The Choice of Unsound Policy Making in African Nations

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Abstract
Africa is a continent which consists of most developing nations in the world. The continent seems to have mixtures or varieties of decentralization practices of administration based on some factors such as social, religious, economical, cultural, political influence amongst others factors. They find it difficult managing her resources (man, material, money and machinery) effectively and efficiently. Policy is an attempt by government to address issues by instituting laws, regulations, decisions, or actions that are pertinent to a particular problem. Therefore, issues arising in different sectors must be addressed and resolved by its policy. The more effective and efficiency of sound policy signifies that the policy is analytically based, economically sound, politically acceptable, socially credible, environmentally suitable and sustainable, for the betterment of the citizenry. It is quite obvious that policy formulation involves huge involvement of political office holders, law enforcement agencies and other public and private stakeholders, therefore any defect from these people will directly and indirectly results into defected policies. Every citizen in a nation deserves a good quality of life; and this is achievable through efficiency of all sectors which can be realized through sound policies and good governance.
Keywords: Policy, policy formulation, sound policy.

1. Introduction
Africa is a continent which consists of most developing nations in the world. The continent seems to have mixtures or varieties of decentralization practices of administration based on some factors such as social, religious, economical, cultural, political influence amongst others factors. They find it difficult managing her resources (man, material, money and machinery) effectively and efficiently. Policy is an attempt by government to address issues by instituting laws, regulations, decisions, or actions that are pertinent to a particular problem. Therefore, issues arising in different sectors must be addressed and resolved by its policy.

Policies tend towards infrastructure, management and operation, regulation, and allocation (man, material, money and machinery). It is expedient for the public and private sectors, firms and industries, government and ministries to formulate sound policies which are the regulatory framework, tenets, and constitution of such organization. The significance of formulating and implementing sound policies in the nation's economic sectors (which includes; Labor, Education, Agriculture, Services, Mining, Manufacturing, Forestry and Fishing, Energy, Transportation, Communication, Trade, Currency, Banking and Finance, and Defense) cannot be overemphasized.

The more effective and efficiency of sound policy signifies that the policy is analytically based, economically sound, politically acceptable, socially credible, environmentally suitable and sustainable, for the betterment of the citizenry (Adeniran, 2016).

2. Literature Review
2.1 Policy
The terms "policy" and "planning" are used very loosely and are frequently interchangeable. Mixing them together is misleading. Policy and planning represent separate parts of an overall process of intervention; meanwhile, there are circumstances where policy may be developed without any direct planning implications, and planning is frequently undertaken outside any direct policy context (Jean, Claude and Brian, 2006). Planning is taken to be all those activities involving the analysis and evaluation of past, present and prospective problems associated with a particular sector or organization either at a local, national or international level and the identification of solutions.

Policy is generally a response to the needs of a society and this is what makes its statements flexible and dynamic. Based on the values of a society, policy outlines what the society wants, how it wants it and how to go about it. In a parallel way, policy involves the public and private endeavors, but governments are often the most involved in the policy process since they either own or manage many components in a nation's system. It should be noted that policy is expected to be enacted, rigid and become law for all people and policy statement will be flexible such that the statements is subjected to constant modifications and amendments.

2.2 Policy formulation and implementation
Policy is the process of formulating and implementing government developmental policies or activities and programs for the benefits of its citizenry. According to David (1957), policy formulation is a decision making

process as put down by a political scientist. He also interpreted political dynamics in terms of a continuous process, a system of interaction. To him, a political system is an interrelated set of activities, roles, and institutions that operates within an environment which provides inputs to the political system and then translates these inputs into policy outputs.

Government policy makers decide what should be done in order to respond to people's demand for economic, social, political and developmental progress of the nation. These Policies are therefore critical key in the management of peoples affairs as no good policy comes from the Government without being criticized by either individuals or group in spite of the fact that government always weigh the merits and demerits of any policy before getting them implemented. Hence, for a policy to be accepted by people, it must undergo series of policy formulation processes and scrutiny. In certain situation, policies formulated are even tested before implementation so as to see the reaction of the public on the policies. Policy formulation is followed by policy demand, policy decision and policy statement. While, Policy statement is a government formal guidelines that provides specific policy roles for its people.

According to Egonmwan (1991), a policy statement is the formal expression as articulations of policy which include legislation statutes, decrees, presidential orders, administrative rules and regulations and court opinions. It could also be statements and speeches made by public officials indicating the intentions and goals of government and what and how it would be done to realize them. One should note that policy statements are sometimes ambiguous and conflicting.

Policy formulation is the development of effective and acceptable courses of action for addressing what has been placed on policy agenda. There are two phases of defining policy formulation:

a. Effective Policy Formulation or Analytical Phase

Effective policy formulation means that the policy proposed is regarded as a valid, efficient and implementable solution to issues at hand. If the policy is seen as ineffective or unworkable in practice, there is no legitimate reason to propose it. Policy analysis tries to identify effective alternatives. This is the analytical phase of policy formulation.

