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THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA: 1966 – 2009

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INTRODUCTION

With an estimated population of 140,000 million and an area of 923,763 square kilometers, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. Nigeria is located in West Africa and has boundaries with the Republic of Niger to the north, Chad to the northeast, Cameroon to the east and southeast, Benin to the West, and the Gulf of Guinea to the south. Nigeria's population is dominated by three main ethnolinguistic groups. Hausa-Fulani in the north, the Igbos in the southeast, and the Yorubas in the southwest.

Nigeria gained independence from British colonial rule in October 1960. Since then it has had four spells of democratic civil rule (1960-1966, 1979-1983, 1991-1993 but military head, 1999-2009). Twenty-eight of the forty-nine years of Nigeria's independence have been under military rule. During the periods of civil rule the government obtained its legitimacy through the popular mandate expressed by the electorate. By contrast, the legitimacy of the military regime is derived from its monopoly on coercive powers-ruling from the "barrel to the gun".

Having looked at a brief history about Nigeria, there is need to briefly look at what public Administration is all about since the topic is Theory and practice of Public Administration in Nigeria. Adebayo (2004), When 'administration' is qualified by the word 'Public', it simply

means the practice of Administration in a particular segment of society, that of the public sector. Public Administration is therefore government administration and operates in the particular sphere of government. It is the machinery for implementing government policy.

Public Administration is concerned with the study of how a country's administration is organized and how it functions. Since it is the machinery for implementing government policy, it follows that its study must lead to the study of the most efficient ways of organizing the executive branch of government, its institutions and procedures.

The keynote in the study of public administration is the emphasis on the concept of efficiency. It is sometimes wrongly assumed that public administration is a mere conveyor belt with which mechanically executes the instructions passed to it by the policy makers. This view may have been plausible, even if never true, in the early days when the tasks of government were few and the machinery required was simple. As late as the mid-nineteenth century, Andrew Jackson, President of the United States, asserted that the tasks of government were sufficiently simple that any person of intelligence could perform them without preparation or training. Even in modern times when the responsibility of government for social and economic development has assumed great magnitude and demands exacting standards of efficiency, the impression still persists that the functions of public administration are not to be taken too seriously. The erroneous impression is particularly true of countries like Nigeria which for the most part of their political existence, had been under foreign tutelage. The generality of the public regarded work in the public service as drudgery in the service of foreign overlords.

The study of public administration grew out of awareness that the machinery of government was inadequate and sometimes totally unsuitable to perform the functions of a modernizing government. Notable among the scholars and policy makers who were quick to notice the deficiencies in the government administration of their day, and to urge the need to improve the system, was Woodrow Wilson. In 1887, when he was Professor of Political Science of Yale in the USA, he stressed the importance of studying the administrative institution of government. Woodrow Wilson stressed that the task of public

administration was to straighten the paths of government, to make its business less un-business-like, to strengthen and purify its organization, and to crown its duties with dutifulness. Since Wilson's time, many writers on public administration, first in the USA and in recent times in Britain and Europe, have sought to emphasize the importance of the concept of efficiency in the functions and processes of governmental administration.

THEORIES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public Administration Defined

The word public administration is very often used, but very difficult to define. This is because the boundaries of the field have never been precisely delineated. In recent years they have even become increasingly indeterminate as both practitioners and scholars have considerably broadened their concepts of what public administration covers (Nigro and Nigro, 1973:3). This problem notwithstanding, various definitions have been put forth to fix the meaning of the term "Public Administration". White (1995:1) observes that: "Public Administration consists of all those operations having for their purpose the fulfillment or enforcement of public policy". Hodgson (1969:1) in the same vein, 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 or agencies". Scholars like Priffner and Presthus (1960:3) lay more emphasis on 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 work together to accomplish their tasks.

Adebayo (1982:4) says that:

When 'Administration' is qualified by the word 'Public', it simply, means the practice of administration in a particular segment of society; that of the Public Sector. Public Administration is therefore governmental administration and operates in the particular sphere of government. It is the machinery for implementing government policy.

According to Dimock (1973:31-32),

Public Administration is 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 government.

Nigro and Nigro (1973:18) summarise 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.

Classical Theories of Public Administration

The old Public Administration theories are regarded as “classical” theories. They are classical in the sense that they attempt to develop simple principles of general application, which have the characteristics of formality, symmetry and rigidity. Like classical physics, they have not been rendered wholly obsolete simply because they are now seen to have limitations, or because new dimensions of thought and more complex ideas have now been developed. They still contain concepts of basic value, even though there is dispute about their application and though they have to be used with more subtlety than their authors implied. Their principal exponents had more three types of background – industrial/bureaucratic, academic and military.

Fayol, Founder of Administrative Theory: Administrative Order

Henri Fayol (1841 – 1925) had a long and successful career as a general manager in French mining and engineering. His classic *Administration Industrielle at Generale*, based on a contribution to a professional mining industry conference in 1900, was published in Paris

in 1916. His purpose was to define “administration” (which means something a little wider than either “management” or ‘administration’ (as often understood in English) as an important professional function of its own right; it with ‘government’ but he regards it as a predominantly important element in government of any sort, “large or small, industrial, commercial, political, religious or other”. In the operation of any enterprise, he says, there are six “functions”. Apart from “administration”, his five other functions include: “operations... techniques... commercials, financiers... de securite... de comtabilite...” The rest of the book deals with the administrative function, which is concerned with the “coordination” and “harmonizing” of all other activities, “setting up the general programme of activities and creating the social structure”.

Fayol regards administration as a high intellectual and moral function, by pointing out that the essential qualities of the chef or of administrative capacity in the abstract, are ambitiously defined – intellectual, moral and physical qualities, broad-mindedness.

The Five Elements of Administration

Having distinguished the administrative functions from the other five, he goes on to subdivide it into five classic elements – foresight, organization, command, coordination and control. In explaining his four other elements of administration, he defines “organization” as providing both the material and social organization. Social organization includes both personal leadership and organization structure. “Command” and “coordination” involve both knowledge and will. “Control can be used in the French sense of watch, monitor, check, audit and obtain feedback. Fayol also lays down a number of “general principles” of administration, which are not so clearly separate as his five “elements”. Indeed, some of them overlap, but most of them provide facets of his main themes of order, logic, clarity and simplicity. The full list is: division of labour, authority, discipline, unity of command, unity of direction, subordination of particular to general interests, remuneration, centralization, hierarchy, order, equity, stability of personnel, unity of personnel, and initiative.

Woodrow Wilson (1856 – 1924): The Study of Administration

Woodrow Wilson is a seminal figure in the discipline of public administration. A political scientist, the piece which made him the founder of the academic discipline of public administration was: 'The Study of Administration'. He discussed the reasons for the late emergence of public administration as a field of study, and investigation, although political science of which it is a product, had begun over 2000 years before his time. When we remember that administration is the most obvious part of governments, it is government in action – the executive, the operation, the most visible side of government, and of course, as old as government itself – Wilson's question acquires added significance.

Wilson argued that the reason for the late emergence of public administration could be found in the political scientists' total concentration on purely abstract political themes, such as the constitution of government, nature of the state, the essence and seat of sovereignty, popular power, kingly prerogative and so on (Maheswari, 2000:18). Amidst this high warfare of abstract principles, administration found itself relegated to the background; there was little time left for the discussion of public administration. The functions of government then were simple because life itself was simple. Life, however, is no longer simple. Administrative tasks have nowadays become complex and challenging and as a result society has since seen the emergence of a science of administration. There is scarcely a single duty of government once which was once simple which is not now complex; government once had few masters, it now has scores of masters. This is why, according to Woodrow Wilson, there should be a science of administration which shall seek to "strengthen the paths of governments, to make its business less 'unbusinesslike,' to strengthen and purify its organization, and to crown its duties with dutifulness".

Wilson's essay emphasized the separateness of "politics" or "policy", as it is called now, from administration. Woodrow Wilson correctly observed that the concerns of public administration are different from those of the constitution-farmers. What Wilson desired was that the principles suitable as foundation for the country's public administration be those which "have democratic policy very much at

heart". He was among the forerunners of the civil service reform in the USA. He propounded the thesis of a group of professionally competent and politically neutral public functionaries who could form the basis of the civil service. Indeed, he was the first to propound the concept of a politically neutral civil service.

The growing importance of administration in society induced Woodrow Wilson to emphasise the need for sound administrative arrangements as an enabling environment for preparation and work of a competent body of administrators. He recommended:

...that it will be necessary to organize democracy by sending up to the competitive examination) provided under the Civil Service Act of 1883, also called the Pendleton Act) for the civil service men, definitely prepared for standing liberal tests as to technical knowledge.

He further asserted: "A technically schooled civil service will presently have become indispensable". The training syllabus should emphasize study and application of already self-evident truths of administrative principles and techniques. It may be noted that Wilson supported liberal education through the United States competitive examination, which tested technical (that is, subject-specific) knowledge of the candidates. It is only with the establishment of the Senior Executive Service (first recommended by the Second Hoover Committee) that examination of a liberal test found its way in the American Public Administration.

The major points of Woodrow Wilson may be summarized as follows:

- Administration is becoming increasingly important to the well-being of society.
- Administration can be described as "science".
- Human beings can learn and be trained in principles and techniques of administration.
- The tasks of administration are non-partisan, detailed and managerial ("business-like").

- There are administrative processes and techniques which are universally applicable and are thus common to all modern governments.
- Administration is a field of knowledge which can be acquired in colleges and universities.
- Administration is separate from politics.
- Administrative study should include the experience of other governments (comparative administration).

Wilson's essay, marked the beginning of public administration as a discipline. The study of public administration has developed in many of the directions recommended by Woodrow Wilson in 1887. At the same time, he posited the politics-administration dichotomy. It was in this separation that Wilson delineated the academic space of the new discipline of public administration, which according to him, is concerned with the execution of policies by government bureaucracy. It must, however, be noted that Wilson's distinction between the political and the administrative remain a key operational issue at the heart of reforms for all seasons, time and space.

Taylor, Management as a Science

Frederick Winslow Taylor (1826 – 1915), a pioneer in the history of administrative thought, has influenced the course of the discipline far more than any other scholar. There is hardly anyone in the field of administration who is not familiar with Taylor. He was the first to carry out well-planned researches in industrial management. Thus, his views and approaches were developed empirically. His *Principles of Scientific Management* (1911) is a work which has possibly had more influence on management practice than any work published ever since.

