

Deepening the Public Service Organizational Culture in Human Resource Procurement in Nigeria: Politics-Administration Dichotomy Revisited

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Abstract

In the words of a leadership expert, John D. Callos (CEO & Board Advisor, Executive Performance and Accountability Coach), "if you hire well, the benefits are multiplied and seem nearly endless. If you hire poorly, the problems are multiplied and seem endless" An attempt was made in this paper to examine the Public Service organizational culture vis-à-vis human resource procurement in Nigeria, revisiting Woodrow Wilson's Politics Administration Dichotomy Model of analysis. Some research questions were raised on the Public service organizational culture in HR procurement in Nigeria. The paper exclusively depended on secondary sources of data collection such as textbooks, scholarly journal articles, internet materials, and relevant government publications, establishment circulars and reports. The paper majorly discovered that the roles of politics and public administration with respect to HR procurement in the Nigerian Public Service cannot be separated in water-tight compartments. It concluded with some policy recommendations that the process of HR procurement in the Nigerian Public Service which is currently bedeviled with undue interference from the political office holders and other myriad of systemic problems should be evolutionary and pragmatic in nature to meet the yearnings and aspiration of the citizenry in particular and the developmental needs of Nigeria in general.

Keywords: Public service, organizational culture, human resource, procurement, politics, administration

INTRODUCTION

The notion that 'human resource is the greatest asset in any enterprise' is becoming more widespread both locally and internationally (Fajana, 2002:11). The words of Walt Disney further stressed the importance of human resource to any organization when he said, 'you can dream, create, design and build the most wonderful place in the world, but it requires people to make the dream a reality'. Nations all over the world are currently in the struggle to better the lot of the citizenry through the process of good governance and responsible Public Service for effective and efficient service delivery. Nigeria is not an exception. However, the structure of Public Service bequeathed to Nigeria by the colonialists was alien and narrow in scope, and so not development oriented, as it was fashioned to suit the colonialists. Economic liberalisation and policies of globalisation have created a hyper-competitive environment, innovation and fierce competitiveness have raised issues of survival, effectiveness, sustainability, etc. Increasing demand for skilled performers and increasing high attrition of capable workforce forced the organizations to shift focus on attracting and retaining high-performing employees in the extremely competitive business environment (CIPMN, 2013). Jamal and Saif (2011) reported the World Bank (1995) study based on the assessments of 192 countries conclude that global wealth constitutes 16% of physical capital, 20% of natural capital and 64% attributed to human and social capital. Nothing happens unless human beings make a concise decision to act. Seleim, Ashour and Bontis (2007) empirically studied 38 software development organization of Egypt and found a positive correlation between human capital and organisational performance. 'People are our greatest assets. Yet few practice what they preach, let alone truly believe it' (Drucker, 1992).

The Civil Service is the core of the Public Service since all national objectives, policies and programmes radiate from there into government agencies and parastatals (Akpala, 1993). The governance rules, institutional framework and guidelines (among a host of others), which regulate government business with respect to HR procurement or recruitment in the Federal Civil Service are Constitutional provisions; Public Service Rules (PSR); Financial Regulations (FR); Guidelines for Appointments, Promotion and Discipline; The Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC); The Federal Character Commission (FCC); Administrative Guidelines Regulating the Relationship between Parastatals/ Government-Owned Companies and the Government; Federal Scheme of Service; and Establishment Circulars.

Popular language uses the term recruitment as a synonym of appointment, but this is not correct. In the technical phraseology of administration, recruitment means attracting the proper and suitable type of candidate for the post to be filled (Sharma et al, 2013). Today, organizations no longer boast of people as their key assets,

but the right people. Research has shown that the first step for any organization to achieve sustainable growth and superior performance is to identify and select the right talent which involves talent sourcing (source), talent assessment (test) and talent verification (verify) (Weihrich et al, 2011). Organisations invest a large amount of its capital for recruitment, integration and development of its employees. It is worthy of probing whether the Public Service organisational culture in HR procurement is critical to the realization of the mandate of the government, and to what degree can the process of HR procurement be enhanced. The present state of affairs in the Public Service appears that the variables responsible for poor performance as a result of undue political interference in the HR procurement process resulting into faulty hiring in the Nigerian Civil Service have not been completely dealt with and so the problem still lingers. It is against the background that this paper sought to examine the Public Service organizational culture in HR procurement, to find out to what extent the undue political and administrative interference in personnel recruitment have impeded on or helped to solve teething problems of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the Nigerian Public Service and proffer the way forward to deepen culture.

