

Public Administration and National Development: The Experience in Nigeria

¹Cinjel Nandes Dickson (PhD) and ²Joseph Danjuma

Department of Public Administration, Federal University Wukari

¹Phone Number: 08065444172, Email: ncinjel@yahoo.com

²Phone: 07031830525, Email: bennevjoe@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract : *Public Administration plays a pivotal role in the act of governance in all nations across the world. It has not only simplified the formulation and implementation of governmental policies and programmes but expedite national development. Public Administration is a government in action and this aspect of governance exist in any modern state. This study has attempted to examine the role of Public Administration in national development. The study employed a qualitative and empirical method of analysis. This is to help in providing critical and in-depth understanding of the Phenomena under study. The study generated data from array of published and unpublished materials such as textbooks, newspapers, magazines, Journals, seminar and conference materials, internet materials, and a lot of others. In the study, it was found out that Public Administration is essential in the act of governance and also aid government in executing its policies and programmes. It was established that Public Administration plays a crucial in promoting national development in Nigeria. Conclusion was also drawn that there is a connection between sound administration and good governance. Commendations such as: need for sound and vibrant policies, good leadership and governance, adhering to principle of rule of law and a lot of others were proffered.*

Keywords: Public Administration, Role, Good Governance and National Development.

Introduction

Development constitutes a big problem to Africa, one of the most thickly populated continents in the world. Studies coupled with experience collected over the years has show that Africa as a whole and Nigeria in particular suffer from economic backwardness. This issue is not due to the mal-distribution of resource or any specific geographical factors such as physical features, climate, size, location or soil (Nwachukwu, 2001). The problem of Africa cannot even be attributed to our culture, custom or tradition. Africa has had a rich culture custom and tradition that is conducive to economic growth and development.

History has it that Kingdoms and communities where known for their enterprising spirit and accomplishment. The citizenry of the country are energetic, hardworking and industrious. Africa posses the skills required for material and societal progression. What is missing are the administrative skills and the challenge of handling and the utilization of both human and material resources which for long has being a strong problem in the country. The problem of faulty administration began right from the inception of colonial time, and then the amalgamation of the country and it got worse during the military era. The various colonial governors came up with diverse constitutions and conferences for better governance but all to the contrary. The application of unitary system to regionalization and subsequently federalism as alibi for suitable administration of the country all proof contrary (Clark, 2004).

During the first republic, the leaders attempted to mimic the British model of administration but the size and plural nature of the country was too large for such kind of model. A coup was launched and the first indigenous government was toppled. *Agwai Ironsi* regime introduced unitary system which failed to recognize the imperatives of administrators. It was more of a one-sided government and was overthrown in 1966 due to it rigidity and over centralization of power at the centre. The *Gowon* Administration surfaced at a time of oil boom and the attention of government was more on the issue of the civil war and unity of the country. A lot of policies of government were not well executed and this is also as a result of some deficiency in administration. *Murtala-Obasanjo* took over the mantle of leadership and subsequently handover government to the civilian administration of *Shelu-Shagari* but still, there was no political correctness in the act of administration (Aye, 2004). This problem continues to the third republic. A lot of reforms, policies and programme were introduced to help in promoting good governance but the situation continues unabatedly.

The need for qualified and experience administrators in developing countries can hardly be over emphasize. Efficient and sound administration is required to guide the execution of policies and programme of government in any country. In Nigeria, millions of naira are left in the hands of administrators who do not even have the elementary principle of administration. A realistic approach to the development of the country call for qualified high level manpower most especially in this time that functional administration is needed in order to officially and effectively utilizes both human and material resources in the country (Abraham, 2002).

Governments is a social institution established in each human society for orderly conduct of public affairs, therefore, for it to be affective, an efficient administrative skills must be injected inside the system to promote the flow of government activities, political programmes and reforms. The purpose of creating divisional unit such as regions, province, state, local government was

mainly to make administration easier. The first attempt to create province started in 1906 when the colony and protectorate of Southern region were divided into three (3) provinces. These are: *Eastern, Central and Western region*, where each was under a commissioner. With the amalgamation, there were two (2) distinctive administrative regions. At that time, some had suggested the division into four large provinces, but Lugard refused, the North and South were each under a lieutenant governor and Lugard was the Governor – General. This was the situation up to 1939 when the Southern province were reorganized and divided into: the Western and Eastern province, each under a chief commission with the headquarters at Ibadan and Enugu respectively. The Northern Province remained a single entity, bigger than the two put together (Bello, 2012).

