

The Administrative Reforms Experience in Nigeria

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Abstract: The paper examined the various administrative reforms in Nigeria and identified the factors affecting the implementation of reforms. These were with a view to providing insight into why the reforms are not yielding the required results. Primary and secondary sources of data collection were utilized for the study. The results showed that about 24 administrative reforms have been implemented in Nigeria. The results revealed that factors such as bribery and corruption (99%); the concept of federal character (69%); insecurity (94%); and the discipline of execution (98%) affected the implementation of administrative reforms in Nigeria. The study concluded that the problem with reform is not in the theory but in the lack of attention to reform implementation.

Keywords: Implementation, Reform, Administration, Nigeria, Civil service.

I. INTRODUCTION

Reform is essentially changing the way government does its work in view of current or anticipated reality or a desired state. It must be geared towards the achievement of national objectives. Infact, reform has an incredible power to serve as a vehicle for social change. Administrative reform can be described as a mechanism for institution transformation or change, transfusion of innovation, political control and achievement of efficiency and economy. Administrative reforms provide opportunity for a reexamination of the structure, processes, techniques and management practices in use in an organization. They are designed to breathe fresh air into the system with a view to revitalizing it. They are intended to make it more efficient in resource provision and utilization. Administrative reforms are therefore occasions for the general review of the entire organization and for prescribing necessary remedial measures.

In the Nigeria environment, the factors affecting reform implementation can be categorized into management dimension and the context of reform. Studies have shown that many reforms have been carried out in the Nigerian civil service. However, the desired changes have not been achieved despite the barrage of reforms conducted on different aspects of the service, and the amount of the resources expended on them. This necessitates the need to address the challenges of reform implementation in the Nigerian civil service. In any situation of reform, there are certain issues and factors that play significant roles in determining the success or failure of the implementation process. These factors are described differently by different writers. For Corkery *et al* (1998) for instance, they described them as success factors but for Olaopa (2011) they are treated under the general description of landmine and pressure points in reform implementation. Corkery *et al* have categorized some of these factors into 'management dimension' and context of reform'.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

From the available literature reviewed, it has been established that an important step in becoming a successful civil servant/government is gaining an in-depth awareness of reform as an important activity that permeates the Nigerian society and influences both institutions and individuals in multiplicity of ways. In order to understand the complex dynamics of how and why people need reform, one must have knowledge about not only individual behaviour (e.g. psychological aspects such as motivation) but also the social context in which that behaviour occurs. Over the past three decades, the scientific study of the social context of reform has been at the centre of the academic discipline.

According to Das (1998), "the idea of a civil servant as a platonic guardian, though very old as the name itself suggests, totally dominated the modern literature on public administration even today. The standard prescription deriving from this view has been to select good officers from public office and give them the knowledge and power to do what they believe is in the public interest. This idea underpin the dominant discourse that "good people insulated from political and economic pressure will act in public interest". The quotation refers to the view that civil servants represent the universal interest of the society. This view evolved in Germany. Hegel argued that the most important institutions in the state were the bureaucracies, which represented the absolutely universal interest of the state. To Hegel, bureaucracy was a transcendent entity, a mind above individual minds. He regarded bureaucracy as the universal class, synthesizing the particularism of

the civil society with the general interests of the state. The existence of power by the bureaucracy was a mission to be performed for God or society (Knox, 1952).

Bentham (1987), in the nineteenth century, propounded the influential idea of a civil servant as a benevolent social guardian committed to achieving the common good. The Benthamite view of a benevolent guardian state, which has, in fact, shaped discussions of public policy, has had a long tradition in economics. It is premised upon the assumption that civil servants are somehow morally and intellectually above the system. In the Benthamite perspective, it is assumed that civil servants selflessly seek the welfare of the people even when the people themselves do not know what their best interest is. Weber (1946) on his part, recognized bureaucracy as the characteristic form of public administration for a state with extended territorial sovereignty. He wrote so approvingly of the virtues of bureaucracy that modern literature presents the bureaucrat as a benevolent social guardian maximizing general welfare, which is somehow equated with the objectives of the state.

