



Challenges and strategies for the implementation of public policies by bureaucrats in the Federal Republic of Nigeria

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Abstract

Over the years in Nigeria, numerous brilliant policies have been formulated and implemented. Yet there is apparent and significant development to show for that as evidenced by the fact that Nigeria has continued to remain in the category of the Least Developed Countries of the world. The study utilized documentary research design and secondary sources of data collection. This suggests that mere formulation of policies should become not the major issue in Nigeria but rather their effective implementation as it is only effectively implemented policies that can bring about national development. Against this background, the study explored the importance of public policy in governance and public administration-generally, deeply discussed public bureaucracy and its role in policy implementation, critically examined and analysed the key Challenges inhibiting the public bureaucracy in Nigeria from effectively implementing policies. In carrying out the study, the secondary sources of information or data gathering were mostly relied on and consequently, content analysis technique was adopted in the analysis. Problems to effective policy implementation by the public in this country include the ineffective and corrupt political leadership under which the public bureaucracy the pervasive and deep-rooted corruption within the public bureaucracy and the pressure and influence of primordial demands and values on the bureaucracy which negatively affect implementation activities and processes. The study recommend that government should work towards ensuring the evolvment of both purposeful and responsible political and bureaucratic leaderships as well as the realization of politics and administration dichotomy study in order to create room for the bureaucracy to operate and implement policies essentially on the basis of laid down ideal bureaucratic rules and principles.

Keywords: Bureaucrats, Challenges, Developing countries, Public policy implementation,

1. Introduction

Governments the world over utilizes the tool of public policy in proffering solutions to the problems confronting their people. It is geared towards securing and maintaining the welfare of the populace. This is why public policy is seen as the plan of government for its programmes and activities. 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). Nigeria as a country is not left out in realizing the importance of public policies and their uses. Right from early days of independence, Nigerian governments have designed public policies for the well-being of her people. In fact, it has been said that the country is not lacking in designing beautiful policies and printing them in colourful books with good appellations. Hence, in Nigeria we have had the Vision 2010, Vision 2020, 7 Points Agendas, Green Revolution, N- Power, SURE-P, Structural Adjustment Programme to mention a few (Ikelegbe 2018, Abah, 2019).



However, these well-intentioned policies scarcely impacted Nigerians positively on sustainable basis. Despite the various policies with their costs implications, poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, insecurity indexes of the country are still very ugly. According to the World Bank Report (2021), number of poor persons in Nigeria for year 2020 was 89.0million. about 6. 1 million people relapsed into poverty in 2021 alone. It noted that 4 in 10 Nigerians live below the national poverty line with lack of education, access to basic infrastructure, electricity, safe drinking water and improved sanitation (Ikelegbe, 2018). It is also estimated that in 2022, over 95. 1 million will be in extreme poverty. Hence, Nigeria was recently rated as the poverty capital of the world. The same report indicts that unemployment rate is embarrassing and out of school children are increasing. It showed that in 2020, 33% of the labour force was unemployed, 32.5% in 2021 and projected to hit 35% in 2022 (Ezeani, 2019).

In Nigeria, due to the failure of public policies in the power sector to improve significantly power supply for household and industrial uses, corporate bodies are said to be relocating to other African countries. This development among others worsens already bad unemployment situation in the country. The result includes spiral insecurity and other vices. Able-bodied Nigerian youths are ready tools for bandits and other organized criminals. Graduates unemployment has fueled ritualistic orientation to make money quick since government has failed them. This is what they refer to “yahoo yahoo boys/girls”. It is disastrous for the nation and individual lured into it. The image of the country among the comity of nations has been negatively affected (Ozor, 2020; Mankinde, 2021).

