Politics of Bureaucracy and Public Policy Outcomes in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper assessed the effects of bureaucracy on public policy and the quests by political representatives to control the structures and policies of government assumed to be dominated by civil servants. Through a descriptive but analytical approach, the study explored the weapons in the arsenal of top civil servants and political representatives, how they are utilized to exert influence and their likely effects on public policy in Nigeria. The paper adopted the elite theory as a guide. The study also utilized secondary data to source basic information relating to the objectives of the research. Content analysis and thematic discussions on the specific research objectives were adopted for the data analysis. The study observed that bureaucrats utilize their wealth of information and expertise, apolitical posture and stability to influence public policy outcomes in their relationship with political leadership. Also, the political representatives on their part wield the power of legitimacy, control of the power of the purse and authority to determine the latitude for the agencies to control the bureaucracy in public decision-making. Consequently, such display of capabilities if not properly managed would leave negative imprints on public policies generated and all becomes the loser. This study therefore recommended among others that professionalism of the civil servants be re-emphasized, higher qualifications and experiences for elected representatives and above all, both actors in public policy in Nigeria should be exposed to basic civic education principles to be more patriotic in their services to fatherland.

Key words: Politics, bureaucracy, public policy, expertise, professionalism, legitimacy

1. INTRODUCTION

Government is assumed to be in place all over the world no matter its forms or means of coming to power to ameliorate the suffering of its people. Be it elected government or a military dictatorship, the intentions of government are usually to uplift the general condition of the people, at least in their policy statements. Hence for government to meet the needs of its people, it requires policies to address the specific known challenges confronting the state. Hence, public policies reflect the instruments of the state through which the government addresses the problems and needs of the people in any country (Nnadozie, 2016). With these instruments in place and working, lives get improved. Public policy is the means through which government works. As societies are faced with numerous problems from social, health, infrastructure, environmental challenges etc, government through its policies proffer solutions to them (Atakpa & Ayogu, 2023). No country excels in its service to her people and the international community without well-designed policies which apart from serving

as action plan of government are also guides and framework of state activities for optimal utilization and justification of her resources use (Okoli & Onah, 2020).

For Quadri (2022) public policy denotes the activities of government directed to achieve the stated objectives of government in many policy areas. Through public policies, government pursues the will of the state including protection of lives and property of all, creation of employment opportunities, maintenance of law and order as well as pursuit of the welfare of the greatest majority in the state. As public policies are indispensable in every clime, policy making processes are no child's play. Elected political office holders and bureaucrats (civil servants) play pivotal roles in public policy making and implementation. The political representatives as politicians chose by the people through election strive to have policies in place to secure the happiness of its people. As representatives of the people, they identify, initiate, make as well as review policies to reflect the needs of their people. The assurances of their stay in positions and power are dependent on how their employers (electorates) rate the impact of their policies. On the other hand, Bureaucracy is the machinery through which the aspirations of the state and of its operators are articulated, formulated, and executed (Aremu & Adedire, 2021). Specifically, bureaucrats are members of the civil service who are career personnel and well-trained for various aspects of the policy process. Even though, they are not necessarily the primary makers of the policy, they play an active role in policy implementation in Nigeria (Adegbite, Bakare, Raji & Raheem, 2022).

Therefore, public policies are products of the interactions between the politicians chosen by the electorates and the career civil servants who sustain the process of governance. At various phases of public policy including identification of problems, policy initiation, policy formulation, policy legitimation, policy implementation and policy review, these and other actors play major roles. The politicians as representatives of the people identifies various deprivations their constituents suffer, transform and synthesize these problems into coherent and manageable issues for necessary actions and clarify/defend the issues raised through debates in the relevant institutions of government. They equally ensure that formal approval by the relevant institutions is secured, influence the bureaucrat to ensure implementation as approved and facilitate review where the impact is not very positive (Nnadozie, 2016). The bureaucrats as custodian of government apparatus are also very relevant in those phases through their experiences, apolitical stance and professionalism harmonize the contending interests of the political leadership for workable policy in the state.