Taylor was unhappy with the conditions prevalent in industrial organizations, such as lack of planning and untrained workers and was in search of appropriate answers. In his Paper, "A Piece Rate System", presented before the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in 1895, he expounded the system of management that he had developed. He argued in his paper that there were certain principles which must be observed in any wage payment system where differential reward was

offered. In another paper, entitled "Shop Management", he elaborated his concept of management as follows:

- The objective of good management is to pay high wages and have low unit production costs.
- To achieve this, management has to employ scientific methods of research and experiment to its overall problem; it has to formulate principles of standard, and processes which would allow for control of manufacturing operations.
- Employees have to be scientifically selected for jobs where materials and working conditions are methodically worked out so that standards can be met.
- Employees should be appropriately trained to improve their skills for better job performance.
- A spirit of friendly cooperation must be cultivated between management and workers, for without such a psychological environment it would not be possible to apply the various principles of management.

It was against a general background of managerial unconcern for managing and industrial labour's complete distrust of management that F.W. Taylor evolved his theory of scientific management. Taylor advocated reliance on factual and analytical approaches as well as careful selection, training and assignment of personnel in place of rule-of-thumb or intuitive methods. He also stressed friendly cooperation between management and employees in planning and carrying out the work of organization.

Taylor did not believe in the miracle-man to solve problems. For him: "The remedy for inefficiency lies in systematic management rather than in searching for some unusual or extraordinary man". (Taylor, 1911). In other words, administration makes ordinary men perform extraordinary tasks. Secondly, production and productivity come only through human toil, and thus the greater the effort the greater is the output. According to Taylor, it was utterly wrong to regard management and labour as the only two parties in an economic organization and, further, to view them as being locked up in a perpetual conflict of

interest. The real objective of any business organization was its social purpose, namely, to serve the needs of the consumers.

Although regarded as the Father of Scientific Management, Taylor did not coin the term. It was first used by Louis Brandies in 1910, but became a standard term of wide currency after *The Principles of Scientific Management* was published in 1911. According to Taylor, scientific management involves a complete mental revolution on the part of workers towards their duties, work and employees. Equally, it calls for complete mental revolution on the part of management towards their employees and their problems. As Taylor stressed, "Without this complete mental revolution on both sides scientific management does not exist. This is the essence of scientific management, this great mental revolution" (Taylor 1912:78).

Taylor's scientific management was heavily based on incentive schemes, which had its serious weaknesses. He extolled economic incentives at the expense of other factors which matter in human happiness, such as personal liberty. Taylor put workers in subordination of operations. He favoured specialized supervision.

To enhance efficiency and to promote it, Taylor recommended a five-step process:

First, find say ten or fifteen different men (preferably in as many separate establishments and different parts of the country) who are especially skilful in doing the particular work to be analysed.

Second, study the exact series of elementary motions, which each of these men uses in doing the work which is being investigated, as well as the implements each man uses.

Third, study with a stopwatch the time required to make each of these elementary movements.

Fourth, eliminate all false movements, slow movements and useless movements.

Fifth, after doing away with all unnecessary movements, collect into one series the quickest and best movements as well as best implements.

Dwight Waldo (1948:49 – 50) in assessing Taylor's work identified the following four major principles of scientific management:

1. The development of a true science,

2. The scientific selection of workmen,
3. The scientific education and development of workmen, and
4. Intimate, friendly cooperation between the management and the men.

In short, Taylor believed “that scientific management would yield greater cooperation between works and management” and “lead to greater productivity and therefore a higher standard of living for any society in the long run” (Rosenbloom, 1998:150).

Max Weber: Bureaucracy

“Bureaucracy” is a word we should come to terms with in seeking to understand the theory of large-scale organizations, but it is hard to do so because its meaning is still not universally established. *The New Oxford Dictionary* defines it as “government by bureaux: usually officialism – government officials collectively”, but it is more specific about “Bureaucrat”, “an official who endeavours to concentrate administrative power in a bureau”. Sometimes, it has a derogatory connotation – it is said that “bureaucracy is the pathology of large organizations”.

The word derives from the French word *bureau* – office and the Greek *kratos* – strength, power, dominion, sovereignty, rule, mastery. Hence, the best definition would seem to be a state of affairs where power is exercised by officials or people in offices – probably where such people are supposed to carry out the wishes of another group with sovereign power – (for instance, a democratically elected governing body), but in fact usurp the functions of that sovereign power (Baker, 1972:34). In other words, bureaucracy can mean rule by officials, just as democracy means rule by the people and aristocracy rule by the “best” people. On the other hand, it could mean simply rule through rather than by officials. Or again it could mean rule by, or through an office system rather than officials as groups of individual human beings – a method of rule where the system itself, the machine, has taken over from the human beings.

Max Weber (1864 – 1920) popularized the concept of bureaucracy. His analysis led him to assert that domination was exerted

through administration and legal domination, which he regarded to be the most rational and efficient form of organization yet devised by man. Weber avers that domination is exerted through charisma, tradition and rational-legal authority. It was he who founded the modern sociological study of bureaucracy. In doing so, he freed the term from its pejorative connotation, and emphasized its indispensability for the rational attainment of the goals of an organization.

The idea of bureaucracy, as enunciated by Max Weber, is based on the notion of rational-legal authority – that is, an authority which employees recognize as legitimate. Included in the rational-legal authority are written rules and procedures and their primacy. Each position in the bureaucracy has its duties and rights, which are clearly defined; rules and procedures are laid down to determine how the given authority is to be exercised. Bureaucracy promises a stable organization, despite the fact that its incumbents come and go. Its functioning does not necessarily depend on the know-how of individuals working in it: know-how is instead embodied in rules, regulations, procedures and other written records which always remain within the organization, in contrast to individuals who could join and leave. Other attributes of bureaucracy are hierarchy, division of labour, functional specialization, and so on. Weber's bureaucracy emerged as neutral, hierarchically organized, efficient and inevitable in contemporary society. Other characteristics of bureaucracy, according to Weber, are precision, continuity, discipline, strictness and reliability. These features make it technically the most efficient form of organization. It should be observed that Weber's reference is to "ideal-type" bureaucracy, which is never actualized.

Max Weber also defines bureaucracy in terms of its structural characteristics. He advocates a kind of organization which is impersonal, where authority is exercised by administrators only by virtue of the office they hold, and in accordance with clearly defined rules and regulations. In other words, bureaucracy emerges as uniquely impersonal, neutral, passive, and instrumental. Its behavioural characteristics are objectivity, precision and consistency. Bureaucracy is thus defined in terms of an organisation's basic structural characteristics. These includes:

- A well-defined hierarchy of authority.

- Division of labour based on functional specialization.
- A system of rules covering the rights and duties of incumbents of various positions in the organization.
- A system of procedures for dealing with work.
- Impersonality of interpersonal relationships.
- Selection for employment and promotion based on technical competence.

Today, bureaucracy is a power group, and as such is a distinctly separate group within a state. It has its own special interests, values and power basis. Its separate interests lie in the maintenance and extension of administrative positions and power, while its distinctive outlook lies in the belief in its own superior capacity to interpret national interests free from party bias. Finally, its power lies in its knowledge and experience and in the cloak of secrecy within which it conceals its operations.

The following are the eight attributes of bureaucracy, according to Max Weber:

1. a continuous rule-bound conduct of official business.
2. A specified sphere of competence.
3. The organization of offices follows the principles of hierarchy; that is, each lower office is under the control and supervision of a higher one.
4. The rules regulating the conduct of an office, may be either technical rules or norms. In both cases, if their application is to be fully rational, specialized training is necessary. It is thus normally true that only a person who has demonstrated an adequate technical training is qualified to be a member of the administrative personnel of such an organized group, and hence only such persons are eligible for appointment to official positions.
5. In the rational type, it is a matter of principle that the members of the organization should be completely separated from ownership of the means of production or administration. Officials do not themselves own the non-human means of production and administration. These are rather provided for

their use, in kind or in money and the official is obligated to render an accounting of their use.

6. In the rational type, there is also a complete absence of appropriation of his official position by the incumbent.
7. Administrative acts, decisions and rules are formulated and recorded in writing, even in cases where oral discussion is the rule or is even mandatory.
8. Legal authority can be exercised in a wide variety of different forms.

The attributes highlighted above are underlined by certain principles. One is the rule-bound nature of bureaucratic behaviour, the abstractness of the system of rules and the impersonality of their operation. Another is the principle of hierarchy complemented by the need for specialization in order to operate the rule of the office. The principles of bureaucracy include the following:

1. **Specialisation:-** Each office has a clearly defined sphere of competence in the legal sense.
2. **Hierarchy:-** Members of the organization are organized into a clearly defined hierarchy of offices.
3. **Rules:-** The official is subject to strict and systematic discipline and control in the conduct of the office.
4. **Impersonality:-** The official works separately from the ownership of the means of administration and without appropriation of his position.
5. **Appointed officials:-** Candidates are selected on the basis of technical qualification. In the most rational case this is tested by examination.
6. **Full time officials:-** The office is treated as the sole, or at least the primary, occupation of the incumbent.
7. **Career officials:-** The job constitutes a career. There is a system of promotion according to seniority or achievements or both.

Bureaucracy, naturally, implies democracy. Bureaucracy claims the attributes of equality before law and regularity of administrative action, which are the basis of democratic form of government.

Luther Gulick: Papers on the Science of Administration

Gulick is known for the development of the formal organization theory, also called the classical theory of organization. He is equally known for the acronym, POSDCORB, which is coined to describe the functions of the chief executive, POSDCORB stands for the following activities.

- **Planning:-** that is, working out in board outline the things that need to be done and the methods for doing them to accomplish the purpose set for the enterprise.
- **Organising:-** the establishment of the formal structure of authority through which work subdivisions are arranged, defined and coordinated for the defined objectives.
- **Staffing:-** the whole personnel function of bringing in and training the staff and maintaining favourable conditions of work.
- **Directing:-** this is the continuous task of making decisions and embodying them in specific and general orders and instruction, and serving as the leader of the enterprise.
- **Reporting:-** that is, keeping those to whom the executive is responsible informed as to what is going on, which includes keeping himself and his subordinates informed through records, research and inspection.
- **Budgeting:-** involving fiscal planning, accounting and control.

