

Public Administration And Sustainable National Development In Nigeria's Fourth Republic

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ABSTRACT

Public administration is popularly regarded as the handmaid of public policies. However, this traditional role of public administration has since changed. Public administrators now play vital roles in policy formulation as the perceived gap between politics and administration continue to close up. Yet, since independence, national development has progressed in twists and turns thereby necessitating the imperative of sustainable national development. In the quest for sustainable national development, public administration is certainly a game changer. Therefore, with the use of the ecological theory, the paper argued that in the quest for sustainable national development in the country, there are stumbling blocks before public administration which should be surmounted. These include among others: lack of ethical climate in the public sector, poor professionalization of public administration, lack of inclusive decision making, attitudinal change by public officers, pursuit of foreign paradigm of development, lack of merit system in the public sector and low morale among public administrators. The paper made far-reaching recommendations on how to achieve sustainable national development through public administration. These include: comparative pay and reward system, ability to develop home grown development paradigm, reliable power supply, training and retraining of public officers, emphasis on merit and zero tolerance to corruption.

Key words: Public Administration, Development, Sustainable National Development, Public Policy and Democracy.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is acclaimed to be potentially rich in human and material resources that are lying fallow waiting to be substantially explored and exploited for the growth and development of the country. Unlocking these potentials remains a huge challenge before every government that come to power since independence. Presently, Africa in general and Nigeria in particular are regarded as the new frontier greatly revealed for their huge market and resource endowment. However, ability to translate these opportunities into sustainable national development remain a huge problematic to surmount.

Challenges to national development have long been identified by State managers, scholars, public and private sector practitioners. These include: human capacity gap, poor funding of development programmes, low workers morale in the public sector, fluctuating fortunes in the economy, political instability, corruption in the public sector, patron-client relations, failure of public sector reforms to yield their expected results, among many others. Yet, not a few scholars have noted the role played by "received paradigm" of development in stunting and thwarting the developmental goals of countries of the South-South (Ayee, 2008; Maduabum, 2014; Olaopa, 2016; Nchuchuwe and Akhakpe, 2016). To these could be added the uncertain global economic conditions often characterized by a cyclical process of economic boom and recession. The unstable state of the oil market (the mainstay of the Nigeria economy) has continued to cast dark cloud over the socio-economic development drives of the country.

Public administration is widely tainted to mediate these conditions to bring about efficiency and effectiveness in governance that has the ability to ultimately lead to the general welfare and well-being of the people. Unfortunately, years of development planning and administration has not successfully been translated to sustainable national development. As the citizenry continue to suffer from different dehumanizing conditions such as: increased infant and maternal mortality from preventable diseases, poor supply of portable water, unstable electricity supply, poor enrolment in schools, increased cases of students drop-out from schools, poor road networks and maintenance, malnutrition and poverty, poor housing, among others. Suffices to say that ideas on how to get out of these socio-economic concerns have never been in short supply. However, translating and domesticating development paradigms within the country's milieu has been the challenge!

The study therefore seeks to unravel these obstacles facing public administration in its drive towards achieving sustainable national development in the country. The present economic recession in the country has opened a new vaster for scholarly investigation on how public administration as an interventional agent can arrest the drift towards a failed nation state and bring the country back on the path of sustainable national development.

To address the central concerns of the study, it is sectioned into the following. The first section discussed conceptual and theoretical issues germane to the subject matter of investigation. The second addressed the nature and character of public administration and sustainable national development. The third carried out an overview of public administration and sustainable national development in the country. The fourth analyzed the relationship between public administration and sustainable national development in the light of the present democratic system and recession in the country. The fifth discussed challenges facing public administration in achieving the goals of sustainable national development. The final section made some prescriptions based on opportunities available to the country for sustainable national development.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL INDULGENCE

Public administration is a major driver of socio-economic and political development in any country. Every country desirous of genuine development invests enormous human and material resources in its public administration in order to achieve greater welfare and well-being for the citizenry. Viewed from this perspective, scholars have analyzed public administration from the prism of its developmental roles in the society (Maduabum, 2014; Akhakpe, 2016). Generally speaking, public administration is seen as the best way of getting things done. It involves a cooperative action involving human and material resources directed towards achieving stated objectives.

