that may negatively affected the bureaucratic system which is an integral part of the society. The study therefore examined the role of bureaucratic dysfunction on the crisis of Nigerian Public Administration. The paper is subdivided into eight sections, introduction, conceptual clarifications, theoretical framework, methodology, bureaucratic dysfunction and its effects on the federal public service in Nigeria, conclusion and recommendations.

2. Conceptual Clarifications

2.1. Bureaucracy
Ujo (2008) writes that bureaucracy is an old concept, with M. de Gurney, a French economist being created with the first use of the concept during the first half of the 18th century. Many scholars including J. S. Mills, Mosca and Michel, followed in the heels of de Gurney in working on bureaucracy, however it is Max Weber that is regarded as the first social scientist who executed a systematic study of bureaucracy, bringing to prominence the identifying characteristics of bureaucracy.
Weber (1946 cited in Ujo 2008: 31) write that "bureaucracy is categorized into (i) patrimonial bureaucracy found in traditional and charismatic types of authorities and (ii) legal-rational bureaucracy found only in the legal type of authority". Whoever, the focus of Weber and other scholars after him has been on his legal-rational bureaucracy. Four principle factors have been identified has having influenced Weber's wide ranging discussions on bureaucracy, and they are:
The historical, technical and administrative reasons for the process of bureaucratization, particularly in western civilizations; the impact of the rule of law upon the functioning of bureaucratic organization; bureaucratic officials as an elite group; and the most important attributes and consequences of bureaucracy in the modern world, particularly of governmental bureaucracy (Ujo, 2008: 32).
Max Weber (1946) sees bureaucracy as an inevitable feature and outcome of modernization and the increasing complexities of human institutions. A fully developed bureaucratic mechanism when compared with other organisations is like comparing a machine with the non-mechanical mode of production. Weber identified the man elements of his model of bureaucracy as: impersonal order, rules, sphere of competence, hierarchy, personal and public ends, written documents and monocratic type. Bennis (1968) provides the background for the emergence of bureaucracies, when he writes that the bureaucratic "machine model" emerged as a reaction against the personal subjugation, nepotism and cruelty and the capricious and subjective judgments which passed for managerial practices during the early days of industrial revolution.
Adamolekun (2006) emphasizes the importance of development oriented bureaucracies in African states such as Nigeria. The position of Adamolekun is that in order to midwife the development needed in these developing countries, the bureaucracy must possess to competence and commitment to work with the political leadership of the country to maintain national sovereignty and achieve societal goals as articulated by the political leadership. Adamolekun (2006) proposes a model strategy for establishing a development oriented bureaucracy that has three interconnected factors. Such a bureaucracy is characterized:
by a strong political leadership that is ready to provide national direction and is capable of articulating a conception of public service that ensures the commitment of state bureaucrats to the goals set for the society and is conscious of the need to introduce necessary changes in the structural, human and   management aspect of the administrative machinery (Adamolekun, 2006: 98).
Adamolekun (2006) writes that Nigeria, like most of Africa has not been able to adopt this type of strategy, as it not had strong and purposeful political leadership able to articulate national interests and work for the good of the society. Past Nigerian governments, military and civilian have evidently lacked the capacity to provide effective political leadership. It becomes inevitable that they could not articulate a conception of public service needed to elicit the strong commitment to national interests from public officials. The lack of established commitment to public service combines with the exploitative socio-economic order in the country to bring about the regime of high level political and bureaucratic corruption in existence in Nigeria.
Adamolekun (2006) observes that no state bureaucracy has actually implemented strictly the model strategy for development oriented bureaucracy as proposed. However, the Chinese bureaucracy as well as the old bureaucracies of Britain and France which have evolved to the extent they are able to play the expected roles in the suggested model strategy, could be described as fitting the bill of development oriented bureaucracies.