This description of the work of the executive is adopted from the functional analysis elaborated by Henri Fayol for industrial and general administration. It is believed that those who know administration intimately will find the analysis a valid and helpful pattern, into which can be fitted each of the major activities and duties of any chief executive.

Gulick took the managerial view of administration, equating it with the executive. He defined public administrations as "the science and art of governmental systems, operation and service, particularly on the managerial side" (Gulick, Vol. XV, No 2:74). He emphasized on the

similarities between public administration and private administration and advocated increasing interaction between the two.

It is important to note that Gulick stressed the importance of division of work as a principle of administration. According to him: "Work, division is the foundation of organization" (Gulick and Urwick, 1973;3).

Three most spectacular governmental changes were predicted by Gulick. They include: first, the rise in the range, scale and volume of international governmental action; second, the far greater incursion of the national state into the control and regulation of the domestic economy; and third, the spectacular rise of a new pattern of metropolitan settlement, called megapolis, produced largely by automobile and electricity, and destined to be accentuated by easy air transport and atomic energy. The increasing functions of the national state policy and the guidance of the domestic economy raise problems of administration, both public and private, of a new order. Administration, according to him, must become better prepared to act in these fields without taking sides in the political controversies which are involved.

In this connection, he identified five crucial tasks to be undertaken in the near future:

- The adaptation of administration to meet the needs of the new environment.
- The recognition that we are dealing with purposefully organized human action generally rather than with public administration alone, thus bringing us into direct partnership with those whose concern is business administration.
- A fresh approach to managing manpower for government, which is called "personnel administration".
- An understanding of the great possibilities of automation (electronic computers).
- A fresh exploration of the place of the expert in democratic administration.

As an administration reformer, Gulick developed the following ten principles:

1. Related activities should be administered as a unit.

2. All agencies should be consolidated into a few departments.
 3. Each organizational unit should be placed under a single official selected on the basis of proven competence and technical knowledge.
 4. Authority should be commensurate with responsibility.
 5. Each head of a department should have a staff for carrying out regular evaluation.
 6. Responsibility for such function should be vested in a specific functionary.
 7. Elected officials should be reduced in number.
 8. Boards of Commissions should not be used for administrative work. They should be limited to quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial functions.
 9. The chief executive should have power to appoint and remove department heads and direct their work.
 10. The chief executive should be equipped with a research staff to report on the departmental work and suggest improved methods.
- Finally, Gulick formulated a five-point formula for strengthening public administration to meet future demands.
1. Public administration as a field of action needs to be more closely adapted to changing human requirements, particularly in three areas of development; namely, the international, the economic and the metropolitan.
 2. Public administration as a field of analysis and understanding (that is, an academic discipline) needs to be more closely related to the study of business and other forms of administration.
 3. Public administration needs to bring the problem of personnel into the centre of its attention as never before.
 4. Public administration must accept and move forward with the new opportunities of automation (that is, to get computerized).
 5. Public administration must examine and reformulate its doctrines and practices with reference to the use and control of the expert in public as well as private management.

Gulick reflected the emphasis of the reform movement in the USA in the early decades of the twentieth century. He repudiated the

policy-administration dichotomy and believed in the indispensability of government and public administration. He also believed in the science of administration.

The Main Value of Classical Theories

What specific ideas of practical value emerged from what may seem to be the abstraction of the "scientific" or "classical" management school? The first is simply the identification of management, organization or administration as a distinct function to be studied and practiced in its own right. Calling it a science could be an exaggeration necessary for emphasis. However, the practical aim was to make men think and apply themselves to the problem of management and organization and to give those who did so some feeling of pride and self-respect.

Secondly, some clearer thinking was introduced concerning authority, responsibility and delegation. Emphasis was placed on the definition of clear lines of command and subdivisions of functions, and hence on responsibilities.

Neo-Classical Theory of Public Administration

There are various kinds of organization theories outside the broad description of "classical". They are relevant to organizations within the public sector. These "new" ideas or theories are sometimes categorized as the "Human Relations" and the "Systems" Schools, with the implication that the former is employee-centred, psychological and either "soft" or "paternalistic" or both, while the latter is "scientific" and mathematical. The earlier thinkers about organization not only used engineering analogies, but rather simple ones, as if they had in mind old-fashioned simple machines. The newer thinkers whom we shall now discuss, not only used biological analogies, but took them from contemporary biology, which made them see organizations as akin to very complex organisms. Indeed, the newer thinkers about organization and management have been, at least indirectly, and some of them very directly, influenced by all kinds of new thinking and new philosophy in the natural sciences generally (Baker, 1972;42).

Elton Mayo: Human Relations

Elton Mayo (1180-1940) is among the foremost administration thinkers of this new paradigm, and had enormous influence on the development of industrial sociology and psychology. Mayo is regarded as the father of the human relations theory of organization. This theory emerged out of a set of extended experiments in the Taylorian scientific management traditions, conducted by Elton Mayo, Fritz Roethlisberger and others at the Hawthorne Plant of the Western Electric Company in Chicago, from 1927 to 1932.

These deliberately planned experiments were aimed at studying workers' output. The first stage was devoted to the measurement of output of five female workers engaged in the assembly of telephone relays. These women were taken into confidence and thus cooperated in the experiment. They were put in separate rooms, otherwise their working conditions were these selected workers were varied in matters such as the number and duration of rest periods and coffee breaks and total hours of work. The result proved to be amazing. The output under most changes showed a steady increase, implying that the workers were responding not to the working conditions as such, but to "the attention being devoted to them" in the experiment.

In short, there was no correlation between output and variation in working conditions. These results were interpreted by Mayo and his team in terms of the group relations established among the workers themselves as well as between the workers and supervisor (Maheshwari, 2000:152-153). In other words. They showed, according to Rossenbloom (1998:152) that, in the context of organization, "social and psychological factors can play a major role in determining the productivity of workers".

The protracted Hawthorne experiments yielded a number of conclusions:

1. Productivity is affected not by physical stamina and strength but by social and psychological factors.
2. Non-economic rewards and sanctions more decisively determine employee motivation and level of job satisfaction.
3. Basing division of work stringently on specialization is not necessarily the most efficient approach.

4. Employees respond to management as members of informal organizations rather than as individuals.

Three explanations can be given for the result of the Hawthorne experiments. The first one emphasizes perception and cognition. This is to say that the workers felt that the management was concerned about their welfare. The second explanation is based on the observation of on-the-job and off-the-job interaction among the girls, the emergence of an informal leader, and a sense of team membership. This shows that increased group cohesiveness led to increased productivity. The third explanation is based on the dependence of attitudes on interaction. The girls selected for the experiment were placed in the position of initiating interaction with the experiments, of being consulted.

The Hawthorne studies constitute by far the most comprehensive study ever attempted on the attitudes and reactions of workers. Taylor assumed that workers are inert beings and capable of being manipulated through economic incentives. The Hawthorne studies, on the contrary, revealed that workers are human beings, who do not exist in social isolation. They are members of closely knit work groups who establish acceptable patterns of behaviour.

Chester Bernard: Practical Experience and Theory

Chester I. Bernard (1886 – 1975) is one of the foremost administrative theorists. His well known work, *The Functions of the Executive* deals with the functions and processes, as essential problems of the executive (or organisation) and of the management of cooperative systems, based on personal experience and observation. It is a pioneering study in administrative theory, in which Chester Bernard highlighted the broader issues of administration, such as formal and informal organizational units, functional outlay, organizational relation to the external environment, and equilibrium among organizational units. Bernard regarded the following three as the main functions of the executive:

1. to maintain communication in the organization,
2. to secure essential services from individuals, and
3. to formulate objectives.

The qualities of a good leader, for him, are vitality, endurance, a sense of moral responsibility, intellectual capacity, pervasiveness and an intuitive propensity. Bernard emerges as a behavioural scientist, his is an important contribution to the effort to make public administration a behavioural science.

Herbert A. Simon: Behaviour within Organisation

Herbert Simon's greatest contribution to public administration is his insight into how individuals make decisions in bureaucratic organizations. His book, *Administrative Behaviour*, as a study of decision-making processes in administrative organizations, seems to equate all administration and management activity with decision-making. He takes the starting point of organization theory away from the static idea of structure, which was a major preoccupation of the classical theorists, to the dynamics of processes – in fact that from “anatomy” to “physiology”.

Simon's principal and most valued contribution to administrative theory lies in the enunciation of his views on decision-making. For him, decision-making comprises three principal phases: finding occasions for making a decision; finding possible courses of action; and choosing among courses of action. The three phases follow a certain sequence. Intelligence activity precedes design and precedes choice. Each phase in decision-making is a complex one. The design phase, for example, may call for new intelligence activities; problems at any given level generate sub-problems that, in turn, have their intelligence, design and choice phases. In other words, there are wheels within wheels. These three stages are closely related to the three stages in problem-solving: what is the problem, what are the alternatives, which alternative is the best?

Science of Administration

Simon's ultimate aim was to evolve a pure science of administration. Such a science is possible only after values have been separated from facts. It is only the factual context of administrative behaviour can be developed. An applied science of administration would attempt to use the system of empirical propositions established by pure

science to work out an implementation for any particular (complete) system of values.

Simon propounded the idea of administrative man. The behaviour of an individual in an administrative situation is conditioned by organizational factors such as the expected role of the position, obligations and duties, concern for public interest and moral and ethical responsibilities. It is therefore impracticable for the administrative man to maximize choice. Such a man has two important characteristics: Firstly, because he satisfies rather than maximizes, the administrative man takes a decision without examining all the possible alternatives. Secondly, the administrative man makes his decision with simple rule of thumb, so to say, without analyzing the interrelatedness of all the variables. He therefore describes human behaviour in organizations as "intendedly rational". Complete rationality is thwarted by: "Incomplete knowledge of the problem, alternatives and consequences; and inability to completely standardize individuals, having as they do, multiple, even unranked, preferences" (Simon, 1978:xxx – xiv).