In light of this, and in accordance with the contention of Ugo and Ukpere (2020), a sufficient resolution to the issue of effective policy implementation failures in Nigeria

must logically flow from a thorough examination and analysis of its causes, the study is slated to examine policy implementation as a major stage in the policy process, emphasize the necessity and role of public bureaucracy in the effective implementation of policies, investigate barriers that prevent the public bureaucracy in Nigeria from carrying out policies in an effective manner, and offer suggestions for overcoming these challenges and bolstering the capacity of the Nigerian public bureaucracy in the direction of effective policy implementation. Sequel to the above, this paper seeks to examine the Challenges and Strategies for the implementation of Public Policies by Bureaucrats in the Federal Republic of Nigeria and proffer useful recommendations to mitigate the menace thereto.

Over the years, the gap between strategies for the implementation of public policies and goal attainment due to inadequate implementation of these policies has become of great concern to many observers. The paper is interested in identifying the implementation constraints and to explore the implications of poor educational policy implementation for national development. Following a clarification of the challenges and strategies for the implementation of public policies by bureaucrats in the federal republic of Nigeria. The paper comes out with the following Question: What are the challenges of poor implementation of bureaucrat’s policies for national development? What strategies can be adopted to ensure better policy implementation?

Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Public Policy

Policy is seen as course or principle of action proposed or adopted by individuals, groups, organizations or government. Policy is seen as being central to the operation and activities of both private and public organizations. However, a policy



option made by groups or individual is referred to as private policy while the one made by the government is regarded as public policy. Here, we are concerned with policies of government known as public policy (Ikelegbe, 2018).

Though public policy is viewed from different perspective, thereby generating varied definition of the concept, but what is gamine is that it is the principled guide to action taken by the government of the state with regards to a class of issues in a manner consistent with law and institutional customs. In the view of Egonwan (1991), it is a governmental programme of action, while to Okoro (2005), policy refers to hard patterns of resource allocation represented by projects and programmes designed to respond to perceived public problems or challenges requiring government action for their solution. Contributing to the concept of public policy, Ezeani, (2006) sees it as the proposed course of action which government intends to implement in respect of a given problem or situation confronting it. Ikelegbe(2006) asserts a broader perspective when he states that public policy is the integrated course and programmes of action that government has set and the framework or guide it has designed to direct action and practices in certain problem areas. Public policy is mode setting action which showcases the direction and guides the way to the realization of certain goals and objectives desired by the government. Some of these public policies in Nigeria in different sectors include; the National Policy on Education, National Population Policy, National Housing Policy, Poverty Alleviation Policy among others (Egonwan, 2019).

Policy implementation

The next and most crucial stage after policy formulation is its implementation. It is, perhaps, for its importance that some scholars refer to the policy implementation stage as the hub of policy process. The process of converting a policy into actions

and assumptions into results through numerous projects and programs is essentially what constitutes policy implementation (Okoli and Onah, 2020; Ikelegbe, 2018). According to Kraft and Furlong (2017) as well as Ajaegbu and Eze (2021), the process and actions involved in applying, carrying out, and managing a policy are really referred to as policy implementation. Implementing policies involves a range of tasks, such as issuing and enforcing directives, allocating funds, signing contracts, gathering information and analyzing issues, employing and assigning staff, forming committees and commissions, delegating tasks and responsibilities, and making interim decisions, among other things (Nweke, 2022).

The primary reason for the success or failure of any particular policy is the pattern and kind of its execution. In this regard, Nwankwo and Apeh (2018) note that the implementation phase of a policy is the most crucial since it determines whether the policy will succeed or fail. In this regard, Ikelegbe (2018) and Nweke (2022) also point out that poor implementation is a major cause of policy failures. Put another way, the cornerstone of any successful policy is its effective execution, since only policies with this quality are able to address societal issues.

Effective policy Implementation

Essentially, and in accordance with Hornby (2021), the term effective denotes the ability to generate desired or intended outcomes as well as successful outcomes. Therefore, in the context of this work, effective policy implementation means carrying out a policy in a way that result in the achievement of the policy's aims and objectives. The specified and planned development goals and objectives are, in essence, accomplished when a policy is implemented effectively. Consequently, the primary goal or emphasis of bureaucratic actions ought to be on the most efficient way to carry out policies.