Similarly, Henry (2007) provides an elastic definition of public administration "as a broad ranging and amorphous combination of theory and practices, its purpose is to promote a superior understanding of government and its relationships with the society it governs, as well as to encourage public policies to be more responsive to social needs and to institute managerial practices attuned to effectiveness, efficiency and deeper human requisites of the citizenry". This means that the essence of government that is the realization of the culture and well-being of the people can be efficiently and effectively achieved through public administration which Dimock and Dimock (in Maduabum, 2014) see as the action part of government.

When these goals captured above are realized, it means development is taking place. Development as a means to an end, should be able to take a people and the society they live in

progressively from one state of being to the other. Such social change should better the lives of the people and society (Iwoyemi, 2001; Adefarasin, 2015). Sustainability is the ability to conserve something both for the present and future use. Sustainable development is therefore, the practice of making use of both finite and non finite resources today without compromising or endangering their use by the present and future generations (Amue, and Igwe, 2016; Ayeni, 2010).

Many commentaries have been made on Fred Riggs ecological approach to public administration in developing societies (Sapru, 2009; Ayee, 2008; Olojede, 2012). It remains a potent force in explaining public administration processes with different attitude, pattern, structure and outcomes in developing societies. The reason is that their environments are different.

Sustainable development has become the vogue in the contemporary global system due to the apparent failure of past and present developmental efforts by governmental and non governmental organizations to bring about qualitative changes in the life of the people and environment they live in (Ayeni, 2010 and Oyewole, 2008). Perhaps, it is on the basis of these imperative needs that the United Nations declaration of the next decade and half (2015 – 2030) as years for the pursuit and achievement of the sustainable development goals. While these goals are much in terms of numbers and issues to be addressed, it is up to governments in developing areas of the world to deal with those issues they have the human and material resources to adequately realized. However, if past and present efforts at national development in the country are anything to go by, there is need to tinker with the present structure and processes of public administration in Nigeria. This point can only be properly understood by analyzing the nature and character of public administration and the quest for sustainable national development in the country.

The Imperative of Sustainable Development

The world today is moving at an alarming speed with geometric population growth and intense human activities to keep up with demands of the time. In the process of managing change in the maze of global contradiction(s) and complications, both finite and non-finite resources come under immense pressures and stress. According to the United Nations (2016) "The latest data show that about one in eight people still live in extreme poverty, nearly 800 million people suffer from hunger, the births of nearly a quarter of children under five had not been recorded, 1.1 billion people were living without electricity, water scarcity affected more than two billion people".

It is against this background that on 1st January, 2016 the world officially started implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Altogether, there are 17 Sustainable Development Goals to tackle global challenges in the next 15 years. It is expected that all nation's will need to build the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into their respective policies and plans in order to achieve these goals. The following are the 17 SDGs.

Goal 1: "Call for an end to poverty in all its ramifications";

Goal 2: "End to hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture";

Goal 3: "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages";

Goal 4: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life long learning opportunities for all";

Goal 5: "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls";

Goal 6: "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all";

Goal 7: "Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all";

Goal 8: "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all";

Goal 9: "Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation";

Goal 10: "Reduce inequality within and among countries";

Goal 11: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable";

Goal 12: "Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns";

Goal 13: "Take urgent actions to combat climate change and its impacts";

Goal 14: "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development";

Goal 15: "Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forest, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss";

Goal 16: "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels"; and

Goal 17: "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development" (United Nations, 2016).

169 targets follow these 17 goals. Also, they set out qualitative and quantitative objectives for these goals in the next 15 years. Of course, it is expected that national peculiarities and realities would be taken into cognizance in implementing these goals given differences in capacities and level of development among countries of the world. The goals are cohesive and integrated and could balance the three dimensions of sustainable development, that is, economic growth, environmental sustainability and social inclusion (United Nations, 2015).

