



Impact of Bureaucratic Structures on Governmental Organizations' Performance in Britain & Nigeria: A Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the impact of bureaucratic structures on the governmental organizations performance. The objective of this paper is to highlight and reinforce the indispensability of the Weberian bureaucratic principles to the effective functioning of public sector organization. Content analytical approach was used as a method of research. Weber's theorization on bureaucracy had suffered several criticisms from scholars; however, the contributions remain unassailable. Using this model as benchmark, the paper attempted an explorative expedition of the Civil service in the countries understudy and examined the extent of conformity with bureaucratic structures and operations. The paper observed that the search for efficiency in the public bureaucracy has been a very huge task with one reform committee replacing the other from 1934 to date. The noticeable features of the various reforms efforts via their reports attempts at organizational development and measures targeted at enhancing good governance and managerial capacity. Weber's characterization (Legal-rational authority) of bureaucracy underscores the essence of these reform initiatives and it also constitutes the fulcrum of the public bureaucracy in Britain and Nigeria. The paper recommended among others, a reduction of government cabinet agencies/departments; collaboration of intergovernmental exchanges and objective implementation of the principle of federal character (Quota system) by entrenching merit while seeking to achieve proportional geo-political representation as obtainable in developed countries.

Key Words: Bureaucratic structures; Civil service; Governmental organizations' performance; Bureaucratic decentralization and organizational development



1. Introduction

Bureaucracy is a word coined by Monsieur de Gourney in 1845, which was later popularized by Max Weber (1864-1920) German born sociologist. Though adversely associated with red-tape, excess paper work, inefficiency etc, it may be organizations employ in order to achieve their goals. Bureaucracy is the characteristics of every large organization such as university, army, churches etc. According to Jacob (1966), the central points behind Weber's ideal type construct of bureaucracy are as follows: (i) men, (ii) officers (iii) methods and (iv) authority. The officials or bureaucrats who hold offices in a bureaucracy do so on the basis of the specialized educational or technical qualifications or professional accomplishments, symbolized in certificates, university degrees or other forms of records of achievements. His office is by appointment, not by election. He is promoted in a series of ascending steps throughout his career. His pay is in form of fixed salary not determined by the amount of work he performs, but rather on the position of his office in the total organization. In addition, he is entitled to pension after retirement and in return, his duties, obligations, loyalties and primary relationship are towards the organization.

The concept of bureaucracy refers to the structures, procedures and regulations that are put in place for organizational performance (Davies, Nsiegbe & Elike 2024). The relationship of the offices of the organization is determined by the arranged principles of hierarchy. Order flows down wards while obedience flows upwards the ladder of hierarchy. In other words, matters of directions, control and discipline flow from the top to down, in step fashion. In this bureaucratic unit, the office is separated from the person (individual) who occupies it. There is a dichotomy between the use and the ownership of means of production or administration, that is there is an atmosphere of impersonality in the bureaucratic set-up.

The method of operation is based on established rules and norms. In other words, there is a set of rules which guide the conduct of the office, and operations. The bureaucrat is expected to act within the prescribed rules to ensure the heavy reliance on records and files by bureaucrats. The concept of formal rules and procedures in bureaucracy pertaining to established guidelines and standards that govern organizational behavior and processes (Oguh & Adamu 2025). These rules are designed to ensure consistency and fairness that will lead to organizational performance. In terms of the operations of administrative systems, the technical superiority of bureaucracy is manifested in its precision, speed, clarity, continuity, discretionary power, uniformity, strict hierarchical relationships and reduction of fiction and expenditure of manpower and material resources (Yuanwei, 2024).



In a bid to find a system of authority which produces the highest degree of goal achievement in the organization, he (Weber) advocated the rational-legal authority relationship. This is a type of system of authority derived from impersonal, abstract rules, based upon rational decisions or calculations for all members of the organization in order to achieve maximum efficiency. Unlike the traditional authority (based on custom, tradition, culture) and the charismatic authority (based on personality traits, wisdom, eloquence in speech etc) Weber advocated an organization where in practice an official obeys a superior person, but obedience is not given to the person but to the office which is legitimate personification of the rational authority.

Bureaucratic structure according to Adamolekun (1981), noted the following salient features of public bureaucracy are:

- i. A department or ministry is under the overall leadership of a political office holder called minister or commissioner. There will be few departments that are headed by career officials but are still subject to ministerial control called "non-ministerial administrative agencies" e.g .Nationalized industries.
- ii. A government is usually of considerable size and it is hierarchically structured with distinct offices arranged in a manner that puts the political head at the apex and the other officials at different levels, until the most junior officials are located at the bottom of the hierarchy. The channels of communication are expected to be upwards, downwards and lateral. The chain of command is normally expected to reflect super-subordinate relationships.
- iii. The civil servants who staff government departments are organized hierarchically in line with the structural arrangement described in (ii) above. They are expected to operate according to established rules and to consider their specific offices as non-personal. Thus a civil servant can be deployed.
- iv. In many states, department conduct their activities under the general oversight which the exercise power is controlled by the legislature.
- v. The work of many departments extends beyond the national (federal and state in federal system) headquarters to constitute what we have referred to as administration.