There are four obstacles which stand in the way of rational decision-making:

1. Multitude of problems, goals and policy commitments.
2. Barriers to collecting adequate information about the variety of acceptance goals.
3. The personal needs, commitments, inhibitions and inadequacies of decision –makers, which interfere with their assessment of goals and policies.
4. Structural difficulties within administration. This is the reason for the concept of "bounded rationality".

Principles of Administration

Herbert Simon dubbed the principles of administration as proverbs occurring in mutually contradictory pairs. He argued that "most of the propositions that make up the body of administrative theory today share... this defect of proverbs. For almost every principle one can find an equally plausible and acceptable contradictory principle. Although the two principles of the pair will lead to exactly opposite organizational

recommendations, there is nothing in the theory to indicate which is the proper one to apply" (Simon, 1956:53-67).

Simon cites the following administrative principles as examples:

1. Administrative efficiency is increased by a specialization of the task among the group.
2. Administrative efficiency is increased by arranging the members of the group in a determinate hierarchy of authority.
3. Administrative efficiency is increased by limiting the span of control at any point in the hierarchy to a small number.
4. Administrative efficiency is increased by grouping the workers, for purposes of control, according to (a) purpose, (b) process, (c) clientele, or (d) place.

In general, Simon argued in *Administrative Behaviour* that a science of administration was possible, but it would require a careful separation of facts from values. In effect, his critique of classical theories showed that a scientific theory of administration would have to be developed on the basis of facts derived "from the context of administrative and organizational behaviour".

Traditional Model of Public Administration and the New Public Management (NPM) Approach

Our discussion of the "classical" and "neo-classical" theories of public administration falls under what is known as the old public administration or the traditional model of public administration. The traditional model of public administration, in summary, came through the application of private sector based ideas of "scientific management" to public administration. It introduced efficient operational methods based on standardization of tasks, regarded as "one best way of fitting workers to tasks, and systematic control of tasks, processes, and workers" (Hughes, 1998:35). These principles were easily adapted to bureaucratic structures. In addition, the traditional model applied the insights of social psychology in a "human relations" approach. This is often contrasted with the scientific management approach, but in practice sought to achieve greater efficiency of performance too, though paying attention to the need to motivate workers rather than merely

controlling and directing them. This enhanced bureaucratic model of large-scale organization was held to be both rational and superior to other possible alternative (Moti 2004:106).

The New Public Management Approach

It is the critique of the traditional model of public administration that has produced a reform model usually designated as "New Public Management: (NPM). Traditional public administration was criticized on the following grounds:

- In many systems, there is no clear separation between policy and administration, either in terms of decision-making processes or the respective roles of administration and politicians, which are often fused together.
- Decision-making processes do not, in any case, conform to the rules of technical and economic rationality, but are affected and shaped by processes of conflict, negotiation and exchange between interests, both internal and external, to the state bureaucracy.
- Hierarchy and centralization combine with a formal, sometimes slavish, adherence to rules and procedures to produce defects (or bureaucratic pathologies) such as delay, inflexibility, unresponsiveness, and an arrogant disregard for the interests and concerns of citizens.
- Bureaucracies are characterized by a process of 'top-down' implementation which frequently produced inappropriate policies and inadequate results.
- The range of transactions within the modern system of state administration, both internally and with external organisations and interests, is so extensive that this produces a degree of complexity much greater than the model would suggest (Minogue, 1997:17).

Box 1: On the New Public Management (NPM) Approach

At the national level, NPM approach is employed in Vice-President Al Gore's National Performance Review (NPR). Its 1993 Report, *From Red Tape to Results: Creating a Government that Works Better and Costs Less*, explicitly seeks "a new customer service contract with the American people, a new guarantee of effective, efficient and responsive government". It calls for the following steps, among others: putting customers first, making service organizations compete, creating market dynamics, using market mechanisms to solve problems empowering employees to get results, decentralizing personnel policy and streamlining procurement....

The view that policy administration is largely political and businesslike is essential to the NPM more generally. To work in democracies and maintain accountability, deregulated, empowered, result-oriented public administration must stick to adoring policy goals established by elected and politically appointed officials.

Source: David H. Rosenbloom, **Public Administration: Understanding Management Politics and Law in the Public Sector** (USA: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., Fourth Edition, 1998), pp. 22-23.

The New Public Management reform model is therefore based on the assumptions that large state bureaucracies are inherently defective, and wasteful, and the market is better equipped than the state to provide most goods and services. The radical changes needed to introduce transformed and entrepreneurial model of public management would have to be established by:

- Restructuring and reducing the public sector, particularly through privatization.
- Reorganising and slimming down the central civil services.
- Introducing competition into remaining public services, especially through internal markets, and the contracting of the provision of public services to the private sector.
- Improving efficiency and obtaining "value for money" through performance management and auditing. (Minogue, 2000:5).

The claim of the New Public Management is to transform traditional administration into a new specie of public management, characterized by:

- A separation of strategic policy from operational management.
- A concern for results rather than process and procedure.
- An orientation to the needs of citizens rather than the interests of the organization or bureaucrats.
- A withdrawal from direct service provision in favour of a steering or enabling role.
- A changed entrepreneurial management culture (Minogue, 2000:5).

The New Public Management model gives priority role to management and emphasizes empowerment, entrepreneurship, effectiveness and a dynamic organizational culture modeled on private sector management. To reform the service using new public management in Nigeria would require a thorough change in the culture of doing things which cannot occur simply by changing regulations, structures, processes and technology, but by changing the orientation of public servants through a robust competency-driven, competitive people-centred reprofessionalisation scheme. This scheme is the subject of extensive discussion in the last chapter of this book, which outlines a framework of reform for the Nigerian Civil Service through professionalisation. In the meantime, Chapter Three is devoted to a review of the theory and practice of administration in Nigeria.

Having look at theories of public Administration this paper will go on to discuss the following:

- (1) Evolution of the Nigerian Civil Service and reforms initiatives
- (2) Local Government Administration
- (3) Demarcation between the military and democracy

Evolution and Growth of the Nigerian Civil Service

Olusanya O. (1975) Nigerian Civil Service has its root in the British Colonial Administration which dates back to the second half of the 19th

century, what is known as Nigeria today came into existence as a result of the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates and the Lagos colony on January 1, 1914; whereas the civil service went far beyond this date. Various parts of the territories of today's Nigeria were ceded to the British imperialists at different dates, for instance, Lagos was ceded to Britain in 1861, and a rudimentary civil service was established. The Southern and Northern protectorates came under the British colonial administration at a much later date. The Southern protectorate was transferred from the foreign office to the colonial office in 1899. The Northern part of the country which was administered by the Royal Niger Company whose sole interest was purely commercial, was taken over by the company whose sole interest was purely commercial, was taken over by the British colonial administration on January 1, 1900. Each of these territories had its own civil service in a very modest form. The service, in fact, was a civil-military organization – as it was a combination of civilian and military officers. For instance, it had the following departments: Public Works Department, Military, Forestry, Botanical, Judiciary, Medical and Sanitary, Prisons, Treasury, Customs, Post Office, Marine and Printing.

A major development came in the history of Nigerian Civil Service on January 1, 1914 when the Southern and Northern Protectorates “ceased to exist and were replaced by a single Government of Nigeria, under a Governor-General, constituted under new Letters Patent and Orders-in-Council with a new seal and flag.” This is referred to as the Amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates. Lagos became the capital of the new country – Nigeria, and the seat of the administrative heads of the technical departments and central headquarters of administrative field services.

The colonial administration in Nigeria was marked by two prominent features that had profound effects on its civil services. First, “it was alien rule imposed on the people of Nigeria following military conquest.” The second feature was the “concentration of all powers (executive, legislative and judicial) in the hands of appointed officials who, being responsible only to the imperial country...” commenting on the first feature, Katako stated

since most of the (African) countries that came under the sphere of colonial influence came by military conquest, or by treaty, or by cession, the initial task of the bureaucracy was to pacify the people. The bureaucracy was therefore mainly concerned with the maintenance of law and order and collection of revenue to meet the cost of these services.

On the second feature, the lack of participation and accountability had a permanent legacy as the civil service was regarded and is still regarded as government's service/work, not owned by anybody', and therefore requires minimum efforts. For example, there is a saying in Yoruba *a ki se*

ise oba l'agun, meaning one does not do government's work strenuously. This is one of the challenges that the bureaucracy in Nigeria has to contend.

New Federalism: The Era of Military Dictatorship

The advent of the military regime in Nigeria on January 15, 1966, saw the end of the "old federalism" and the shaky beginning of a new one. The enactment of Decree No. 34 of May 24, 1966, which was directed towards the unification of the Nigerian Civil Service, implied a centralized political authority and a return to the pre-1954 unitary civil service. The reaction to this act was immediate and violent. It triggered a chain of events that not only threatened integrity of the country, but also plunged Nigeria into a three-year bloody civil war. The "new federalism" was therefore marked by a number of factors which included: increased centralization of political authority; ascendancy of federating forces; greater structural differentiation of the constituent states; increases in the federal government largesse and increases in the functions of the Federal Civil Service.

Perhaps, the most remarkable feature of the new federalism in Nigeria was the substantial expansion in the policy making and execution functions of the Federal Civil Service. The centralizing tendency, which national development planning set in motion in 1962 (Akindele, 1996:9), was greatly affected by prolonged military incursion into governance up to 1999. The sharing of federal revenues had been an issue, which was

later to inspire the creation of the Distributable Pool Account by the Raisman and Tress Commission in 1958. The Commission gave considerable weight to the principle of derivation, while allocating to the central government a significant share of the revenue collected by it.

As a result, federal civil servants acquired wide policy making functions. They played a major part in the formulation of social, economic, educational and political objectives of the government. They were able to perform this function because of the unique positions they occupied in the hierarchy of the ministries and the departments. The most well-placed amongst them, such as the permanent secretaries, their deputies and the under-secretaries, made claims to wealth of experience, just as they had access to information and data necessary for policy proposals. With their vantage positions, they made policy proposals, spelt out all possible consequences and even indicated their policy preference (Lawson, 1974:12). The same top federal civil servants saw themselves as equal partners in policy-making with their politically appointed Commissioners (Ministers). The latter initiated policies, but much depended on their educational and professional training and knowledge of the complex activities of government.