Public Bureaucracy

In essence, bureaucracy is the systematic, logical arrangement of positions and duties in a hierarchical fashion, with internal policies and procedures guiding the process to prevent the blending of personal interests and official obligations (Ozor, 2021). Based on formal structures and authority, the rules and regulations also specify the responsibilities of members and the protocols for performing official activities. To put it simply, bureaucracy is a formal administrative structure that has specific operational characteristics, such as a set of rules, impersonality, rationality, neutrality, division of labor, and hierarchy of authority (Ezeani, 2019). Churches, government agencies, and private, sophisticated businesses are all considered bureaucracies (Heady, 2019). However, our focus in this study is the public bureaucracy and which in Nigeria is composed of the federal civil service, the civil services of the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, the civil services of the 774 local government areas, the Federal and State parastatals or corporations, the armed forces bureaucracy the police bureaucracy, federal and state agencies, institutions and commissions etc. Bureaucrats which is a derivative of bureaucracy refers to those who work and operate within the public bureaucracy.

Since public bureaucracy is now a necessary component of modern society, it is highly valued (Mankinde, 2018). This is thus because the pace and direction of policy implementation are set by the public bureaucracy. In theory, the public bureaucracy makes the decisions about what needs to be done, how it should be done, and who will really gain from it. Indeed, the public bureaucracy is responsible for turning well-thought-out plans into workable solutions. Public bureaucracy essentially fills the gap that exists between the intent of legislation and its implementation.

According to Dick (2018), public bureaucracy is becoming more and more important and ubiquitous in modern countries. In fact, there is no longer any question about public bureaucracy's ability to be a true instrument of development and change. Thus, the effectiveness and sufficiency of public bureaucracy are critical to the country as a whole as well as to every aspect of the development process (Abah, 2020). This is due to the fact that the public bureaucracy's capability dictates what gets done, where it gets done, when it gets done, and how well it gets done. A policy cannot accomplish its goals and objectives if the governmental bureaucracy is incapable of implementing it properly. Indeed, a society's potential for development increases with the public bureaucracy's ability to carry out policies in an efficient manner. In summary, we posit that for any government to be seen as administratively competent, there must be evidence of the near absence of a gap between the intentions of a policy and the actual achievement of these intentions or goals. And this can only come to be when the public bureaucracy implements policies effectively. For this, therefore, the issue of effective policy implementation needs to be taken seriously both in practice and in academic discourse.

The State Bureaucracy and Public Policy-Formulation and Implementation.

Public policy to Carl (1975) is the proposed course of action of the government or one of its division. Public policy is what government chooses to do or not to do. It is the integrated courses and program of action that government has set, and the frame work or guide it has designed to direct actions and practices in certain problem areas. Generally, public policies are meant to solve societal problems particularly those considered to require public or collective action (Ikelegbe, 2006). The policy process is a sequential pattern of action, a complex web of structure, activities and interaction relating to



techniques, strategies, resources, costs, benefits and policy goods and services among persons, groups and agencies. It consists of several activities and interactions between the environment which generates demands, the political system or more accurately the conversion process which converts and translates demands and preferences into policy output and the implementation system which consists of implementing agencies and activities (Larkey,1979). This results in output and performance which interacts with the environment in the form of impact. This again is capable of generating further demands and preferences which makes the entire process interactive. The policy process could therefore be said to consist of six key aspects: policy generation, problem identification, policy formulation policy adoption, policy implementation, policy evaluation and policy impact.

As administrators they are strategically placed to perform the the policy generation task. According to Ikelegbe (2006), they come in daily contact (in the course of carrying out government activities) with the needs, problems, aspiration and interest of the citizenry and their environment, thus, possessing first-hand knowledge of the short comings, inadequacies and problems of present policy. These contacts provide the bureaucrats the challenges and ideas to formulate new policy responses. They therefore, because of their position in the scheme of public policy-making-generates and initiate a large chunk of public policy. Rourke (1976) noted that:

the policy making power of bureaucracies is also inherent in her being the administrative organization for implementing policy. The implementing function enables bureaucratic policy influence in two ways. First, it sets the range within which policies could be made. The

bureaucratic abilities, experiences and orientations sets, restricts or facilitates policy choices. Political leaders make policies that their bureaucracies have abilities to implement. Second, political leaders also know that implementation success will be facilitated, if the appropriate bureaucratic agencies are well disposed towards policy