There are certain principles common to different government upon which the structure of their bureaucracies' rests. These are:

- a) **The functional principle:** Organization or structuring of bureaucracy based on function or activities they perform e.g Ministry of Education, defense, Health etc.
- b) **Process principle:** A bureaucracy or Ministry is said to be structured by process principle if its activities cut across the services or needs of other ministries, e.g the activities of Ministry of National Planning or Finance, affect those of others in matters of co-operative and uniform planning and financial transaction, respectively.
- c) **Clientele principle:** A bureaucracy structured in clientele format, is primarily concerned with the affairs of certain groups of persons, e.g Ministry of youth, Department of Veterans, Senior Citizens or Handicap.
- d) **Area principle:** A bureaucracy organized in area principle format, is primarily responsible for certain areas or locations as may be assigned to it, e.g. Ido-Osi Local Government, Federal Capital Territory (FCT) etc. Another factor which affects the structure of bureaucracy is the nature or type of government system operating on its environment (particularly presidential, military etc) for example, in Britain where parliamentary system operates, the political heads of bureaucracies or ministers are individually and collectively responsible for all governmental functions. In other words, there is a dichotomy in areas of individual responsibility. The emphasis is on the functional hierarchy of administrative system which consists of administrative, the executive and clerical classes.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the impact of bureaucratic structures and operations in Britain and Nigeria vis-à-vis organizational performance of government organizations and to assess the extent of bureaucratic operations and interrelationships in Britain and Nigeria.



1.2 Literature Review

ORIGIN OF BUREAUCRACY

The term "bureaucracy" is of recent origin. Initially referring to a cloth covering the desks of French government officials in the eighteenth century, the term "bureau" came to be linked with a suffix signifying rule of government (as in "aristocracy" or "democracy"), probably during the struggles against absolutism preceding the French Revolution. During the nineteenth century the pejorative use of the term spread to many European countries, where liberal critics of absolutist regimes typically employed it to decry the tortuous procedures, narrow outlook, and highhanded manner of autocratic government officials (Helinzen 1845). Since then this pejorative meaning has allocated responsibility clearly, or any critic of rigid rules and routines that are applied and buck-passing of conflicting directives and duplication of effort, of empire building, party or political persuasion (Watson 1945). During the years following World War II this common stereotype was given a new twist by the witty, mock-scientific formulations of *Parkinson's Law*, which derided empire building, waste of resources, and inertia by implying that official staffs expand in inverse proportion to the work to be done (Parkinson 1957).

This popular, pejorative usage must be distinguished from "bureaucracy" used in a technical sense. Although the distinction is beset with difficulties, social scientists have employed the term because it points to the special, modern variant of age-old problems of administration, just as terms like "ideology" and "class" point to modern aspects of intellectual life and social stratification. The analytic task is to conceptualize this modern variant. At the macroscopic level, Max Weber's definition of bureaucracy under the rule of law provides the best available solution to this problem; none of the critics of Weber's analysis has as yet dispensed with his definition. According to Weber, a bureaucracy establishes a relation between legally stated authorities and their subordinate officials which is characterized by defined rights and duties, prescribed in written regulations; authority relations between positions, which are ordered systematically; appointment and promotion based on contractual agreements and regulated accordingly; technical training or experience as a formal condition of employment; fixed monetary salaries; a strict separation of office and incumbent in the sense that the official does not own the "means of administration" and cannot appropriate the position; and administrative work as a full-time occupation (Weber 1922; Bendix 1960).



BUREAUCRATIZATION OF GOVERNMENT

- (i) **Development of European Bureaucracies.** Bureaucratization may be traced to the royal or princely households of the early Middle Ages, which were composed in part of retainers who made up the military following of the ruler and also performed administrative functions in his service (the German word Amt, meaning "office," goes back to a Celtic term meaning servant). Rulers would appoint these retainer-officials to the several offices of the royal household, including those charged with organizing and superintending supplies, finances, clothing, horses, weapons, written communications and records, etc. For a time, the royal household travelled from place to place, administering the affairs of the realm, dispensing justice, and collecting (and in part consuming) the revenue owed to the ruler (Peyer 1964). However, eventually a separation occurred, in terms of personnel and location, between the offices of the royal household and the corresponding offices of government. In his classic work of Tout (1920-1933) has shown for England, and in a briefer essay Otto Hintze (1908) has shown for several western European countries, how the several functions of the royal household provided the starting points of a development eventuating in the establishment of the several ministries of a modern government. This change from personal to public service on the part of officials involved a century-long development. From an organizational standpoint, this development was partly a by-product of the size and the complexity of affairs increased, the households of kings and princes grew well as for members of his family and his personal retainers and servants. Officials came to live in households of their own and to be paid for their services in money rather than in kind. Several factors, both tangible and intangible, facilitated this change. Among the more tangible factors were improved means of transportation, the increased use of money, and the growth of the economy and, hence, of revenue; for the control of officials at a distance depends on the incentives available to the ruler and on the ease with which the officials can be reached. A more intangible factor was the sense of obligation or awe with which subordinate officials regarded those above them. That this partly patriarchal feature remained a part of government employment long after government through the ruler's household had disappeared is suggested by the fact that until the nineteenth century public officials in Prussia were still obliged to



obtain permission to marry from their official superior, who would pass judgment on the social standing of the prospective bride (Hintze 1911).