Given the above scenario, this paper shall address the following questions that pertain to:

- (1) What are the roles of the Federal Civil Service Commission in HR procurement?
- (2) How does the Federal Character Principle affect HR procurement in the Nigerian Public Service?
- (3) To what extent is politics-administration dichotomy model in practice in HR procurement in the Nigerian public Service?
- (4) What impact does political interference have on recruitment process in the Public Service?
- (5) How can the Public Service organizational culture in HR Procurement be deepened in Nigeria?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In specific terms, the objectives of this study are as follows:-

- (a) To determine the nature of recruitment in the context of the Public Service organizational culture.
- (b) To assess the HR procurement process and the extent to which it has positively or negatively been influenced by the political office and administrative holders.
- (c) To take a general overview of the HR procurement in the main stream of the Ministries and government Parastatals/Agencies on one hand and Public sector versus Private sector on the other hand in relation to efficient and effective service delivery.
- (d) Make appropriate policy recommendations to further deepen the soaring critical roles of the Public Servants and administrators in the implementation of government policies, as well as the rules guiding the conduct of government business.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The part provides the review of related literatures to this subject matter in order to clarify and direct the channel of inquiry adequately towards ensuring that relevant concepts are clearly elucidated.

PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

Public administration is the machinery, as well as the integral processes through which the government performs its functions (Lamidi, 2015). The word 'public' simply means the practices of administration in a particular segment of the society, that of the public sector. Public sector organizations refer to those organisations that are responsible for the provision of basic government services to the public as opposed to private sector organizations that are owned and controlled by individuals (Ngu, 1990). Public organizations are established, managed and controlled by the machinery of government, e.g., Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

THE PUBLIC/CIVIL SERVICE

The Public Service, which is made up of the employees of government, is an indispensable instrument through which the government implements its policies and programmes. It is through its instrumentality that government policies are translated into services for the people. They are those responsible for the functioning of government through the implementation of government policies (Afolabi, 2011). The main functions of the Public Service are essentially to help formulate and implement the policies of government and to render related services to the public.

Specifically, the Public Service is made up of workers in government ministries, parastatals and other agencies, are further expected to provide continuity in governance, and to serve as a repository of knowledge and experience of the practices and procedures of governance, and to protect public interest (National Political Reform Conference, 2005) such policies include welfare services rendered to the citizens. Parastatals are established to discharge functions and attain objectives more readily achievable outside the Civil service structure and procedures. Parastatals are granted some degree of independence to enable them achieve the purposes for which they are established, subject to compliance with Government policies. Within the Public

service is the Civil Service which constitutes the inner core, or the heart of the Public Service (Anifowose and Enemu, 1999). The Public Service has, however, undergone several organizational and structural reforms, both before and after independence, yet there is no tremendous improvement in the quality of service provided to the citizenry (Anazodo, et al 2012). These changes aimed at refocusing the Civil Service and improving its efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

The Civil Service is the machinery of government that assists in formulating and implementing government policies (Afolabi, 2011). The Civil Service is the machinery through which government designs and implements its policies. The Civil Service machinery is organized to help the executive arm of government meet its responsibilities. The Civil Service is made up of all servants of the state other than holders of political and judicial offices, who are employed in a civil capacity and whose remuneration is paid wholly and directly out of money voted by legislature (Imuetinyan, 2015). Anazodo (2009) argues that Civil service in Nigeria comprises workers in the various Ministries or Departments apart from those who hold political appointments. According to Imuetinyan, Civil Servants are those public servants who are direct employees of both federal and state governments other than the police, armed forces personnel, and the teachers. The objectives of government are usually encapsulated in its aims and goals while the Civil Service (or the Bureaucracy) provides the manpower needed to actualize the vision and mission of government, as well as implement programmes/projects. Civil Service is thus defined as a well-organized body of permanent paid officials of Ministries and Departments under the Executive arm of government, charged with the responsibility of implementing government policies and programmes in accordance with laid-down rules and procedure. The Civil Service plays a central role in support of government by providing among other things:

- (i) appropriate/considered policy advice;
- (ii) providing necessary input into the articulation of vision and strategy;
- (iii) provision of the appropriate mechanism for the translation of government's vision into policy framework; and
- (iv) providing the appropriate structure and manpower for the implementation of government policies (Afolabi, 2011).

It is noteworthy, that in the process of carrying out its statutory duties, the Civil Service provides a lot of public services, social and economic responsibilities. Since the country's independence, the Nigerian Civil Service has remained one of the most enduring structures for the attainment of national aspirations through policy formulation, articulation and implementation.

