



An assessment of National Identity Number policy and its implementation challenges in Bauchi State

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to critically assess the institutional framework for implementing the policy in Bauchi metropolis; and ascertain the human factors affecting/inhibiting successful implementation of the National Identity Number policy in Bauchi State. An explanatory and descriptive cross-sectional design, an approach using mixed methods of data collection was used in this study. Data for the study were both primary and secondary. Two sets of questionnaires were administered to obtain primary data. One out of every one hundred households were selected through systematic random sampling in each residential areas. Equally, two workers each were selected from the six (6) enrolment centres in Bauchi through quota sampling technique. In all, a total of 220 household's heads and 12 workers were sampled.

Keywords: Assessment, Challenges, implementation, Policy and NIN.

1. Introduction

The National Identification policy in Nigeria was first conceived by the military administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1978 but was later abandoned by succeeding administration just like several other government policies that suffered implementation. Given the privilege to serve the nation again in 1999, under a civilian rule, Obasanjo revisited the policy by funding its implementation. The main intent of this policy is to provide every citizen in the country with valid means of identification. In 2003, a new scheme managed by the Directorate of National Civic Registration (DNCR) was initiated and about 54 million Nigerians were registered (NIMC policy Handbook). However, the policy failed to meet official expectations and was also hampered by allegations of corruption and embezzlement of funds (The Punch, 2003). This development caused a major setback in the implementation of the laudable

initiative. To further give the policy a facelift later metamorphosed into National Identity Management Commission through Act 23 of 2007. The new policy presents a paradigm shift from mere production of identity cards to identify management via de-duplication, authentication and verification processes.

While justifying the act 23 above, the then Board Chairman of the National Identity Management Commission, Prince Uche Secondus remarked that the panacea to this challenge (identity management), is to embark on the same project all over again. The signing of the contract marked the fourth time that Nigerian Government attempt to issue national ID Cards to Nigerians (Leadership Newspaper, 2010). As good as the intention of the preceding administration might be, the conduct of the exercise has remained unsuccessful (The Vanguard, 2012). The question that needs to be addressed is what modalities should

be employed to prevent the current effort from ending up in similar fate at a time Nigeria need a good record of citizenship and reliable database for development purpose? It is the belief of this study that, the project would not suffer same fate of the previous attempts on digital identity management policies. It is on this note that this study is set to examine the implementation of the NIMC policy and the challenges facing the project with a view to providing information that will assist policy makers in closing the gap between the policy intention and expected outcome in Nigeria. As part of solutions to the lingering problem in the country, the Federal Government of Nigeria conceived the use of NIN as an effective tool in crime control and combating prevalent and seemingly insurmountable terrorist activities in Nigeria.

The widening gap between policy implementation and expected outcomes has been a source of concern to governments and individuals alike especially in the developing countries of the world. As a result, several studies have been advanced by scholars to unravel the challenges facing policy implementation over the years. Most of these studies have focused on different policies with different outcomes. These include (Muhammad, 2008), Ugwuanyi and Emma (2013), Braimah, Rufai and Anin-Bonsu (2014), Bolaji, Gray and Campbell-Evans (2015), Ahmed and Dantata (2016), Obodo (2016), Ajulor (2018) among several others.

Therefore, there is need to investigate the NIN Policy and implementation challenges in a named location with people of different socioeconomic background to broaden the understanding of policy operations. This is because different people react to similar issues differently based on their socioeconomic characteristics (Afon, 2006). It is on this note that this study is set to investigate implementation challenges

of NIN in the different residential zones of Bauchi, Bauchi State.

Research Questions

1. What is the institutional framework that exist for the implementation of the NIN Policy and how can it be strengthened to achieve its objectives in the study area
2. To what extent did personal, group or institutional interest or prejudice affect the implementation of the NIN policy in the study area?

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to assess the implementation challenges of NIN policy in Bauchi with a view to providing information capable of assisting decision makers in improving on implementations strategies to guaranteeing effective identity management system in Nigeria.