The benevolent social guardian view was dominant for a very long time. It is only in the last few decades that a view has been critiqued by the public choice theory from the perspective of self-interest. The theorists of public choice have used this perspective to document and explain how civil servants pursue their self-interest rather than the common good; why government spending and employment is over-extended; why clientelistic practices are rampant, and how government programmes and policies create opportunities for rent-seeking (Tulloch, 1965; Niskanen 1971, Russell and Nicholson, 1991, Krueger, 1993). In his classic work *The Origin of Species* (1859), the British scientist Charles Darwin expounded the theory of evolution and the notion that nature is constantly changing in form and function. This framework explains the dynamism of human societies which usually ignite changes in the needs and values of societies. These changes are induced by reforms at different levels notably global, national (government), institutional and socio-cultural. Caiden (1968) however distinguishes administrative reform from administrative changes which could result from a normal process of administrative development or modernization. To Caiden, administrative change is a self-adjusting (not a result of deliberate effort) response to fluctuating conditions. Consequently, administrative reform results from the malfunctioning in the self-adjusting process of administrative changes (Matahaba, 1989).

The concept of administrative reform in Nigeria had generally implied periodic reviews of a part or the whole of the machinery of government. Such review always produces a blueprint that is the basis of a white paper. Reform could however be simply a management maintenance intervention, or organizational health-check, while it could also be a turn-around maintenance to reengineer the structure, management and functioning of the administrative system, with improved service delivery as the overall objective. Reformers usually ask such questions as “what features of our current structures, culture, system, processes or skill set, get in the way of what we are trying to achieve?” Conversely, the same question can be restated as “what sort of strategy do we need to take advantage of, in order to be able to exploit our existing strengths and opportunities?” This had been approached through the setting up of commissions, review teams or panels or study groups to review the structure, management and methods of government operations with a view to making recommendations for improvement as might be appropriate.

Between 1934 and 2015, not less than twenty four reforms have been carried out in Nigeria civil service. They included the Hunt Commission (1934), the Harragin Commission (1946), the Foot Commission (1948), Philipson Adebo Commission (1954), the Gorsuch Commission (1954) and Mbanefo Commission (1959), others were: the Morgan Commission (1963), the Elwood Commission (1966), the Adebo Commission (1971), the Udoji Commission (1974), the Dotun Philips Commission (1988), the Allison Ayida Commission (1995) the Obasanjo reform (1999-2007), the Yar'Adua reform (2008-2010) and the Jonathan reform (2011-2015). Conducting administrative reforms in any civil service is a common practice all over the world. Reform is really not about investing more resources, but building institutional capabilities and workforce capacity in the public service to mobilize and manage available resources to ensure increased investment results in better services and improved outcomes (Olaopa, 2008). As a reform instrumentality, the civil service Commissions/Panels/Committees are utilized by the political leadership to evaluate the public service for a desired change, which may be comprehensive, radical or incremental. The final decision on the acceptance or rejection of recommendations in the form of a white paper is that of Government and therefore is political. If the political leadership is not committed, then, little or nothing will be achieved. Many reforms have been implemented in Nigeria and are examined in this study. The Harragin Commission (1946) was established the senior and junior services categories and set up terms and conditions of service for the two categories. This was followed by the Gorsuch Commission (1955) introduced the dichotomy in the civil service relating to the administrative and professional cadres. It also set up a five grade service structure which essentially constituted the basis of the federal civil service. It further dealt with a revised salary structure scheme, organization, methods and levels of authority. Its terms were:

- (a) To enquire into the structure and remuneration of the civil service with special references to problems arising from constitutional changes proposed at the conference of Nigeria's constitution. The outcome of the commission was that the civil service was a stratified one with the fact that the top stratum was

extensively occupied by Europeans while the bottom stratum was taken by Nigerians. The submission of the commission was that the structure of the organization was not in harmony with normal organization.