The development of modern public service has been less uniform in its political than in its organizational features. Service to a ruler in a capacity that combined household functions and official responsibilities soon resulted in honor and social standing for the incumbent, whether or not he originally possessed an aristocratic title. All royal officials came to constitute a lower nobility in contrast to a higher nobility, which was entitled to an autonomous exercise of authority on a hereditary basis. Yet the dividing line was neither clear nor stable, as high royal officials used their positions to gain more independence from the ruler in the conduct of government affairs as well as for their own advancement. This drive of high-ranking officials for greater independence was supported, moreover, by public demands for greater stability and for an administrative performance that was readily available. One can visualize the development as one alternating between a growing Independence of one or another group of officials and the dependence of his officials or obtaining the services of more dependent and divergent development of representative institutions in the several European countries.

- (ii) **The Western experience.** The common denominator of bureaucratization is that the earlier involvement of public employment with family prerogative and the identification of office with property have been superseded, in the course of long and diverse developments, by the emergence of the nation-state in which public officials administer "a service-rendering organization for the protection of rights and the enforcement of duties" of a national citizenry (Barker 1944). That is, government is in charge of the currency, the postal system, the construction of public facilities, the provision of social services, the adjudication of legal disputes, and other public services. Although the policies that should govern such public functions are often in dispute, the relative neutralization of the civil service and hence the conception of administrators as employees in charge of a public trust may be due ultimately to the growth of consensus concerning the idea of government as a service-rendering institution that should not be pre-empted by any one of the individuals and groups contending in the political arena. This consensus is both cause and consequence of the growth of government and public employment. Official statistics on these developments in several countries are conclusive in this respect, but they are not standardized enough to be suitable for comparative study (Ule 1961).



(iii) **Developing areas.** The preceding discussion of bureaucratization, which has been confined to the "Western experience," has suggested the importance of at least two characteristics: the long-run continuity of this experience, and the central role played by the clergy and by law and legal experts in effecting the emancipation of government service from ties with personal service, kinship relations, and property interests. These and related preconditions have been absent from other types of bureaucratization, to which at least some reference ought to be made at this point. One type refers to problems of public employment in the so-called developing areas.

However diverse, these areas have at least three features in common. They are latecomers as far as industrial development is concerned. They show little of that diminution of "primordial" ties which preceded or accompanied the development of Western nation-states and their bureaucratization. At the same time, they greatly emphasize the importance of government and rapidly expand public employment (Shils 1959-1960; Fallers 1956, 1964; Chicago University 1963). Under conditions of economic scarcity, government posts are much sought after, and the ideology of government initiative in economic development provides no basis for restricting public employment. As a result, such countries are characterized by top-recruitment, which is a legacy of colonial regimes in many of these areas (Berger 1957; Braibanti 1963, Kingsley 1963).

Perhaps it is useful to consider public administration in these cases as an arena of fluctuating contests, in which the primordial ties between officials and the public, the exigencies of governmental planning under conditions of great poverty and in the context of the cold war, and the ideals of efficient public service by trained administrators all play a part. This novel setting calls for an analysis of bureaucratization in terms appropriate to it (Riggs 1964), but there is reason to think that these terms are as inappropriate to Western bureaucratization as concepts derived from the Western experience are inappropriate to the developing areas.

HISTORY OF BRITISH CIVIL SERVICE AND BUREAUCRACY

Till the middle of the nineteenth century, Britain has the patronage system of civil service. The civil service posts were given as a political reward. An ordinary citizen who had the required merit but no patronage could not enter the civil service. This type of civil service led to corruption and inefficiency in administration. However, the increased concern about corruption, economy, efficiency and popular rights to public office gave rise to the modern civil service by the middle of the 19th century.



i). The Northcote-Traveyan Report (1854) of Britain.

The British Treasury appointed the Northcote-Traveyan committee in April 1953, its report on the 'organization of the parliament civil service in Britain' was published in 1854, its main recommendations are:

The patronage system of recruitment should be abolished.

Recruitment should be by open competitive examination

A civil service commission should be established. It should be an autonomous semi-judicial body and made responsible for proper administration of recruitment process.

Promotion within the service should be by merit and not by seniority

The intellectual side of administration should be separated from the mechanical side. In other words, the civil service posts should be divided into two class.