However, the specific objectives are to: -

- i. To assess the institutional framework for implementing the NIN policy in the study area.
- ii. To assess the personal, group or institutional interest or prejudice affecting the implementation of the NIN policy in the study area.

2. Literature Review

The term policy has been defined variously by different scholars in relation to their professional and academic backgrounds. The proliferation of literature on policy debate has been a never-ending process since the inception of the concept.

In a developing nation like Nigeria, public policy is very critical since it is the spring board to channelling development. Some of the numerous policies formulated in Nigeria includes but not limited to the following. National Policy on Education 1977, National Population Policy 1988, National Housing Policy 1991, Poverty Alleviation Policy 2004, and National Health Insurance Schemes 2005, Vision 2010, 2020, 7-point Agenda among several

others, specifically the National Identification Number of 2007 which is the focus of this study is a policy of government aiming at providing solutions to long standing identification problems in Nigeria. However, it is pertinent to note that policy formulation is not an end in itself but a means to an end. Therefore, if the goals and objectives of formulated policies are to be achieved, such should be properly implemented.

Distinctively, Olaniyi (1998) in his reference to Roberts and Edwards (1991) posits that any policy made by the political actors concerning a targeted goals and methods of attaining them remains a public policy. The concern of policy is towards achieving a particular goal in a specified situation. Basically, it might be long term or short term goal but policies are made to attain targeted goals. Be that as it may, public policy is a set of inter-related decisions by political actors or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them with a specified situation.

The overall objectives of every government are to bring about a qualitative improvement in the standard of living of its citizens and to promote growth and development generally, realizing these noble objectives entail not only the formulation of policies but also the effective implementation of such formulated policies by the public beaurecracy (Ugwuanyi and Emma, 2013). It is on the basis of this that Obodo (2013). Commented that a well-articulated but unimplemented policy on any business of government is decidedly less valuable than the paper on which it is written. Ajulor (2018) argue that policy is only a good plan stored in the archive if it is not implemented correctly. Effiong (2013) quoting Jeffrey pressman and Aaron Widavsey:

The separation of policy from implementation is fatal. It is not better

than mindless implementation without a sense of direction. This implies that a good policy followed by inefficient implementation not only generates troublesome outcome, it also leads to colossal waste of funds and efforts and failure in service delivery (Obodo 2013).

Implementation literally means carrying out, accomplishing, fulfilling, producing or completing a given task (Ugwuanyi and Emma, 2013). Implementation stage of the policy process is an operational phase where policy is actually translated into action with the hope of solving some public problems (Braithwaite, Rufa'I and Amin-Bonsu, 2014). It involves a series of activities undertaken by the state and its agencies to achieve the goals and objectives articulated in policy statements (Kwankye and Cofie, 2015).

Edwards (1980) cited in Makinde (2005) defines policy implementation as a stage of policy making between the establishment of a policy (Such as the passage of a legislative act, the issuing of an executive order, or the promulgation of a regulatory rule) and the consequences of the policy for the people whom it effects. It also involves a wide variety of actions such as issuing and enforcing directives, disbursing funds, making loans, assigning and hiring personnel, etc. Ajulor (2017) noted that policy implementation is critical to the success of any policy since it constitutes the epicentre of the policy process. It involves the identification of policy plans, programme, projects, and activities, precise definition of the distinct roles of implementation organizations or agencies; details of strategies and necessary linkages and coordinating mechanisms; as well as resources (human, financial, material, technology, information acquisition, and utilization).

It has been established that developing nations especially Nigeria never lacked in planning or policy formulation but the problem has always been achieving results.

Policy and implementation in this part of the world have been faced with several challenges which actually widen the gap between policy objectives and expected outcome.

Honadle (1979) in Makinde (2005) linked the problem associated with policy implementation to that of social carpenters and masons who fail to build to specifications and thus distort the beautiful blue print. The study was equating policy with a building plan. Quoting the author as said:” Implementation is the nemesis of designers, it conjures up images of plans gone away and of social carpenters and masons who fail to build to specifications and thereby distort the beautiful blue prints for progress which were handled to them. it provokes memories of “good” ideas that did not work and places the blame on the second (and second-class) member of the policy and administration team....” There could be implementation gap as a result of many factors, which could arise from the policy itself, the policy maker, or the environment in which the policy has been made (Makinde, 2005).