Consequently, it is at these interactions that interests of the political representatives often clash with the stabilizing role of the bureaucrats, hence the politics of bureaucracy in the public policy process. When dealing with pressure groups, the bureaucracy represents the majesty of the state; when dealing with legislatures, prime ministers, presidents and the courts, the bureaucracy often appears as an extra-constitutional interloper in the affairs of government. It must either seek to have its actions legitimated formally or be capable of bargaining successfully to gain influence over decisions. It must also bargain for funds to continue its existence and operations. Without carrying the analogy too far, these options for bureaucracies dealing with political institutions might correspond to the legitimate and clientele options available to pressure groups in their dealings with bureaucracy (Peters, 2017). These representative institutions are incapable of formally abdicating powers, but they must bargain to get the assistance in policy making and implementation that only the bureaucracy can provide. Bureaucracies have the information and expertise that contemporary governments require for effective policy making. Hence, the representative institutions must find a means of acquiring that information, even if that

means informally abdicating their responsibilities.

The shifting power relationships between bureaucracies and more representative institutions involves a delicate political process and some attention to public opinion. Most members of the public continue to regard their elected officials as responsible for the conduct of public business, and these officials must therefore continue the form (if not the substance) of policy making in their interactions with the public bureaucracy (Peters, 2017). Both sets of actors in this exchange of power, influence, information and money have a great deal to lose by a clumsy handling of the process, and a political "game" of conflict and compromise results. Most of this game is hidden from the public eye, but it is an essential component of government and, despite its apparent illegitimacy, actually affects the quality of policy decisions. This paper therefore assessed the effects of politics of bureaucracy on the public policy outcomes in Nigeria.

2. METHODOLOGY
This paper adopted a descriptive approach. The elite theory was utilized as a guide to explain the overt and covert manipulations by the members of the bureaucracy and the political leadership to maintain influences over public policy processes in Nigeria. The paper also utilized personal observations and review of literature to source basic information relating to the objectives of the study. Content analysis and thematic discussions on the specific research objectives were adopted for the data analysis.

3. Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework adopted for this paper is the elite theory as associated with David Apter, Rothwell F. and Lester Seligamen views. The assumption in this theory is that public policy is determined by the ruling elite and carried into effect by public bureaucrats and agencies. A striking feature is that policy produced reflect elite values, serves elite interest and is the product of elitist relationship. Hence, the masses

become apathetic and ill-informed as they play no significant roles in influencing policy through their demands or action. Therefore, public policy in Nigeria is the balance of politics of influence between the bureaucrats and the political leadership in the country.

4. Conceptualization of terms
Politics of Bureaucracy
Before we delve into the concept as a whole, the key terms that make it up need to be individually explained. Politics does not yield to a unified definition because social lives revolve around it. However, two classes of definitions can be found. These are definitions with negative connotations as politics being a dirty game; and positive connotations, seeing it as activities involving the allocation of values in societies. From the later, Halper and Hartwig (1975) defined politics as the making of decisions by public means. It is the most inclusive process by which social conflict is regulated in the community. Without politics, resources of the state will be difficult to be assigned peacefully. Hence, it has also been defined as the authoritative allocation of value.

In a pejorative fashion, politics is assumed to be a dirty game. So that when one goes clannish, selfish, deceitful in ones dealing with fellows in the society, it is termed politics. It is in this line of thought that O'Rourke (1987) defined politics as the pursuit of self-interest analogous to exchange in the market…. For Prozorov (2018), politics is the activity of organized life in society, involving manipulation of state power for personal and party gains. In this study, we align with this last view to examine the relationship between top civil servants and the political representatives' influences over public policy processes and outcomes.

Just like politics, bureaucracy does not yield to a singular definition. It is seen as a body of professionals employed to assist in realizing the ideals of the state as well as body of rules or procedures followed in actualizing the decisions of government. Birokrasi (2017) defines bureaucracy as an instrument of administrative processes in the policy

implementation process, with its own interests and ability to be professional and accountable in its duty. This definition relates closely to the use of civil service as synonymous to bureaucracy. Adamolekun (1983) sees the civil service as the body of permanent officials appointed to assist the political executive in formulating and implementing government policies. For Small, Kordosky and Moore (2020), bureaucracy is a system of government that is courteous but impersonal, hierarchical, and based on written records and rules. This explains the procedures followed by bureaucrats in managing big and complex organizations.