Concept of Strategic Policy

A policy strategy focuses your organization's public policy objectives. Generally, organizations undertake a number of initiatives towards the pursuit of a policy objective without clearly outlining how these initiatives interact and complement each other. Strategic planning is a set of interactive and overlapping decision leading to the development of an effective strategy for a firm Strategic planning is the process of deciding on the objectives of the organisation on changes in the objectives on the resources used to obtain this objective and on the policies that will govern the acquisition use and disposition of these resources. The strategy-performance interface must also consider the new challenges in inter-agency relationships and the rise of non-bureaucratic networks in the regulatory state as well as links between government and the more differentiated general public. Many of the market-emulating reforms of the past decades have strengthened the output and outcome side of policy services in promoting customer value, public value, or value for money. Within related public administration discussions, there is an emerging idea that regulation, in its multiple forms, actually covers most aspects of governance (Jordana & Levi-Faur, 2004, Levi-Faur, 2013).



2.2 Challenges to Effective Policy Implementation by the Public Bureaucracy in Nigeria

In ideal situations, bureaucracy is known and desired essentially for its reliability, efficiency, speed, dependability and effectiveness in implementing policies. This is what it actually is, to a very reasonable extent, in developed nations. In Nigeria however, the bureaucracy appears to be obviously far from being such as its operations and activities is very much fraught with some challenges arising from the existence of certain negative factors and circumstances. Key among these factors includes the followings: -

Ambiguous Goals

Ambiguous goal is one of the challenges to effective implementation of public policies in Nigeria. Nweke (2008) contends that when policies are vague and unrealistic, they enhance the failure of such public policies, stressing that a policy that aims at achieving its goals should make such clear and realistic as clarity of policy goals are very important since it reduces conflict and confusion. In addition to goal clarity, public policy goals must be realistic and simple, showing the achievability of the desired goals. He notes that most policies are made for purposes of the selfish interest of the political leaders and sometimes only to attract public acclaim and attention with less regard to their appropriateness in addressing given problems or the possibility of their effective practical implementation. The above reasons prompted Okoli and Onah (2002) to note that most public policy making objectives in Nigeria are directed towards personal rewards and interests of the political leaders and their colleagues with the result that a policy is judged more on its political merits with the real development need rarely factored into consideration, and for these, most public policies in Nigeria are either inappropriate or lack well defined objectives for their effective implementation.

Poor Ambitions Nature of some Public Policies

Another factor that constitutes an impediment for the effective implementation of public policy in Nigeria is over ambitions nature of some public policies. Some Public policies actually tend to be over ambitions, sweeping and overly fundamental in nature (Mankinde, 2005), stressing that in most cases, the formulation of such over ambitions policies is not borne out of sincere effort to bring about rapid development but just to boast the ego of the political leaders to attract the admiration of the electorates. Example of such public policies are policies that have their main objectives in the provision of free education or free health services to all the citizens especially in some states of the federation. For such policies, the government will be aware that there are no adequate resources, both financial, material and human resources for the effective implementation. Such public policies have witnessed very ineffective implementation resulting in deterioration in quality and standard of service that some people prefer to send their children to private primary and secondary schools and to seek medical services from private hospitals irrespective of the high cost in those private places. Undue Political Interference another constraint to effective policy implementation in Nigeria is undue interference by government officials and political office holders. Though it is the duty of government to make policy, but it demands that after formulating the policy, the government should give the implementing agencies or personnel the free hand to implement such policies without unnecessary interference. Such control and directives are mostly motivated by personal, group or political interests. Once this is the case, the strategies and processes of the implementation is always altered which definitely result to unsuccessful public policy outcome. This situation is getting worse as the headship of such agencies are appointed by the political



office holders as political patronage thereby totally neglecting experience, skill and commitment. This prompted Ugo and Ukpere (2011) to note that public policies in Nigeria is marred by political interest.