In July, 1963, a *Mid-Western Region* was created and Lagos was carved out from the West as the federal territory in 1959. On 27 May, 1967, the entire country was divided into 12 states when *Gowon* was overthrown by *General Murtala*, the numbers of states were increased to 19 and in 1987, and two more states were created. In 1996, six states were created and in 1998, 8 states were created and all this were for administrative conveniences (Aye, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

One of the critical problems which prompted the study is the disruptive nature of government policy and how it has constituted a serious problem to the processes of administering and managing of the affairs of the country. A lot of policies and programme were abandoned and most government that surfaced often come along with it agenda. They care less about its effects in the society how it affects national development. The policies and programme comes and go with their founders. Common examples are: War Against Indiscipline's, (WAI), Green Revolution (GR), Better Life for Rural Women, National Economic Empowerment Development strategy, Transformation Agenda, Seven Point Agenda, War Against Indiscipline and Corruption and a lot of others.

Another problem which also called for this study is the instability in governance and the challenges of functional administration. The country has witness five military coup and the military administrators have ruled the country for over 25 years. Democracy is nascent and it is confronted with a long of challenges such as: electoral malpractices, zoning, rotation, and a lot of others. The issue of good governance is far from reach. Religions/ethnicity tends to interrupt the growth of governance. The confuse nature of which model to adopt further exacerbated the problem. This continues to affect the flow of governance and functional administration in the country. The central objective of the study is to examine the role which public Administration plays on National development in Nigeria.

Methodology

The research approach to this study is the documentary research design. It mainly entails the study of documentary materials. The research relied on secondary data drawn from arrays of published and unpublished materials relevant to the study such as: books, journals, magazines, conferences and seminar papers and newspapers. Other sources of secondary data were reports, white papers of investigation panels and other quantitative publications related to the problem of the study. The method by which data were generated for this study is the secondary source. There were qualitative soft publications and entries in recognized and official websites. Others include: online version of international dailies, books, journals, reports, seminar and conferences paper, national newspapers etc.

Being a non-experimental research, the use of qualitative descriptive analysis is employed for the analysis of the generated data. This will be done through careful analysis of the formulated hypotheses in line with the reviewed literature. Thus, under the findings and discussions, each discourse is based on some background assumption presented in the form of research questions and objectives.

In interpreting our data, the relationship between functional and sound administrative practices and national development in Nigeria was established at both theoretical and empirical levels. Empirically, we used a qualitative and historical method that was critical and analytical in providing descriptive and historical details.

This was also complemented by descriptive quantitative analysis. The qualitative and historical method provided us with clear perspective into our research problem by giving us the opportunity to understand the historical details and accurate account of the past and to use the past to discuss the present

Conceptual Clarification

a. Concept of Public Administration

This is a very controversial issue as it is very difficult to define the subject of Public Administration in one sentence. This fact has been supported by Waldo (1967) saying, "The immediate effect of all one sentence or one paragraph definitions of Public Administration is a mental paralysis rather than enlightenment and stimulation." Nigro and Nigro(1980) cited in Eghe (2002) also subscribe to this view when they say that, "The boundaries of the field have never been precisely limited and that they have in

recent years become increasingly indeterminate as both practitioners and scholars have broadened considerably their concepts of what Public Administration covers.”

However, various definitions have been put forth to properly define the term ‘Public Administration’ but so far no precise or specific definition has been given to this term. Each definition has rather widened the scope of the subject. Before we attempt to define the term ‘Public Administration’ it should be clearly understood that it is not executive office or department, which alone constitutes Public Administration. All the departments of Government in one way or the other are an integral part of this Administration. It is concerned with both the formulation and implementation of Public Policies. Administration simply means the activities undertaken by the government to fulfill its desired ends. This difference, however, lies only in the ‘activities’ which are to be considered administrative activities. Some scholars adopt a broader view and include a government activities having for their purpose the fulfillment of Public Policies while others take a narrow view and consider only those activities concerned with the executive branch of the government.