Therefore, politics of bureaucracy can be explained to mean the tactics by the bureaucrats to remain relevant in policy processes and the politicians' efforts to be seen to be in charge of public policy processes as elected representatives of the people. It concerns the effects of politics and organized interests on bureaucracy in the policy making, implementation and evaluation (Peters, 2021). Furthermore, politics of bureaucracy is the struggle over power and influence on public policy between elected officials and permanent officials.

Public Policy

Public policy according to Obikeze and Anthony (2004) implies governmental action and programmes of action toward solving societal problems. Ekpo (2014) on his part avers that public policy is a purposive course of action followed by the government or public institutions in an attempt to achieve a particular goal of the state or the other. Public policy denotes the activities of government directed to achieve the stated objectives of government in many policy areas (Quadri, 2022).

Despite these definitions of public policy, it is imperative to emphasis that an explanation and understanding of public policy is inadequate without clarification on the term "public" which clearly separates it from other form of policy. Public can refer to issues involving the masses or everybody. When it is referred to as everybody or the masses, we can talk of people's policy. But is there anything as such in the real sense of the word? That is policy of the people, by the people and for the people. In an attempt to answer such question, Nnadozie (2016) argues that the "publicness" of public policy is purposely used by politicians and government officials to hide the true objective of their intentions and to deceive or misled the uninformed and gullible members of the society. Such usage cannot help to explain the true meaning and essence of public policy.

Public is also referred to as own and run by the government or state. So, one can talk of government or state policies. Employing any of these terms to qualify policy appears to convey the same meaning for which the term public is used. However, while government is more restrictive and has a specified span of life, the state is not so constrained. Government is the instrument through which the will of the state is construed and achieved. The term state is more expansive, inclusive, enduring and permanent than government. Therefore, it is more appropriate to see public policy as state policy. Hence, public policy can be defined as the statements of the actions, interests and programmes of the dominant class in a state enforced through the instrumentality of government on its behalf. Therefore, public policy in Nigeria cannot reasonably be appreciated without understanding the character of the Nigeria state and the dominant class it is meant to serve.

The Nigerian state after a 'flag independence" in 1960 was described as an appendage or neo-colonial peripheral capitalist state (Nnadozie, 2016) and the nature of its governing or dominant class as dependent and captive (Nnadozie, 2010). According to the author, as an appendage or neo-colonial state within the international capitalist order, Nigeria serves two masters-international finance capitals on one hand, and members of the Nigerian political elite on the other. Consequently, unlike its foreign

masters (western capitalist powers), a surrogate or neo-colonial state such as Nigeria, cannot initiate critical national policy, or take any vital national decisions without reference to and approval of the core capitalist states of the United States, Britain, Germany, Japan, Italy, Canada and France- the grandmasters of the system.

5. Contributions of bureaucracy in public policy process

The public bureaucracy as a representative of the state machinery charged with the responsibilities of formulation and execution of policies and programmes in government establishment play key roles in public policy processes. The top civil servants play definite roles in virtually all the phases of public policy processes starting from identification of problem(s), policy initiation/setting of agenda, policy formulation, policy adoption or legitimation, policy implementation and policy review.

Identification of problems: The bureaucrats because they are on the tap, come in daily contact with the needs, problems, aspiration and interest of the citizenry and their environment, thus, possessing firsthand knowledge of the short comings, inadequacies and problems of present policy and the new challenges. They are most times confronted with demands for actions from people as the government that is most visible at the reach of the people.

Policy initiation: In the same manner, the bureaucrats utilize their closeness to the community to present to the political leadership concerned identified issues substantially affecting the people negatively needing government intervention. From experiences of previous or on-going policies, they can initiate a more workable format to address the deprivations people suffer. It is at this stage that the top civil servants working alone or through other stakeholders transform and synthesize the problem or challenges involved into coherent and manageable issues that are forwarded to the legislature or executive arm of government for consideration and necessary action (Nnadozie, 2016).