2.2. Bureaucratic Dysfunction
Stazyk and Goerdel (2010) write that since Weber (1958) first identified his ideal-type characteristics of the legal-rational bureaucracy, arguing that in spite of their technical superiority to other forms of organization that bureaucracies would likely develop their own sources of permanence and power that could become particularly ''dehumanizing.'' Following Weber's treatise, scholars such as DiMaggio and Powell (1983) as well as Merton et al. (1952) have focused on these dysfunctions of bureaucracy.
Scholars who have focused on these dysfunctions, have suggested that bureaucratic organizations are slow and inefficient, rigid, resistant to change and innovation, impersonal and unresponsive, hampered by layers of authority, permeated with red tape, and subject to considerable goal displacement (Gormley and Balla 2008; Tompkins 2005; Gore 1993; Weber 1958; Dahl and Lindblom 1953). Some of these scholars have implied that complex political and institutional nature of the public sector and its organizations usually compounded bureaucratic dysfunctions (Gormley and Balla 2008; Rainey 2003; Wilson 1989).
Hicks and Gullet (1982) identifies "rigidity" as one of the most dysfunctional elements of bureaucracy. Their argument is that Weber's bureaucracy is non-adaptive and as such is at variance with the basic adaptability laws of nature. The proposition that there should be strict adherence to regulations would make bureaucrats timid, conservative and unable to adapt to change when the need

arises. This position corroborates the earlier writing of Downs (1967) that superior officers in any bureaucratic set up would choose to be rigid for fear of losing power, prestige and their income. The attitude of rigidity in application of rules of procedure, which sometimes results in undue delays in making official decisions as higher authorities have to be consulted for approval before anything out of the books can be done is what Downs refers to as 'bureaucratic mentality' and 'red tape'.

Stazyk and Goerdel (2010) write that some of the perceived dysfunctions of bureaucracy may be traced the need to secure coordination and control across employees in these very large organizations. They push forward their proposition by citing the proposition of Downs (1967) that increasing hierarchy within complex public organizations are usually as a result of efforts to ensure effective coordination and cooperation and to reduce conflict among employees. The larger and more diverse these organizations are, the more the higher levels of hierarchy that will be created. Unfortunately, increased higher levels of hierarchy have the tendency to lead to distortion in the flow of information and communication within organizations, which may in turn result in confusion over goals and authority leakage throughout the hierarchy, with the organizations becoming less efficient (Downs 1967 cited in Stazyk and Goerdel, 2010).

Several scholars have proposed that despite the considerable merit that could be credited to product of research on bureaucratic dysfunctions, that public organizations that adhere to bureaucratic principles are highly efficient and effective (Selden and Sowa 2004; Brewer and Selden 2000; Simon 2000; Rainey and Steinbauer 1999; Wolf 1993). Some of the members of this school of thought have credited bureaucracy and organizational hierarchies with a wide range of advances that have been recorded in the public and private sector.

The major argument of this school is that in spite of any inadequacies that may arise in the application of bureaucratic principles, Weber was largely correct about bureaucracy's efficiency and technical superiority over other organizational designs and broader market-based approaches (Simon 2000; Jacques 1990; Chandler and Daems 1980; Chandler 1977; Williamson 1975). The proponents of this school have averred that scholars should place less emphasis on bureaucratic dysfunctions and focus more on how to get hierarchies right and greater trust on managers at various levels to enable them perform effectively and efficiently (Simon 2000; Chandler 1977; Frederickson 1997; Jacques 1990; Williamson 1975).

2.3. Public Administration
In this paper we focus on the various conceptions of public administration as the activities involved in the management of the society's affairs, instead of definitions regarding public administration as a field of study. Milakovich & Gordon (2013 cited in Dibie 2014) defined public administration as "all processes individuals and organizations and (the latter acting in official position and role) associated with carrying out laws and order, rules adopted or issues by legislative, executive and courts". This definition sees as public administration as effectively transcending the three arms of government. It is broader than some other conceptions which restrict it to the management of public programmes (Denhardt, Denhardt & Blanc, 2014) or that emphasize the formulation and implementation of public policy (Starling, 2013; Dye 2011).

Public administration refers to the process of implementing or executing government programmes. In democratic societies both republican and monarchical, it refers to the agencies of government that are charged with the responsibility of implementing legislative acts that represent the will of the people. Management in this context refers to both the officials responsible for running the organization as well as to the process itself. Public administration equally involves the using human and material resources to achieve the stated goals of the organization (Rosenbloom, Kravchuk & Clerkin, 2009).