An Overview of Public Administration and Sustainable National Development

Public administration in developing countries can aptly be described as the handmaid of socio-economic and politico-cultural growth and development. Its roles contrast with the practice in the developed or advanced countries of Western Europe and North America where for centuries the private sector was and continue to be the engine room of growth and development. Most countries in the South-South got independence with a poorly developed private sector. Therefore, it behooves on the various governments through their public administration systems to champion the course of development in their respective countries. However, in most cases, public administration was constrained humanly and materially to push for sustainable national development.

Colonialism had stunted the growth of indigenous forces of production through its exploitation policies and programmes (The Political Bureau Report, 1987). At independence, a new form of colonialism known as neo-colonialism was put in place by the ex-colonial masters. Through cajolery and or brute force, most developing countries were and are still made to embrace and imbibe Western mono-culture perspective to public administration. Certain principles of administration are said to be sacrosanct and universalistic. Ever too often detailed blue prints of development are drawn up in a top-bottom manner from the West and handed over to developing nations for implementation with the hope that foreign aid will flow in, training of public servants will progress inhibited and public institutions will be strengthened to implement them. However, these expectations have hardly been realized because of socio-economic and politico-cultural challenges.

Indeed, successive governments in the country have long recognized the imperative of sustainable national development. Thus, since independence, several development and rolling plans have been formulated and implemented (Lawal and Oluwatoyin, 2011). Shortly after

independence, the first development plan was drawn up that ran between 1962 – 1968, the Second came up between 1970 – 1974, the Third development plan ran between 1975 – 1980. The Fourth development plan came on stream between 1981 – 1985 (Lawal and Oluwatoyin, 2011). Interestingly, all these plans were well intended as instruments to jump-start development and bring about total transformation of the country into a developed and prosperous nation-state. All areas of the society were well captured in these plans. Yet, their implementation have often fallen short of expectations. Also, the race to catch up with the developed North has seen development plan embracing frequent paradigm shift and swallowing line, hock and sinkers prescriptions expected to curse the ills of underdevelopment in the South-South.

Meanwhile, internal contradictions within the country's political economy have rendered any serious effort at development difficult. Suffused with political instability, neo-patrimonialism, corruption, poor law enforcement and internal security, economic recession, social upheaval, cultural degradation and resource gap, have all compounded the external constraints to its development aspirations. Thus, the country paints a comic picture! A country with enormous wealth both exploited and unexploited remain one of the poorest country in the world. Perhaps, the country is fondly remembered or recognized around the world today as potentially rich not in terms of what it can do to improve the lots of its citizenry and society but what it has untapped.

Sustainable National Development in Nigeria: Can Public Administration Come to the Rescue?

There is no gain saying that public administration has a pivotal role to play in sustainable national development because it is the engine of governmental activities aimed at achieving the common good. Perhaps, this is what Dimock and Dimock (in Maduabum, 2014) meant when they aver that "public administration is problem solving, it is as much involved with the formulation of policies by which agencies are guided as it is with the execution of policies through practical down-to-earth, action-oriented programme". In view of these all important roles it is imperative that well talented, technically endowed and trained personnel are engaged in the public sector to pursue the corporate interests of the country (Olugbemi, 1979; Dibia, 2014; Akhakpe, 2016).

Also, Henry (2007) appertains, a central and crucial role to public bureaucracy when he avers that:

It is primarily the public bureaucracy that investigates and roots out political corruption, it is the bureaucracy that researches and recommends what new or revised benefits or policies, society needs, it is the bureaucracy that delivers these public benefits and it is the bureaucracy that assesses the effects of government policies and adjusts them accordingly.

In the context of developing countries, these promises are yet to be domesticated in political institutions of the country, many years after its independence. Is either these values well embedded in the West are culturally derived or public servants are just coping with them rather than having faith in them. The result of this disjuncture is every where to see in the developing areas of the world. From Asia, Latin America to Africa the sorry state of "arrested development" is ever too present to ignore!

The African condition is not really anything to write home about. From all angles, the situation is piteous. Nzongola-Ntalaja (1997) paints a rather sordid picture of conditions in African state when he enthused:

Africa is still afflicted with the woes of tribalism and the negative effect of mis-guided economic policies such as costly white elephant projects, a deteriorating social infrastructure, a declining standard of living, growing inequality, the reappearance of epidemics that had apparently disappeared (e.g. sleeping sickness, bubonic plagues together with the emergence of deadly new ones (HIV, Ebola) and general misery among ordinary people. The declining capacity of the African state to ensure personal and economic security is the major reason why Africa has the highest number of refugees in the world today.