The superior class should mechanical work. These two classes should have separate forms of recruitment. Recruitment age for inferior posts should be 17 to 21 and for superior post 19 to 25. Thus, it confined entry into civil service to young men only and reject the idea of recruiting mature men. Superior civil servants should be selected on the basis of general intellectual attainment rather than specialized knowledge. In other words, the open competitive examination should be in liberal arts rather than technical or professional subjects and should be of the university level. Unification of the civil service with unified recruitment and inter-department promotions. The committee felt that this unification would remedy the 'fragmentary character' of the civil service.

ii). The Fulton Report (1968) of Britain

In 1966, the British government appointed the Fulton committee on the civil service to examine the structure, recruitment, training and management of the home civil service and to make recommendations for improvement. The committee submitted its reports in 1968 and observed the home civil service today is till fundamentally the product of the nineteenth century. This is what we have found, it is what we seek to remedy. It is made a total of 158 recommendations and the significant ones related to the civil service are mentioned below. A new civil service department should be created to manage the civil service. It should be headed by the prime minister and should absorb the civil service commission. The permanent secretary of the civil service departments should be designed as head of the home civil service.

All classes should be abolished and replaced by a single unified grading structure covering all civil servants from top to bottom. The correct grading of each post should be determined by job evaluation. A civil service college should be set up to provide post-entry training for



recruits. It should offer training courses in administration, management, economics and other allied subjects. The training courses should include management training for specialists also. Furthermore, the college should be providing a wide range of shorter courses and have an important research function. There should be a greater mobility between the civil service and other employment; that is, the universities and the private sector. The opportunities for late entry and short term appointments should be expanded. When recruiting university graduates, the relevance of their courses to the job they are being recruited for should be taken into account. In other words, preferences should be given to relevant degrees when recruiting. The civil service should encourage professionalism both among specialists and administrators (i.e. generalists). The specialists should have opportunities for greater responsibility and wider careers. The generalists should be encouraged to become specialists in particular areas of financial administration or social administration.

More attention should be paid to career management; a planning unit should be set up in each department to supervise the work of the department. The post of a senior policy advisor should be created in major departments. This should be in addition to the post of permanent secretary. The official's secretary rules should be relaxed. The process of administration should be made more open to public knowledge and consultation.

iii). Civil Service Ethics in UK

The British civil service is built on the Maxim of political neutrality, hence civil servants are banned from partisan political participation like standing for elections, holding office in a political party or even publicly expressing controversial viewpoints. However, under the 1954 regulations which was reviewed in 1984, the most junior civil servants are permitted to participate in political activities though they are still expected to remain neutral in the performance of the official duties.

The British civil service has been in operation on the well-known maxims of the civil service, which are the principle of 'permanence' neutrality and anonymity. However, on June 6 2006, a new civil service code was launched. This code outlined the core values and standards of the service. Interestingly, it listed the core values as integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality. The value of anonymity was dropped from the core values.

iv). The Structure of the British Civil Service

The British civil service has two bodies that govern its operations. They are the permanent secretaries' management group (PSMG) and the civil service steering board (CSSB). Both



bodies are chaired by the cabinet secretary and they work together to ensure that the civil service works coherently and effectively.

Civil service risk management, including quality assurance at departmental level, and mitigation strategies for cross-departmental risk. Developing a strategy for improving (and defending) reputation of the civil service. Ensuring the civil service has capacity to deliver cross-cutting PSAS. Deciding what type of employer the civil service wants to be in the future?

Supporting departments to ensure shared services arrangements were implemented. Due to the fact that all British civil servants are employed by the Crown and not by the departments they work in, they can be transferred to other departments at the shortest notice. Thus workers are moved across department. Apart from the regular ministries, there are about 100 Non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) that are usually referred to as 'quangos' meaning Quasi Autonomous Non-Government Organizations. NDPBs are not accountable to parliament.

It must however be noted that since the jobs, and budgets of the NDPs are defined and allocated by sponsoring departments while their staff are also appointed by these departments they cannot really be fully independent of them. There are also another group known as non-ministerial government department (NMGDs). There are categories of these. The first are the inland Revenue and Customs and Excise. The second contains independent bodies that implement legislation that they have no power to change. They are accountable to parliament and of course the courts.

Summarily, the administrative reforms of England, beginning as part of the royal household, English government administration was gradually separated out into the different branches of the executive, much as it had been in France and Germany. But in this process the cohesion of the country, the ease of communication, and the absence of a standing army and other factors combined to achieve a balance between royal authority and the local authority of the landed gentry. True, an administration approximating the Continental absolutist system was attempted, beginning with the Tudor monarchy in the late fifteenth century. Yet this absolutist interlude ended with the legislative supremacy of parliament rather than with the administrative absolutism of the king, while administration at local levels consisted of offices as a species of collective prerogative in the hands of the gentry and urban notables (Namier 1930 in 1961 edition; Tocqueville 1856; Cobban, 1957).



n England, on the other hand, earlier bureaucratic developments had been arrested by the overthrow of royal absolutism, which was followed by a period in which the private appropriation of public office prevailed. Some reforms curbing a direct financial exploitation of public office and requiring the personal discharge of public duties by office-holders were instituted in the late eighteenth century, and some unsuccessful experimenting with examinations for the public service occurred during the 1830s (Cohen 1941). But administrative reform became effective only insofar as it was part of the movements for political reform and hence an attack upon the identification of office with family and property. Beginning in practice with the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 and the administrative centralization pioneered by Edwin Chadwick (Finer 1952), administrative reforms was extended to the personnel field on a programmatic basis by the Northcote-Trevelyan Report of 1853. Selection by competitive examinations and promotion by merit were instituted subsequently by Gladstone's Order in Council of 1870. English bureaucratization was, therefore, in part a manifestation of increasing equalitarianism and in part evidence of the desire to detach the public service from its previous ties with familial and political privilege at a time when governmental services and controls were being expanded rapidly to cope with the problems of a maturing industrial society (Anikeze 2010).