Formulation of policy: This stage is almost an extension of the second phase. The bureaucrats assist the politicians in the consideration of the costs and benefits of the demands, as well as the alternative courses of actions required in tackling them. As professionals, the civil servants draw from their wealth of experience, formulate policies that are workable and within resources of government. They equally source and provide their political heads with necessary statistics or information that would enable them defend their proposal before legislative oversights.

Policy legitimation: This is the stage where the bureaucrats play very minimal role. It is here that the legislature gives authority seal on favorable or acceptable policies that were formulated. However, the top civil servants have ways of securing approvals from the legislature. Since the legislators in various committees oversight their mandates, they form good relationships which facilitate lobbying to get what they want. The bureaucrats also liaise with pressure groups to pressure the legislature for legitimation of interested policies.

Policy implementation: According to Onyekwelu, Okpalibekwe and Dike (2015), within the context of policy formulation and implementation, the state bureaucracy more appropriately belongs to policy implementation system. This phase is to the civil servants what the fourth stage is to the legislators. The bureaucrats translate the policy objectives to visible actions. At this stage, the bureaucrats go to the field (community) and practicalize the intentions of the policy. In addition, at the level of implementation, the civil servants are allowed significant latitude to use their discretional powers in dealing with situations. It is worthy of note that sometimes such discretionary action constitutes new policy thrusts, or forms the basis for new policy actions and remains indispensable for effective government.

Policy review: This is the final stage of the public policy-making process where efforts are made to subject the policy implemented or being implemented to critical analysis in order to evaluate the extent to which the policy actualized or is actualizing the goals intended on targeted constituencies, individuals or groups. As the instrument and part of the executive arm of government, the civil servants in their different departments are called to do policy impact assessments. Since the bureaucrats were in the front seat in the implementation stage, it is convenient for them to professionally state the gains, challenges and recommend areas for improvement.

Following the enormous tasks of the state bureaucracy in public policy processes, it is designed after the Weberian principles to facilitate efficiency and effectiveness in the discharge of their roles. Some of the salient characteristics of bureaucracy include as presented in Baba and Attah (2016);

- Body of non-elective government officials;
- An administrative policy-making group;
- Government characterized by specialization of functions, adherence of fixed rules, and a hierarchy of authority;
- A system of administration marked by official rules, red tapism and proliferation.
- A well-defined division of administrative labor among persons and officers;
- A personnel system with consistent patterns of recruitment and stable linear careers;
- A hierarchy among officers, such that the authority and status are differentially distributed among actors and
- Formal and informal networks that connect organizational actors to one another through flows of information and patterns of cooperation.

However, with reference to the orthodox processes of public policy making and the characteristics of bureaucracy, it needs to be stressed that they are only ideal situation which when subjected to the realities on ground do not, in most cases follow the processes as enunciated, not even in developed countries; not to talk of Nigeria and Africa at large. The character of the Nigerian state, nature of her dominant class and their objectives pollute both her bureaucracy and the public policy it produces. Under the situation, Nnadozie (2004) argues that public policy as well as bureaucracy primarily serves as a means of creating conducive environment for primitive accumulation, penetration and expansion of the international capital.

6. Nigeria bureaucracy and public policy processes

The roles and functions of the Nigeria bureaucracy are largely conditioned and determined by the character of the state in Nigeria and its changing roles in the society. The bureaucracy as an instrument of the state and part and parcel of the executive arm of government, the Nigeria bureaucracy is structured and organized towards the realization of the aims and objectives of the state in the society.

The civil service in Nigeria is of a colonial creation. The model of civil service bequeathed to Nigeria by her colonial master (Britain) was narrow in structure and objectives. It was basically structured in such a manner that enabled colonial masters to successfully extract the much coveted financial and material resources needed by their controlling metropolitan powers. Colonialism was therefore marked by a lack of accountability and absence of transparency (Alabi, 2019). On the other hand, the service was not particularly programmed to bother about the needs and problems of the Nigerian people. The civil service in Nigeria was therefore not established for the general welfare and betterment of the life of the Nigerian people. Hence, the cardinal role of the state bureaucracy in Nigeria is maintenance of law and order. So, all through the six stages of the public policy processes, the bureaucracy is occupied with responsibilities to ensure that law and order is maintained in the polity. This ensures peace and stability in the system for

public and private businesses. As stated before now, during the many years of British rule in Nigeria, the roles and functions of the civil service were geared towards the realization of Her Majesty's imperial objectives in the country. At inception, when the colonial state was struggling to find its feet, the service was essentially a peace-keeping institutions pre-occupied with maintaining law and order and the replacement of the pre-capitalist mode of production and social formation with capitalist mode and ways of life.