The definition given by eminent scholars can be broadly classified into three different categories on the basis of importance they attach to different aspects of administrative function. There are those who stress the function of implementation of Public Policy. For example White (1959) cited in Adamolekun (2002) observes that “Public Administration consists of all those operations having for their purpose the fulfillment or enforcement of Public Policy.” In the same vein, Hodgson cited in Eghe (2002) opines that “Public Administration comprises all activities of persons or groups in governments or their agencies, whether these organizations are international regional or local in their scope, to fulfill the purposes of these governments’ agencies.” Scholars like Pfiffner and Sheer Wood (1960:3) lay more emphasis to the coordinating role of Administration. In their opinion, “Administration consists of getting the work of government done by coordinating the efforts of the people so that they can work together to accomplish their set tasks.” Then, there are others who emphasize upon administrative function of implementing the law of the country. In the words of Walker (1950:5) “The work which the government does to give effect to a law is called administration.”

However, the definition given by Nigro and Nigro (1980) cited in Eghe (2002) is more comprehensive and includes, besides, the above-mentioned functions, the relationship between public and political process as well as its association with the community as a whole. Nigro and Nigro summarize the meaning of Public Administration in these words:

- i. Is cooperative group effort in a public setting;
- ii. Covers all three branches - executive, legislative and judicial and their interrelationship;
- iii. Has an important role in the formulation of public policy and is thus a part of the political process;
- iv. Is more important than, and also different in significant ways from, Private Administration;
- v. As a field of study and practice has been much influenced in recent years by the human relations approach; and
- vi. Is closely associated with numerous private groups and individuals in providing services to the community.”

The above definitions take a wider view of the term. There are scholars who take a narrower view and as students of Public Administration, we are more concerned with this ideology. In this category comes Waldo (1967) as cited in Eghe (2002) defines Public Administration as, “the art and science of management as applied to the affairs of State.” Dimock and Dimock (1970) cited in Adamolekun (2000), see Public Administration as the fulfillment or enforcement of Public Policy as declared by the competent authorities. It deals with the problems and powers, the organization and techniques of management involved in carrying out the laws and policies formulated by the policy-making agencies of the government. He further adds, “Public Administration is law in action. It is the executive side of government.”

All these definitions manifest one fact that Public Administration is government in action. In common usage, it is concerned with the executive, operative and the most obvious part of the government. That is to say, it is mainly concerned with the executing and implementing part of governmental activity with the question as how law should be administered with equity, speed and without friction. Thus, Public Administration comprises the systematic - execution of the will of the people which has been discovered, formulated and expressed in the form of laws by the legislature. For instance, the assessment and rating of taxes, the hanging of criminals, the delivery of mails, the recruitment of the army, etc are all acts of Public Administration. To sum up, it may be said that Public Administration is the non-political machinery of the government carrying on its work for the welfare of the people according to the laws set up by the state. It is the permanent executive as distinguished from political one. We must, at this stage, also be clear that Public Administration has to do with people and not with things. There is a school of thought which holds that in the future, the tendency will be from the Administration of persons towards the Administration of things. But this view appears narrow. Things may be arranged but ultimately it is the participation of the human elements that matters. Things, no doubt, are of great importance to the administrators who arrange them but they cannot be administered by him. Administration has to do

with human beings for whom it is meant. It is essentially a matter of social relationships, it should also be remembered that Administrator is neither a philosopher nor a politician but the non-political side of the executive.

b. Concepts of National Development

The word national Development is the coinage of two English words national and development. The word national is both an adjective (denoting country wide, general, a state) and a noun (denoting resident, citizen, subject, native and inhabitant). Development denotes improvement, advancement, increase, expansion, change e.t.c.

According to Saleh (2013), the word national development implies the effort of a nation or a state to better-off the welfare of its citizen in all aspect of life. In the same direction, Stevenson (2014) sees national development as a condition or a state at which a nation improve the quantity of life of its citizen. The two definitions above sees national development as human centered and oriented. They do not lay emphasis on the physical aspect of life.

Douglas (2014) defined national development as a process where constituted authority of a nation or society provides the basic necessity of life to its citizen. He went further to mention the basic necessity to include: fight against hunger, illiteracy and poor standard of living.

Bello (2012), also see national development as broaden concept which comprise social, economic and physical advancement in a society such as: Improvement in a GNI, PI, economic growth, GNP, infrastructural development and a lot of other. This definition also flow with the perception of Smith (2015) who also advocated that national development encompasses the improvement in GDP, GNP, PI and all sector of the economy.

In another parlance, Sule (2015) sees national development as the solution to societal problem such as national cohesion, stability (political and economic mechanism), and national integration, ethnic and religious harmony. The definition restricted national development to only social aspect of life and careless about infrastructural development.