HISTORY AND ROLE OF BUREAUCRATIC OPERATIONS IN NIGERIA

The public bureaucratic structures have a significant role to play in the administration of government - whether autocratic or democratic. The role of bureaucracy may vary significantly under each of the systems. During the colonial administration in Nigeria (1900-1960), the role of the bureaucracy was essentially concerned with the maintenance of colonial laws and order and collection of taxes and levies. The colonial bureaucracy was created in the first instance, to prosecute imperial policies. At Independence on October 1, 1960, things changed. The post-independence era witnessed "the transformation and redefinition of the role of the civil service to that of nation building that is assisting the new government to plan and accelerate the pace of Nigeria's socio-economic development." (Nigeria, 1985). The First Republic that fell in 1966 ushered in the first military regime in Nigeria. During this period, the Civil Service rose to the challenge of the political crisis, which engulfed the nation. The top civil servants openly assumed political responsibilities. They were not only seen, but they were heard. They were in effect, responsible for policy formulation and implementation, while the military was preoccupied more with the prosecution of the civil war. The era also witnessed the emergence



of higher civil servants, dubbed 'Super Permanent Secretaries'. They became highly influential 'political technocrats', particularly between 1970 and 1975. It was an era of highly bureaucratic power. But the fall of General Yakubu Gowon's military regime on July 29, 1975, marked the end of the 'golden age' of the civil servants in the act of governance. The Second Republic commenced on October 1, 1979, after 13 years of military rule in Nigeria. The Second Republic had Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the National Party of Nigeria of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) as the executive president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The regime was terminated on December 31, 1983 via a coup d'etat. During this period, the civil service performed several roles. For example, Oyovbaire (1989) highlighted the following functions of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (who is also a bureaucrat):

- i) Coordination of the activities of Federal Ministries and Extra-ministerial departments. Advising the Head of Government on the appointment and deployment of Permanent Secretaries.
- ii) Formulation of policies on and allocation of office accommodation and staff quarters. Provision of staff for newly established and ad hoc bodies.
- iii) Management of the careers of officers in the administrative cadre and all Senior Management Staff on GL 14 and above.
- iv) All functions at present performed by the Federal Ministry of Establishments and the Public Service Department of the Cabinet Office.
- v) Liaison with Heads of State Civil Services.
- vi) Providing leadership and direction to the service, maintaining high morale and esprit-de-corps.
- vii) Reviews of machinery of Government, restructuring and reorganization of Federal Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments
- viii) Promotion of good relations between Ministries and Civil Servants.
- ix) Relations with the following special bodies: a. National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) b. Federal Civil Service Commission.

From the fore-going, we can summarize the role of the bureaucrats as coordination of federal ministries, advising the political officials, formulation and implementation of government's policies, gathering and supplying of data for policy makers, ensuring continuity of services and public relations services (Danjuma & Attah, 2016). All the roles highlighted above are so crucial to the smooth running of any administration to the extent that one may be tempted to conclude that bureaucracy is indispensable. Thus, the bureaucracy can make or mar any administration. Furthermore, the public bureaucracy is entrusted with public property. "The



Public has entrusted the ministers with the government of the country, and the ministers in turn entrust the Civil Service with the property of the Public." (Baker, 1971). The public property may be either tangible or intangible. The tangible properties, among others include cash, stationery, buildings, equipment, vehicles, furniture, stores etc. The civil servants are responsible not only for their safe custody and maintenance, but also for their proper and effective utilization. Underscoring the importance of bureaucracy Downs (1967) states: It is ironic that bureaucracy is primarily a term of scorn. In reality, bureaus are among the most important institutions in every part of the world. Not only do they employ a very significant fraction of the world's population, but they also make critical decisions that shape the economic, educational, political, social, moral, and even religious lives of nearly everyone on earth. The ability of bureaus to outlive their real usefulness is part of the mythology of bureaucracy. Civil service reforms in Nigeria focused on improving personnel management, pay systems and career paths of public organization professionalism and performance with a view to promoting service delivery with increased accountability (Enang, 2025).