Public administration involves cooperative group effort in the public milieu; covers the three branches of government and their inter-relationships (referring to intergovernmental relations). It goes beyond the implementation of policies, as it has an important role in public policy formulation and is part of the political process, whereas it is distinctly different from private administration. However, it is closely associated with numerous private groups and individuals (Rosenbloom, Kravchuk & Clerkin, 2009).

Nigeria is a federal state, operating three tiers of government; federal, state and local government. Presently, Nigeria has thirty six states and seven hundred and seventy four (774) local governments, with public servants serving at all the levels. Dibie (2014: 343) writes that "at both the federal and state levels, the central feature of governmental administration is the ministry, an administrative organization whose structure and functioning have remained largely unchanged since ministries were first constituted in the 1950s". The implication is that while there had been relative instability in the political leadership of the country until 1999, the public administration system had been relatively stable. However, over the years, the number of ministries at the different levels of government in the country have varied depending on the interests of particular president or governor.

3. Theoretical Framework
We have adopted two theories as the theoretical constructs underpinning our propositions in this paper. They are the Bureaucratic theory and Ecological approach.

3.1. Bureaucratic Theory
This theory developed following the seminal propositions of Max Weber on bureaucracy. Max Weber believes that his ideas of bureaucracy in government organizations will help to explain why the modern bureaucracy found in industrialized western countries has helped them achieve maximum performance. The postulation of Weber is that in order for any large scale, complex organization to run efficiently, there is need for formalized rules and procedures. The proposition of Weber is that what makes an organization bureaucratic is that it possesses some vital characteristics which includes, operating under a hierarchy of authorities, emphasizing

meritocracy and not inherited rights or ownership, while the decision-making process follows clearly defined chain of command. Weber postulated that given the complexities involved in the operations of modern organizations, bureaucratic theory is the "most rational" and "ideal" solution to the effective management of such organizations (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, 2006).

Ujo (2008) puts forward the characteristics of the model of legal-rational bureaucracy designed by Weber, as follows:

1. Official business is conducted on a continuous basis; 2. An administrative agency functions in accordance with stipulated rules and is characterized by three inter-related attributes: (a) the powers and functions of each official is delimited in terms of impersonal criteria; (b) the official is given matching authority to carry out his responsibility; and (c) the means of compulsion at his disposal are strictly limited and the conditions under which their employment is legitimate are clearly defined; 3. Every official and every office is part of a hierarchy of authority. Higher officials or offices supervise while lower offices and officials have the right of appeal; 4. Officials do not own the resources necessary for rendering the duties, but they are accountable for use of official resources. Official business and private affairs, official revenue and private revenue are strictly separated; 5. Offices cannot be appropriated by the incumbents as private property which can be sold or inherited; and 6. Administration is conducted on the basis of written documents (Ujo, 2008: 32-33).

 In the context of this paper, the management of Nigeria's public Administration which as at end of 2014 employed one million, one hundred and seven thousand, workers across all the ministries, departments and agencies, including the armed forces, police and other security agencies (El-Rufai, 2015), must be managed in line with established principles of management. There must be clearly defined hierarchy and chain of command, in the operations of the many MDAs that run the affairs of the Nigerian state, while implementation of policies and programmes must followed laid down procedures. Handling of issues and delivery of specific services in line with the propositions of Weber would follow merit, as this is the only way the system can be just, fair and equitable to all.

Given the fact that a large number of organizations have been created, with very large sizes and the sphere of influence covering the thirty six states of the federation, it becomes imperative that the adoption of the legal-rational model of Weber is the only way the affairs of the state can be effectively managed. Not following laid down rules in the management of the large organizations that have been created to deliver public goods and services to the Nigerian people, would be an express invitation to chaos and anarchy.

The negation of the principles of the legal-rational bureaucracy proposed by Weber has led to incidences of allegations of marginalization by some sections of the Nigerian population. In some instances the implementation of federal character principles which runs counter to meritocracy as postulated by Weber's bureaucratic theory has also laid to some level of inefficiency in the public administration system. When less qualified workers in adherence to the principle of federal character are employed or promoted on the basis of their state of origin while better qualified workers who are not from the favoured state or zone are overlooked, it leads to entrenchment of incompetence, leading further to poor service delivery and low productivity.