PUBLIC SERVICE RULES (PSR)

As earlier observed, the Public Service Rules (PSR) is one of the policy instruments guiding establishment matters. PSR is a basic instrument for guiding the conduct of government business help to enrich, maintain and promote discipline and guide the proper conduct of officers while carrying out their responsibilities in government service (Afolabi, 2011). The PSR also promotes fairness, accountability, transparency and good governance while at the same time providing the guidelines for recruitment into the service, career progression and development of employees, as well as their rights, obligations and privileges. However, it should be noted that, since parastatals are established by specific legal instruments, the application of PSR to them is sometimes limited to the extent that it does not conflict with the principal Act which established them. The PSR is divided into six (6) parts and each part comprises relevant Sections. The Part One dwells on Appointments and Leaving the Service (PSR, 2008). Parastatals are allowed by the Act establishing them to evolve rules and regulations on establishment matters in tandem with the PSR. For instance, the National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB), a Parastatal under the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) has evolved rules and regulations governing the services of both senior and junior staff as an off-shoot of the PSR. However, when there is a knotty establishment matters in contention, the PSR takes precedent.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The word 'organization' can be used in a number of different ways. For the purpose of this paper, 'organization' means the process of ordering and coordinating activities (e.g., drawing up detailed arrangements for a recruitment program), and 'organization' denotes a social entity formed by a group of people (Cole, 2005). Argyris (1960) cited in (Cole, 2005) sees organizations as intricate human strategies designed to achieve certain objectives. Simon (1960), also cited in (Cole, 2005) posits that since organizations are systems of behaviour designed to enable humans and their machines to accomplish goals, organizational form must be a joint function of human characteristics and the nature of the task environment. According to Furnham and Gunter (1993) cited in (Armstrong, 2012, culture represents the "social glue" and creates a 'we-feeling', thus counteracting processes of differentiations that are an unavoidable part of the organizational life. Organizational culture offers a shared system of meanings that is the basis for communication and mutual understanding. If these functions are not fulfilled in a satisfactory way, culture may significantly reduce the efficiency of an organisation. Organizational

culture can be described in terms of values, norms, artifacts and management/leadership style.

Organizational culture (also known as corporate culture) is the pattern of values, norms, beliefs, attitudes and assumptions that may not have been articulated but shape the ways in which people in organizations behave and things get done (Armstrong, 2012). This definition emphasizes that organizational culture is concerned with the subjective aspect of what goes on in organizations. It refers to abstractions such as values and norms that pervade the whole or part of a business. The organizational culture of HR procurement is encapsulated in the plethora rules and regulations guiding the procurement processes that are expected to adhered to. Charles Handy (1981), cited in Armstrong (2012) remarked that in organizations there are deep-set beliefs about the way work should be organized, people rewarded, people controlled. It may not be possible to define an ideal culture or prescribe how it can be developed but it is certain that embedded cultures exert considerable influence on organizational behaviour and therefore performance. If there is an appropriate and effective culture, it would be desirable to take steps to support or reinforce it. However, if the culture is inappropriate, attempts should be made to determine what needs to be changed and to develop and implement plans for change (Armstrong, 2012).

HUMAN RESOURCE PROCUREMENT

HR procurement or recruitment may be defined as the process of generating a pool of qualified applicants for organizational roles and jobs (Mathis and Jackson, 1979 in Onah, 2003). According to Cole (2004), recruitment involves all the activities whose purpose is to attract sufficient and suitable potential employees to apply for vacancies in an organization. The above definitions imply that inherent in a successful HR procurement programme are comprehensive staff auditing, job mapping, job description and job specification. While the purpose of recruitment is to provide a pool of opportunities for efficient staffing decisions, selection covers the entire process of taking advantage of these opportunities to make the right choices from the available alternatives. Thus, Armstrong (2014) demonstrated that the purpose of recruitment would largely remain unachieved if the condition for competitive selection is compromised at any stage of the selection process. Recruitment is the gateway for the in-flow of raw human resources into the organization; the selection process represents the point at which the grains are separated from the chaff. According to PSR 020201, "Recruitment" means the filling of vacancies by the appointment of persons not already in the Public Service of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It, however, excludes the transfer of officers from other Public Service in the Federation to the Federal Public Service. PSR 020202 states that direct appointment to the Federal Public Service may be in any of the categories such as (a) trainees or pupils; (b) probationary staff in a pensionable post; (c) staff on non-pensionable contract to a non-pensionable post, or against a pensionable post for a specified period; and (d) on temporary basis other than (c).