(b) To establish another commission that will look into salary and wages review.

The Newns Report (1959) was primarily concerned with the administrative machinery for the control of government expenditure, including the role and function of permanent secretaries. The Mbanefo Committee (1959) reviewed salaries and wages and the effect of increase in the cost of living on salaries of public servants. The Morgan Report (1963) primarily examined wages and salaries and conditions of service of junior employees, but recommended a regarding of all levels and a permanent body for the review of wages for future adjustments. The Elwood Report (1966) attempted a nationalization of posts within the Gorsuch structure, but pointed out the disparity of wages within the public service as a whole. The Adebo Commission (1971) was primarily set up to review wages and salaries. It recommended a more comprehensive look at the organization as well as the grading structure within the public services. It was this recommendation that led to the setting up of the Udoji Review Commission by the Federal Government in September, 1972.

The Udoji Report (1972) amongst other things, attempted to solve three main problems.

(a) providing the concept of a “New Style Service”

(b) Revising the salaries, within the framework of a comprehensive, but manageable, compensation scheme, and

(c) Creating machinery for making continuous wage adjustments possible in the future.

The Dotun Philips Commission (1988), was set up based largely on the report of a study carried out in 1988 to restore the civil service of the glorious past by reinventing those factors that facilitated its effective performance. It was reform to redress negative forces in the service, including the low morale in the service, the problem of coordination and accountability and the abolition of the post of the head of civil service and the pooling system. It was already obvious, in spite of the spirited attempt by Professor Philips’ seminar reviews to redress the gaps in the 1988 reform, that the reform had not brought the required change in the administrative system. This led to the institution of the Allison Ayida Commission in 1995 to examine the service as the 1988 reform restructured it, and to restore the civil service of the glorious past by reinventing those factors that facilitated its effective performance. It was a reform to redress the negative forces in the service and to deal with the problem of coordination and accountability.

The Obasanjo civil service renewal programme, that ran from 1999 to 2007 was the next. The federal executive council under the new democratic dispensation decided that the Ayida Reform and its proposed manning levels consigned reform to the “hardware” of operations rather than to the “software” of system rejuvenation. The Ayida Reform did what the government dictated by re-inventing the pre-1988 system. It did this without taking the benefit of new thinking on public sector management reform as a global phenomenon. The panel’s composition suggested that the government did not have a better agenda than to dismantle the 1988 reform and bring back a non-professionally-oriented new generation of civil servants already infected by an undemocratic military tradition. Indeed, the reform was an attempt to refurbish a system that had become dysfunctional. Consequently, by the time the military handed power over to civilians in 1999, bureaucracy had become a clog in the wheel of progress, which required urgent and careful attention. This situation made the Obasanjo’s civil service renewal programme inevitable. The Yar’Adua civil service Reform (2008-2010) builds on the foundation laid by the Obasanjo’s administration. As the president himself acknowledged in his inaugural address, when he said that: “Over the past eight years, Nigerians have reached a national consensus in at least four areas; to deepen democracy and the rule of law; build an economy driven primarily by the private sector, not government; display zero tolerance for corruption in all its forms and finally, restructure and staff our government to ensure efficiency and good governance. I commit myself to these tasks”. Pursuing this commitment, the administration made a commitment to a 7- point agenda to serve as the compass to guide its activities. The 7- point agenda should best be seen as ‘an articulation of policy priorities that will strengthen the reforms and build the economy; so that the gains of the reforms are felt widely by citizens across the country.’ The Jonathan Transformation Agenda of 2011-2015 bears the markings of reform continuity, especially as regards the national economic transformation plan and its civil service reform component. In spite of its own difference as implicitly implied by the nomenclature – “The Transformation Agenda” is actually a continuation of the vision 20: 2020 – derived from Obasanjo’s vision 2020 and developed under the Yar’adua administration.