With all this, we can deduce that national development is a heated and nebulous concept that is very difficult to conceptualize. It is so broad and depth in horizon. It comprises of social, economic and physical aspect of life. Its overall essence is to promote a meaningful and better life to the citizens.

Overview of Machinery of Governance and Administration in Nigeria

The state structure is a federal republic, with three tiers of government: the center (also referred to as the federal government), the state, and local governments. The federal system was adopted in 1954, when Nigeria was still under colonial rule. The federal system evolved from three regions to four in 1963, and then to twelve state in 1967, nineteen in 1976, twenty-one in 1987, thirty in 1991, and thirty-six in 1996. The federal capital territory of Abuja, the new seat of the federal government (function since December 1991), has an autonomous status. There are currently 776 local government areas in Nigeria. As already mentioned, the key institutions in the machinery of government are the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary. These three institutions operate at the federal and state levels of government (Dare & Oyewole, 2010).

At the federal level, during the first civilian rule (1960-1966) Nigeria operated a federal parliamentary system of government, with a titular president as head of state and a prime minister as the head of government. The prime minister presided over a cabinet in which he was “first among equals” with his cabinet colleagues, with whom he shared collective responsibility for running the affairs of government. The second civilian administration (1979-1983) was based on a federal presidential system of government. The president exercised the executive powers, combining the roles of head of state, head of government, and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. He was popularly and directly elected by the national electorate. The president was entirely free to select and appoint his ministers and various advisers to assist him in the execution of his duties (Danzaria, 2004).

The current military administration operates a presidential system of government, with the power of the head of state, head of government, and commander-in-chief of the armed forces exercised by the head of state. He presides over the *Provisional Ruling Council* (PRC), the *Federal Executive Council* (FEC), and the council of States. The PRC exercise the legislative functions under the military regime. The FEC, Which is the body entrusted with overseeing the implementation of government policies, is made up of ministers of government, comprising civilians as well as retired and serving military and police officers. The council of states is a forum that brings together the head of state and the military administrators of the thirty-six states in the country. This consultative forum is a key political mechanism in managing inter-governmental relations (Bello, 2012).

The organizational structure of government at the federal level is duplicated at the state level, with minor modifications. The military administrator, who is appointed by the head of state, works with the executive council (cabinet) made up largely of civilians, referred to as commissioners. A major variation of the governmental structure at the state level is that the state executive council combines the legislative functions with the cabinet functions of defining and implementing policies. Under civilian rule,

the head of the executive branch of government at the state level is an elected governor, and the legislative and executive branches are separate (Adamolekun, 2000).

The local government being the third tier of government has a supervising council (the executive body) consisting of a chairman, vice chairman and supervisory councilors as well as a council (the legislative body) made up of elected representative called councilors. The supervisory councilors are assigned specific areas of responsibility, for example, health, education, rural development, and so on. A peculiar feature of the Nigeria public administration is the existence of institutions of modern state alongside traditional institutions. Traditional rulers variously called Emirs, *Obas*, *Obis*, *Olus*, *Ovies*, or simply Chiefs serve as traditional heads of communities or ethnic groups that have pseudo control on the local governments (Adamolekun, 2000). These traditional rulers are organized into various consultative bodies at the local government and state government levels. A new arrangement launched in 1995 is the establishment by the federal government of a council of traditional rulers at the federal level. This forum brings together selected prominent traditional rulers from each state of the federation. The council serves as a consultative forum, enabling that federal government to exchange views with the traditional rulers on a variety of national issues (Adamolekun, 2000).

There are constitutionally assigned responsibilities among the various tiers of governments. There is an exclusive list of issues on which only the federal government can legislate. Similarly, there is a concurrent list of legislation on which the federal and state governments can legislate. The local governments can make laws on a list of assigned residua issues (Bello, 2012).

Civil Service System in Nigeria

The Nigerian civil service has been subject to three political influences: the colonial, civilian, and military. These influences retain common commitments, albeit in varying degree-for example, career orientation for civil servants and the use of the public service commission for promotion, discipline, and rule enforcement for the civil service but each of these influences bequeathed different legacies. An important legacies merited from the colonial rule were the attributes of political neutrality, anonymity, and impartiality. Post-independence civilian regimes sought to reinforce the role of the civil servant, especially higher civil servant, as confidential advisers to ministers (the political heads of ministries) (Adamolekun, 2000).