The important roles of the civil service discussed above, notwithstanding, experience has shown in Nigeria that many of government's laudable policies have been marred by poor implementation strategies (i.e. bureaucratic procedures) adopted by the civil service, charged for the implementation. The civil service has a way of putting obstacles in the way of policies formulated by the political officials, especially those policies on which they hold divergent opinions. Various tactics are employed "to thwart implementation of policies about which they are sceptical "ranging from procrastination, 'discovering' insurmountable obstacles or effecting unworkable solutions, etc. (Greenwood and Wilson, 1990; Okotoni, 1996). Bureaucracy, being one of the longest standing institutions in Nigeria, will continue to be relevant to governance, its shortcomings notwithstanding.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on the *politics-administration dichotomy theory*. It is a theory which holds that bureaucrats are experts who should be left alone to do their job without political interference. It derives from the Woodrow Wilson days of the "founding" of public administration and is easily found expressed in both "old" and "new" textbooks of public administration (White 1926; Goodnow & Rohr 2003). It holds that there should be no favoritism in hiring or contracting decisions. In its strictest form, the theory holds that there



should be a complete separation of administration from politics. Students are most likely to encounter the theory when studying the council-manager form of municipal government where the city manager is expected to be some kind of outside "neutral expert." In criminal justice, it is most often encountered in the literature on court management or court reform. It is also likely to be encountered when the topics of ethics or efficiency are discussed in the field of public sector management. While the theory has long been useful for marking off the boundaries of public administration as an intellectual field, application of the theory in reality and practice has yielded very little by way of insight into bureaucratic behaviour or a better understanding of the intended to be applied strictly and should be used only as a guide for assessing normative behaviour, or professional ethics.

Further, Svava (1999) argues that the word "dichotomy" (which implies strict separation) should be replaced by "complementarity" since the thrust of public administration literature from Wilson (1989) onward has stressed such concepts as interdependency and reciprocal influence. It is probably accurate to say that politicians and public administrators regularly negotiate their mutual influence upon one another. Politicians, for their part, who are used to a much more "rough and tumble" world than public administrators, sometimes try to control bureaucracies by appointing directors who are completely opposed to the mission of the bureaucracies they are supposed to manage. Public administrators, on their part, tend to react to this by re-emphasizing merit, demanding disclosures, or engaging in various kinds of ethical whistleblowing or workarounds. Of course, sometimes bureaucracies can choose to blindly follow political leadership for purposes of enhancing their power position or in hopes of being able to exercise more discretion over an important agency function. Most governments generally face continual struggles with establishing the proper balance between political control of bureaucracy and democratic control of bureaucracy, and such struggles are a hallmark of democratic systems.

1.4 Methodology

This study adopts Content analysis research design. This method allowed the researcher to obtain data majorly from secondary source of data (local and international journals, relevant text-books, hand-notes, published and unpublished seminar papers) for an objective and systematic analysis and valid inferences.



Content analysis is referred to "a wide and heterogeneous set of manual or computer assisted techniques for contextualized interpretations of documents produced by communication processes in the strict sense of that phrase (any kind of text, written, iconic, multimedia, etc.) or signification processes (traces and artefacts), having as ultimate goal, the production of valid and trustworthy inferences.

1.5 Findings

Prior to the Nigerian Civil war, bureaucracies were mainly organized in regions with a weaker Federal bureaucracy. Then, Nigeria operated the British style of bureaucratic structure. This was part of her colonial heritage. In 1970 however, when it adopted the presidential system, there were also combinations of two or more of the four principles. The office of the Director of Budget and special adviser to the President on several activities were established in the Presidency. However, with the coming again of the military government in 1984, the bureaucratic structure had more or less reverted to parliamentary style.

The organizational structure of Nigeria's civil service shows the permanent secretary as head of his department. Other principal officers such as director, Principal secretaries, Deputies etc, fall below him. The size of federal bureaucracies is usually large than those of the state and local governments. Moreso, though there are appointments politically influenced, in fact, in some instances, quota system (representation of all states or ethnic groups) is applied in job recruitment.

It is in Britain that the political-administrative division is marked most clearly and rigidly and associated with the definite and well understood differentiation of roles. British administrators are appointed on the basis of qualifications and test operated by the civil service commission and there is virtually no political influence upon appointment.

In Britain, though the Prime Minister respectively, function (theoretically) to give accounts of the departments, agencies and ministers under them, it is asserted by Adamolekun (1981) and Woll (1977) that the lay ministers (Britain) are rarely able to evaluate meaningfully the advice given to them by the bureaucrats, therefore, career administrations do exercise more decision-making power than ministers and secretaries who are nominally responsible. Also the task of monitoring policy implementation has grown larger than what the average ministers congress could handle vis-avis the complexity of government department and processes.

According to wooll (1977), "the political nature of bureaucracy lies in the fact that the functions these agencies perform involve a direct legislative, judicial and executive power; all of which



have profound consequences on the community as a whole". The bureaucracy is not merely carrying out laws, rather it is deeply involved in the determination, interpretation and execution of law.

In articulation of interest of specialized groups, Britain have both established industrial and professional interests which deal primarily with government departments and usually seek legislative support when not satisfied with bureaucratic channels.