Summary of Empirical Works

A number of works related to this study were reviewed: Olaleye (1989) did an extensive review of the “Performance of the civil service in Western Nigeria (1954-1976); Akinsanya (1973) examined “Nigerianization of the Western Nigeria Higher Public Service” and Coker (1977) analyzed the “Merit in the Public Service: a Study on the “Growth pattern of the Nigerian Federal civil Service (1960-1993)”. Tunji Olaopa (2008) analyzed the various theories and practice of Public Administration and civil service reforms in Nigeria in his book.

Theory and Practice of Public Administration and Civil Service Reform in Nigeria; Omoyele (2012) did an analysis of the evolution and challenges of the civil service in Nigeria in his book. The Civil Service in Nigeria: Evolution and Challenges. From the fore-going, there has been concentration on isolated descriptive studies of reforms by many scholars. Critical analysis of the studies did not reveal the human factor of implementation. The foregoing depicts the gap in the literature. This study however, is considering a key variable, that is implementation and how it affects the success or otherwise of previous reforms in Nigeria.

The Challenges of the Implementation of Administrative Reforms

In any situation of reform, there are certain issues and factors that play significant roles in determining the success or failure of the implementation process. These factors are described differently by different writers. They are usually treated under the general description of management dimension and context of reform. Under management dimension are the following variables: Communication and consultation – This is an area where management of reform execution gets a bit tricky. For the stakeholders, especially those that would be touched by the impacts of reform, and those who are in the position to influence the outcome of reform process, there has to be a process of consultation so that agreement and consensus can be reached on key issues. This is necessary because, agreeing on the key issues involved in the change process means acceptance of their implications for and by the parties, hence the ease with which they can be carried out along especially during the painful stages of implementation. The need for consultation is also underlined by the fact that the reform is taking place within the larger context of democratic process whose basic tenets include, in the words of Dudley,... “the determination of national priorities through the process of argumentation and debates”. This democratic process helps to build widespread consensus and support for the reform implementation as well as help ensure greater probability of success. It is strongly advised that the communication strategy to be employed should be well worked out and adapted to suit the nature of communication in the environment in which reform is taking place, because the mode and means of effective communication may differ from one society to another. Other areas under the Management Dimension are: clearly defined goals and strategy; Implementation Agency; Involving Ministries and Agencies in implementation; and Monitoring and Evaluation. Another challenge that must occupy the minds of reformers during implementation is transparency and accountability. These are important for a variety of reasons. Public service reforms is about changing entrenched attitudes and behaviours which is a difficult enough task that faces resistance from those who benefit from the status quo, and stand to lose out in the reform.

Executing reform under this circumstance is further complicated by the fact that the political beneficiaries of reform, whose support are needed to push implementation through often sit on the fence until implementation process is completed. Hence, executing reform programme involves trying very hard to elicit the crucial support of very reluctant people, and one important means of gaining this support is through transparency and accountability. Besides helping to gain support for reform, a transparent process would also serve to convince people that the process of governance is open to all-comers and indeed requires their participation. This would not only boost confidence in the reform management process, it will also help to convince stakeholders that everybody will ultimately gain if the reform is successfully implemented. There has been concentration on isolated descriptive studies of reform by many scholars. Critical analysis of the studies did not reveal the human factor of implementation. Government appears to gloss over the crucial factor of the civil service in public policy. The foregoing depicts the gap in the literature. This study however, is considering a key variable, that is, the challenges of implementing Administrative Reforms.

Objective of Study

The objective of the study was to identify the challenges faced in the implementation of administrative reforms in Nigeria.

Hypotheses

In order to achieve the purpose of this study the following null hypotheses are proposed:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between socio-economic cum political factors and the prevalence of administrative reforms in Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic cum political factors and the implementation of administrative reforms.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between the objects of reforms and the results of reforms implementation.

III. METHODOLOGY

Area of the Study

The study covers the whole of Nigeria. However, data for the study were subsequently collected from the selected ministries in Abuja, which is the capital of the country Nigeria. Panel data from the government gazettes, and publication from Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) including other relevant government publications assisted in the execution of this study.