When posts prove difficult to fill, they shall normally be advertised in at least three newspapers with national coverage for a minimum of six weeks. PSR 020203 (a) When a candidate for employment requires additional professional experience before he can be regarded as fully qualified for appointment to a specific post, the candidate may be appointed as a trainee or pupil for a normal service of two years in the post. This period may however, be reduced in special circumstances. On completion of the "trainee period" the pupil may be appointed to the full grade on probation and will not be eligible for confirmation in the service until he/she has fulfilled the conditions laid down in Rule 020302 where applicable (PSR, 2008).

HR PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES AS STIPULATED IN THE PSR

The Part One of the Federal Government PSR (2008 edition) has to do with HR procurement which is the main thrust of this paper. According to Rule 020101 - Appointments to public offices in the Federal Civil Service are made on the authority of the Federal Civil Service Commission. These appointments are made either: (a) By letter written under the direction of the Federal Civil Service Commission; or (b) By formal agreement between the officer and the Federal Government or its appointed agents subject to Rules 020205, 020206 and 020207. Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Extra-Ministerial Offices are authorized to appoint eligible candidates to posts in respect of which the powers of appointment have been delegated to them. 020102 - (i) The Federal Civil Service Commission shall make appointment to posts graded GL.12 - 17. Such appointment shall be made as the need arises into the available vacancies after advertisement. Officers intending to transfer their services shall take part in the annual Public Service Examinations for post GLS 07-10. (ii) Subject to modalities to be prescribed by the Federal Civil Service Commission from time to time, each Ministry/Extra-Ministerial Office shall select from the pool of successful candidates at the Civil Service Examination prescribed in Rule 020102. (iii) This shall be handled by the appropriate Committees of each Ministry with the representatives of the Federal Civil Service Commission and Head of the Civil Service of the Federation at the meeting of the Committees.

SOURCES OF HR PROCUREMENT

Basically, HR procurement can be done from within the organization (internal sources) or from outside the organization (external sources). Internal recruitment includes transfer/redeployment, promotion and upgrading

as advertised internally on the notice boards or internal memorandum. External sources include unsolicited applications, educational and training establishments, Government labour Exchanges and Registry, agencies and Recruitment consultants, Executive Search Consultants (Head Hunter), Advertising, Employee referrals.

THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS AND ELIGIBILITY

Employee selection begins where recruiting stops (CIPMN, 2007). The process includes initial screening which involves identifying and eliminating the obviously unqualified candidates from the pool of applicants for the jobs. After the initial screening, the next step is the aptitude test or interview. The test can be intelligence test, personality test, psychometric test (skill or proficiency tests), graphology test (using handwriting to predict future performance), polygraph test (heart pulse rate and breaking rate), etc. The interview is a very popular step in the selection process. It involves a face-to-face discussion with a candidate in order to obtain and assess information about him which will enable a valid prediction to be made of his or her future performance in the job in comparison with the predictions made for any other candidates. It could be conducted by interview panel or Assessment Centres. Immediately after interview, reference checks are carried out on the applicants and decisions to hire are reached and approval sought as appropriate.

To be eligible for permanent and pensionable appointment into the Federal Civil Service, the PSR (2008) stipulates that an applicant must be a Nigerian as defined in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In addition, the applicant must:

(i) possess a certificate signed by the Chairman or secretary of his/her Local Government indicating his/her State of Origin and Local Government Area; (ii) not be less than fifteen (15) years and not more than fifty (50) years of age; (iii) possess such minimum qualifications as are specified in the approved Scheme of Service from time to time. (iv) be certified by a Government Medical Officer as medically fit; (v) Possess a testimonial of good conduct from his/her last employer or if not previously employed from last school or institution attended; (vi) State whether or not he/she has been convicted of a criminal offence; (vii) State all employment he/she was engaged in and, if he/she had left any employment, why he/she did so or if he/she is still in any employment whether or not he/she is under any obligation to remain in it; (viii) State whether or not he/she is free from financial embarrassment. (ix) Possess the NYSC discharge or exemption certificate where applicable (Guidelines on Appointments, Promotion & Discipline, 2004).

The Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC) and HR Procurement Powers

Recruitment of Federal Civil Servants is vested in the Federal Civil Service Commission whose establishment is provided for in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as Amended). The Federal Civil Service Commission is responsible for appointments, transfers and secondment, promotions and discipline in the Civil Service. The Commission may delegate some of its powers to Ministries/Extra Ministerial Departments. The Commission delegates the recruitment of junior staff on salary GL 06 and below to each Ministries/Extra Ministerial Office who shall appoint Junior Staff Committee. It may also issue from time to time guidelines as deemed appropriate. The Commission is headed by a Chairman and 15 other members. The Federal Civil Service Commission has no power over appointments that are the exclusive responsibility of the President or other arms/functionaries of government, e.g. A judge of the Supreme Court of Nigeria; any officer in the Nigerian Police Force; Principal representatives of the Republic of Nigeria Overseas such as Ambassadors and High Commissioners; and Justice of the Peace (Imuetinyan, 2015).

THE FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE AND HR PROCUREMENT

The Federal Character Commission was established by the Nigerian Constitution. The Commission comprises the following members: (a) Chairman, and (b) one person to represent each of the states of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory. The Chairman and members shall be appointed by the President subject to confirmation by the Senate.

The Federal Character principle and quota system are some of the consociational arrangements to promote peaceful coexistence of Nigeria (Ikelegbe, 2013). The phrase, Federal Character was first used by the late General Murtala Ramat Mohammed in his address to the opening session of the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) on Saturday October 18, 1975 (Ammani, 2010). Recruitment into the service is guided by the Federal Character Principle entrenched in Section 153 (1) d of 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as Amended) with a view to ensuring that appointments to public service institutions fairly reflect the linguistic, ethnic, religious and geographic diversity of the country (Imuetinyan, 2015). Understandably therefore, the 'Federal Character Principle' is a political strategy adopted by the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to give every state, ethnic group/language as well as religion group a sense of belonging and representation in the recruitment, appointment and election of people into government of the Federation or any of its agencies.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The practice of HRM is underpinned by a number of theories. These theories have been propounded by scholars to provide theoretical basis for understanding the HR procurement. According to Armstrong (2012), some of the HR theories put forth by David Guest (1977) and Boselie et al (2005) include, Normative theories; Contingencies theory.

NORMATIVE THEORY

Normative theories – these are normative in the sense that they establish a norm or standard pattern in the form of prescribed best practice. These take a considerable risk in applying ‘one best way’ (Armstrong, 2012). This theory is relevant because Public Service has operational rules and regulations guiding the conduct of government business regarding HR procurement.

CONTINGENCY THEORY

Contingency theory tells us that definitions of HR aims, policies and strategies, lists of activities and analyses of the role of the HR department are valid only if they are related to the situation of the organization. Legge (1978) in her book, *Power, Innovation and Problem Solving in Personnel Management* cited in Armstrong (2012) was the first commentator to insist that a contingent approach should be adopted to personnel management, i.e., ‘the design and implementation of policy that matches, or is contingent upon specified organizational requirements and circumstances’ Armstrong (2012). Paauwe (2004) cited in Armstrong (2012) asserts contingency theory states that the relationship between the relevant independent variables (e.g. HRM policies and practices) and the dependent variable (performance) will vary according to the influences such as organizational size, age and technology, capital intensity, degree of unionization, industry/sector ownership and location. Contingency theory is associated with the concept of fit – the need to achieve congruence between an organization’s HR strategies, policies and practices and its business strategies within the context of its external and internal environment Armstrong (2012)

For the purpose of this paper and proper understanding of the subject matter, this paper will adopt Woodrow Wilson’s Politics-Administration Dichotomy Model.

POLITICS-ADMINISTRATION DICHOTOMY MODEL

Thomas Woodrow Wilson (December 28, 1856 – February 3, 1924), a former American President is credited with the Politics – Administration dichotomy via his model on Public Administration in his essay, “The Study of Administration” published in 1887. Politics – Administration dichotomy has been one of the most widely discussed issues in public administration since its inception as a separate field of study. Wilson, in his seminar article argued in favour of four concepts:

- (i) Separation between politics and administration;
- (ii) Consideration of the government from a commercial perspective;
- (iii) Comparative analysis between politics and private organizations and political schemes; and
- (iv) Reaching effective management by training civil servants and assess their quality (CIPMN 2013).

The Politics – Administration dichotomy is a model that constructs the boundaries of Public administration and asserts the normative relationship between elected officials and administrators in a democratic society. Woodrow Wilson (1887), as quoted in Adebayo (1981), stressed that administration lies outside the proper sphere of politics and that administrative questions are not political questions. From these premises, he argued that although politics sets the task for administration, it should not be suffered to manipulate its offices. On a contrary view, also quoted by Adebayo, Demir and Nyhan (2008) posit that the dichotomy has been advocated on the grounds that the dichotomous division of labour and authority between elected and administrative officials increases the democratic accountability and planning ability of administrators. That politics and administration, in the dichotomous model, serve distinct purpose.