The above diagnosis is a fair account of the very situation in Nigeria today. Indeed, the situation is getting worst by the day, especially under the present economic recession in the country. Foreign exchange earning has dropped drastically compared to what obtained in the early 2000 to 2015. Prior to this time, successive governments had rolled out very ambitious developmental programmes and projects aimed at transforming the State and its citizenry from an underdeveloped to a developed and modernized society. Some of these programmes include: Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), the Indigenization Exercise, Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS) and the Transformation Agenda.

All these programmes of social change were encapsulated in the statist or developmental State model that is seen as an instrument for fast-tracking socio-economic and politico-cultural development (Raplay, 2007). However, this model soon ran into trouble waters as poor flow of funds, lack of technical knowhow, internal conflicts and crises conspired to lead to the abandonment of this model that was considered wasteful and prone to abuse by politicians and rent-seeking bureaucrats. The alternative open to the country was to approach the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for loans to carry out its socio-economic restructuring programmes. However, this invitation was to be accepted only after certain conditions were met by the country's government. Top on the list of these conditions was the demand by IMF and its affiliate financial institutions for the use of the mono-cultural or universalistic neo-liberal principles of economy, efficiency and market. Irrespective of the ailment of countries of the South-South, these were standard prescriptions that have their correlates in the Weberian bureaucracy, economy and politics.

Against the ground-swell of oppositions to these prescriptions from Nigerians, successive governments in the country have gone ahead to implement them with severe consequences of sustainable national development in the land. Rather than bring the state and its citizens out of socio-economic and political crises, this model that only changes in name not in character from the benefit of hind sight, has plunged the country into deeper crises. Even where it might not change positively is refurbished and brought back to the country several times over. It would appear every aspect of the Nigeria society and people resist its modus operandi its ecology, structure and pattern of public administration and political economy differ.

Public Administration And Sustainable National Development: The Journey so Far

It is widely acknowledged that public administration in Africa holds the keys to social change or transformation in the society (Balogun, 1995; Fajonyomi, 2012; Akhakpe, 2012 and Maduabum, 2014). This optimism is borne out of the fact that in the absence of a robust and vibrant private sector (as is the case in the developed West) the government through its administrative machineries came in handy not only to fill these yearning gaps, but act to drive the process of development.

Also, it is better position to drive this process given the assemblage of creative talents recruited by government as civil and public servants (Olugbemi, 1989). They are required to pursue the corporate interest of Nigerians and the "common goods" rather than their personal interests. This is the ideology under which public administration and administrators should operate. Where these goals are assiduously and faithfully pursued, the goals of development are easily achieved. Such achievements are easily noticeable in the improved standard of living of the people, peace and security in the land and sustainable development.

The concrete reality in the country however, does not reflect these goals. While every government that comes to power quickly announces mouth-watery programmes and plans of actions ostensibly, to bring the country and its citizens to the "promise land", poor programmes, projects and policies implementation continue to hinder the realization of their goals. As Tembai (in Maduabum, 2014) rightly enthuses:

Nigeria's development efforts over the years have been characterized by lack of continuity, consistency and commitment (3Cs) to agreed policies, programmes and projects as well as an absence of a long term prospective. The culminating effect has been growth and development of the Nigeria economy without a concomitant improvement in the overall welfare of Nigerian citizens.

Perhaps, what has become prominent in the past few years under democratic rule the phenomenon of growth without development in Nigeria. Twice in the last four years, Nigeria was adjudged the biggest economy in Africa and one of the fastest growing economy in the world. Not long after this declaration Nigeria slip into recession and then depression that it is struggling to come out from. This would suggest to any one that such growth and development statistics are not based on solid foundations that can ensure their sustenance – the people. Their paradigms and parameters are drawn outside the country. Therefore, they cannot explain the opposite trend of increased poverty, school drop-out, decaying infrastructures, insecurity, poor law enforcement and policy implementation, among others being experienced in the country.