As the colonial state was becoming gradually but firmly established, the service expanded its scope of activities from purely a law-and-order maintenance body to include also the collection of customs duties, taxes and other forms of economic activities. Nnadozie (2004) maintains that the establishment of those basic infrastructures such as railway lines, roads, waterways and other communication network which are necessary for the socio-economic exploitation of the country were all premised on the law-and-order function of the civil service.

However, as political independence approached, these roles and functions of the service once again expanded. This was the period of political and bureaucratic apprenticeship when the British picked a handful of people to hand over power to consolidate their interest even when they have left physically. At this time, the roles and functions of the civil service not only expanded but also underwent some modifications to reflect the changing character of the Nigeria state, particularly the emergence of a new class of leaders who by their form and character are better described as governing class. The service stabilized the polity for the change of guard by maintaining law and order still. The bureaucracy in Nigeria carried over the traditions, norms and mentality of its departing colonial overlords, a tradition and culture suitable only to a government whose preoccupation was the maintenance of law and order than the promotion of the material and social needs of the people. The implication is that civil

service in Nigeria, as in any neo-colonial state is serving two masters; international capital and the local governing class. The function of the bureaucracy whether in terms of advising the political leaders or government of the day in policy initiation and formulation, or in the execution of the policies and programmes made by them, is to serve as a veritable instrument and a faithful handmaid of both the domestic and international capital for the realization of these goals and objectives of the state.

With the emergence of the military in the politics and governance of the country, the roles and functions of the civil service expanded tremendously, exceedingly far the traditional duty of advising the political leaders and executing policies and programmes made by them. In the absence of the legislature and political parties, the civil servants in Nigeria acquired wide range of power and influence. Due to their political inexperience and other social threats to their institutional cohesion and integrity, the military high command had no alternative but to ally with the only remaining insiders in government, the civil service brass or the permanent politicians, after the displacement of the civilian politicians. Consequently, the activities and power of public bureaucrats expanded so widely and dramatically that most of them not only started feeling but indeed behaved as equals if not greater than their political bosses. In the final analysis, these roles, functions and activities of the civil service in Nigeria are all geared towards private accumulation and expansion of capital, irrespective of the type of governments in the country (military dictatorship or civil 'democratic' dictatorship). Despite its outward differences and trappings, the roles and functions of the civil service in Nigeria are basically the same in both types of regimes.

Therefore, the civil service in Nigeria has a definite and historical role which is to assist the Nigeria state to create and develop the necessary conditions and environment for private accumulation and expansion of capital. As an institution created and nurtured

by colonialism and one managed and controlled by a dependent governing class with the active support of international capital, the civil service is inherently biased and necessarily hamstrung against the Nigerian masses (Nnadozie, 2004). It is incapable of generating programmes and policies or adopting development strategies capable of addressing the issue of the underdeveloped features of the Nigerian society including those of mass poverty, squalor, social degradation and lack of social infrastructure and human dignity. Consequently, the service in its public policy processes, is primarily concerned with generating policies and programmes capable of protecting and expanding private property and the penetration of international capital in the country.

7. Contributions of the political representatives in public policy in Nigeria

The political representatives in public policy process include the president as the chief executive, his aides/advisors, the legislators and their aides/advisors. These are the politicians or the political class who are elected to represent the people in government. As the representatives of the people, they enjoy the recognition/support of the people (legitimacy), have power of control over the budget (money), determine the autonomy for government agencies working with them and are the voice of the people as their representatives. These qualities position them well to contribute in public policy processes effectively if properly utilized.