As a Federal Government retained more national resources, and as the expectations of the Nigerian public on the provision of economic goods and services rose, the Federal Civil Service increasingly came to be looked upon in the new federation to bring about speedy realisation of government's economic and social programmes.

Udoji Reform in 1974

By 1970, when the Second National Development Plan had declared "that the Federal Government will occupy the commanding heights in the quest for national development and provide the leadership and administration necessary to achieve national objectives" (FGN-Udoji Report, 1974:1), the capacity of the inherited Weberian public administration system to deliver services that matched the level of public expectation was already a subject of debate in Britain especially (Pilkington, 1999:63). The point was that the public service was heavily

bureaucratic and unadventurous on account of its reluctance to transit from an “administrative to the managerial culture” (ibid).

At the heart of the discourse was the generalist tradition and the issue of professionalism in the British-type civil service. There was increasing criticism that the civil service was amateurish and incapable of leading with the problems of an increasingly complex and technology advanced society (Drewery, 1999:195). This debate reached its height with the release of the Report of the Fulton Committee in 1968. dealing a blow on the “cult of generalists”, the Fulton Report decried the tendency of the higher civil service to think of themselves as advisers on policy to people above them, rather than as managers of the administrative machine below them (Fulton Report, Vol. 1, para. 18).

A little over a decade before Fulton, the World War management challenge had inspired the American Department of Defense under McNamara to introduce the Programme Planning and Budgeting System (PPBS), which together with Peter Drucker’s earlier invention, Management By Objective (MBO), were fads for public sector reforms at the time. However, the Fulton Report became the “high water mark of managerialism”. Managerialism refers to a virtual preference for business management philosophy and techniques, which subsequently became an anti-bureaucratic movement that reached its apogee in the 1970s.

Another parallel movement had however been unleashed earlier by Ronald Coase’s theory of the firm published in 1937. This theory “established the basic distinction between markets and hierarchies and argues that certain resource allocation decisions were made within hierarchical organizations because of a need to economise on transaction costs” (Fukuyama, 2004:61-62).

When, in 1971, the Adebo Commission concluded its second and final report of the Wages and Salaries Review Commission (1970-71), it captured the elements of the crisis that the civil service of the time faced in the light of the expanded national expectation. In so doing, it pointed out the limitation of its terms of reference, arguing that the question of pay was intimately bound up with that of organization and structure. It therefore recommended the setting up of a public service review commission with expanded terms of reference. The Udoji Commission,

which was consequently set up on 13th September, 1972, defined its responsibility as one of defining the public service's expanding functions, and responsibilities and the requirements "for it to become a more effective tool to achieve results in (its) newer, more demanding roles as agents for development" (Udoji Report, *ibid*).

Inspired by the UK Fulton Report, the Udoji Report advanced a number of principles and processes in recommending "a new style public service", with a results-oriented management system operated by professionals and specialist in particular fields, who keep themselves abreast of advances in their fields, join professional associations, subscribe to journals, attend seminars; constantly learning, and who know that in this technological age, one must run fast in order to keep up (Udoji Report, *ibid*).

It also recommended the adoption of a new set of management techniques, namely, Project Management approaches as distinct from the known traditional, hierarchical and bureaucratic system. It hoped to achieve a result-oriented system through the adoption of a mix of Management By Objectives (MBO) with strong emphasis on the definition of managerial responsibility in terms of expected results, and rigorous measurement of performances against projected plans and standards. Adoption of a Programme and Performance Budgeting System (PPBS) will in turn focus budgeting on outputs or results, rather than on inputs or activities. The Commission also recommended higher remuneration packages comparable with those obtainable in the nation's private sector, with a minimum public service wage pegged at ₦100 per month or (about ₦1,200 per annum) and a two-installment payment mechanism.

The Federal Government chose to implement the compensation component of the reform without the other components, thus disconnecting wages in Nigeria irredeemably from productivity improvement levels in the national economy. Also, whereas the Commission recommended payment of arrears in two installments, the government released the arrears all at once, provoking, as it were, high inflationary trends in the national economy. By 1983, according to research findings (Kitgaard, 1997:494), real wages for "highly skilled"

civil servants in Nigeria were 30% of what they were in the mid-1970s. Although perks and non-wage benefits tended to rise to compensate partly for this decline, government salary levels as at the date 1990s had gone well below living wage (Robinson, 1990 and Berg, 1993).

In addition, Numberg and Nellis (1995) have found that by the mid-1980s, the salary of the top civil servants was less than ten times the lowest paid rank in Nigeria. The Obasanjo administration pay review of May 2000 raised maximum wage considerably. Nonetheless, the pay level remained too low to serve as appropriate incentive for the desired level of work performance in the federal public service.

Finally, whereas the MBO, PPBS and project management approaches that the 1974 reform recommended had already been discredited as reform solutions as of 1974 when they were introduced, their underlying logic presented a prime opportunity for Nigeria to lay the basic management infrastructure for adopting the new public administration system that the nation is still struggling to put in place under ongoing reform initiatives of the Obasanjo administration.

The 1988 Civil Service Reform

Early in 1985, the Federal Military Government of General Buhari constituted a study group, led by Professor Dotun Phillips, to assess the effectiveness of the Federal Civil Service and make recommendations that would lead to the reduction of personnel along with desirable organizational changes (Phillips, 1992; Olowu, 1996). Though the team submitted its report in September 1985 a successful coup had in August 1985 brought General Babangida to government as a Head of State. The new government inherited the 1985 study group report and "attempted to synchronise the management of the civil service with the government perception of the requirements of the presidential system of government adopted in the 1979 constitution" (Olowu, *ibid*). A presidential task force on its implementation, popularly called the Koshoni Committee, reworked the team's report into a white paper, which informed the promulgation of the April 1988 implementation guidelines on the civil service reforms. This was given the force of law by Decree No. 43 of 1988.

The main elements of the reforms included the following:

- Ministers (and no longer Permanent Secretaries) were to be the Chief Executives and Accounting Officers of their respective Ministries.
- Permanent Secretaries, who were renamed Director-Generals, enjoyed tenure similar to those of Ministers as political appointees whose tenures coincided with that of the administration which appointed them.
- The civil service was also “professionalized”. This means deployment and utilization of staff in accordance with their profession or specialization, with the condition that they spend their entire career in one ministry, in order to acquire life-long expertise in the business of that ministry. The practice of pooling officers and deploying them centrally thus ceased, with each ministry taking up responsibility for employing, promoting and disciplining its staff in accordance with uniform guidelines provided by the Civil Service Commission, which monitored to ensure compliance and it treated any appeals against the decisions of the ministries in the area of personnel management.
- The office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation was abolished and its function shared between the Secretary to Government and the Civil Service Commission.

The 1988 reform was undoubtedly comprehensive and well-thought-out like the 1974 reform before it. However, it suffered a conception-reality gap in many senses. Its concept of professionalism was the first evidence of that gap. The assumption that professionalism would derive primarily from the location of an officer within the Service was a strange conception of professionalism. In the large body of literature on the subject of professionalism, a profession is better characterized by measures like a scientific body of knowledge which is regulated and imparted over a fairly lengthy period of training. The Udoji Report acknowledged this. This Report suggested that training should be utilized to create a corps of professional managers at the higher levels from among those with generalist and professional backgrounds.

Furthermore, it was, perhaps, too ambitious for the reform of 1988 to hope to make a "professional" out of everyone. Professionals are required in the public service but so also are the other groups (politicians, administrators and scientists) to assist in helping government to balance the search for truth, respect for governance norms and the exercise of political power. In the end, the 1988 reforms, rather than professionalize the elites of the Federal Civil Service, politicized them and systematically induced their wastage. In fact, the politicization of the position of Permanent Secretary increased the turnover rate of strong officers in whom a lot of training investment had been made. This eroded professionalism through skills depletion, without a commensurate policy of training and human capital investment to make up for it.

The decentralization of personnel management to line ministries also led to arbitrariness in the exercise of delegated authority. This allowed the unplanned influx of personnel that distorted the service's skills mix and its structure. This poor structure also had to do with the non-alignment of structure with the changing role of the state since 1985 when the deregulation of the economy took a systematic turn. The Phillips framework subsisted all through the tenure of President Babangida until 1994, when the Abacha regime set up the Ayida Review Committee.

The Ayida Reform of 1995

By 1994, it was already obvious, in spite of the spirited attempt by Professor Phillips seminar reviews to redress the gaps in the 1988 reform, that the reform had not brought the required change in the administrative system. In inaugurating a seven-man Review Panel on the Civil Service Reforms on 10th November, 1994 under the chairmanship of Mr. Allison Ayida, the then alien Head of State, General Sani Abacha, expressed the popular sentiment that:

in spite of the earlier review, the Civil Service of today still remains a shadow of what it should be. All the lofty ideals of efficiency, professionalism and accountability which the 1988

Reforms intended to bring into the Service has not been achieved.

The Ayida Review Panel was to examine the Service as the 1988 reform restructured it, and to restore the civil service of the glorious past by reinventing those factors that facilitated its effective performance. It was reform to redress the negative forces in the Service, including the low morale in the Service, the problem of coordination and accountability and the abolition of the post of the Head of the Civil Service and the pooling system.

The key elements of the recommendations of this panel included:

- Abrogation of Decree No. 43 of 1988 and reverting of the Service to a system guided by relevant provisions of the Constitution, the civil service rules, the financial regulation and circulars and the restoration of the Permanent Secretaries as Accounting Officers.
- Restoration of the title of Permanent Secretary as a career rather than political appointment and reestablishment of the post of the Head of the Civil Service as a career position separate from the post of Secretary to Government, which remains a political appointment.
- Structuring of ministries according to their workload and not according to a uniform pattern.
- Restoration of the powers of the Civil Service Commission in personnel management with delegated powers to the ministries.
- Replacement of Planning, Research and Statistics Department with a Management Information Unit for central data collection, with the PRSD becoming optional for ministries.
- Abolition of some cadres like messengers, cleaners, caterers, domestic staff and so on, whose jobs are better performed through some other arrangements instead of established posts.