Meanwhile, national development programmes have continuously been on the agenda of government with enormous human and material resources dedicated to the process. Government borrows within and outside the country to finance some of these projects. With huge debt overhang breathing down the neck of the country. Power supply, education, infrastructure development, food production and job creation are some of the areas government has focused attention over the years. The power sector reform however, has proven to be a difficult nut to crack! Given the centrality of this sector to national development little has been done to resolve its epileptic state. Failures to effectively diversify the economy means that opportunities for job creation continue to contrast or decline (The Punch).

With increasing population of the country, it is natural that the education sector will expand. While government has increased its budgetary allocation to this sector it falls short of the United Nations prescribed twenty-eight (28) percentage of the country's annual budget. The backlash of this increase in school drop out, poor funding of the education sector and lack of interest in formal education by the populace is lack of sustainable national development. Similarly, with the drop in State resources contingent on its mono-culture economy, funding of infrastructural development has fallen below expectations with abandoned projects that dot the socio-economic landscape of the country. Law enforcement and security of lives and property of the citizenry have not been properly managed to give confidence to Nigerians and foreigners that the country is safe for co-existence and sustainable development. These

developments have led many to hypothesized that the State in Nigeria has gone to sleep, failing or has actually failed (Fajonyimi, 2012).

Public Administration and Sustainable National Development: What Went Wrong?

The project of sustainable national development in Nigeria has often progressed in twists and turns. It has always been one step forward four steps backward. On a face value, it would appear a natural order of things that cannot be avoided. But there is more to unsustainable national development in the country than meet the eyes. In this section, we focus our attention on what the challenges are and how they can be managed by successive governments in the country.

Perhaps, two basic points of departure may be key to explaining these trajectories. It would seem the paradigm or model of development used by public administrators has been wrong particularly from the stand point of differences in culture and scenario of development pattern, structure and strategies between Nigeria and the West where most of them come from. Of course Riggs (in Saprus; 2009) has clearly demonstrated that the administrative principles, patterns, structure and behaviour in Western societies defer from that of Non-Western societies. Therefore, to understand the workings of public administration in developing countries, a good understanding of its ecology is vital (Olojede, 2012). Unfortunately, this empirical finding has not been taken to heart by Western scholars and Donor Agencies in diagnosing and prescribing cure for the developmental challenges of Non-Western societies. This point has been further elaborated on by scholars of development studies in Non-Western societies (Replay, 2008; Ayee, 2008; Olaopa, 2016). In this regard, the view of Dwivedi (2001) is apt:

....a country's culture and style of government are the keys to understanding what makes a country function. It is imperative that any public sector reform forced upon developing nations draws on the local customs, culture and traditions. When the culture and tradition are discarded in favour of Western-life, management practices and when there is not enough time given for these nations to see if such transplantation has already taken root in the body politic, a hodgepodge of two value systems start operating simultaneously with no specific standard upon which effectiveness of that administrative system, as well as the conduct of public officials could be measured. Such standard in the past have been drawn from the purely mono cultural perspective of the North.

It is clear from the foregoing that the differences in cultural values and norms between the North and South play a significant role in determining the success or failure of public sector reforms, processes and the quest for development in the global South. Perhaps, the attitude and behaviour of public administrators to the issue of development remain largely uncooperative and most times self-servicing. For example, on the course of colonial rule in the country such negative attitude to governance was perhaps meant to punish the alien rulers who imposed their will on the "captured natives" (Osaghae, 2002). Thus, public administrators see government work as no man's work therefore, it should be put on the shoulder not on the head. Similarly, its resources were considered inexhaustible and to steal from government coffers was seen as punishment for the oyibo rulers (Osaghae, 2002). However, many years after independence this attitude and behaviour have not changed in the positive direction. Indeed, the materialistic perception of the State and its institutions make transparency and accountability difficult in public service and prebendal use of public offices for personal interests, the norms (Osaghae, 2002; Joseph, 1987).