To understand why policies fail informed the study by Muhammad and Muhbubur (2008). Specifically, this study focused on primary education policy in Bangladesh. It was discovered that there is indirect foreign pressure and influence of powerful elites in policy formulation and did not follow local democratic values and proper rules and regulations. Other factors which account for the failure of the policy include institutional weakness, lack of political will as well as inadequate resources impacts on policy implementation.

In a similar study based on Nigeria Bolaji, Gray and Campbell-Evans (2015), and Gray and Campbell-Evans (2017) also Atelhe and Akande (2018) attributed failure of National education policies in Nigeria to Lukewarm attitudes of beauracatic institutions and lack of understanding of the overall vision and

purpose for implementing the policy. These studies also documented that planning inconsistency, political instability and over centralized mechanism of decision making and execution contributed to why education policy failed in Nigeria. There was uniformity in the conclusion of these studies that achieving desirable educational policy outcomes depends largely on having focused, responsible and purposeful political leader’s policy outcomes depend largely on having focused, responsible and purposeful political leaders at the heads of the various government tiers (Federal, State and Local/district government)

The concern for the target beneficiary and policy environment gravitates Ajulor (2018) who investigated the challenges confronting implementation of sustainable development goal in Nigeria. The study discovered that Nigeria and most countries in Africa entered economic recessions because of policy implementation challenges such as unrealistic goal setting, political patronage, and neglect of target beneficiaries and lack of consideration of policy environment. The study recommend that Africa should set policy goals that are implementable. The sustainable development goals should be reviewed by African Countries to properly domestic goals with environmental considerations. Also, the cooperation between the policy implementers and the target beneficiary is highly necessary for the success of any policy.

Bogoro and Samson (2014) carried out study on the knowledge and attitude of residents towards implementation of development control policy in Bauchi State, Nigeria The research which was carried out through questionnaire administration, interview and onsite assessment method discovered that residents awareness about development control was high in their respective study areas, the outcome of these researches

indicate there was no significant correlation between the residents level of education and compliance with development control regulations. Although people see development control as a way government curtail their freedom and right to use their land as they like, but can this be said about NIN in Nigeria.

3. Methodology

Research design

An exploratory and descriptive cross-sectional design, an approach using mixed methods of data collection was used in this study. The rationale for choosing exploratory research design is because the low face of implementation of National Identification Number (NIN) of Bauchi State were yet to be identified. In mixed research methods the qualitative data is used to support data that are obtained quantitatively thereby increasing the validity of the result. The use of mixed design also allows the strength of each method to interact and develop a comprehensive investigation of the variables and research questions. In this case, the aim was to find out whether the independent variables (in isolation or jointly) were statistically related to the dependent variable implementation and NIN.

Sample and Sampling technique

The sampling interval is the ratio of the number of cases in the population to the desired sample size. The first 'k' would be chosen randomly and subsequent selection of the 100 house along the line of movement. This will represent 1.0% of the buildings. A total of two hundred and twenty building were selected in Bauchi (core 77; transition 83; suburban 45 and planning scheme 15) respectively. In all, a total of two hundred and twenty respondents were contacted.

The multistage sampling techniques were used in the collection of primary data from residents. Information was also sourced

from staff of the NIMC in enrolment centres in Bauchi. In other words, two sets of questionnaire were administered for the purpose of this study. One set on the residents and the other on the enrolment officers and supervisions of the NIN implementation agency in the study area.

Secondary Data

Secondary information was obtained from the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) in the study area. Information on the number of enrolment centre and number of workers in each of the centre were solicited. Maps of Bauchi state and Bauchi metropolis were also obtained from the ministry of physical planning and urban development in Bauchi state. Information were also obtained from text materials both published and unpublished.