Paucity of Data and Reliable Statistics

Public policy planning relies basically on data but in Nigeria like in other developing countries, accurate data is a very scarce commodity and since the success of any policy depends on the reliability of underlying data such as popular census, national income or output, available resources etc. it is difficult to come up with effective policy intentions with inaccurate data. The clearest illustration of the problem of data in Nigeria is the fact that since independence till date, nobody has been able to answer the simple question of how many are we in Nigeria (Ugo et al). They argue that a county that does not know its population would definitely not be in position to determine the other vital statistics necessary for planning; like birth rate, death rate, number of school age and other demographic changes in the population which are essential for planning. In Nigeria, a comprehensive national data base is lacking and conflicting statistics abound in Nigeria as a result of the lack of collaboration and coordination between various federal agencies involved in data collection in such circumstance, the planning exercise will be reduced to a mere guesswork.

Culture and Values of Most Policies

Nweke (2006) argued that most policies of government are abstract things that do not give values in return. He states the example of the Festival of African Culture (FESTAC 77) which he says engulfed a huge sum of money that could have been channelled into other sectors so as to enhance growth and developments in the economy. If public policies do not have values, after implementation, the impact will not be felt by the people thereby making the implementation of such public policies ineffective. Since people have numerous

needs, government abandoning their immediate needs to go for those without values to the people look ineffective after its implementation.

Changes in Government

Changes in government have contributed significantly against the successful implementation of government policies in Nigeria. Ajakaiye (2003) states that frequent changes in government from incessant military coup in the past and frequent changes in the administration in the present democratic era contribute to no small measure the ineffective implementation of public policies, as each succeeding government administration would undo and reject what it met instead of the common slogan that government is a continues process. Here though plans are made to accommodate little variations, in Nigeria, new administration finds it absolutely difficult to continue with the policies of the previous administration. This has led to many abandoned projects which litter the country's landscape today.

Corruption

Edoh (2003) sees corruption as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain, reiterating that this has become a common act in Nigeria as it has destabilized the political system drastically; where government funds are being misappropriated by the leaders who only put the interest of their family and friends at heart while ignoring the masses. In support of Edoh's view, Chimobi (2010) explains further that corruption has eaten so deep into the government and economy that everyone seems to be blinded by it and has almost become an accepted way of life in Nigeria. In Nigeria, the government's income is generated mostly from natural resources, and this income instead of being used for development purposes, is then circulated among the political office holders and their families, leaving the rest of the people to wallow in poverty. The situation has gone so bad that elected leaders practically ignore the affairs and well-being of their



people who elected them into office as they mismanage and embezzle funds meant for the implementation of policies that would impact on the lives of the citizens with impunity. Chimobi (2010) adds further that this leads to bad governance, and there are several issues involved with bad governance in Nigeria which include; use of wrong policies, adaptation to wrong policies and implementation of those wrong policies, which has increased poverty and inequality as well as contributed to the suffering of the citizenry.

2.3 Achieving enhanced effectiveness in Policy Implementation by the Public Bureaucracy in Nigeria

One, there needs to come into existence a focused, responsible and purposeful political leaderships at the heads of the various government tiers (Federal Government, State Government and Local Governments).and the emergence of honest and dedicated bureaucratic leaderships at the heads of public organization or public bureaucracies. It is expected that the democratization process in Nigeria will aid and hasten the coming into existence of such visionary and purposeful leaderships that will be more inclined to developing appropriate policies to address Nigeria's problems and such policies that can be effectively implemented by the Nigerian public bureaucracy.

Two, Government needs to embark on a programme for improving working conditions of the public bureaucrats as this will help to build their morale, dedication and commitment to implementing policies. Specifically, an improvement in pay packages will, for instance, significantly diminish the corruption tendencies among the public bureaucrats in Nigeria and hence allow for the proper use of allocated fund for implementing policies.