Also, the educational system in the country has not been generally restructured and transformed to address the need of a country in quest for development. The colonialists left a tertiary educational system that was not directed at stimulating industrialization but to provide secretarial services for an administrative State. Ekeh (1980) showed that the university of Ibadan model left behind by the British colonialist was already being abandoned in the West at the time it was introduced in Nigeria. Many years after independence, universities are still established based on this model. We cannot be doing the same thing and expect different result. Therefore, a structural change is required to address our challenges in science and technology.

The power cauldron in the country is a major obstacle to sustainable national development. No meaningful growth and development can take place in any country without constant and reliable power supply. Yet, the country has been unable to resolve the energy crisis in the country that has created a fractured development pattern in the country. Lack of reliable power supply stifles small and medium scale enterprises that can create jobs and serve as spring board for the country's industrialization drive. However, the elite conspiracy not to make this sector work has continued to cast aspaction on the developmental aspirations of the country (Iwayemi, 2001).

Also, the infrastructural deficit in the country is a major constraint to sustainable national development. Poor road network, poor maintenance of existing ones, traffic congestion, lack of portable water, among others all serve as disincentives to investors, obstacle to economic growth and low standard of living of an ever growing population. While successive governments have expended billons of dollars to provide these amenities, poor maintenance culture and lack of forward looking approach to development have made their sustenance difficult.

The rentier nature of the country's economy is exemplified in the almost total reliance on oil revenue for powering the process of development. This put the country at the mercy of international oil cartel who manipulate oil prices to suit their whims and caprices. The often talk about diversification of the economy is feebly enforced by an oil cabal that is more interested in distributive or extractive capitalism rather than productive one. This makes the country's economy susceptible to external forces rather than indigenou control. Therefore, fortunes of the country's economy are not in our hands. This explains why whenever there is shock in oil prices the economy suffers. It would seem our fate is not in public administrators but on those who regulates it from outside.

Political instability and policy inconsistency shows that Nigeria polity is crisis prone because the national question remains unresolved. While waiting for this to be resolved in the interest of our collective good, public policy lacks continuity partly because public institutions lack autonomy. Public servants are servants to the party in power not to the citizenry who they swore to defend. Therefore, there are no defender of the public interest or the constitution that executive committee in and outside power that manages the common affairs of the bourgeoisies.

Political and administrative corruption remains perennial struggles plaguing the body polity. Why some scholars attribute its rise to lack of national integration (Onimode, 2007; Akhakpe, 2014; 2010). Others attribute it to the crisis of leadership and authoritarian rule (Achebe, 1983; Ayoade, 1998; Akhakpe, 2010). Although, several institutions have been set up to fight this scourge such as: the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Code of Conduct Bureau their impact on the anti-

graft war remain largely negligible. It would appear, the anti-graft law can bark but cannot bite (Akhakpe, 2010).

Public Administration and Sustainable National Development: Policy Proposal for Enduring Change

In the preceding section, we analyzed challenges facing public administration in its efforts to achieve sustainable national development in the country. In this final section, focus will be on the policy proposals or options that would enable public administration achieve the goals of sustainable national development in Nigeria.

To begin with, the country should get its development paradigm right. Ever too often, policy makers and executors, public-private sector practitioners tend to look at development from the point of view of the West forgetting that every country's development path has to be based on its cultural and social value systems. Some of the resistance to public sector reforms in Africa stem from disconnect between the people's cultural values and the principles and demands of Western neo-liberalism. The communal life style of the African people and society are antithetical to individualism on which neo-market reform is based (Dibie, 2014; Ayee, 2008 and Olaopa, 2016).

The country public sector leadership should increase their faith in science and technology and invest massively in them rather they pay lip service to them because they hold the key to inclusive and sustainable national development. This should be aggressively pursued in all works of life because they hold the key to unlocking the potentials of the country for growth and sustainable development. Science and technology should be made the life style beginning with the public sector and carried out to other parts of the society. This is a major factor in the economic revolution that took place among the Asian tigers (Akhakpe, 2016).

However, this expectation may remain elusive if the power challenge in the country remains unresolved. Reliable and constant power supply is the major stimulant of economic and social transformations. The country should get it prioritized right in this sector or else the country might as well forget its vision for the 20:20:20. Nigerian leaders are quick to talk about change in order to get elected but no sooner they get to office then they begin to sing discordant tunes. They should not only confess change they should profess it.