Study Population

The universe of the study is the serving federal civil servants from the Office of the Head of Service and three selected Ministries in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) namely: Federal Ministries of Information, Internal Affairs and Finance. The reason for the choice of these three key Ministries is because they are directly involved with the civil service. The Federal Ministry of Finance is one of the three principal government agencies which also operate within the civil service system. It deals with financial management and control. The Ministry of Information is very vital for the flow of communication within the MDAs, officials and finally the public. The Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs amongst other functions is directly involved with the issue of security which is very crucial to the success or failure of any reform implementation. The office of the Head of Service was selected because it is the office where all the activities of the Civil Service are coordinated.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The selected sample will comprise the staff of the Office of the Head of Service, Federal Secretariat, Abuja and officers of the 3 selected ministries in the FCT, Abuja. At the end of the study the entire population of the staff of the Office of the Head of Service and the three selected Ministries was fairly large; The total population of staff of the selected Ministries stood at 32,045 that is (Information-7,629, Finance-9,358, Internal Affairs-8840 and Office of head of Service-6,218). Using 95% confidence level, a total of 1,430 workers served as the target respondents. In order to determine the population of respondents from each of the four units of government, a Population Proportion to Size (PPS) was employed. This resulted in 317.384,367 and 259 for Information, Finance, Internal, Internal Affairs and Office of the Head of Service respectively. In order to ensure adequate representation of the different groups within each Ministry, the target respondents were stratified into middle level staff characterized by Grade levels 06-11 and Management staff characterized by Grade levels 12-15.

Consequently, questionnaire was administered to 1,430 officers while information elicited from questionnaire was beefed up with interviews conducted with 4 Permanent Secretaries, 12 Directors, and 20 Heads of Department of the Selected Ministries in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. The sample size of the study was drawn through the purposive sampling procedure because the study addressed the administrative reforms and the management staff were in charge. To that extent we believe that purposive sampling procedure would be more relevant for the study. This was supported by a random selection of some senior civil servants and retired civil servants in Nigeria for interview.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data collected were analysed through the use of descriptive, interpretive and simple statistical approaches. The approach entails detailed analysis and argumentation on the study. In other words, the analyses were facilitated by the availability of both primary and secondary data. The data collected from the field were collated and edited, after returning from the field.

Table 1.1: Showing the Contingency Frequency for section C on the factors affecting Implementation of Administrative Reforms in Nigeria.

Factors affecting Implementation of Administrative Reforms in Nigeria	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The discipline of execution is a major factor affecting the implementation of administrative reforms in Nigeria	20	15	859	433
The provision of adequate security would enable the implementing of reforms	24	19	783	501
The major area of constraint in the implementing process is the concept of federal character	253	409	408	257
There should be a re-structuring of the civil service for better implementation of reforms	450	629	127	121
Corruption affects the implementation of reforms	35	31	755	506
Sum	782	1103	2932	1818
Mean	156.4	220.6	586.4	363.6

Source: Author’s Fieldwork

Out of the five questions asked on the factors affecting the implementation of administrative reforms in Nigeria, more than one thousand two hundred respondents which amounts to over 90 percent of the sampled respondents agreed with the variables considered for this study in order to analyze the factors affecting the implementation of administrative reforms in Nigeria. Majority of the respondents agreed that the discipline of execution is a major factor affecting the implementation of administrative reforms in Nigeria. Closely linked to this is the issue of corruption, over (95%) of the sampled respondents rated corruption as the main factor that affected the implementation of reforms in Nigeria. The issue of security can not be over-emphasized, from the graphical presentation of this subject as shown in the table and figures, it is evident that reform can only thrive if adequate security is provided.