It was obvious from the conclusions of the 33rd meeting of the Federal Executive Council under the new democratic dispensation on 15th June, 2001, that the Ayida Reform and its proposed manning levels consigned reform to the “hardware” of operations rather than to the “software” of system rejuvenation. The Ayida Reform did what the government dictated by re-inventing the pre-1988 system. It did this without taking the benefit of new thinking on public sector management reform as a global phenomenon. The panel’s composition suggested that the government did not have a better agenda than to dismantle the 1988 reform and bring back a non-professionally-oriented new generation of civil service already infected by deep systemic crisis of a collapsed education system and an undemocratic military tradition. Indeed, the reform was an attempt to refurbish a system that had already become dysfunctional.

The Obasanjo Civil Service Renewal Programme, 1999-2007

Background of the reform

One of the crucial challenges faced by the Obasanjo administration, on assuming office on 29 May, 1999, had to do with the issue of how to address the crisis in public management, which was a key aspect of the deterioration in the quality of governance in the country that prolonged military rule induced and sustained. Aspects of this crisis, as identified by President Olusegun Obasanjo in his inauguration address (1999), include:

- Inefficiency in the delivery of social services
- Insensitivity to general welfare
- Indifference to the norms guiding the conduct of public officials
- Rampant corruption.

These lapses had led to a situation defined by the weakening of public institutions, distrust of government by the citizens, collapse of infrastructures, and the development of a sense of despair among the people. This scenario posed a crucial challenge to the Obasanjo administration, namely, that of how to transform the country from a state of chaos and hopelessness to one of order and promise, thereby laying the foundation for, in the words of President Olusegun Obasanjo,

“the beginning of a genuine Renaissance”. The need for social transformation became more pressing in the light of the fact that the Obasanjo administration inherited an economy that had been stagnant and uncompetitive. The average GDP growth rate of 2.8% at the time this administration assumed power made it one of the slowest growing economies in the world on a per capita basis. It will puzzle any development observer that a country that had earned about US\$11 billion annually from oil and gas in the last 20 years, and which had appropriated about US\$500 billion as federal government expenditure alone over the period, could still be ranked as the 20th poorest country in the world. Indeed, the UNDP Human Development Report has, since 1998, ranked Nigeria as one of the poorest countries with respect to the Human Poverty Index (HPI). The country is also ranked 30th in Gender-related Development Index (GDI), while it occupies 40th position from below in its Human Development Index (HDI). Besides, its aggregate external and domestic debt per head of the population (with the scheduled debt service due in 2003 of \$2.91 billion, and arrears as at the end of December, 2002 amounting to \$2.078 billion; a total of \$4.99 billion) remain sustainably high (DMO:2003). Its capacity to finance investment from domestic saving is also indescribably low. Indeed, aggregate production is still dominated by the primary sectors oil (13%), and subsistence agriculture (41%). (NEEDS Document: 2004). The secondary sectors, especially manufacturing, was stagnant (6% of GDP), thereby making Nigeria one of the last industrialized countries in the world. Also, there was general insecurity of life compounded by worsening inequality and unemployment rate that threatened social cohesion. Finally there was the HIV/AIDS pandemic, a socio-economic time bomb waiting to explode unless effectively dealt with.

In summary, the Obasanjo administration, at its inception, faced the challenge of transforming a totalitarian state to a democratic one, in which the relationship between the government and the citizens will be one of trust and partnership. It also faced the challenge of economic development, which can be defined in terms of the strengthening of the economic substructure of the society through industrialization and the diversification of economic products.

Box 2: President Obasanjo on the Administrative Challenge before His Administration at its Inception

Nigeria is wonderfully endowed by the Almighty with human and other resources. It does no credit either to us or the entire black race if we fail in managing our resources for quick improvement in quality of life of our people. Instead of progress and development, which we are entitled to expect from those who governed us, we experienced in the last decade and a half and particularly in the last regime but one, persistent deterioration in the quality of our governance, leading to instability and the weakening of all public institutions. Good men were shunned and kept away from government while those who should be kept away from government were drawn near. Relations between men and women who had been friends for many decades and between communities that had lived together in peace for many generations became very bitter because of the actions or inaction of government. The citizens developed distrust in government, and because promises made for the improvement of the conditions of the people were not kept, all statements by government met with cynicism.

Government officials became progressively indifferent to propriety of conduct and showed little commitment to promoting the general welfare of the people and public good. Government and all its agencies became thoroughly corrupt and reckless.

Members of the public had to bribe their way through in Ministries and Parastatals to get attention and one government agency had to bribe another government agency to obtain the release of their statutory allocation of funds.

The impact of official corruption is so rampant and has earned Nigeria a very bad image at home and abroad. Besides, it has distorted and retrogressed development.

Our infrastructures, NEPA, NITEL, Roads, Railways, Education, Housing and other Social Services, were allowed to decay and collapse. Our country has thus been through one of its darkest periods.

All these have brought the nation to a situation of chaos and near despair. This is the challenge before us. Fellow Nigerians, let us rise as one, to face the tasks ahead and turn this daunting scene into opportunities in a New Dawn. Let us make this the beginning of a genuine Renaissance.

Source: Inauguration speech by President Olusegun Obasanjo, delivered on May 29, 1999. See recall: **A Chronicle of Nigerian Events, Number 1, January 2000, pp. 132-133.**

Box 9: On Reforms in New Zealand

The present trend the world over is towards granting greater autonomy and delegating more power at all levels of the government. Perhaps the highest level of autonomy and delegation has been effected in New Zealand during the course of the reforms initiated in the last decade. Most of the government activities have been either privatized or are being run as State Owned Enterprises like private sector businesses conforming to commercial objectives alone. For the core activities that have been retained in Government, Ministers enter into a contract with the Departmental Chief Executives, who himself is on a contract, has full powers to hire and fire his staff and to fix their salaries. All civil servants are employed on a contract, under which they are responsible to produce a certain number of outputs of specified quality at a certain price. In order to achieve such outputs, each manager has complete discretion over inputs and can prescribe work methods, devise systems, fix salaries, grant amenities and decide upon the number of his staff while remaining within his overall budget. The pay of the manager is also dependent on his performance. There are annual reviews and depending on their results his pay can be adjusted both upwards and downwards. Budgeting has become totally output-oriented, with the control of the Treasury limited only to a fixing of the total size of the departmental budgets.

(1) Civil Service Reform

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

What followed was a functional review which essentially answered two critical questions: how many people do we need to do the job and what type and with what skills? And, what is the best way to get this work done? The functional review helped each restructuring MDA

to get the functional structure of Government right, while the skills required for the MDA to perform in its redefined function was also determined. The required new skill when aligned with what the MDA currently has, formed the basis for determining its retraining and severance proposal.

The latter in the first phase was compiled on the basis of eight criteria.

MDAs designate as pilots that have implemented their restructuring plan included the State House, the National Planning Commission, and the Federal Capital Territory and Solid Minerals. Following the directive of the President that five other MDAs be included, the Federal Ministries of Education, Health, Foreign Affairs are also implementing plans.

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

As for the Finance Ministry, a new organizational structure which rationalized its former thirteen departments into the and the deployment of economists/financial management professionals to man them have so far been implemented. Similarly, The National Planning Commission's old eleven departmental structure has been rationalized into seven, all manned by professional staff. The Commission's six parastatals have also been rationalized with the former Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) absorbing the National Data Bank and transformed into the National Bureau of Statistics. The National Manpower Board merged with the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), and the National Centre for Economic Management and Administration (NCEMA) merged with the Centre for Management Development

(CMD), Moreover, the Ministry of Solid Mineral Development now operates a new structure with four technical Departments. Its Mining and Licensing/ Administration system has also been re-engineered and the staff profile has changed from a preponderance of generalists administrative officers to professional staff.

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

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

The first batch of officers that were retired involved a total of 35,700 officers. The FCSC has already issued 20,000 disengagement letter to the affected officers.

In compliance with directives of president Olusegun obasanjo, a social assistance,/ pre-retirement training was organized for the disengaged officers at the conclusion of which cheques covering severance payments were issued to the retirees.

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

of continuous revision of the processes of recruitment, appointments, deployments, discipline, performance management, pay and the incentive system.

(ii) Pay Reform

As part of its commitment to improve public sector working condition, the Obasanjo Administration raised the national minimum wage from N250 per month to N5,500 per month with effect from 1 st May, 2000. This was subsequently raised to N7,500 per month representing a 190% increase to date. In June 2004, the Federal Government set up the Wages, Salaries and Emolument Relativity Panel headed by Professor Edozien. The Panel found the existence of multiple salary structures within the public sector, prevalence of un-monetised fringe benefits, unwieldy allowances ranging between four and thirty-four, the de-linking of productivity and performance, and implementation of unapproved allowances by many public sector agencies. On the basis of the Edozien Panel baseline technical Report, the Presidential Committee on Consolidation of Emoluments in the Public Sector headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan was set up. It examined the current salaries and allowances and consolidated them into single personal emolument.

On the basis of Shonekan Report, Government is moving the economy towards a cleaner wage system. Besides the consolidation of fringe benefits and allowances, a maximum of four non-regular allowances which should reflect job peculiarities and performance-based is being instituted. Government has approved that there should be job specific allowances such as the Call Duty Allowance, Risk-related Allowance, Relocation Allowance and Scarce Skills Allowance. In addition, grade levels will be compressed by eliminating Grade Levels 01, 02 and 11 which have become dormant and irrelevant due to outsourcing and the application of the monetisation policy. Self-financing agencies will be bench-marked with the private sector comparators.

The National Planning Commission (NPC) and the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission (NSIWC) have been removed from the pooling system in order to allow for career progression and

promotion of professionalism. NSIWC will conduct regular salary surveys, periodic productivity surveys and enforce the right to disclosure of information. It will produce a wage determination model that will take care of salient compensable factors highlighted by it.

(iii) Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS)

The IPPIS is an IT-enabled facility being put in place to establish a reliable and comprehensive database for the public service, facilitate manpower planning, eliminate record and payroll fraud, facilitate easy storage, update and retrieval of personnel records for administrative and pension processes and staff remuneration payment with minimal wastages and leakages.

The system became operational in April 2007.

The project is being implemented in phases, the five (5) Ministries involved in the initial deployment being the Federal Ministries of Education, Information and Communications, Transportation, National Planning Commission and Foreign Affairs. There are a number of central personnel agencies and technical support agencies that are linked with the operations of IPPIS for their oversight and control functions over the operations of personnel and payroll in the public service. These are the Office of the Head of Service of the Federation, Office of the Auditor-General of the Federation, Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation, the Budget Office of the Federation, Federal Civil Service Commission and the Nigeria Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA).