Several scholars have put forward wide ranging criticisms of the bureaucratic theory proposed by Weber. Their focus had been on the dysfunctions of bureaucracy, with emphasis on the fact the adoption of the bureaucratic principles have led to public organizations being slow and inefficient, resistant to change, impersonal and unresponsive, hampered by layers of authority, and permeated with red tapism (Stazyk and Goerdel, 2010; Albrow, 1970). However, it must be stated that the bureaucratic principles still remain the best method for management of large public organizations, as neglecting them will lead to several forms of abuses by public office holders, especially in a prismatic society such as Nigeria. The neglect of the application of bureaucratic principles in the Nigerian context has manifested in the very high level of inefficiency that the Nigerian public administration system has exhibited over the years in spite of many reforms, reviews and renewal programmes commencing in 1934, of which the Obasanjo civil service renewal programme was the fifteenth (Adegoroye, 2006).

3.2. Ecological Approach

Ecological approach is the scholarly proposition that in any given society, administration and its environment influence each other. As a consequence, it is important to understand the dynamics of the interactions of various environmental and socio-cultural factors of the society with the administrative system to be able to have a clear perception of the nature and operations of the administration of that society (Ujo, 2008). The major proponents of the ecological approach n public administration include; J. M. Gaus, Robert A. Dahl, Robert A. Merton and Fred W. Riggs. However, for this paper, we have chosen to adopt Fred W. Riggs Prismatic model. Expounding on the prismatic model, Riggs (cited in Ujo, 2008), write that "the prismatic society is one which has achieved a certain level of differentiation, specialization of roles that is necessary for dealing with modern technology, but has failed to integrate these roles" (Ujo, 2008: 108).

Riggs classifies most developing societies including Nigeria as prismatic societies. According to him, the prismatic society is:

one which has achieved a certain level of differentiation; specialization of roles that is necessary for dealing with modern technology, but has failed to integrate these roles. Prismatic society shares the value-patterns of both fused and diffracted societies. According to Riggs, prismatic society has three important characteristic features, viz: (1) heterogeneity, (2) formalism (3) overlapping" (Ujo, 2008: 108).

Riggs sees prismatic societies as societies in transition, trying to borrow from the developed societies which he referred to as diffracted societies but not really able to operationalize what its borrowed to its advantage. The position of Riggs was that a very fundamental attribute of a prismatic society was the existence of a high degree of heterogeneity. By heterogeneity, Riggs meant existence of divergent viewpoints, systems and practices, simultaneously competing with each other. These competing viewpoints and practices lead to incomplete, inconsistent, and irresponsive social change in a given prismatic society which in turn affects the administrative system (Riggs cited in Ujo 2008).

Formalism in the prismatic societies according to Riggs (cited in Ujo, 2008) refers to the extent of discrepancy that exists between what is prescribed and the actual, between formal and effective power, between what is stated n the constitution, laws and regulations, and the actual practices and facts of the day to day running of government and the society. The position of Riggs is that the greater the discrepancy that exists between what s expressly stated n the statute books and what is practiced, the more the formalism in such a society.

Ujo (2008) writes that in prismatic society, though the laws, rules and regulations stipulate how public bureaucracy may operate; the actual behaviour of bureaucrats is remarkably different. There is high level of inconsistency in the application of laws by bureaucrats. They stick to rules in particular situations depending on the interests involved or ignore them depending at other situation. This type of formalism is caused by lack of pressure from outside the system, such as well developed and organized civil society organisations that very active in holding bureaucrats accountable in terms of implementation of government programmes. Ujo (2008) writes that:

The reasons for such type of behaviour may be ascribed either to the natural inclination of the employees towards collecting easy moneyor to the existence of chances for maladministration. Thus, generally formalism in administration paves the way for corruption in the society (Ujo 2008: 110).

The high level of formalism that exists in the Nigerian society has become deeply entrenched in the bureaucratic machinery resulting in a grossly dysfunctional bureaucracy. Instead of tackling the systemic problem of formalism that pervades the different socio-economic strata of the society various governments have carried out reforms of the public service, with a view to ensuring efficiency in the bureaucracy. These reforms have to a large extent failed to meet expectations as a result of the fact that the bureaucracy is an integral part of the larger society.