4. Results and Discussion

Respondents' reasons for failure to have NIN in the Study Area

The category of respondents who failed to register for NIN in the study area were asked to indicate reasons for not doing so and the result were as presented Table 1. The major reasons adducted to not having NIN by respondents was delay in period of registration accounting for 19.8%. Personal interview with some of the applicants revealed apart from the fact that most of the enrolment centres in the study area did not have enough space to accommodate high number of enrolees, the equipment and personnel were also inadequate which made the applicants to wait for long before getting registered. Contrary to provision in NIMC Regulations of 2007 which directed all Nigerian to get enrolled for NIN, respondents in the study area still believed that government did not make NIN registration compulsory as this constituted 17.4%. Next to this was that respondents did not see NIN registration as profitable when compare it with other means of

identification like permanent voter card (PVC) used for election. This is because holders of PVC stand better chance of getting money from politicians as they offer sell their votes during elections. Those who believed having NIN is not profitable accounted for 15.3%. Closely related to this were those who did not see it as necessarily representing 14.6%. The proportion of respondents in this category

as obtained in the different residential zones reduces from the core to suburban. Other reasons as indicated by respondents were too many requirements (10.4%), it takes time before card is issued to enrollee (10.0%) and I don't know where to register (7.6%). In order to make NIN registration to be more effective, all the reasons identified must be addressed.

Table 1: Respondents reason for failure to enrol in NIN in the study area

Reasons	Residential Density		Transit		Low Freq.	%	Schem e Freq.	%	Total Freq.	%
	Core Freq.	%	ion Freq.	%						
Officers demand for bribe	02	1.4	02	2.0	00	0.0	00	0.0	04	1.4
Too many requirements	16	11.3	11	11.2	03	7.0	00	0.0	30	10.4
I don't know where to register	13	9.2	14	4.0	05	12.5	00	0.0	22	7.6
Delay in period of registration	27	19.5	20	20.0	09	22.5	01	14.3	57	19.8
I don't see it necessary	19	13.5	17	17.0	06	15.5	00	0.0	42	14.6
Gov't did not make NIN-Compulsory	23	16.3	19	19.0	06	15.0	02	28.6	50	17.4
It take time before card-Issued	17	12.1	08	8.0	03	7.5	01	14.3	29	10.0
Is not profitable like other Means of identification	20	14.2	15	15.0	07	17.5	02	28.5	44	15.3
Others	04	2.8	04	4.0	01	2.5	01	14.3	10	3.5
Total	141	100.0	100	100.0	40	100.0	07	100.0	288	100.0

Source Author's Field Survey, 2023

Perceived importance of NIN by respondents in the study area

The benefits derivable from the use of NIN were probed into the results is as contained

in Table 2 below is major reasons acceded to by majority of respondents in the study area was that it helps in curbing impersonation of identity which represent

23.3%. For example, at the point of enrolment the immigration officials attached to each ERC examines the application to ascertain his/her indigenization status. Next to this is that NIN helps in identifying aliens in our environments (18.6%). Closely related to this to this is that NIN can help in curbing criminality which constitutes 15.4%. The respondents who believed that when

majority of citizens in the country get enrolled it can provide us with accurate figure on which social and economic planning can be based accounted for 15.3% in the study area. The use of NIN can help to curb falsification of figures and reduces cost of duplication of biodata registration by different agencies respectively accounted for 14.4% and 10.7% in the study area.

Table 2 Importance of NIN registration as perceived by respondents in the study area

Importance	Residential Density		Transiti		Low		Schem		Total	
	Cor	%	on	%	Freq.	%	e	%	Freq.	%
	Freq		Freq.				Freq.			
Helps in identifying aliens in our environment.	60	19.8	65	19.2	31	16.6	10	15.2	166	18.6
Helps in curbing criminality.	49	16.2	48	14.2	28	15.0	13	19.7	138	15.4
Assist in providing accurate figure on which social and eco. Planning is based helps in curbing Falsification of figures	46	15.2	51	15.1	27	14.4	13	19.7	37	15.3
Helps in curbing falsification of Figures.	33	10.9	55	16.3	32	17.1	09	13.6	129	14.4
It reduces cost of duplication of bio-data registration	40	13.2	32	9.4	19	10.2	05	7.6	96	10.7
It helps in curbing impersonation of identity.	71	23.4	80	23.7	44	23.5	13	19.7	208	23.3
Others	04	1.3	07	2.1	06	3.2	03	4.5	20	2.3
Total	303	100.0	338	100.0	40	10.0	66	100.0	894	100.0