Politics is a process by which disagreements and conflicts are worked out. This process of politics ends with laws and policies through legislation. The purpose of politics is to provide political guidance to public administration. On the other side of policy making process is public administration, whose principal responsibility lies in translating value choices into concrete results. Specifically, public administrators apply special knowledge and skills called expertise. The purpose of public administration is to provide neutral competence to the policy process (CIPMN 2013). Government also believes that the ability of the Public Service to respond constructively depends to a very large extent, on the workforce that make up the service, i.e. from the top selected/appointed officials to the worker engaged in the most routine task, all of which are charged with the responsibility of executing organizational programmes (Eghe and Edigin, 2010).

POLITICS – ADMINISTRATION DICHOTOMY DEBATE

The politics – administration dichotomy model which Wilson introduced in 1887 has been a subject of fierce

debates for quite a while. Some scholars argue in support of the dichotomy while others argue against it. As reported by CIPMN (2013), Goodnow (1990) in his book “Politics and Administration” contended that there are two distinct functions of government. “Politics”, according to Goodnow, has to do with the execution of the will of the state while “Administration” has to do with the execution of these policies. Separation of powers provided the basis for the distinction (Goodnow 1990). According to Adebayo (1990), another scholar and advocate of dichotomy, Pfiffner (1935) opines that politics must be controlled and confined to its proper sphere which is the determination, crystallization and declaration of the will of the community whereas administration is the carrying into effect of this will once it has been made clear by political processes.

According to Adebayo (1990), advocates of politics administration dichotomy were largely influenced by political situation in America at that time which was dominated by spoils and patronage system. Spoils and patronage systems were seen as obstacles to the achievement of efficiency in public administration. Adebayo further asserts that Demir and Nyhan (2008:3) reported that that following World War II, the dichotomy began to receive intense critiques from scholars on both normative and empirical grounds. Adebayo further reported that the duo cited some authors like Fesler and Kettl, 1991; fox and Miller, 1995; Henry 1987; long, 1954 and Rainey, 1990) as having discredited the theory for being “unfounded”, “political metaphysics” “Naive at best” “False” and more recently “dead”.

It is important to observe that the reality in the Nigerian Public Service is that the above assertion does not completely remove every form of similarity between politics and administration such that the two becomes one and the same thing. Rather, it points to the fact that politics and public administration cannot be separated in water-tight compartments.

The critics of dichotomy lacks emphasis on the internal context of individual organisations within the same sector and the unique characteristics and practices that may provide its main source of sustainable competitive advantage.

HR PROCUREMENT IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC SERVICE: AN ANALYTICAL OVERVIEW

In order to realize the noble mandates of the Public Service, procedures for the need-based procurement of its employees are clearly stipulated and laid down for instance, within the proper interpretation of Sections 14 (3 and 40, 15 (2 and 5), 16 (1) and 17 (3a) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as Amended). Babaru (2003) and Aina (2010), in Makoji and Akowe (2016), have opined the mandates of the Federal and states Civil Service Commissions in Section 197 (a) and third Schedule (Part II) of the Constitution of the Federal republic of Nigeria to, within the planned needs and objectives of the Federal or State government include: Identify the required jobs to be done (job description) and the characteristics of the required personnel (job specification); set up general and uniform guidelines for appointment, deployment, promotion, training and discipline of staff employed in the public service. PSR 02201 and 02102 (2008) also empowers the Civil Service Commission to perform these roles directly or delegate to the appropriate MDAs in conjunction with Office of the Federal/State Head of Civil Service as appropriate.

Every time managers plan, they take into account the need and desires of members of the organization, as well as the needs for material and HR, technology, and other requirements in the external environment. They must identify, evaluate, and react to the forces outside the enterprise that may affect the operation (Weihrich et al, 2011). In this changing context, the skill needs of firms are increasing and are expected to increase in the future because of globalization and technological change. The most significant change over the past decade has been the increase in the number of people employed in managerial professional and service occupations (Gold et al, 2010). Recruitment into leadership of Civil Service since 1979 appears to follow the same pattern as it did between 1966 and 1979. For instance, during the short period of civil rule (1979-1983), the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria was empowered to appoint persons to the office of Permanent Secretary and to remove persons so appointed for any such post. The same goes for the appointment of Permanent secretary in the State Public service by the Governors (Nnamdi, 2010). In other angle, the Civil Service Commission denies Nigerian Public Service managers and administrators the freedom and authority to utilize and control personnel resources within their management area and that this makes the managers/administrators not accountable for what their subordinates do.