Some of these inherited legacies have not been sustained under the military regimes. For example, during the first phase of military intervention (1966-1979), two patterns emerged in regard to the role of the higher civil servants. Between 1957 and 1975, the higher civil servants dominated the policy process, leading to the virtual loss of the attributes of political neutrality, anonymity, and impartiality. By contrast, between 1975 and 1979, the role of civil servant in the policy process became less pronounced (Adamolekun, 2002). This trend, which has since continued, is attributable to several factors. First the mass dismissals or “purges” of the civil servants in 1975/76 and 1984/85 made higher civil servants more circumspect and less likely to take a high profile in public policy making. Second, the appointment of advisers to government with strong technical skills in various disciplines has reduced government’s reliance on civil servants. Third, economic reforms, especially privatization and commercialization of public enterprises, have also reduced the opportunities for the appointment of higher civil servants to the board of parastatal, thus curbing their influence (Saleh, 2013).

The size of the civil servants has grown and contracted in response to political as well as economic factors. The transition from colonial rule to sovereign independence led to the first wave of expansion in the civil services. Whereas colonial rule had focused on the limited objectives of maintaining law and rely partly on traditional rulers for governance in the “indirect” rule system, the attainment of sovereign independence compelled the government to pursue broad socioeconomic development objective – requiring expansion in the numbers and mix of civil service personnel. A second contributory factor in the expansion of the civil service was the increased revenue from oil, especially in the 1970s, which enabled the government to fund various programs and projects, most of which initially linked to post-war efforts of reconstruction, rehabilitation, and reconciliation. Those projects were administered mainly by the civil servants (Saleh, 2013).

The size of the federal civil service thus grew from less than 30,000 at independence in 1960 to 45,154 in 1970, leaping to 98,877 in 1974 and to 213,802 in 1988, and peaking in 1990 at 273,392; in mid-1998, the civil service was about 200,000. The contraction in the civil service since the mid-1980s is traceable to the “purge” in 1984/85 and the retrenchment undertaken in the context of the economic reforms initiated by the federal government since 1996. In early 1998 the federal government announced that the federal civil service would be reduced by 30 percent. This plan was shelved in July 1998 by the successor military government (Adamolekun, 2000).

The Nigeria civil service system has undergone several major reforms that date back to the pre-independence era. Since independence, however, the civil service reforms can be divided into three phases: *pre-Udoji*, *Udoji*, and *post-Udoji*. A federal government – appointed Public Service Review Commission in the period of 1972-1974- referred to as the *Udoji* Commission, named after its chairman – was a milestone in the annals of Nigeria civil service because of the wide – ranging nature of its review and recommendations, which extended beyond civil service and encompassed the parastatal and local government as well (Bello, 2012). The main contributions of the *pre-Udoji* civil service reforms were improvements in salaries and wages, reform of the grading structure, and strengthening of management responsibility. By contrast, the *Udoji* Commission introduced a number of key innovations in the civil service, notably the opening of the post of the chief of executive of the ministry, referred to as permanent secretary, to both administrative and professional/specialist staff; the harmonization and unification of job grading and salary

systems throughout the service; the introduction of the merit system as a basis for reward; the replacement of the confidential reporting system by the open system of reporting; and the introduction of a new code of conduct for all public officers. A major goal of the Udoji reforms was to introduce modern management style, techniques, and culture to the Nigeria civil service. In retrospect, this goal was not achieved; however, the *Udoji* Commission was better known for the salary increases it gave public servants (Adamolekun, 2000).

Subsequent to the *Udoji* reform, two major reform efforts were initiated: the 1988 civil service reforms and the 1994 Review Panel on Civil Service Reform- also called the *Ayida Panel*, named after its chairman (which submitted its report in June 1995). Though inspired largely by the economic reforms launched two years earlier, a dominant feature of the 1988 civil service reform was the politicization of the civil service, especially its upper echelon. For example, the ministers were to serve as chief executives and accounting officers of their ministries. The latter responsibility had traditionally been vested with the most senior civil servants (permanent secretaries). The position of permanent secretary was abolished and replaced by that of the director general, who was, for all intents and purpose, the deputy minister. The post of the director general was made a political appointment, and its term was coterminous with the minister's. The pooling system whereby professionals and administration officer could move around various ministries was abolished. Instead, each professional was expected to spend his or her career in one ministry (Muffett, 2000).