On the part of the executive, particularly the president and his chief aides including the advisers in the presidency constitute the major source of initiative in the development of policy proposals (Okeke, 2001). The president plays both legislative and executive leadership. In Nigeria, the president is expected to present policy recommendations to the National Assembly, and also to present draft bills as well as approve (assent) bills passed by the National Assembly. As a result of the weakness and underdeveloped nature

of interest aggregating structures as political parties, professional associations, labour unions in Nigeria, as other developing countries, the executive (president) wields prominent influence on policy making than developed countries (Dror, 1968).

Furthermore, the executive approves annual budget and other federal laws passed by the National Assembly. After legislative actions on budget estimates presented to the National Assembly, the president signs the budget into law for use. In the same manner, working with his aides and advisers, he studies the bills presented for his assent from the National Assembly, signs according or reject such bills. On the other hand, through his ministers as political heads of ministries, demands accounts from the civil servants on the progress of government policies and programmes undergoing implementation to serve their right purposes.

In the same vein, by exercising his power over the control of the purse, the executive determines what goes to the respective ministries, department and agencies of government. The president through the Ministries of Finance harmonizes, adds or cuts various ministerial estimates before transmitting the estimate to the National Assembly. It also determines the level of discretion or autonomy to be extended to the civil servants in carrying out specific government policies and programmes to ensure effective control through executive orders.

As legislature, the National Assembly play indispensable roles in the public policy making process directly or through delegation. In a democracy, legislators can play roles such as adoption of bills as proposals for law, debating of bills emanating from elsewhere and determining of major policy in the public policy making processes (Okeke, 2001). The legislators also oversight the implementation of public policies and programmes to accountability and quality. As the representatives of the people, they see to it that public funds are properly utilized. Results from oversight function can lead to appropriation of more

fund or even cancelation or stoppage of work for further investigations (Peter, Ayogu & Egbara, 2025).

In addition, the legislators adopt bills received from either the executive or other sources as proposals for law. Such bills received are debated and discussed through the various channels of legislation to make sure quality implementable laws are made. Through such debates, unmerited bills are thrown out to avoid wasting public funds on unproductive policies and programmes.

However, it is important to emphasize that the contributions of the political representatives in Nigeria in public policy processes are equally hamstrung by the character of the Nigeria state and the nature of the governing class piloting the affairs of the country as their bureaucracy counterpart. Nigeria as a neo-colonial state is programmed to perpetuate expansion of international capital and private accumulation of wealth for both local and international capitalists. Their efforts at policies and programmes targeting the masses are accidental or survivalist when their continuation in office is threatened especially during election years.

8. Bureaucratic weapons in politics of bureaucracy

Even though, government by bureaucracy, meaning an integrated and purposive civil service elite, is not a likely occurrence, does not mean that the struggle over power and influence on public policy between elective officials and permanent officials will not go on still (Plowden, 1990). In this struggle, each side has important weapons and stratagems at their disposal. The bureaucracy has the following opportunities to influence public policy outcomes, especially in Nigeria:

Information and expertise: The bureaucracy is the reservoir of government information. The data with which the government operates are generated, processed, stored and retrieved through the instrumentality of the civil service. Since a given agency of government specializes in a particular area of service, it develops competences and capabilities to understand and interpret it. Consequently, such relative monopoly of information can be translated into power. In attempt to make policies by the relatively ignorant politicians in most technical policy areas require them to rely on the highly exposed experts. Under such situation, information supplied could be manipulated to protect agency interests or other protected interests at times against the express political wishes of the political representatives. This is more so in Nigeria where the qualification for the highest political position is evidence of school certificate, not minding the grade of pass.

Power of decision: Despite the ''metaphysical pathos'' about the red tape and inefficiency of state bureaucracy, compared with many political institutions especially legislative institutions, it is still a model of efficiency (Gouldner, 1955). Having few procedural rules concerning free discussion, voting and the like, bureaucracies are in a position to act more rapidly than legislatures on many issues. In part because of the capacity of bureaucratic organizations to make decisions quickly, and to utilize technical information more readily than do legislatures, there has been a continuing trend to delegate authority to them (Schoenbrod, 1993). Also, bureaucratic agencies do not have to be as sensitive to the political pressures that may be coming from constituents in making their decisions.