4. Methodology

This study is a desk research, and we relied entirely on secondary data sources from relevant textbooks, scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles, government publications and materials downloaded from the internet. Though the Nigerian bureaucracy encompasses the bureaucracy at the federal, state and local government levels, our focus is the bureaucracy at the federal level. Included in our analysis are the ministries, departments and agencies; the bureaucracy of legislative and judicial arms of government. We undertake a thematic presentation of the content analysis of the data in line with the selected theoretical constructs. We equally use the terms public administration, public service and public bureaucracy interchangeably.

5. Bureaucratic Dysfunction and Its Effect on the Federal Public Administration System in Nigeria

Bureaucracies do not exist in isolation. They are usually affected by the socio-cultural milieu in which they operate, leading to noticeable divergences between the bureaucracies of different nations. The German, American, Japanese, British or Nigerian bureaucracies would some degree differ from each other, as a result of the ecology of the location.

As we pointed out earlier, Nigerian Public service has been subjected to several reform programmes resulting from the belief that it had failed to meet the expectations of the society in terms of delivery of services. Some of the Reform or review commissions such as the Udoji Review (1974) and the Obasanjo Renewal Programmes charged the Nigerian bureaucracies with nepotism, corruption, incompetence of the senior and junior staff, lack or inability to apply specialized skills, lack of time management skills and general inefficiency.

5.1. Politicization of the Nigerian Public Administration System

The Nigerian Public Administration system has become highly politicized even though bureaucrats in theory are supposed to be apolitical and serve any political party in power. The whole public service which ought to be a non-partisan and neutral body with no permanent loyalties to any group have had to take sides in many instances. Appointments to top management positions in the public administration system have become largely politicized, such the position of Head of service is no longer the exclusive preserve of the most senior permanent secretary. Federal character plays a major part in such appointments including the appointment of permanent secretaries which may not necessarily be according to the seniority of the directors. A permanent secretary who is number five in ranking (seniority) may get appointed as head of service if the number one is not from the preferred place in terms of state of origin. There instances of people being appointed permanent secretaries from the position of Assistant and deputy Directors ahead of some directors, presumably on their performing better than some directors in promotion examinations.

Some directors serve for seven years and get retired at the level, while their juniors who have political leverage get elevated to permanent secretaries ahead of them. In instances where competent officers are overlooked while juniors who could be less competent serve as discouragement to the senior officers, which could impact their productivity. Such, reduction in productivity may be credited to the dysfunction of the bureaucratic machinery instead of federal character and political interference.

Bureaucrats in order to make way for their careers secretly facilitate the interest of the ruling party instead of being neutral. Some of them go to mobilize electorate and facilitate the campaigns of particular political party in the constituencies in order to be seen as being loyal to the government. These activities are undertaken to facilitate their elevation to the position of permanent secretary when the time comes. At times, public service rules are contravened in order to champion the interests of a political party, while some are even known to be members of a particular political party by their conduct, even though they may claim not to be registered members of such parties.

5.2. Influence of Corruption by Elected Officials on the Bureaucracy

The lack of accountability by elected public officials in the country has resulted in massive public sector corruption. This ecological factor has manifested in the fact that the bureaucracies have become grossly inefficient and unaccountable to the people in the delivery of public goods and services. Anise (1986) argued that there exist in the Nigerian bureaucracies institutionalized elite networks, intricately woven to ensure that the interests of members of the clique and their accomplices outside the public sector are protected at the detriment of public interest. Normal services to be provided by the bureaucracy are deliberately delayed to ensure that contractors, suppliers and other stakeholders settle officials first, and the undue delays are blamed on the nature of the bureaucracy and not on the corrupt operators.

Corruption pervades various segments of the Nigerian society to the extent that it has risen to the status of a pervading culture. As a consequence of this, the whole bureaucracy being an integral part of the society is not exempted. It is therefore a normal occurrence for files of projects and programmes approved (statutory approved officials, such as the minister and permanent secretary) for execution to be hidden by public bureaucrats who wait for the owners of such files to "come and settle" before such files are released. There are also cliques that ask for particular percentage of the contract sum to be released to them before the papers are released to the beneficiary companies that had successfully passed through the official bidding process.