Training and retraining of public servants should be prioritized. Performance appraisal and management should be the basis for retention of public servants in the service of the country. Patron-client relations should be de-emphasized while merit should be used for appointment and promotion or advancement in the service. Merit should be prioritized and made the corner stone of the public service in Nigeria. No nation becomes great with mediocre at the helm of affairs in its public service. Nigeria must put its best foot forward.

Over the years, the best brains in the land have left the country for greener pasture elsewhere outside the country. Ironically, in the 1960s and 70s, the public sector attracted the best brains in the land. However, following the poor conditions of service in this sector, many competent hands have left for the private sector that apparently offer better conditions of service to their workers. This means the public sector should be made attractive once again with better pay and juicy offer of incentives to bring the best brains to the public service and retain them. This is necessary because the public sector will remain for many years to come the major driver of socio-economic transformation in the country. It therefore, needs the best hands it can get to pursue this goal.

It is worrisome the extent to which public administration keeps shifting from one paradigm and model of development to the other without embedding effectively their tenets and principles in the country. An indigenous paradigm or model of development has a higher rate or possibility of success than borrowed one. Technique and precept of development in public sector management from Europe may not function efficiently and effectively in Nigeria because of differences in culture and environment. If public administration in the country must borrow from its homologue in Europe, more emphasis should be on adaptation of model rather than pattern maintenance.

The attitude and behaviour of public administrators are major constraints to sustainable national development. Fred Riggs (in Sapru, 2009) notes that the administrative sala model and the behaviour of its officers is true of Nigeria. He enthused (in Sapru, 2009) that:

The sala official publicly may adhere to a modern set of norms but secretly reject them as meaningless (or mere paper work). A sala official may insist on a strict enforcement of regulation by the public but when his personal issue is involved, he may openly violate them.

Some public administrators justify this kind of behaviour on the grounds that the State and its agency (government) are no man's properties therefore, its work should not be taken seriously. Similarly, they see its wealth as not evenly distributed. Therefore, any opportunity a public official has should be used to promote his/her private gains (Osaghae, 2002). The solution to this abnormality lies in getting to the root of reason(s) why public administrators behaviour in the way they do, that is, against the public interests.

Perhaps, the way out of these phenomena of bureaucratic normlessness and administrative profligacy prevalent in public administration of the country, is to ensure, as Barnard (in Sapru, 2009) has argued that "...the expansion of cooperation and the development of the individual (employee) are mutually dependent realities, and that a due proportion or balance between them is a necessary condition of human welfare?" Thus, we return to the opening statement of this essay, to wit: the welfare of the citizenry, must be the primary responsibility of public administration in Nigeria if sustainable national development must be achieved.

CONCLUSION

Sustainable National Development (SND) is an unnegotiable responsibility of Public Administration in a developing country like Nigeria. National development has always been on the agenda of public administration in the country. However, we have shown that the mere fact that the country is in deep recession, social dislocation with people selling their children for money, high rate of school drop-out, low enrolment in schools, lack of affordable medical care, high rate of infant and maternal mortality, insecurity in the land, inability to manage outbreak of epidemics like river blindness, meningitis, Lassa fever, polio, among others, means that national development has not been sustained over the years. The essay made some recommendations to cure these ills. These include: the pursuit of indigenous models or paradigms of development in the country or adaptation of "received" ones from Europe, better motivation of public officials, attitudinal change by public administrators, the imperative of national integration of the country, diversification of economic base of the country, timely and successful resolution of the power caldron in the country, among others.

The country's mono-culture economy makes it responsive to external shock rather than internal stimuli. Diversification of the economy and cut in cost of governance hold the key to sustainable growth and development of the economy. Over reliance on oil revenue makes the economy a distributive rather than productive one. Self reliant, inward looking system is what

the country needs to build up capital and create employment opportunities for the teeming youths of the country. Is about time the country carves a niche for itself rather than leave at the mercy of external forces (Onimode, 2007). Once these recommendations are faithfully followed, the country will surely be on the path of sustainable national development.

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