Makoji and Akowe (2016) opined that despite the plethora rules and established instruments and framework, Public Service in Nigeria had acted contrary to the popular expectations due to undue influence from the political officials. While making reference to the alleged recruitment scam in the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) in 2012, Ajayi (2013) described the exercise as ‘the general misuse of hiring process in government’. The analysis observed that in sheer spoil and patronage fashion, the merit principles were grossly undermined. Ajayi noted that out of 5,000 personnel approved to be recruited into the service, 250 slots were allocated to the Presidency; 100 to President’s wife; 100 to the Minister of Interior; 250 to the Federal Character Commission; 30 slots to each of the two Commissioners of Immigration Board. The above scenario undermines the politics – administration dichotomy as the NIS procurement process was hijacked by the political class and executive arm

of government. Other allegations applicable to similar agencies of governments include:

- (i) Advertisements are placed for positions that had already been filled.
- (ii) Appointments are done in secret through quota system and later regularized, instead of open recruitment and merit.
- (iii) Purchase of scratch cards or employment forms by applicants to the tune of between ₦1,000.00 and ₦5,000.00 for access to download application form for job positions that are not in existence.
- (iv) Letters of appointments and jobs are offered to family members, cronies and friends before the commencement of the selection process.
- (v) Employment slots and positions are shared among political office holders in all levels of government, e.g. Presidents, Vice-President, Ministers, National Assembly (Senator and House of Representative) members, Governors, Commissioners, traditional rulers, Local Government Chairmen, etc.

In consonance with Woodrow Wilson and Goodnow's views, the recruitment process in Nigeria are negatively influenced by the political class or elected officials as the bureaucrats are not given free hands to initiate and implement a recruitment process that will lead to efficiency and effectiveness. HR recruitment carries the traits of formalism introduced by the political elites, as rules exist only on paper but never applied objectively and less qualified candidates are given undue advantages the most qualified ones. Dismay as it may, the HR procurement in the Public service is chaotic and arbitrary as the purpose is more of promotion of mediocrity and ethnicity than effective and efficient service delivery.

In agreement with the assertion of Adebayo (1990) in CIPMN (2013), the bulk of the work of an administrator is concerned with disposing of current business in accordance with established tradition and practice. On the other hand, experience has shown that all cases of human affairs cannot be settled with established decisions to cover all details in advance for all times. In the core Ministries, a call circular is issued for each Ministry to declare vacancies, subject to appropriate budget provision, which would be collated by the Federal Civil Service Commission, especially appointments into senior posts, that is, posts attracting emoluments on Grade level 07 and above and other posts attracting fixed emoluments of equivalent Grade Levels in Ministries/Extra-Ministerial Offices.

The Federal Civil Service Commission makes appointments to posts graded GL 12-17 while it delegates the responsibility of appointments to GL 06 and below to the MDAs. Such appointment is made as the need arises into the available vacancies after advertisements. Officers intending to transfer their services are to take part in the annual Civil Service Examinations for post GL 07-10. To qualify for this examination, candidates must possess a good Honours Degree not below Second Class Lower Division or Higher National Diploma not below Upper Credit. This should be in line with the Scheme of Service. Final selection shall be made by the Ministries/Extra Ministerial Offices in line with their requirements (Guidelines, 2004).

The HR procurement procedures in the Parastatals and Agencies of government are slightly different from that of the core Ministries as we earlier pointed out in this paper that the FCSC ceded some recruitment functions to the Parastatals due to enabling Acts that established them. In the core Ministries, the Honourable Minister is the political head of the Ministry while the Permanent Secretary is administrative head and Accounting Officer of the Ministry. In conforming to the PSR, the Permanent Secretary provides leadership in terms of discipline, promotion and welfare of staff. Establishment matters are regarded as the preserve of the Administrative heads of Ministries (Sambo, 2011). On the other hand, in a Parastatal, the head of Parastatal or Agency (Director-General or Executive Secretary or Registrar/Chief Executive as the nomenclature may imply) is the accounting officer responsible to the Governing Board/Council. Using the National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB) with the Headquarters in Benin City, Edo State as a good example of a Parastatal of the Federal Government, the Senior Appointments, Promotion & Disciplinary Committee is headed by the Registrar/Chief Executive, as Chairman with other Heads of Department as members. When it has to do with the appointment of the Registrar/Chief Executive or Director, the Chairman Governing Board will chair the Committee with the Governing Board and Management duly represented. The Junior AP&DC for appointments to posts graded CONRAISS 05 and below is headed by the Director of Administration with the Heads of Departments or their representatives as members.