In Nigeria, active public organized pressure groups are almost non-existence except at times on ethnic basis. This is because, according to Rights (1963) the bureaucracy in developing countries are often suspicious of autonomous groups outside their control. Hence, groups that start to organize on their own or with external support from foreign governments, foundation, or religious body are viewed with hostility and if not actually suppressed are at least given little co-operation as compared with officially sponsored groups. This explains the widespread ban on 'organised' trade unions, and pro-democracy groups in Nigeria such as NLC, ASSU, Democratic Alliance etc.

Bureaucratic Exchange (A comparative analysis): Bureaucratic exchange here is defined as inter-governmental relations or interactions which take place among different levels of government within a country. In Federal administrative system such as Britain and Nigeria, this would include the Federal, state and Local levels, otherwise called the three tier levels of government.

According to Adamolekun (1981), the development of intergovernmental exchanges in Nigeria is somewhat different from that of the Britain in that intergovernmental exchanges gained prominence in Nigeria even before the Federal administrative system was set up in 1954. Moreso, Nigeria's intergovernmental exchanges were more by conflict and competition rather than collaboration and cooperation. The main reason was because the central government had almost equal powers with the three (later four) regions in the country.

In Britain, distribution of central government grants to local authorities is based on objective criteria of local rateable values number of school children and mileage of roads. By contrast, One frequent result is to distort the original objectives of a programme in order to include local interest whose support is essential. These programmes are usually referred to as pork barrel projects (politically influenced projects).



In Nigeria, distribution of federal governments allocation to local governments is now enshrined in the constitution as noted earlier on, particularly since the 1976 local government reformed. Local government receive 10-15% of the federal revenue allocation. Other grants also come from or are sent through states where they (local governments) are domiciled.

In Nigeria, the federal bureaucracy dominated the major source of tax revenue. Income tax is the main source of its revenue generation, states largely control sales tax (in Nigeria, VAT) and local government - property tax.

In Nigeria Akpan (1981) accentuated that "at the federal level, the military regimes, try to be as "constitutional" as possible in their relationship with civil service, their counterparts in the states act differently. The military governors rule with an iron fist very often recycling on extraneous and unconstitutional sources of advice and not on the civil service, and their dealings with the civil service were often as arbitrary as those of Murtala in 1975. Though commissioners were appointed as they have been at the centre but state military governors often used the opportunity of executive council meetings only to inform commissioners and permanent secretaries of the decisions they had already taken.

Furthermore, Comparative public administration has long recognized that bureaucracy is inevitable. There is little doubt that any sizeable, viable polity in the world today must have a public service which meets the criteria for bureaucracy (Heady 2001). It may also be true that globalization can be seen as the expansion of bureaucratic structure. However, the inevitability of bureaucracy does not mean uniformity, as there is much variation throughout the world. So-called "deviant bureaucracies may exist, especially in newer developing nations and in socialist societies (Kulcsar 1991).

Bureaucracies vary by departmentalization, which references the number of cabinet agencies or ministries the government has. Chapman (1959) argued that, at minimum, any government needs five (5) departments: foreign affairs; justice; finance; defense, and internal affairs. Most growth comes from adding new departments off the internal affairs category (like education, transport, health, etc.) Other departmental growth occurs when regulatory commissions grow in size and become full-fledged departments, or when quasi-public "government corporations" become full-fledged government agencies. According to Chapman (1959), the worldwide average back around 1959 was fifteen (15) departments, Russia being the exception because in its Soviet heyday it had fifty (50) different government departments. According to Heady (2001), the worldwide average nowadays is still about 15 (the number of cabinet agencies and



ministries in the U.S. and U.K.) although some countries (mostly small ones) get by with as few as 10 or 12, and another cluster of countries (Indonesia, South Africa, South Korea, Mexico, Canada, and Greece) have "bloated" bureaucracies of 20 departments or more. Obviously, the larger the number of departments, the harder it is to coordinate them, and the interrelationship problem will result in fragmented decision making when policy requires different agencies to work on different facets of the same social problem.

Bureaucracies also vary by the nature of their civil service system, which references how someone goes about getting a job with the federal government. Variation can occur not between countries, but within countries as different departments do their hiring differently. The most important factor is perhaps whether people wind up in government jobs by accident or not. In other words, one should ask whether public service really has any meaning. One should also ask if people are prepared by training or ability to work in the civil service.

More findings from the comparative literature is that in developed countries (as opposed to developing countries), more people work at the state and local levels of government (Heady 2001). In other words, developing countries hire more people at the central, or federal, level, even though the extent of public employment is higher in developed countries. Qualifications for public service depend upon the political system, and party loyalty or patriarchal patronage are the only requirements in some countries. Political system and regime type will always be a factor.