Another issues of great interest is the concept of Federal Character. The responses from the respondents posed a challenge for the study which was eventually cleared with the aid of personal interview. Out of the total of the sampled respondents, six hundred and sixty five (665) respondents representing 50.1 percent agreed that the concept of federal character was a major constraint in the implementation process, while six hundred and sixty two (662) respondents representing 49.9 percent disagreed. At the level of personal interview reactions were sought on this assertion, those who agreed explained that the concept of Federal Character was not a problem but that the implementation of the concept was the problem. Finally, on the issue of restructuring the civil service, the majority of respondents believed that the structure of the civil service was good Data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution tables, percentages, arithmetic means and charts. Inferential statistical tools were used to determine the relationship between the selected variables. The observations made in the course of survey and notes and voice recording taken during interviews were logically presented and evaluated. The analyses of the data were subjected to rigorous descriptive analyses based on the logical rules of deductive reasoning.

Findings of the Study

This study looked at the administrative reforms and the challenges of Implementation in Nigeria. The findings revealed that the challenges of Implementation was the bane of the administrative reforms in Nigeria. Inhonvbere (1996) stated that the real issue was no longer the unavailability of workable prescriptions, but the absence of the required political will and appropriate political environment to implement existing policies. Indeed, at the end of this study, the challenges of Implementation can be traced to the issues of bribery and corruption; insecurity, the concept of Federal character, discipline of execution of reforms. Other challenges included; the human factor in implementation, lack of initiative on the part of the Civil Servants, poverty and the lack of attention or lip service paid to the issues of continuity, consistency and commitment.

(a) Communication/Cooperation

This is necessary because for any reform to be successful there must be a period of consultation which involves cooperation from all parties concerned. Communication is key and the communication strategy to be used should be well worked out and planned in such a way that it will suit the nature of communication in the environment in which such reform is taking place. This study observed that there was a communication gap between those that would be touched by the impact of reform and those who were in the position to influence the outcome of the reforms process. There has to be a process of consultation so that agreement and consensus

can be reached on major issues. This is very important because, agreeing on the major issues involved in the change process ultimately means acceptance of their implications for and by the parties involved. Which will also translate to the ease with which they can be carried along especially during the different stages of implementation. In addition communication and cooperation involves dialogue, exchange of views and information, this is necessary because it helps to deal with the issues of misunderstanding and misconceptions about what is being done.

b. Implementation Structure

The role of a central unit in the implementation process cannot be over-emphasized. This unit must be managed by people who are well trained with the right skills and competencies to handle the task, they must be given the political clout to push through the reform process. The study revealed that before the inception of the Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR) which is the lead agency that now oversees the reforms and reform implementation in Nigeria, that there was no correlation between the reform process and the reform implementation. It was also revealed that the involvement of the ministries and agencies was not adequate considering the fact that these ministries and agencies were also going to be directly affected by the changes entailed in the reform. Ideally, they were a crucial part of the system for reform implementation, so it is only proper that they should be involved in the process.

(c) Monitoring/Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation process would involve the use of certain measurement instruments. In reform implementation, monitoring and evaluations are indispensable, they are very important for the success of any reform. This means finding out whether the implementation process is having the desired effect according to the objectives set out in the reform programme, and in a situation where it is not, then what could be done to salvage it. This study revealed that the monitoring and evaluation process was grossly inefficient, where available, it was not well done because of the mechanism of feedback which was a two way traffic mechanism of exchange between reform managers and reform recipients. Often times, the recipients of the reform being implemented found it difficult to send back information to the reformers on the outcome of the reforms, which made it difficult to know which programmes to change, correct or even stop and sometimes which programmes to intensify.

(d) Political Commitment

The level of success of any reform depends heavily on the interest of the political class. To succeed, many policy reforms require time, resources (both human and materials), sacrifice and good time frame which often transcend the duration of particular governments or individuals especially in a democratic environment like Nigeria. This study revealed that the political class in trying to satisfy the yearnings of the people which unfortunately was very difficult, sometimes ended up not getting it right. The political class tended to give attention to the reforms that favoured them; they also delegated reform execution which sometimes resulted in poor implementation.