Source Author's Field Survey, 2023

Perceived problems of NIMC during implementation of NIN in the study area

For any policy to be effective such policy must be adequately implemented. Implementation of NIN in Nigeria is entrusted in National Identity Management Commission. In the process of implementing NIN policy in Nigeria, the agency encountered some problems which was investigated and the results is as contained in Table 3 below. The most prominent problem as identified by respondents was absence of enabling law to ensure adequate compliance to NIN registration. This accounted for 21.0%. Although there were regulations (NIMC Act of 2007) in place which make NIN registration compulsory for everyone in the country but respondents seems not to be aware of the provision of the law or the law has not been properly enforced to achieve adequate compliance, poor enlightenment campaign was another problem identified confronting implementation of NIN and

this accounted for 20.6%. This finding further confirms the earlier results that agency saddled with responsibility of publicizing the activities of government (NOA) has not measure up to expectations. Poor staff strength, poor funding and inadequate tools and equipment also hinder smooth operations of the agency as these respectively accounted for 9.8% and 9.6%. There are other agencies which collect biodata of individuals for use-specific and these agencies most often carry out overlapping functions with NIMC which may have far reaching cost implication as well as render NIN implementation ineffective. The respondents in the study agreed to this as overlapping of functions accounted for 5.3%. It is conclusive based on findings in this study that if NIN policy would succeed, not only that there should be aggressive public enlightenment also the NIMC Act of 2007 which made NIN registration compulsory should be properly enforced.

Table 3: Problems of NIMC as perceived by respondents in the study area.

Problems	Residential Density		Transit		Low Freq.	%	Schem		Total Freq.	%
	Cor	%	ion	%			e	%		
	Freq.		Freq.				Freq.			
Bribe and corruption	08	3.1	07	2.1	04	2.4	03	4.5	22	2.7
Poor enlightenment campaign	63	24.7	61	18.2	32	9.0	14	20.9	170	20.6
Poor staff strength	23	9.0	35	10.4	15	9.0	08	11.9	81	9.8
Lack of accessibility to enrolment centre.	60	23.5	61	18.2	35	21.0	10	14.9	166	20.2
Inadequate tools & equipment	20	7.8	35	10.4	15	9.0	09	13.2	79	9.6
Poor funding	27	10.6	32	9.6	14	8.4	07	10.5	80	9.7



Overlapping of functions with other agencies	07	2.8	26	7.8	09	5.4	02	3.0	44	5.3
Absence of enabling law to ensure compliance.	45	17.7	72	21.5	43	25.7	13	194	173	21.0
Others	02	0.8	06	1.8	00	0.0	01	1.5	09	1.1
Total	255	100.0	335	100.0	167	10.0	67	100.0	824	100.0

Source Author's Field Survey, 2023

Residents Perceived Solutions to the Problems Confronting NIN Implementation in the Study Area

Solutions to the problems confronting NIMC during implementation of NIN in Bauchi was ascertained through the resident's agreement index (RAI). To do this, solutions to problems of public policy implementation as related to NIMC were identified in the literature. It is believe that the level of agreement of residents with each of the solutions would indicate its level of effectiveness. To this end, a high level of agreement is an indication that the solutions would be highly effective and

SWV= $\sum_{i=1} P_1 V_1$ equ. (1)

Where: SWV is the summation of weight value, P₁ is the respondent rating a particular solutions and V₁ is the weight value assigned to each variable

The residents agreement index (RAI) for each variable solutions is arrived at by dividing the summation of weight value by the addition of the number of respondents to each of the five ratings. This is expressed mathematically as:

RAI = $\frac{SWV}{\sum P_1}$ equ. (2)

Where RAI is the resident's agreement index, SWV and P₁ are as defined previously. The closer the RAI of a particular variables is to five, the higher is the assured resident's level of agreements to the solutions to problems of NIMC in the study area. The residents agreement index obtained for the study area based on the identified solutions is as presented below.

vice versa. To calculate the residents agreement index (RAI), the residents were instructed to rate each variables (solutions) using one of the five ratings: very much in agreement, agreed, just agree, disagree and very much in disagreement. Each of this was respectively assigned a value of 5,4,3,2 and 1. The summation of weight value (SWV) for each of the solutions is obtained through the addition of the product of responses for each rating of the solutions and their respective weight values.