The 1994 Review Panel on civil Service Reform, whose recommendations the government began to implement incrementally in 1997, reversed most of the change introduced by the 1988 reforms. Two key features of the 1988 reforms that the panel reaffirmed were the personnel management Board in each ministry and the devolution of authority to incur expenditure to certain categories of senior management staff, especially to the level of assistant director and above. The panel also made strong case for upward review of pay and other incentives for civil servants. This recommendation responded to the decline in public service pay brought about by the combined pressures of inflation and devaluation. For example, the salaries of level 17 officers, the highest administrative position below the permanent secretary, had fallen in value by 1993. Wage compression decreased as the salary differential ratio fell from 18:1 in 1975 to 9:1 in 1993. The government has accepted the need for wage increases, but they have not been implemented (Saleh, 2013).

The *Ayida Panel* also addressed the issues of federal character and bureaucratic corruption. The "federal character" principle was written into the 1979 constitution with a view to ensuring that appointments to public service institutions fairly reflect the linguistic, ethnic, religious, and geographic diversity of the country. In practice it has resulted in a confused balancing of the merit principle and a quota system with a heavy dose of arbitrariness under military regimes. This has had adverse consequences for both mobility and performance in the civil service. Against this background, the *Ayida Panel* recommended that recruitment into the civil service, especially at the entry grades of professional cadres, should as much as possible be based on a combination of merit and federal character such that the best candidates from each state are selected on a competitive basis (Danzaria, 2014)

Military Regimes in Nigeria

The process of nation-building in the third world generally and for Africa countries in particular has been very through turbulent. The experience has been from colonization to uneasy political independence; through turbulent republics which often end in military coups d'état and sit-tight reactionary rulers. Since the decade of freedom as the 1960s are often described for African, more than half of the independence countries on the continent have experience military rule. The trend of military intervention in politics has become so wide-spread that it is almost becoming a norm (Clark, 2014).

Nigeria alone has recorded eight known coup d'état between 1966 and 1990; five successful and three unsuccessful. Each time a coup is announced, the leaders have always listed several reasons to justify their reason for snatching the power. The impression usually given is that the new set of the coup plotters have come to rescue the country from the intolerable clutches of mal-administration. Thus, successful coup plotters often describe their regimes as 'corrective'. And because of good timing, wise coup plotters strike when the people are highly dissatisfied with the current rulers; People, until very recently, would welcome them enthusiastically (Danzaria, 2014).

In the past few years, however, Nigerians have started to query very loudly, the overall usefulness of military rule and its contribution to nation-building. Are coup plotters always motivated by patriotism? Is military ruler's corruption free? Do they have real answers to the problem of Nigeria, that is, have their solution so far been truly efficient? Is military ruler really preferable to democratic political process? Answers to question such as these have not been in favour of the military (Smith, 2015).

Yet with 21 years of military rule out of a total of 30 as an independent state, it will amount to a gross distortion of history to conclude that the military have not contributed much to the country's nation-building efforts. In this until, you are going to learn about the nature of military regimes; the reasons usually give by the soldiers for snatching power, as well as what successive military regimes in Nigeria have been able to contribute to the country's national development. Five out of the eight recorded coups in Nigeria have been successful. This means we have had six regimes covering a period of 29 years. This is presented in the table below:

Table 1: Period of Governance and Administration in Nigeria

Aguiyi Ironsi	January 1966 – July 1966
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Yakubu Gowon	July 1966 – July 1975
The Murtala/Obasanjo regime	July 1975 – September 1979
The Buhari regime	January 1983 – August 1985
The Babangida regime	August 1985 – 1991
The Abacha regime	July 1991- August 1998
Abubakar Abdulsamam	August 1998-may 29,1999

Source: Researcher's Survey, 2019.

The failed coups include: The *Dimka* led coup attempt of 1976 in which the then head of state, *late Gen. Murtala Muhammed* lost his life. There were also the *Vatsa* sponsored attempt of 1987 and the *Orkah led attempt of April 1990, both against the Babangida regime. The latest coup attempt led by Major Gideon Okah* has been described as the bloodiest in Nigeria's history (Dare and Oyewole, 2010).

By nature, military rule is the rule of force. Military men normally do not assume power by being elected. They simply use their weapons of coercion (the guns) to take over government. Once they succeed in seizing power, the first thing they do is to dismiss elected bodies e.g. legislators at the central, state and local levels. They also ban partisan political associations and suspend the constitution totally or partially. Laws are made by decrees and edicts, and the whole machinery of government is based on the fear of guns (Stephenson, 2014).