(e) Stakeholders

The involvement of key segments of the Civil Service in the planning and implementation of the reform programme is very important; some of these experts draw the terms of reference for the reforms. Public servants whose organisations are directly involved must be carried along. This study revealed that public servants whose organization were likely to be affected by reform implementation were naturally predisposed to protecting the status quo that they were familiar with and especially those that defined their interests.

(f) Security

A major area of constraint in reform implementation is the issue of insecurity. For any meaningful development to take place in any society, there is always need for security, both internally and externally. The security challenges faced in Nigeria as discovered by this study posed a great threat to the successful implementation of reforms. Presently, the experience of Boko Haram uprising in the northern part of the country was named as major source of disunity. The international community, especially the developed West, is now more sensitive about security threats emanating from Nigeria. The appearance of such threat in any reforming country would have, among others, the effect of bringing massive pressure to bear on such country by the powerful Western nations including the threat of military intervention.

(g) Bribery and corruption

This practice has greatly soiled the image of the civil servants. It is not always easy to get something done for a citizen without some civil servants asking for a gratification. The study traced this problem to the

issue of remuneration. A major cause of the chronic capacity problem that afflicted the civil service in Nigeria was the problem of poor pay, which was also a major inducement for the endemic corruption among civil servants. There was a serious need to address the issue of adequate remuneration considering the high cost of living. It is very important that workers are able to meet up with the basic necessities of life, that way they will spend less time on trying to make ends meet and concentrate on their jobs.

(h) Human Factor

Reform is about changing entrenched attitudes and behaviours which is a difficult task and often faces resistance from those who benefit from the status quo, and stand to lose out in the reform. It is far easier to get someone to accept a new policy that is beneficial to the person than something that others may benefit from. Often times implementing reforms under this circumstance is very difficult and further complicated by the fact that the potential beneficiaries of such reform, whose support are needed to push implementation through, sit on the fence until the implementation process is far gone or sometimes completed. This study revealed that implementing reforms programmes in Nigeria was made more difficult because of the lukewarm response from the civil servants and the lack of support from the potential beneficiaries of the reform.

(i) Federal Character

Closely related to the human factor in the challenges facing reform implementation is the concept of Federal Character, according to Obiyan and Akindele (2002). Federal character is a deliberate government policy which is instrumental in ensuring that Nigerian citizens get their fair share of government jobs at Federal, State and Local Government levels. The prime objective is to give every Nigerian a sense of belonging and also to foster national unity. This principle essentially refers to the recognition of the plural nature of the country in recruitment, distribution of administrative and political offices and power as well as the resources of the country. This study observed that federal character as a principle was not bad at all, that the problem was still with the human beings who implemented the policies. The major challenge facing the Federal Character Principle in Nigeria was the method used for the implementation. In order for Nigerians to benefit from this policy, reformers must refrain from all forms of selfishness and imbibe the culture of unity. The Government should also make the rules of the game clear before the implementation process, for example, in citing major projects, they should look at the place where there would be comparative advantage and cite those projects there, and not base important developmental project decisions on favouritism.

(j) Discipline of Execution

This study observed that most reforms fail because of the lack of discipline in the execution. From the research conducted, most reforms were beautifully conceived but at the point of implementation the gap between conception and reality takes over. The two must go together because the problem with reforms is not in the theory but in the execution. Reform will always fail if the strategy for execution is poor. As far as implementation is concerned, reform plans must not just be dedicated to the analyses of data about how to handle reforming, it must ensure that data translate into action plan which will bring about growth, development, increased productivity, and better service delivery. Often times, fabulous reform plans are often never implemented because the government lacks the capacity to carry through reforms. Again, this study observed that reform implementation needed time and patience. Government must also have the right combination of resources, financial, human, infrastructural and materials to carry through with reforms implementation. Less emphasis should be placed on high-level strategy, intellectualizing and politicking and more emphasis placed on the discipline of execution. Anything short of this, will amount to waste of time and resources.