The analytical framework and dissection of policy goals and values are important in understanding why specific policy should be adopted with respect to a particular sector and country. The analytical framework or elements for evaluating policies are;

- POLICY CONTEXT: These include the institutional set-up and policy motivations. Institutional set-up evaluates the country's general government structure and how sub-national entities fit into the policy formulation and implementation process, and policy motivations is derived from the country's socioeconomic and political circumstances as end benefits as a result of institutional set-up.
- POLICY CONTENTS: These are summed up in terms of policy objectives, approaches and solutions depending on the respective sector objectives.
- POLICY CONSEQUENCE: These relates to the policy outcomes and performance of policy solutions. It approaches and solutions may results into ineffective or poor outcomes and on the other way round are effective and efficient outcomes. The outcome is highly dependent on the soundness of the policy.

b. Acceptable Policy Formulation or Political Phase

Acceptable policy formulation means that the proposed course of action is likely to be authorized by the legitimate decision makers, usually through majorly building a bargaining process. That is, it must be politically feasible. If the policy is likely to be rejected by the decision-making body, it may be impractical to suggest it. This is the political phase of policy formulation.

Effective policy alternatives, presumably based on sound analysis, must be made; then the policy must be authorized through political process, such as legislation or regulation. Both phases: analysis and authorization, comprises of policy formulation.

2.3 Factors militating against sound policy formulation in the developing nations

According to NUHA Foundation (2016), developing nations are referred to as impoverished nations and are currently undergoing economic recession; it is obvious that various economic policies are on the formulation stage with the hope of implementation. During formulation stage, policies are set with hope of execution; meanwhile there are several issues or factors militating against the fulfillment or realization of its implementation which might turn the policies or vision into a phantasm (hallucination). Among the factors are;

1. Bureaucracy: This is the level of official delay given to issues that should not have taken such a long time to deal with. Issues that would ordinarily take two days officially to treat and pass on the next level of processing would take more than one month to handle.
2. Corrupt tendency or Vested interest: Placing wrong persons in policy making meanwhile they go against the interest of the general public and fight for their own pockets. They also take bribe and this act is referred to as corruption. According to Adeniran (2016), corruption is not just about a specific act(s), but it is about our very mindsets and deep-seated behaviors. Kofele-Kale (2006) defines

corruption as an act of requesting, offering, giving or accepting directly or indirectly a bribe or any other undue advantage or the prospect thereof, which distorts the proper performance of any duty or behavior.

3. Political instability: There is no way a nation will be in political crisis and expects formulated policies to be implemented. Situation of political crisis results into discontinuity of implementing policy process from where previous government stops by the newly elected political party in government.

4. Skills and technical know-how: Lack of trained personnel that have enough skills and technical knowledge about policy will hamper a successful implementation of policy.

5. Interferences from various professionals: The entire system of nation's economy is a complex system, it is multi-disciplinary in nature whereby professionals from various fields come together to decide on how the system will become developed. Professional or stakeholder involvement can be classified into three:

   - Instructive involvement: This is where government makes the decision but mechanisms exist for information exchange.
   - Consultative involvement: This is where government is the decision-maker but stakeholders have a degree of influence over the process and outcomes.
   - Cooperative involvement: This is where primary stakeholders act as partners with government in the decision-making process.

   None of these types of involvement is more desirable than another, or mutually exclusive. Much depend on the task to be undertaken by the political and social norms, as well as the capabilities and aspirations of stakeholders themselves. Professionals from various fields that are not well grounded or having little or no knowledge in the concerned sector of the economy will pose a challenge in the formulation of it policy.

6. Peculiarities of the developing countries: The characteristics of developing countries are diverse cultures, multi-ethnic, multi- language and multi-religious. Individuals from various jurisdiction representing his people will want a policy that will be more favorable to his people, in this case, oneness cannot stand and these poses challenges in formulating a policy.

7. Others are inadequate funding; lack of sound economic research and development institute (NUHA Foundation, 2016).

3. Way-Out and Recommendations in order to Enhance Sound Policy

It is quite obvious that policy formulation involves huge involvement of political office holders, law enforcement agencies and other public and private stakeholders, therefore any defect from these people will directly and indirectly results into defected policies. To ensure sound policies, the following measures are recommended below;

1. Clearly stating the statutory responsibilities of law enforcement agencies to prevent misalignment of responsibilities when been discharged.

2. Corruption as a deadly disease in governance should be combated using strict and deadly punishments such as death sentence and life imprisonment.

3. Empowering the citizens to make reports through various devices to the established agencies that guide against unlawful act.

4. Political office holders and leaders in governance should be retrained on policy making, and leadership to enhance high sense of mental magnitude in governance.

5. From the election point of view, elections should be conducted from the least position to the highest position (for instance, from Local Government Chairman to Gubernatorial and to National President) and not from the usual highest position to the lowest position; this will prevent the wining political party in the federal seat to influence the decision of the voters during the gubernatorial and local elections. Also, ensuring that most legislative seats in the State House of Assembly are not dominated by one political party; this will give room for constructive criticisms and corrections. On this same election view; adopting Two-Party System can also be a way out

4. Conclusion

In a broad scope of sensitization, orientation and education on policy formulation and implementation, it is expedient that the listed factors militating against the formulation and implementation process of sound policies in the developing countries should be minimized; therefore, policy formulated and implemented should be sound, effective and analytical. If the developing countries embark on formulating and implementing weak policies, and still been outweighed by those militating factors; the choice of those countries in becoming impoverished is inevitable. Every citizen in a nation deserves a good quality of life; and this is achievable through efficiency of all sectors which can be realized through sound policies and good governance.

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