Three, there is also the need for a conscious effort by government leadership to reduce the extent to which politics infiltrates bureaucratic activities in Nigeria. This will

ensure that bureaucrats in authority are allowed to exercise real control and authority and to be able to function freely and apply some basic ideals of weberian model of bureaucracy in their administrative processes and procedures. Such will, indeed, allow for more effective functioning of the public Nigerian bureaucracy.

Four, the culture of discontinuity of policies in cases of changes in government or organizational leadership should be discouraged. Specifically, we recommend that the National and the State Assemblies should enact a law that will guarantee continuity of policies made forwards growth and development. This is necessary because, even though government comes and goes, the public bureaucracy remains and should continue the implementation of existing policies unless fundamental developments render their continued implementation impossible or unnecessary. Indeed, if every leader hat comes into position puts aside the ones in place before their tenure, Nigeria will never grow.

2.4 Theoretical Framework of Analysis

The theory used for the explanation of this work is the Progressive Utilization Theory by Rajan (1962) given the general conception of public policy and implementation in Nigeria. It is appropriate to note that public policy and its implementation is meant to solve a perceived problem for both the present and future benefit to the citizens, and this can be achieved not only by how lofty and beautiful such policy is, but by the determination of the implementation bureaucracy in tailoring such policy to give the desired goals and objectives through strategies and collaboration of the beneficiaries.

This theory was propounded by PrabhatRanjan in 1962 in an effort to overcome the strategies of both capitalism and communism (Maheshvaranda, 2003). Maheshvaranda expresses that the theory optimizes the use of socio-economic,



industrial and human resources based on cooperative coordination and a wide basis ranging from local communities to large regions and nations and between the people of diverse geographical areas. He states that the theory seeks the welfare and happiness of all, stressing that it is not concerned only with economic but encompasses the whole of individual and collective existence, educational, social, political and mental well-being of the citizens. It analyzes the political forces that shaped the development of the economy which was described as inhumanity.

This theory captures the essence of this study, as it stresses that socio-economic dimension of ineffective policy implementation include; lack of access to basic social and infrastructural facilities which is the responsibility of the government such as education and skills, ignorant and lack of access to information, basic health care, safe drinking water, transportation system, good road, communication, housing, food among others. The theory stresses that in doing this, the citizens themselves should be seen by government as partners who should be fully involved in initiation and implementation of such policies. The progressive utilization theory is of the view that government alone cannot achieve the desired goals of its policies without integrating the citizens who are the beneficiaries of these policies to see such policies as their, thereby inculcating ownership syndrome through bottom top approach, while the beneficiaries of such policies should not be seen as mere recipient but partners in progress which is the basis for the initiation and implementation of such policy through input-output process. It adds further that since it is the responsibility of the government to provide for the welfare of the citizens, government and its agencies should come up with strategic policy plans devoid of personal or parochial interest for

effective implementation of public policies for the benefit of the citizens they represent.

2.5 Empirical Review

A concern with implementation emerged as an outgrowth of the renewed interest in the substance of policy among post behavioural era. Scholars such as Ololube (2018a, b) and Alasomuka and Ololube (2020) argued that it is imperative and legitimate for policy content to characterize policy making processes and progress.

Public policy implementation has been described as one of the major problems confronting developing countries. Egonmwan (2009) argued that relatively, the successful implementation of public policy is difficult in first world countries, it is more difficult in the third world countries, and may be most difficult in reform-oriented governments in the third world such as Africa and Latin America and most usually it is the problem of widening gap between intention and result. Weimer and Vinning (1992) buttressed this point, by drawing the analogy between implementation and marriage, that if policy adoption is courtship, then implementation is marriage.

According to (Mankinde, 2005), some policies in Nigeria are over ambitious, sweeping and over fundamental in nature. It is sad to say that, the formulation of such over ambitious policies is not borne out of their sincere effort to bring economic growth and development, but to boost the ego of the political leaders. An example of such over ambitious policies is policies having as their basic objectives the provision of constant power supply (electricity) to all citizens. For such policies, there is usually poor funding for the public bureaucracy to effectively implement them. For instance, the policy of constant electricity has witnessed such a very weak implementation which has resulted in the epileptic power supply that most part experience darkness constantly.