Permanence: A civil servant enjoys stability in his career. He is privileged to serve a long period of time under changing political leaderships. The bureaucrats are immune from arbitrary dismissal from service. Such person stays in office for thirty-five years or until attaining the age of 65 years; whichever that comes first. In some places, they cannot be transferred or reposted at will because certain rules guide against such arbitrariness. Civil servants can always adopt a strategy of waiting and delay. Ministers come and go, but the basic work of civil servants does not change, simply because the ministers rarely have time to learn what has to be changed or

to put such a program into effect. In addition, as Peter (2021) put it, the longer time perspective of the permanent civil service allows them to pick solutions to problems that may take a long time to come to fruition but that may ultimately solve a problem rather than offering only a "quick fix" before the next election.

Apolitical: The civil servants are said to exist to be seen, not heard. They are meant to be neutral in their services. This feature allows them to argue that not only are they expert in what they do, but also that their decisions will not be affected by the need to placate voters. This partisan impartiality goes hand-in-hand with the expertise of the bureaucracy to make a strong argument that their decisions will be superior on technical grounds to those that would be taken by political institutions. It is an important means of understanding how bureaucracies are able to compete successfully for influence and power in decision making. Civil servants do not have to stand for election, are not faced with constituency pressures or pressures for conformity from their own party, and have been effectively neutered politically in most societies.

9. Politicians' weapons in politics of bureaucracy

Legitimacy: The political institutions are the representatives of the people, being elected by the people. The political heads in the executive and the legislature are conferred with the authority of decision making. Hence, whatever the civil servants do in policy making process is assisting the people's representatives to serve the state better. Few constitutions even mention bureaucracies, much less vest any formal powers of decision making in them. Therefore, whether by delegation, funding, or acquiescence, bureaucratic actions must be legitimated by constitutionally prescribed actors. More often than not this legitimation comes through inaction and acquiescence rather than through formal action, but it still involves a transfer of authority (Peter, 2021).

Budgetary powers: Another potent tool of influence and control of the political institutions over the civil servants lies in the power of the purse. In order to survive, prosper and grow, agencies require money and must be able to influence political institutions to provide them with it. The budgetary process is one of the crucial points of interaction in bureaucratic politics. The bureaucracy seeks money and the autonomy to spend it, while the political institutions seek control of their funds and also seek to ensure accountability as to how it will be spent. The importance of the budget for both sets of actors has led to the development of a number of techniques on both sides to attempt to counteract the powers of the other. The legislature might choose to starve unconforming agencies of needed funds or activate strict accountability processes until such becomes submissive.

Power of delegation: As the custodian of the will of the people, the political leadership are the ones responsible for determining the extent of discretion allowed the agencies. In general, agencies seek to acquire as much latitude as they can. This refers primarily to latitude to make policy; they might seek a blanket grant of authority in an area of policy. It may also refer to budgeting; they might seek some latitude in the way in which funds may be spent. Given the volume of business and the complexity of modern government, bureaucracies are likely to be given greater latitude. On the other hand, the power to grant such latitude is a powerful weapon for political institutions and can be used to gain concessions of information, or compliance on other issues. It is the constitutional role of political institutions to control policy and its implementation. Moreover, according to Peter (2001) they must be responsible politically for what happens to the country, and they want to control policy if they are to be held responsible for it. Thus, in addition to bargaining over money, agencies and political institutions must also bargain over the degree of autonomy to be granted, the responsibility for funds and accounting, and the procedures for delegating authority.

10. Effects of politics of bureaucracy on public policy processes in Nigeria

It is a common parlance that where elephants fight, it is the grasses that suffer. No doubt, both the political representatives and top civil servants as bureaucracy play important roles in public policy making and outcomes. In scenarios where the interactions of these important actors in public policy turn hostile, its effects would be negative and could explain the failures of public policy outcomes in Nigeria as major policy issues (poverty, unemployment, insecurity, etc.) besetting the country from independence are still much with us decades after. Others effects of the problem include:

Increasing cost of governance: In a bid to reduce or at least control the influence of the bureaucrats in public policy initiation, the political representatives usually resort to the use of what Peter (2018) referred to 'counterstaffs'. It is the development of their own staffs and independent sources of information. These enable them to remove the bureaucratic bias in the information received. In Nigeria, the chief executives at the state and federal levels usually appoint avalanche of aides. In fact, the constitution has no limit to the number of aides the president or state governors should appoint. Currently, the Tinubu Administration maintains about three aides on information alone. The proliferation of counterstaffs or aides shoots up cost of governance. The many aides appointed are placed on high salaries and allowances which put undue pressures on the budget for developmental projects.