5.3. Socio-Cultural Factors and Federal Character Principle

In the Nigerian Public administration system, socio cultural considerations are increasingly eclipsing the normal functioning of bureaucracy. Contrary to the postulations of the Weberian legal rational model, environmental factors predominate and processes affecting the decision making processes as well as the quality of service delivery. Powerful traditional rulers are reported to have intervened to swing the tide in favour of illustrious subjects who ordinarily are not qualified for either appointment or promotion by merit at a given time. Analysts and scholars point to the fact that the entrenchment of federal character principle in the constitution out rightly negates the principles of bureaucracy expounded by Weber. In line with the federal character principle, appointments and selection in the federal public administration system is based on state of origin and not the bureaucratic criteria of Weber. Since appointments have to be made according to state of origin at the point of entry most of the applicants from the South who possess better educational qualification are dropped for the few less qualified candidates from the North to ensure that there is balance.

In terms of promotion, application of the principle also sees more qualified candidates being overlooked while the less qualified candidates from the North get promoted and assigned strategic positions for which they may not even possess the competence to manage. The implication is that serving bureaucrats who watch helplessly in frustration as their juniors with less qualification and experience are promoted may become demoralized and this will in turn negatively impact their productivity. Aluko & Adesopo (2004) write that the implementation of federal character principle breeds inefficiency and ineffectiveness since it encourages favouring of less qualified candidates from the North against better qualified candidates from the South.

5.4. Indiscipline in the Nigerian Bureaucracy

Indiscipline has been identified as a significant problem area for Nigerian bureaucracy. Olugbile (1997) argued that a socio-cultural dimension to implementation of disciplinary measures on erring bureaucrats. Traditional or cultural factors require that though an erring bureaucrat should be punished for his or her misdemeanor, however, when elders intervene on the bureaucrats behalf, the disciplinary committee or the superior officer is required to respect the "grey hairs of the elders" by accepting their plea and letting the culprit off the hook. Ignoring the plea of the elders and punishing the erring bureaucrat may lead to the superior officer being labeled a social misfit who has no regard for the culture of the land. Some, senior bureaucrats have found to their chagrin that there are situations where they cannot implement the code of conduct to the letter because of cultural issues and subordinates are let off the hook. Some junior bureaucrats deliberate undermine the rules from time to time knowing that they would be protected by their elders, and this affects the efficiency of the bureaucracy.

6. Conclusion

The shortcomings of the Nigerian public administration system cannot be blamed on bureaucratic dysfunction. There are various environmental factors both internal and external to the system that affect its efficiency in the delivery of public goods and services and hinders its ability to operate in line with the Weberian model. These factors are among the reasons why majority of the reforms that have been implemented in the public administration system over the years have not yielded the expected result.

The legal rational type bureaucracy proposed by Weber with its attributes would have been the best fit, given the tremendous size of the Nigerian bureaucracy. The non creation of the conducive environment for the proper implementation of the bureaucratic principles as propounded by Weber in the Nigerian bureaucracy by the government, the provision of federal character in the Nigerian 1999 constitution, as well as pervading public sector corruption have created the anomalies in the system which some may regard as bureaucratic dysfunction.

7. Recommendations

The National Assembly should review the relevant aspects of sections 14, of the 1999 constitution that deals with federal character principle. This will ensure that merit is strictly adhered to in the appointment and promotions in the Nigerian bureaucracy in line with the propositions of Weber's bureaucratic model.

The Nigerian government should strengthen the institutions that have been set up to fight public sector corruption to enable them combat corruption at all levels in the Nigerian bureaucracy.

Interference by traditional rulers in the operations of the bureaucracy including the disciplinary procedures should be banned. Traditional rulers who break the law by interfering should be made to lose their positions as a deterrent to others.

Promotions to top management positions in the public administration should be completely divorced from politics. Elected officials should not use support for their political party as pre condition for promotion of top management of the bureaucracy. The code of conduct bureau should monitor the activities of bureaucrats and punish those who contravene the rules.

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