Another limiting factor to effective policy implementation in the country is the undue pervasive political interference and influence on the public bureaucracy (Amucheazi 1980). In the context of Nigeria, political leaders are the ones who formulate, control and also implement the policies. This is not wise as such control and implementation are done selfishly and of personal interest. This is more so as in extreme cases of such political control in Nigeria, the bureaucrats are not even allowed to take actions on routine administrative matters without consultation and consent of the political authorities. This has resulted to too much time and energy wastage on implementation of policies in Nigeria.

3. Methodology

The methodology for this study entails observatory and participatory methods. The researchers observed public opinion and outcry on government policies and had participated in group discussion on the matter that concerned the operation of government business in Nigeria. Data for this study is secondary and primary. While the secondary source was based on existing records and documents, the primary sources was both observing trends in the country and also taking part in related discussion as mentioned above.

4. Results and Discussion

Instances of Public Policy/Programme Failures in Nigeria

From independence until now, no government, military or civilian has gone without introducing good policies with noble intentions for the people of Nigeria. However, the fact that Nigerians are still living in darkness with rationed power supply, threatened by staggering unemployment, poverty rates, illiteracy and insecurity is a pointer of failed policies and programmes. There are various instances of public policy/programme collapses in agriculture, education, health, rural

development as well as nation building. A review of a few of these policies/programmes suffices for sober reflection.

N-Power Scheme

The scheme was set up by the All-Progressive Change government of President Muhammadu Buhari on 8th June, 2016 to resolve the problem of youth unemployment and grantee social development. The government created the scheme as a component of its National Social Investment Programme to provide a structure for large scale and relevant work skills acquisition and development and to ensure that each participation will learn and practice most of what is necessary to find or create work. N-power scheme is targeted at youths between 18-35 years who may be graduates or non-graduates. It is expected to run for 2 years after which beneficiaries (graduates) would be engaged in the states' and federal government ministries, departments and agencies. It was made up of six categories before N-knowledge was recently added. They are N-teach, N-health, N-agro, N-build, N-creative and N-tech (Okogba, 2017). While N-teach and N-health are for graduates with NYSC certification or exemption and graduates of NCE and health certificates from schools/colleges of health, others are for non-schooled youths. The federal government recruited 500,000 youths in the first batch of the school with stipends of ₦30,000 per month with tablet phones. By 2019, a total ₦270 billion was estimated to have been spent on the scheme from 2016. However, Erunke (2022) observed disappointments with the scheme and which graduated its first and second batches in 2019. Apart from intermittent delays in the payment of stipends, exited beneficiaries have not been absorbed in the MDAs either at the states or federal levels as promised. There was also ownership problem between the Office of the Vice-President where the scheme was initially domiciled and later the Ministry of Humanitarian Services and



Disaster Management and problem of lack of effective monitoring and control from places of primary assignment (PPAs) as stipends were paid electronically without any form of clearance from PPAs. For two years now, exited beneficiaries have been in the streets confused and frustrated.

Trademoni

Trademoni is an aspect of the federal government social empowerment programme code named, the Government Enterprise and Empowerment programme (GEEP). The programme was set up in 2016 by President Muhammadu Buhari to provide microcredit to traders, farmers, and artisans, petty traders (Ayogu, Udeme & Ecoma, 2019). It grants interest free loans of between ₦10,000 to ₦300,000 in graduating scale of ₦10,000, ₦20,000, ₦50,000, ₦100,000; and 300,000. The startup amount depends on the size of trade. The programme is funded by the Bank of Industry (BOI). However, the manner the money was disbursed in markets during the 2019 general election period made the exercise to be seen as vote buying venture by the APC government. The scheme apart from the use of BVN, there is no effective monitoring for repayment as many that collected went away with the view that they have gotten their share of the national cake. It is unclear how many persons that repaid money collected in full or accessed the full ₦500,000 (Ayogu, Udeme & Ecoma, 2019). There was equally alleged politicization as there were insinuations that markets in some parts of the country benefited more without justifications. Trademoni targeted mostly traders in urban markets that have organized unions and abandoned rural market women who actually needed it. Former president Olusegun Obasanjo allegedly described the scheme as “out-rightly idiotic programme” for sidelining the rural traders in favour of urban counterparts.