Mathematically, this is expressed as:

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Also shown in the table is the average RAI denoted by RAI for the identified variables. This is obtained by summing up the RAI for each variables and dividing it by the total number of variables. (N = 10) The deviation of the resident's agreement index is also presented in Table 4.21. To calculate this, the average resident's agreement index is subtracted from the

resident's agreement index for each variables. This is denoted as RAI-RAI. From the table below, it can be seen that the highest RAI was 4.34, while the lowest was 1.77. The value of RAI has a direct variation with the level of agreement with a particular solutions (Afon, 2006). The average RAI for the study area denoted as RAI was 2.25. Therefore the deviation around the mean of the highest and the lowest RAI were 2.09 and -0.48 respectively. The variables with positive deviation about the mean of RAI were variables considered by the residents that can substantially solve the problems confronting NIMC in the process of implementing NIN in the study area. These variables were; enrolment of NIN should be given to private company and implementation should be handled by private company with index values of 4.34 and 4.33 respectively. For examples part of the reasons for privatizations of government investment in Nigeria is to minimize the massive waste, misuse, abuse and fraud that characterized the management and day to day running of these organizations. Most importantly, it will allow for efficient use and optimum performance of public corporations in the country.

However, the residents perceptions on solutions to the problems of NIMC in Bauchi were not in any way different as handing over enrolment/registration of NIN to private company and implementation of NIN policy should be given to private company were between agreed and much in agreement. This indicates high level of agreement to the two variables by the residents in the study area. The variables with negative deviations around the mean of RAI, were the variables that the residents showed low level of agreement to, or considered not so important in solving the problems confronting NIMC and NIN implementation in the study area. The low

level of agreement by the residents to these variables does not out rightly indicate they cannot form part of solutions to challenges facing NIN implementation in the study area. Such variables include: Integration of data bases in government agencies, NIN registration should he made compulsory by government, sanctioning of erring officers. Time taken to get enrolled should be improved upon, adequate funding, location of enrolment centre within accessible distance and embarking on public education and sensitization campaign. Their deviations around the mean of RAI were -0.01, -0.09, -0.17, -0.38, -0.41, -0.42 and -0.48. The residents perception on variables such as integration of data bases in government, sanctioning of erring officers, were between just in agreement, disagree, while residents perception on adequate funding, location of enrolment centre within accessible distance and embarking on public education and sensitization campaign fell between disagree and much in disagreement. This implies low level of tolerance by the residents.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Implementation phase where policy is actually translated into action with the hope of solving some public problem. This implies that a good policy followed by inefficient implementation not only generates troublesome outcome, it also leads to colossal waste of funds and efforts and failure in service delivery.

This study therefore concludes that implementation of National Identification Number (NIN) in Bauchi is confronted with several challenges capable of impeding the success level of the operation in the study area. Some of these from perspectives of workers in the agency and individuals are poor funding, poor career development, poor working condition, poor remuneration, inadequate staff, inadequate tool and equipment. While

from perspectives in individuals are bribe and corruption, inadequate number of enrolment centres, overlapping of functions with other agencies, absence of enabling law to compel respondents to register for NIN and poor enlightenment campaign about NIN also contributed to not too impressive success of NIN policy implementation in Bauchi State.

The study recommend that For effective implementation of the public policy, there

is need for adequate and regular provision of funds, effort should be made to improve on the welfare conditions of the workers. Furthermore, efforts should be made to license private companies to carry out NIN registration while NIMC serves as watch dog and control NIN registration operation in the country as this will not only make implementation more effective, it will also reduce the level of corruption in the system.

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