Significant also is a country's historical legacy, which references all sorts of things, mostly negative, such as being a former colony, having experienced disasters, to having a hardened culture of bureaucratic inertia or dependency. Some of these factors are difficult but not impossible to put into a model (Riggs), but the end result is usually that the government's bureaucracy will have a semi-differentiated (or prismatic) interlocking mixture of bureaus, chambers, offices, and rooms. Such governments will essentially be wasting a lot of resources to try evening out the unequal distribution of services under such arrangements, and in the end, it all comes back to arrangements, organizational issues; or how structures are set up to perform functions, regardless of the debates about bureaucracy, regardless of all the talk about culture, it all boils down to the social scientific need to classify before analysing. A bureaucracy is not an autonomous unit in a political system, but it can be as self-directing as it wants to be as well as responsive to its environment. Nonetheless, it is often the case that politics gets the type of



bureaucracy it deserves, and along those lines, the model produced by Heper (1987) is illuminating as to the associated types of polity and bureaucracy:

Below Table shows: Heper's Six Types of Bureaucracy

Personalist polity		Ideological polity		Liberal polity	Praetorian polity
State=Ruler	State=Ruler	State=Bureaucracy	State=Party	Absence of a predominant state	No state
Personal servant bureaucracy	"Machine model" bureaucracy	"Bonapartist" or Rechtsstaat bureaucracy	Party controlled bureaucracy with residues of historical bureaucratic ruling tradition	Weberian "legal -rational" bureaucracy	Spoils system bureaucracy as part of a Hegelian civil society

Source: Heper (1987)

1.7 Conclusion

This study highlighted the bureaucratic set-up (structure, operations and exchange) in an explorative and comparative analysis in the following countries; Britain and Nigeria. In the structure, it has noted the trend in bureaucratic enlargement evidenced in these countries afore stated. More so, it has zeroed in particularly on the British structure whereby the minister (political head) of the ministry whether informed administratively or not, is the head of the ministry and is responsible for the activities of that ministry. He is also accountable to the parliament not the bureaucrat, who will neither take glory for success or take blames for failures of the policies, though he (bureaucrat) may be a major contributor to policy formulation and implementation. This same is true of Nigeria's structure during the parliamentary hay days.

In the Gowon-led military regime (1966-1975), at least, at the federal level, the bureaucrats (higher civil servants) largely called the shots. Hence the catapulting to positions of prominence the so-called super permanent secretaries or the three musketeers (Ime Ebong, Alison Ayida and Philip Asiodu).

Moreover, the presidential system operated in Nigeria between 1979-1984 makes the president, the Chief executive responsible to the nation through various political heads of administrative



agencies established in the presidency. They (bureaucrats) also have political background and may even contest for membership of parliament in elections. They also contribute majorly and openly in policy formulation and execution.

finally, in Nigeria the contrast has been majority during military regimes. Though federal administrative set up has not altered considerably, most times at state and local levels, the military governors ignore the contributions of bureaucrats and use extraneous means to carry out their functions. In conclusion, despite the similarities and differences observed in areas of bureaucratic enlargements were all products of socio-economic political developments in these countries. In Britain, the bureaucratic enlargements came after the Northcote-Trevelyan Civil Service Reforms of 1854, while in Nigeria, it was after 1945, when the civil service enlarged after the creation of regions and later additional states.

1.8 Recommendations

This paper recommends the following:

- i. Reduction of government cabinet Agencies/departments. Britain have few manageable cabinet agencies as low as 15 departments but in Nigeria, cabinet agencies/departments have been over-bloated to around 45 to accommodate their political allies. This has always led to bureaucratic disorganization of structures and inefficiency of government organizational performance.
- ii. Re-examination and objective implementation of the principle of federal character (Quota system) in Nigeria by entrenching merit while seeking to achieve proportional geo-political representation without political interference. This will obviously lead to government organizational performance as obtained in developed country like Britain.
- iii. Expand access to professional development. Investment in training programmes particularly for the civil servants should be prioritized to ensure inclusivity in capacity building, fostering both employee satisfaction and organizational performance.
- iv. Collaboration of intergovernmental exchanges. In Britain distribution of central government grants to local authorities is based on objective criteria of local rateable values and cooperation without conflicts while in Nigeria,



intergovernmental exchanges especially between States and local governments have been bedevilled over the years with more of conflicts, legal disputes and competition rather than collaboration. There should be the creation of a permanent legal framework for collaboration between the three tiers of government.

- v. Articulation of interest and specialized groups: Britain have both established industrial and professional interest which deal primarily with government departments and usually seek legislative support when not satisfied with bureaucratic channels. In Nigeria the reverse is the case. Non-existence of interest groups except at times on ethnic basis.
- vi. Resolution between the political and career officials. For an efficient and productive bureaucracy in Nigeria, the conflict between career and political officials must be resolved. There is need for government to commit itself to strong political will to reforming and revitalizing the civil service, rebuilding them around the ideas of professionalism, meritocracy, work ethics and accountability responsiveness and provision of quality services to citizens, just like what is obtaining in Britain.
- vii. Hiring of more workers at the State/Local level. In Britain, more people work at the State and local levels of government while in Nigeria, we hire more people at the federal level. Qualification for public service depend on political system and party loyalty, thereby leading to poor organizational performance. There should be a re-think by our leaders in Nigeria to act right by recruiting more people at the local level.

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