Sure-P

The subsidy reinvestment and empowerment programme were birthed by

the former president of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan in 2012. The programme was based on the resolve of the Goodluck administration to reinvesting the Federal Government savings from fuel subsidy removal on critical infrastructure projects and social safety net programme with direct impact on the citizens of Nigeria. It was part of the transformation agenda of federal government. The scheme was headed at various times by Dr. Christopher Kolade, General Martin Luther Agwai and Mr. Ishaya Dare Akau. The objectives involved provision of employment for employed youths, and reduction of social vulnerability among the group in the country through the mechanism of the policy. However, just like other policies/programme before and after it, SURE-P ended up enriching the elite class. Unemployment in Nigeria has not abated. Interns of SURE-P were not absorbed. The graduates were sent to secondary and primary schools to teach even without due tutelage. The only benefit is that interns were placed on ₦30,000 stipends per month which has long stopped, leaving former interns who could not get other means of livelihood confused.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Public policies are instruments through which the government proposes to address the challenges of society. However, findings from this study suggests that uncontrollable influence of international institutions, duplication of agencies involved in policy implementation and crises of public programme/project ownership among others have not allowed public policies in Nigeria to be effectively implemented. They usually fail. Consequently, such failure resulting in poor implementation of development policies and programmes is dangerous to the corporate existence of the country. It leads to waste of human and material resources, sparks loss of confidence/trust of government by the citizens as wee as



battered image of the country in the comity of nations.

The overall objective of every government is 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 entails not only the formulation of policies but also the effective implementation of such formulated policies by the public bureaucracy. Given the number of policies that have been formulated in Nigeria since independence, the nation is supposed to have witnessed tremendous levels of social, economic and political development. The reverse has, however, been the case and this underscores the fact that there has not been effective implementation of those policies by the public bureaucracy in Nigeria. In essence, there has been a wide gap between the development goals of a policy at the formulation stage and the realization of such goals on implementation. To close this ever-widening gap, there is the need for enhancement in the extent to which the public bureaucracy in Nigeria effectively implements policies. For the realization of this enhancement, the recommended measures need to be considered and or adhered to in the course of policy implementation activities of the public bureaucracy. It is expected that with such, public bureaucracy could become the veritable instrument of effective policy implementation and as such an, agent of change and development in Nigeria as it is in the developed nations of the world.

Based on the above facts, the following recommendations are suggested:

Firstly, Target Beneficiaries: It can be said that no single government policy plan is sufficient to meet the needs of the people. It is good to target a specific group for a better policy implementation. The target group should be involved at the formulation stage in order for them to contribute in what affect(s) their lives. This will also give them a sense of belonging and commitment. Secondly, Interaction and Communication

between Government and the other Organizations: Adequate attention should be given the nongovernmental organizations, professional bodies, organized private sector and the civil society groups in the policy process. Thirdly, Monitoring of Project: There should be provision for adequate monitoring of projects, to stop the problem of abandoned projects and to ensure the realization of policy goals. Fourthly, Adequate Resources: Adequate material and human resources needed to implement the policy should be provided. Fifthly, Effective Communication: There must be effective communication between the target beneficiaries and the implementers of policy programs. Sixthly, Encourage the Culture of Continuity: The culture of discontinuity of policies should be discouraged. The national and state assemblies should enact laws that will guarantee continuity of policies made to enhance growth and development. There should be continuity in policy, except when the policy is found not to be useful to the people. Sixthly, Substantial Effort and Continuity of Efforts: Policy implementation will not automatically follow from policy decisions but needs to be treated as a positive purposive process in it. Consequently, substantial effort is required to follow policy from intention to action; and the resources needed for adequate implementation of relevant policies needs to be provided to realize policy objectives.

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