(k) Capability

The staff of the Civil Service are its greatest asset. It is obvious that without a professional corp., other resources will remain idle and unproductive. Moreso, staff costs form a huge percentage of yearly budget. It is important to note that for the overall systems effectiveness and nation's health, that the right staff are appointed, trained and retrained at interval. If the national objectives are to be achieved. According to Berg, E. (1993), the agency must maintain within its resources the capacity to diagnose and analyze; to focus, synchronize different activities and ensure coherence. There also must be consistency in order to ensure identification of training, retraining and re-deployment needs. This study observed that training was neglected and where it was done, it was not properly done because it was contracted out to some individuals who most times did not possess the right resources to execute such training.

Ordinarily, the reforms should start with the setting up or putting in place a unit that will carry out regular audit of the present skills and competencies of the staff as a basis for projecting future personnel needs in line with national objectives. With the right planning scheme in place, attention must be given to the issue of selection of new entrants into the service, and vacancy determination, creating vacancies must relate with the

available job on ground. Again, the challenge really is one of how to minimize or totally remove arbitrariness, and therefore exclusively use criteria demanded by merit, even in the context of diversity management or federal character. The need for training and re-training of staff cannot be over-emphasized this is because, no matter how strong a leader is, and how long he/she stays, the person will eventually depart, but the institutions will remain. Therefore, the system must be strengthened so that it will have the capability to continue to carry out its task over a long period. The system must endeavour to have the right people with skills and competencies to handle its tasks and also to ensure that it has enough political will to push through the reform process.

(l) Continuity, Consistency and Commitment

According to Olaopa (2011), reforms are fluid, dynamic and constantly changing, yet an element of stability is needed to at least guarantee continuity, which is necessary for the success of the reform. This study discovered that the lack of attention or lip service paid to these three very important issues has been a major source of challenge as far as implementation was concerned. In the past there was a wide gap between the reform formulation process and the reform implementation process. There was no provision for a strong unit to serve as a coordinator, like a central processing unit, which is necessary for stability within the context of uncertainty. Now, with the creation of the Bureau of Public Service Reform (BPSR), if this agency is allowed to work, while personalities, projects and programmes within the overall reforms plan change over time, that is in a continuous process of dynamic evolution, there is, for the purpose of continuity, consolidation, commitment and consistency, a small group of individuals who constitute the heart of the reform process, that should be preserved along with the agency. This agency is very important because it provides direction, oversees and coordinates all the activities towards the execution of the reform programme. In addition, most reforms need time, sacrifice and long term commitment which often transcend the duration of particular governments or individuals therein, especially in a democracy which often impose time limits on tenure of elected officials. If we are truly one, then we must look out for each other.

Implications

There is need for proper accountability, this will help in curbing corruption and boost confidence in the reform management process. Also, it will help to convince stakeholders that everybody will ultimately gain if the reform is properly implemented. The level and manner of the involvement of all stakeholders should be worked out by the reform managers from the onset, according to the peculiarities of the reform environment within which they are operating. This is very important, and care must be taken to determine the most effective way of this involvements so that the reform effort will not end up being hijacked or sabotaged by those who are supposed to be part of the implementation. Therefore, for the successful implementation of reforms for the attainment of national development, the civil servants, reformers, general public and the government must work together as partners in progress.

IV. CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that the challenges of implementation was the bane of administrative reform in Nigeria. Indeed, at the end of this study, the challenges of implementation was traced to the issues of bribery and corruption, cooperation, concept of federal character, discipline of execution, human factor, insecurity and the lack of attention or lip service paid to the issue of continuity, consistency and commitment. Most reforms need time, sacrifice, patience and long term commitment which often transcend the duration of particular governments and individuals. The results from the data analysed established that the real issue on reforms is not the non-availability of workable prescriptions but the absence of the required political will and appropriate political environment to implement existing policies. The results further revealed that implementing reform programmes in Nigeria is made more difficult by the lukewarm response from the civil servants and the lack of support from the potential beneficiaries of the reforms. The study concluded that the problem with reform is not in the theory but in the lack of attention to reform implementation.

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