The report is submitted to the Management Committee (Committee 1) which makes recommendations through a memorandum to the AP&DC (a subcommittee of Governing Board) for consideration and further reference to the Governing Board for approval. When Governing is not in place, the approval is sought from the Minister or Permanent Secretary. With the establishment of the Department of Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) under the Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation for payment of salaries and wages directly to the employees of the Federal Government, a waiver has to be sought from the Office of the Head of the civil Service of the Federation before recruitment process can be initiated by the parastatals. As observed by Adamolekun (1983), it is instructive to note that under civilian rule between 1960 and 1965, partisan political patronage (including the ethnic and nepotism dimensions) was largely blamed for the

abuse of the autonomy granted to Boards in the area of personnel management. This is in accordance with the Administrative Guidelines Regulating the Relationship between Parastatals/Government-Owned Companies and the Government.

CONCLUDING COMMENT

The challenges of deepening the Public Service organisational culture of HR procurement for sustainable development are a serious business and cannot be left to chance. For a country with diverse non-material resources and in a hurry to develop, our manpower development efforts are not only deficient, but the nation's available manpower resources are not fully utilized to achieve maximum output. Concerted effort must be made not only to generate the required manpower needs of the country, but also to produce the right type which must be skillful, well trained and motivated to perform optimally. Although manpower planning is useful as a concept in drawing attention to certain trends, it is not adequate by itself. It must be supplemented by at least rates-of-return, and social demands estimates and probably take a close look at the problem generated by the process of aggregating.

It is necessary to continuously reexamine our policies of building quality manpower in the Public Service with a view to determining and ensuring relevance between requirements of the nation and the sectoral requirements, educational planning and resource requirements.

The Civil Service consists of Ministries and Extra-Ministerial departments while the Public Service encompasses the Armed Forces, the institutions, Parastatals of Government owned companies and statutory Agencies. Appointments to public offices in the Federal Civil Service are made on the authority of the Federal Civil Service Commission. This is consummated either by letter written under the direction of the Federal Civil Service Commission or by formal agreement between the officer and the Federal Government or its appointed agents, subject to appropriate rules. The Permanent Secretaries/Heads of Extra-Ministerial Offices are authorized to appoint eligible candidates to posts in respect of which the powers of appointments have been delegated to them.

This paper has attempted to explore the Public Service organizational culture with respect to HR procurement process in Nigeria and made some policy recommendations on how the process can be strengthened to enhance efficient and effective service delivery system. Giving the diversity of the Nigerian federation from the foregoing accounts (in terms of ethnicity, multi-linguistic and inequality of economic resources), the justification for the entrenchment of the Federal Character Principle in the Constitution cannot be over-emphasized. This paper agrees with the position of Ammani (2009) that the Federal Character Principle ensures even spread among civil servants and so helps to mitigate the centripetal agitations and protects the interest of the minority ethnic groups, among other benefits. But its implementation with respect to HR procurement should not undermine merit, efficiency and effectiveness. One important argument of this paper is that laws and regulations are not enough to ascertain the conformity of Public Service to best practices. This argument gives credence to the need for the Public sector organizations to have ethical standards which embody the Public Service's philosophies that assigned the roles, functions and implementation of HR procurement policy to the administrators or bureaucrats devoid of undue political interference.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following policy recommendations are made to further deepen the Public Service culture in the area of HR procurement in Nigeria:

- (i) Nigerian Public Service needs to adopt a "new style of management" that injects some effectiveness and value-for-money of the private sector into the public sector in order to promote efficient service delivery bearing in mind its political environment.
- (ii) The HR procurement process to place premium on merit rather than ethnicity, linguistic and geographical spread entrenched in the Federal Character principles, in order to ensure that right caliber of employees are recruited into the Public Service. Where Federal Character Principle is applied to take care of diversities in Nigeria, the best hands should be recruited from the areas so represented;
- (iii) The implementation of the HR procurement policy instruments and monitoring systems of the Public Service should be service-and-result-oriented geared towards the achievement of the nation's socio-economic development.
- (iv) With the global impetus for leaner bureaucracy, more efficient government and effective control of human and material resources, the Public Service HR procurement should be organized in such a way to be at the fore-front of the national change process initiating, guiding and managing change to accord with global best practices.
- (v) Above all, the neutrality of the Civil Service should be guarded jealously. HR procurement is an operative function of the career officials (public administrators) and not that of the elected political

office holders (politicians). The process should be allowed to run within the ambit of extant laws without undue interference.

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