(iv) Public Expenditure Management Reform

A medium-term planning and expenditure framework informed by medium-term sector

strategies has been put in place. The Fiscal Responsibility bill is before the National Assembly for enactment into law. There is manifest change in Government's budgeting and financial management philosophy and operation, which is now characterised by firm policies, economic growth and management orientation, time discipline and predictability in resource allocation and funding releases.

The statutory allocations from the Federation Account to all tiers of Government are now published monthly. The Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly has been strengthened. A Public Procurement Act has since been passed by the National Assembly. The procurement reform has codified the due process rules and regulations enforced by the Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU). This new operation has institutionalised transparency in tenders, contract awards and payments. Accounting and Audit Reforms are also at an advanced stage. Publication of audited Annual Accounts/ Reports is now mandatory with enforcement of sanctions for non-compliance.

(v) SERVICOM-Service Delivery Reform

This service delivery or SERVI COM Reform emanated from a technical assistance provided by the British Government through the DFID to the Federal Government. SERVICOM seeks to introduce the "Customer Orientation" through a "service compact with all Nigerians". The pact was adopted by President Obasanjo, the Federal Executive Council (FEC) and representatives of civil societies in March, 2004 as part of the initiative to re-orientate the Nigerian public as service users to demand quality services as a matter of right, and service providers to deliver on agreed standard under contractual obligations that are formalised in the SERVICOM Charter.

Each MDA has a Ministerial SERVICOM Unit. The SERVICOM Unit is responsible for spearheading the strategy for SERVICOM compliance through a review and monitoring mechanism that relies on SERVICOM Index. There is also in place a Customer Grievance Redress mechanism reinforced by the publishing of MDA's performance.

Service delivery orientation has also provoked a role of state re-definition which revolves around a functional review that seeks to answer the two questions: "What is the best way to get the work done" and "how do we redesign services around customer requirements"? Through creative answers to these questions, Public Service monopolies are being deregulated through delivery innovations and introduction of such other delivery modes as franchising, outsourcing, management contracting, corporatisation, commercialisation and sometimes outright privatisation.

(vi) Monetisation of Fringe Benefits

This policy quantified in money terms, those fringe benefits provided for workers as part of their conditions of service. This was part of reform to reduce the cost of Government, eliminate a major source of waste and leakage while at once helping officers to prepare for life after retirement through encouragement of saving and investment culture.

The policy was introduced in June 2003, while implementation started with political office holders, including Ministers and members of the National Assembly. The policy was subsequently extended, first to the core civil service and is now being extended to all arms of the public service. So far, most Government vehicles and publicly owned buildings and official quarters have either been sold to their occupiers or auctioned to the general public, with a few reserved, thereby saving enormous maintenance costs. Also, thousands of drivers, caterers, stewards, security guards, etc have been disengaged from Government employment, with resultant saving in payroll costs.

(vii) Pension Reform

Up to year 2004, when the Pension Act was passed by the National Assembly, the Federal Government operated an unfunded

Defined Benefits Scheme, and the payment of retirement benefits were budgeted annually under the Pay-As-You-Go Benefit Scheme. Against the backdrop of an estimated N2 trillion deficit, arbitrary increases in salaries and pensions as well as poor administration, the Obasanjo Administration initiated a pension reform in order to address and eliminate the problems associated with the pension scheme.

The new Pension Scheme is contributory, fully funded by both the employer and employee and based on individual accounts that are privately managed by Pension Fund Administrators (PFAs) with the pension fund assets held by Pension Assets Custodians (PACs). This whole scheme is being regulated and supervised by the National Pension Commission (PENCOM). The Commission will ensure that the payment and remittance of contributions are made and beneficiaries of retirement savings are paid when due. The new system has taken effect, with monthly contributions to the fund. However, there is a transitional arrangement where the old pay-as-you-go system will run concurrently until July, 2007.

(viii) Anti-Corruption

Government's anti-corruption initiative was launched in 1999, in what culminated in the enactment of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act of 2000 and the subsequent establishment of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) as well as other measures by Government to plug loopholes in the public service and expose and penalise corrupt officials and other citizens.

The second phase of the programme was the enactment of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Act and the establishment of the EFCC. The EFCC, with its enforcement and prosecution powers, has added teeth to the anti-corruption efforts of Government which is changing international perception of Nigeria as a viable investment environment.

(ix) Statistical System Reform and Strengthening

In 2004, the Federal Government developed a medium-term master plan for the National Statistical System with the full participation of key stakeholders. The institutional platform for statistical management has been completely re-engineered and transformed from the old bureaucratic Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) into the emergent seamless and professionalised National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). A new Scheme of Service for statistical workers has been developed along with a new career structure. Veritable platform has also been created for regular consultation between data providers, compilers and users. A strong state-of-the-art set of indicators to monitor the performance of the Federal Statistical System and a mechanism for reviewing these on an annual basis have been put in place.

These programmes, which cover the first three years, have three main components: namely, reform of pilot ministries/agencies; service wide systems reforms and launch of successful pilot experiments in other ministries/agencies progressively until there is service-wide coverage. The approach to the reform has been to allow each ministry, department or agency (MDA) to implement its own reform, while those with service-wide implications are determined centrally by the Office of the Head of

the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF) and the BPSR in consultation with the Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC) and other related central agencies where necessary. The pace of reform has, however, varied among these organisations.

The experience in the implementation of the reform programme, especially the reform of the core civil service, has been a learning process with considerable lessons to offer. Going by the strategic framework and action plan undergirding reform implementation, the roll out was expected to commence with the setting up of a management structure for the reform. Indeed, the strategy document advised that, given previous Nigerian and comparative experiences of successful reforms, current reforms will not be realised by an ad hoc committee or task force. It recommended that reforms implementation be coordinated by a dedicated unit or engine room that is simply structured, but properly positioned, to foster the required linkages with concurrent reforms.

It took some time for the lead agency to be established after the Presidential approval of 26th September, 2003. The agency which came to be known as the Bureau of Public Service Reform (BPSR) was located in the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF). It was subsequently relocated to the office of the President though technically supervised by the chair of the former Public Service Reform Team (PSRT) and Minister of the Federal Capital Territory. After a review of its status by the Federal Executive Council (FEC) under President Umaru Musa Yar' Adua, the BPSR has since been relocated to the office of the secretary to the government of the federation. The establishment of the bureau was expected to institutionalise reforms, thereby guaranteeing that it had a permanent dynamics.

To provide technical leadership, the Steering Committee on Reforms chaired by the Minister of Finance was set up. Since implementation commenced in mid-2003, a number of reform initiatives have been launched with system renewal and reprofessionalisation as the strategic foci. Some of these were the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPIS); monetisation of the fringe benefits of public servants and political office holders; budget, fiscal responsibility and accounting reforms; transparency in procurement process (Due Process);

pensions reform. Others are service delivery reform being supported by the UK government through DFID; accelerated anticorruption campaign; organisational restructuring, rightsizing and human resource management reform; review and revision of public service rules, regulations and procedures; rationalisation of parastatals; development of a new performance management system in the civil service; strengthening of statistical system and capacity; and freedom of access to information, a private bill which is still before the National Assembly as at the time of writing.

These programmes as has been explained earlier, cover the first three years, and have three main components: namely, reform of pilot ministries/ agencies; service-wide systems reforms and launch of successful pilot experiments in other ministries/agencies progressively until there is service-wide coverage. The approach to the reform has been to allow each ministry, department or agency (MDA) to implement its own reform, while those/with service-wide implications are determined centrally by the PSRI and the BPSR in consultation with the Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC) and other related central agencies where necessary. The pace of reform has, however, varied among these organisations.'

With regard to the scope and pace of reform and change, the process has inexorably regressed into a piecemeal approach, and in some cases, with programme activities launched somewhat half-heartedly. The drawback is that the process has consumed so much time, which is unfortunate, given the limited tenure of a reform-minded government of President Obasanjo. A more business-like approach, in which a number of related issues in the reform and contingent activities associated with them are taken on concurrently, is required if the reform will make reasonable impact. In pursuing their restructuring, each pilot ministry / agency conducted preparatory diagnostic studies expected to help define elements of a restructuring plan. A prerequisite for this restructuring was staff audit and verification, the results of which formed the foundation of a new system of personnel data management.

Local Government Administration

Three historical epochs shall be reviewed under this section. The first will be the period from 1950 – 1983. The second period will be 1983 to mid 1999 and the third epoch will be from mid 1999 – 2009.

We would recall that it was only in 1976 that local government became really recognized as a tier of government. Before then, particularly in the 50s, it was a mere subject or appendage of the regional governments. Local government administration during that period was left to the whims and caprices of their respective regional governments.

By 1966 when the military took over the reins of power, a more centralized command structure characteristic of the military further worsened the autonomy struggle of local governments until the 1976 when the reforms of that year gave local governments a new lease of life. In other words between 1960 and 1975, local governments were mere administrative elections of the central government.

Reforms in Local Government Administration

1976 Local Government Reforms

With the 1976 reforms came the formal recognition of Local Government as a distinctive of government with clearly defined functions, boundaries, and empowering provisions for control over human and financial resources. At least, for the first time, a nation-wide uniform structure, functions and powers of Local Governments were established. Unlike previous years, 1976 was the years in history when one can boldly declare Local Government as a 3rd tier of government in deed with constitution powers, status and financial standing. This development holds irrespective of the fact that the state or regions still have the powers to provide for their structure, composition, finance and functions. (C. F. Akande, 1982). It must be noted that the new status of Local Government was subsequently enshrined in the 1979 constitution of Nigeria.

The new status of Local Government was not pleasant as far as the state is concerned. Bello Imam and Uga observed that state governments resisted steps which would have transferred meaningful authority to the local government level such that from their inception,

the (state governments) issued edicts as from 1976, which in all practical purposes, ensured that local governments clearly operated and even existed almost entirely at the pleasure of the state government (Koehn, 1988).