Nigeria military regimes have generally been conservative. This means they have never introduced any fundamentally different ideas from those of their predecessors. They simply substitute their own apparatus of government from the civilian- ruling through a Supreme Military Council (SMC) or an Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC), using the civil servants and traditional rulers (Bello, 2012).

Military regimes often do not have a specified duration. Soldiers seize powers without any invitation and decided to go back to their barracks when they feel they've had enough. All coup plotters successful or unsuccessful have always put forward a long list of the shortcomings of the regime they seek to displace. Such reasons have ranged from economic, political, socio-cultural, to military. Even when the attached regime is itself military, coup plotters still find fault with its military policies (Stephenson, 2014).

By now, Nigerians have become familiar with the regular set of reasons offered by coup plotters: Poor economic programme and policies, corruption, embezzlement and mismanagement of resources, violation of the constitution, persecution of the opposition political opponents, growing dictatorship, political deadlock and the inability of the ruling party to govern without the use of force, nepotism and domination, cut in defense funding and dismissal/retirement of certain military officers (Dare and Oyewole, 2010). However, the regular in manner in which most of these problems come up each time a coup is announced has shown that even the military themselves do not have the right solution. Whatever may have the inadequacies of the various Nigerian military regimes, we must acknowledge the vital contribution they have made to nation-building. We will briefly itemize some:

- Ensuring the survival of the Nigeria state and making conscious efforts towards national integrations.
- Emphasizing infrastructural development and provision of social amenities.
- Creation of states to strengthen the federal structure.
- Mass mobilization to improve the quality of leadership and followership.

In the first place, the military must be credited with the survival of the Nigerian state up to now. Indeed, the politicians could be said to have sown the seeds of discord that eventually led to the outbreak of the Nigeria civil war in 1967, through the way they handle the first republic. Although the soldiers actually initiated and declare the war, the ground for it had been prepared by the politicians who deliberately whipped up ethnic sentiments as a strategy for winning votes. The Gowon regime fought the war of unity and subsequently embarked on a programme of reconstruction, Rehabilitation and reconciliation. Efforts were made to re-integrate the Igbos into the Nigeria nation (Danzaria, 2014).

Other programme initiated by the military to enhance the survival and integration of the Nigerian state include: The introduction of the National Youth Service Corps scheme NYSC in 1973, adoption of common policies for primary and secondary education, establishment of unity schools and promotion of inter-state socio-cultural relations through cultural exchange programme for the youths, launching of Universal Primary Education scheme (UPE) (Bello, 2012).

Successive military regimes also emphasized the policy of linking up the different sections of the country through road construction, improved rail transportation and increased air routes. Efforts were also made to improve the various means of communication. All these have improved socio-economic interaction among the various sections of people and thus enhanced national integration (Jibo, 2001).

Only the military have succeeded in creating state out of the large regions left behind by the British colonial rulers. General Yakubu Gowon broke the four regions into 12 states in 1967; Gen Murtala/Babangida increased the number to 21 in 1987. These efforts have helped to strengthen the Nigeria federal structure which has always been threatened by mutual suspicions and fear of domination among the major ethnic groups (Danzaria, 2014).

Finally, the last of the military regimes: Murtala Muhammed/Obasanjo's, Buhari/Idiagbon's, Ibrahim Babangida, Abacha and Abdulsalami embarked on one kind of mass mobilization programme or another. *Obasanjo* initiated Operation Feed the Nation OFN, *Buhari* and *Idiagbon* launched the War against Indiscipline WAI which was later re-Christened National Orientation Movement NOM by *Babangida*. The regime later integrated the tenets of WAI/NOM into a wider mass mobilization programme tagged MAMSER: Mass Mobilization for self- Reliance, social justice and Economic Recovery. All of these efforts were aimed at mobilizing Nigerians to greater achievements in different areas: food production, ethical behaviour, and appreciation of our cultural values, patriotism, narrowing the gap between government and the governed, and improvement in the quality of leadership as well as followership (Aye, 2004).

Discussions

In the course of the study, it was found out that the model of administrative pattern adopted in Nigeria in a semblance of the British and American system which is mostly too slow, prolonged, bureaucratic, rigid and more of a paper work than reality. The German model which is result oriented, flexible, cost cutting and efficient is abrogated. The British model often weakens the passage of bills and the implementation of public policy.