Supply of manipulated or distorted information: Another consequence of rivalry between the top civil servants and political leaders in public policy process is manipulation or supply of distorted information to the politicians, who are largely ignorant in technical issues requiring policy actions. The civil servant could derail policy objectives by supplying half truths or information to the politicians. When this is the case, policies and programmes produced can hardly last the test of time, leading to frequent policy and programmes changes despite huge cost in men and materials in their enactment.

Retaliatory civil service reforms/undue interference: The politicians in government in Nigeria in attempt to stifle the 'overbearing' civil service have at various time resorted to reforms that jeopardize the professionalism and job security of civil servants. Civil servants suspected not to align with politicians are either transferred or victimized in service. The political leaders do terminate career of top civil servants through compulsory retirement or tinkering with rules to pave ways for their favorites. In Nigeria, it is not uncommon to have people (civil servants) from the zones of the of the chief executive to be appointed to positions of influence to reassure them of support against extant rules.

Delay in policies/programmes initiation and execution: With the crisis of who determines the what happens in policy mostly covertly, the civil servant buy out time by delaying provision of certain information. This is because the politicians are on short appointment and would want urgency to have something in their names before leaving offices. Whereas, the civil servants who are on permanent appointment could delay policy/programmes initiation and implementation to protect their agency interest or obtain some concessions from the political heads.

Inadequate discretionary powers: Since the political leaders are the custodians of the will of the people, they determine the latitudes allowed the civil servants in executing public policies and programmes. Through this means, the civil servants would only have narrow discretion in the course of implementing policies, thereby witling down their influences. With their powers trimmed down, definitely they would be submissive to the political leaders.

11. Measures to improve bureaucrats-politicians' relationship in public policy in Nigeria

Even though the covert war of influence between the bureaucrats and the political leadership in public policy processes cannot be eradicated, the measures explained below can reduce the tension.

Higher qualifications and experiences for elected/appointed representatives: Lack of good education, exposure and experiences leads to inferiority complex and suspensions. Consequently, higher educational qualification with the exposures and experiences that go with it could make the politicians more stable in dealing with the bureaucrats. The current educational qualification for the office of the president and governor being ordinary level (SSCE) would no doubt leave the political leaders including legislators largely vulnerable. However, when the qualification becomes more elitist with a minimum of a good first degree, the political leaders to be produced would be better informed to understand the intricacies of public policies fairly.

Professionalism of the civil servants should be re-emphasized: The professionalism of the civil servants does not just stop at their expert knowledge. It extends to moral and ethics of the service, requiring the civil servants to maintain high moral and ethics in providing required information to their political heads. It should be reemphasized that they crucify self and arrogance in their service to government. Where correction of the political heads is needed, it should be carried out in love, respect and decorum.

Exposure to basic civic education good governance principles: In addition to the higher educational qualification recommended earlier, both the bureaucrats and political leadership should be exposed to basic civic education and good governance principles to imbibe patriotic service in them. This is necessary because the cause of the friction between the civil servants and their political heads is not popular interest but parochial. Granted civic education is now compulsory in basic schools, those who missed the opportunity should be exposed to training and development programmes in this regard where they should learn to put the interest of the country first and above others as leaders.

12. CONCLUSION

Effective public policy initiation and implementation in Nigeria will continue to be elusive until the key actors, particularly the bureaucrats and the political leadership are groomed to eschew ego and parochialism in their roles in public policy processes. Both play complementary roles in public policy processes and every form of unnecessary display of power should be discouraged. It is only when there is little or no tension between these important public policy stakeholders that policy issues in Nigeria such as multidimensional poverty, unemployment, insecurity and food security can be effectively addressed.

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