In essence, even after the 1976 reform, it was quite pleasurable for the state government to maintain extensive influence in local government functional, financial and administrative matters. For instance, to ensure that local government towed their line, states adopted measures such as review and careful scrutiny of minutes of local government councils and their committees by the Ministries for Local Government, as well as inspection of all books, accounts and records of local governments while also advising in regard to local functions. Notably, such practices proved extremely influential in imposing uniform standards and practices at the local level in the post-reform period. In extreme cases, as in the immediate post reform period, states often unilaterally decided on the supersession of perceived erring local governments. The decision to supersede a local government was more often than not a political decision usually taken on politically partisan considerations, revealing a punitive motive and vindictive attitude of higher level political executives towards local government.

All these were in the context of a certain erroneous interpretation of the provisions of section 7(1) of the 1979 constitution which empowered states to enact legislation ensuring the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of local government. The provisions was interpreted to mean that local government still wholly remained a function of state governments, a position particularly assumed by state governments in the Second Republic (1979 – 1983) as was evident in the abnormal practice of appointing Care-taker Committees by State Governors.

It can be suggested that across the national board, the most critical expressions of the impingement on the autonomy of local governments between 1976 and 1983 were in the regions of their functions, finances and administrative set-up.

Development in Local Government Administration between 1983 and Mid 1999 (Extracted from Bello Imam & Uga, 2004)

The period between December 31, 1983 and May 29, 1999 can at least be described as the democratic dark years in Nigeria. The era witnessed four successive military dictators all of whom attempted to legitimize their forced governance via various forms of liberal attitude to local government autonomy. The four dictators are Generals Muhammadu Buhari, Ibrahim Babangida, Sanni Abacha and Abdul Salami Abubakar. Their various bit respective tinkering with the local government system resulted in a number of fundamental changes in relation to local autonomy.

These obviously comprehensive and well defined measures, aimed at radically reforming the structure, finances and administration of Nigerian Local Governments, with a view to making them viable, autonomous and effective centres of development started to come into operation as from 1987, i.e. a decade after the initial 1976 local government reforms. Most significant of the reforms are:

1. By way of further amplifying and guaranteeing the third-tier nature of the institution of democratically elected Local Government Councils with assigned functions, finance and administrative structures, both the 1989 and 1995 Constitutions (Section 7, Chapter 8 and the Fourth Schedule) became entrenched in the respective constitutions.
2. Within Nigeria, local government was recognised as the basic institution in the country's new perspective planning education, basic healthcare, water for all, rural roads and electricity and lately, poverty alleviation. Towards this end, the Federal Government introduced the submission of a mandatory two year development plan to the Governor (the Chief Executive of each state) by each local government with a view to having a yardstick for the measurement of progress performance at this level of government.
3. In order to further bring government closer to the people, the Federal government increased the number of local government units from 301 to 774 and urged these units to integrate, as a

matter of deliberate policy, Community Development Associations (CDAs) into the mechanic and operation of development from below.

4. Since the absence of a scheme of services has hitherto led to the inability of local governments to attract aimed at making local government employees more efficient and responsive to citizen's demands.
5. In a bid to ease the perennial financial problems of local governments, the Federal Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission increased local government share of the Federation Account from 10 percent to 15 percent in the first instance with effect from January 1, 1990 and subsequently to 20 percent with effect from January 1992. relatedly, it directed state governments on monthly basis, failing which deductions would be made in their share of the Federation account on a quarterly basis. Again, unlike in the past, and more importantly in order to stem the erstwhile misappropriation of federal allocation passed through the state governments to local government's share of the Federation Account should be transferred directly to them and no longer through the State Governments.
6. In order to totally eliminate the erstwhile suffocating and most often unnecessary controls of the state governments over their respective local governments, the Federal government took the unprecedented action of dismantling the Ministries of Local Government in all the states of the Federation. To further enhance the relative autonomy of local governments and in order to arrest the erosion of their functional responsibilities, the state governments were directed not to interfere in the areas of the executive constitutional responsibilities, the state governments.
7. Desirous of eliminating the erstwhile unbridled proliferation of local government units by state governments, the federal government entrenched in both the 1989 and 1995 constitutions that only the Nation Assembly has the power to create new local government units and the procedure for creating such new local government units and the respective constitutions. An over-view

of the procedure shows that they were made as stringent as those for creating new state governments. A similar procedure was prescribed for local government boundary adjustment.

8. In a bid to ensure that regular elections into the local government councils are held as and when due, the erstwhile state government control of local government elections were removed from the state governments and located with the National Electoral Commission.
9. Since Primary School Education, had hitherto constituted one of the greatest burden on the finances of local government, the Federal Government, in Decree No. 31 of 1988, created the National Primary Education Commission and enshrined the Commission in the 1989 Constitution.
10. The Federal Government also sustained its policy of specific (project-based) grants to local governments for accelerated development at the grassroots level. In the recent past, these have included (i) the x1millio Presidential grant for the rehabilitation of township roads, (ii) the x100,000 for the purchase of hospital drugs and (iii) the 65 percent subsidy for the salaries of teaching and non teaching staff of primary schools as part of the special funding through a national fund into which all local governments make contribution.
11. In order to incorporate the local bureaucrats into the mainstream of the nation-wide civil service reforms, the Federal Government released the implementation guidelines on the application of the reforms in the Local Government Service. Under this arrangement, the Local Government Chairman is to play a major role in budgeting, disbursement of funds and awards of contracts. The Post of Director of Local Government Audit, separate from the State Director of Audit was created too. Similarly, the code of conduct provisions was extended to local government officials. All these measures were designed to provide for autonomy, public probity and accountability at the level of governance. Within these network in checking and

balancing the institutional behaviour of all local government personnel.

12. In a bid to further demonstrate the concern of the Federal Government for manpower development at the local government level, it continued its support for the Departments of Local Government Studies at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife; and University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), in addition to organizing some training for local government personnel was also charged with the organization of workshops like the Local Government Unit of the Presidency.
13. The Federal Government also extended the presidential system of governance to the local government level principally to guarantee transparency, accountability and responsiveness for the elected politicians at the level of governance. Irrespective of the pervasiveness of these reforms, local government remained tied to the apron strings of both the states and federal government.

Demarcation between the Military and Democracy

There is no doubt that the civil service has undergone a lot of changes under these two administrations, but were worst hit under the military era.

The Muhammed/Obasanjo regime which came to power in July 1975 used governments sledge hammer to destroy the civil service, through what is called rationalization of the service. The regime embarked on a massive purge in which about 12,000 civil servants were removed from one reason or the other. The autocratic and dictatorial character of the military was clearly revealed here. The procedures for dismissal and termination of appointment as contained in the Federal Public Service of Nigeria, Notes for Guidance of 1972, and the Fourth Chapter of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Civil Service Rules of 1974 were both ignored. It became hard to explain the criteria for the dismissals and terminations, which were not only arbitrary, but prejudicial, discriminatory in many instances, and injurious to the system. Most of the best and experienced civil servants were removed from the

service, thus creating a vacuum that could not be filled for many years after. The morale of the civil servants was greatly dampened. The sense of sanctity and security of tenure and loyalty gave way to laxity, since many loyal civil servants were removed without cause. The civil service environment became certainly hostile for productivity.

The period 1979 – 1983 saw the return of civilians to government after 13 years of military rule, with the inauguration of a presidential constitution on October 1, 1979. According to Phillips, the period witnessed four major adverse developments in the civil service. First, there was a struggle for power by the new civilian political class and the civil servants. The controversy was exemplified as to who was the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer of the Ministry. “The resolution of the problem to the effect that the Minister was the Chief Executive whilst the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry was the Accounting Officer only created more problems. (How can a Chief Executive not also be the “responsible officer who controls men, money and materials?”). Furthermore, the 1979 Constitution gave the President, or Head of Government, discretionary powers to appoint whoever he wishes as permanent Secretary. This led (particularly at the State level) to a partisan-politicisation of the top echelon of the civil service.” thirdly, in this period the size of the civil service witnessed a great expansion, occasioned by partly patronage. The size of the Federal Civil Service which was 157,000 in 1978 rose to 292,000 at the end of 1983 as jobs were created for party loyalists. Arbitrary appointments were made without regard for merit and requirements for the service. Fourthly, the period coincided with economic recession, occasioned by a serious downturn in Nigeria’s oil fortunes.

The economic depression, the rapid expansion in the size of the service coupled with outrageous looting of the public treasury by corrupt politicians led to the inability of government to pay the salaries of the public servants throughout the country. In summary, “partisan-political loyalties shattered” what remained of the cohesion and efficiency of the civil service, and its “morale and productivity plummeted”.

The period 1983-85 marked the return of another military regime to the Nigerian political arena. The regime, too, like that of the

Muhammed/Obasanjo, clamped down in the civil service, and carried out its own weeding exercise. "By the end of October 1984 the total number of public employees affected by the purge was estimated to be between 150,000 and 200,000". This measure like the previous one undertaken under the Muhammed/Obasanjo regime had deleterious effects on the public bureaucracy. It heightened the fears of insecurity of the civil servants which had begun since mid 1970s. This action was not only devastating to the system, it led to much money being spent on payment of retirement benefits and pensions.

It was against this background that a team, headed by Professor Dotun Phillips, was set up in 1985 by the military government to study the Civil Service and make recommendations for reforming it in areas of structure, operation and staffing with a view to enhancing the efficiency and morale of the service. It was the report of this study that gave birth to the 1988 Civil Service reform, carried out by the succeeding military regime under General Ibrahim Babangida. Describing the impact of the reform on public bureaucracy, an analyst has pointed out that:

Instead of pursuing those desirable features of the public service which were ignored by senior civil servants and genuinely prepare the bureaucratic institutions for civil rule, the military rulers went ahead to dismantle the civil service altogether by politicizing the top hierarchies of the service and concentrating political and administrative power in the hands of its own appointees, the political chief executives of the various ministries – a development which has raised corruption to new heights in the nation's public service.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have made an attempt to look at theory and practice of Public Administration in Nigeria from 1996 – 2009. In so doing both civil service and local administration under military and democratic era were looked at. It will be of good to professionalize the civil servant rather than politicizing it to promote efficiency

A desirable step towards the way forward is to give a well-defined constitutional role for the civil service. The civil service must

also be restored to its rightful, place, and redefine the role that it should play in the art of governance.

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