The politisation of the civil service and adoption of the spoil system does not only affect the performance of the civil service. Merit and experience are given less consideration. This affects performance of employees and productivity of the civil service. This menace does not give sufficient room for the flow of government policies and programmes. It also affects the sustainability of policies. It was common during the Ibrahim Babangida Regime and the Obasanjo civilian regime.

There is no line of demarcation between the function expected of a politician and does that are to be carried by the administrator. The politician dominates and played a role of a boss. He mostly acts in areas that are the domain of a trained and learned administrator. Who should initiate, formulate and implement policy function for long has been a serious migraine in the body of Nigeria polity.

It was also found that a lot of government policies and programme are not sustained. The country has a lot of abandoned policies and programme. Most government that appears comes to build for themselves legacy and not to improve the lot of the society. Common example of these are: Green revolution, War Against Corruption, War Against corruption and indiscipline, NEEDs, DIFFRI, Poverty Alleviation programme, Transformation Agenda, free and compulsory Education, Education for all and a lot of others. There are also abandoned project such as: the Ajakuta Rolling mills, Jos still Rolling mills, *Benue- Enugu Road*, *Panyam-Wamba Road*, *Gindiri water project* and a lot of others.

In the course of the study, it was also found that colleges and training centre for the advocacy of public Administration and good governance such as: Administrative staff college of Nigeria, Nigerian Institute of Administration, Leadership Institute and training centre, Institute of Legislative study, institute of Local Government and Development studies, institute of policies and strategic studies and a lot of others are performing below expectation. They are created to serve as administrative laboratory to aid in testing and diagnosing problem of administration in the country but this is the opposite.

It was also found out that there is poor inter-governmental relation between the tiers of government and organ of government. There is battle of supremacy of whose action should not be override. The centripetal federalism adopted in the country tends to give more power to the federal government than the other levels of government. The federal governments see the subordinate level as its creation and thus control its fiscal policies. The executive arm also dominates the other organ of government in terms of administrative practice and art of governances. The hold the heart and breath of most of the government programme. The legislative and Judiciary are more or less a toothless bull dog in the act of governance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The role of good governance, bureaucratic values and public accountability in the strengthening of the practices of public administration and national development can never be emphasized. Public administration is the only vehicle that steer government in action and also ensure that their activities are effective and functional.

Leadership put more emphasis on teamwork and consultation of key stakeholders instead of relying on authoritarian measures, which do not suit the principles underlying the current changes. The commitment of the political leadership to reform is also critical. Although ministerial teams come and go, it is the president and successive teams of ministers who determine the broad directions of change.

To meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, the public administration system will have to dispense all attributes that are dysfunctional to modern management practices such as: over centralization, poor work ethics, and routine-task orientation. Future efforts to improve the public service must address these problems, borrowing, with appropriate adaptation, from the lessons of international experience.

It is in the light of the forgoing, the following sets of recommendations were proffered.

- a. A monitoring and Evaluation unit should be implanted in the heart of governance and in every sphere of government actions and practices. This will ensure that programmes of government are well carried out and done with standard and quality. This will also provides grounds for speedy development in the country and avoid situation where resources of the country are channeled on unproductive ventures.
- b. There is also the need for good governance from the national to the local level. This should be done in such a way that there are acts such as: maintenance of law and orders, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, due process, rule of law, competence, separation and devolutions of powers, free press, a free virile civil society arena, competition for power, existence of credible opposition, respect of minority right among other human rights.
- c. Public accountability and transparency agent should be allowed to perform their role without destruction. Interference in their activities such as unlawful removal of key staff, non-compliance with the finding of their investigation, non-adherence to their decision and professional advices and a lot of others needed to be revised.
- d. Political parties should be educated and given adequate orientation on healthy politicking. They should enlighten and educate their members toward how to exhibit tolerance, build good relationship with other competitive groups, avoiding money politics and a lot of others. This will help to bring sanity to unhealthy rivalry, character assassination, violence, electoral malpractices and a lot of others.
- e. There is also the need for policies and programmes sustainability in government. Since government is a continue process and no man's property, regimes and administrations should ensure the continuity of policies and policies on grounds rather than seeking to create legacy. What government should see as paramount is the public good of the people which comprises of their welfare, essential services, infrastructural development and a lot of others.

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