Bureaucracy and Rural Development; the Role of Public Administration in National Development: The Nigerian Perspective

By Eme, Okechukwu Innocent & Emeh, Ikechukwu Eke Jeffry

University Of Nigeria

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1. Introduction

The principle of social organization which characterizes the twentieth-century industrial societies is “rational coordination” otherwise known as ‘Bureaucracy’. Under this form of organization, people are brought together in formal and complex settings run by professionals and experts. The professionals are called ‘Bureaucrats’ while the organizations they run are known as ‘Bureaucracies’. The modern bureaucracy at all levels of government is powerful as bureaucrats interpret laws, make policies and enforce decisions and engage in a variety of other activities that have a direct impact on the lives of citizens. From the backdrop that public administration examines the practice of governance, responsibility and ethics in politics and administration have been debated since the inception of political and administrative theories. An attempt to define the terms as well as controlling behaviour to achieve the desired ends has been difficult in all democratic nations. This is because

Author a: Department of Public Administration and Local Government, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. 
E-mails: okechukwuinnct@yahoo.com, elje14u@yahoo.com

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elected officials are held responsible at least in theory, through periodic elections; but bureaucrats who are not elected, do not come under this control. It has been observed that non-elected bureaucrats are not neutral executors of legislative policies and do in fact, have enormous discretionary powers and responsibilities in decision making which also creates opportunity for irresponsible actions (Elekwa, 2004). While recognizing bureaucracy as the most efficient form of organization, and even indispensable for the modern state, Weber, unfortunately saw it as a threat to individual freedoms, and the ongoing bureaucratization as leading to a "polar night of icy darkness", in which increasing rationalization of human life traps individuals in the "iron cage" of bureaucratic, rule-based, rational control, yet the decisive reason for the advance of bureaucratic organization has always been its purely technical superiority over any other form of organization.

Incidentally, more and more spheres of life are being dominated by large organizations and increasing numbers of people are becoming employees of complex organizations. As a matter of speaking, quite a few aspects of modern society can be studied without reference to bureaucracy. Most obviously in the business world and in modern establishments, the coordination of specialists, in accordance with impersonal rules is highly developed and adopted. The same trend has also been observed to be the pattern in every other areas of the society. Wilmot (1985) and Applebaum and Chamblis (1995) argued that bureaucracy starts from birth (health bureaucracy) to family upbringing (social welfare), to school (educational) to work (civil service, military, commercial, industrial) to worship and death (religion): man is increasingly dominated by bureaucracy. Thus, every sphere of modern life has become very bureaucratic as people are born into bureaucracies; grow in it, live with it, and even die in it. It is bureaucracy all the way and all the time (Aluko and Adesop, 2004).

The bureaucracy, broadly defined, is that apparatus of government designed to implement the decisions of political leaders. Political leaders make policy, the public bureaucracy executes it. If bureaucracy lacks the capacity to implement the policies of the political leadership, those policies, however well intentioned, will not be implemented in an effective manner. This is because, it is one thing to promise development, and quite another to actualise it. Viewed in this light, the role of public bureaucracy in the process of economic, social, and political development looms large indeed. Irrespective of the fact its role is critical to all areas of the development process in Nigeria. Public bureaucracy is a very vital element of the development process in rural development. This is why we say that Bureaucratic capacity determines what will get done, when it will get done, and how well it will get done. The greater the capacity of the bureaucracy to implement complex economic and social development plans, the higher the development potential of that society. This is not to suggest that bureaucracy is the only force in the development process but it is most assuredly a necessary condition (Okafor, 2009).

Concomitantly, many developmental policies, projects and programmes in Nigeria have been deliberately rural based. This is in consideration of the millions of Nigerians residing in the rural areas where they experience, on a daily basis, the stark realities of underdevelopment such as- Hunger, Curable Dieses, Sickness, Ignorance, lack, abject poverty, malnutrition, lack of social security, lack of portable water, lack of access to education and power, declining agricultural exports and food production; poor transportation and health-care delivery; rural-urban migration; lack of industrialization; and disorderly spatial development among others. This is more disheartening considering the fact that most rural areas are inhabited by the bulk of the nation’s population; they serve as the base for the production of food and fibre. They are also the major sources of capital formation for the country, and a principal market for domestic manufactures. In general terms, the rural areas engage in primary activities that form the foundation for any economic development. The important role attached to these rural areas notwithstanding, they are not attractive to live in. This is because of the obvious absence of basic infrastructures and social amenities, which improve the quality of life. Usually, there is absence of potable water, electricity and good feeder roads. They have low purchasing power and standard of living. Attempts at solving these problems had been the concern of virtually all the governments over the years, necessitating the inauguration of laudable developmental programmes such as Operation Feed the Nation (OFN); the National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) and the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) etc aimed at solving problems inherent in rural areas, all of which were divorced from the real issue of bringing development to the people in the rural areas.

However, the unabatedness of these problems despite these laudable policy programmes has been credited to non faithful implementation of these policies. This scenario is hardly at par with the arguments of the public policy makers that rural infrastructure, if and when adequately provided, can and will enhance the quality of life in the rural areas. It is of imminent concern to note that quality of life in the rural areas leave nothing to desire. Evidence has shown that the rural people have benefited very little from most rural development programmes resulting to the perennial underdevelopment of these areas and as such, the people living therein. The assumption which does not equilibrate the evidence has called to question the role of bureaucracy in rural development through their policy formulation and implementation responsibilities. To
better understand the relationship, the next section becomes indispensable.

II. Growth, Development and Governance: The Fulcrum of Developmental State

With the dawn of the 21st century came a realization that an emaciated state is not what delivered the phenomenal growth and development that was seen in the East Asian Tigers during a period when countries elsewhere struggled to sustain standards of living. On the contrary, what seemed to have delivered the success stories of East Asia was a strong state, supported by a highly competent professional and meritocratic public administration. In many instances these states did not prioritize being democratic, and individual human rights were often curbed in the interest of achieving other policy goals. In addition, well articulated and thought-through development strategies garnered all sectors of the society to cooperate in the fulfilment of societal goals.

If the East Asian formula for the developmental state is the only one existing, a fairly superficial analysis of the presence of necessary factors for constituting such developmental states in most of Africa is elusive. Times have changed, and the impetus for establishing democratic regimes is also such that a return to autocracy to achieve development is not an option. As Mkandawire wrote: “the first few examples of developmental states were authoritarian. The new ones will have to be democratic.” Furthermore, development can also not be seen in the aggregate, with the spoils concentrated at the elite level. The requirement now is for equitable distribution of growth, preferably while correcting any biases in distribution that might be the result of some historical developments.

State, in political science, is generally a group of people inhabiting a specific territory and living according to a common legal and political authority; a body politic or nation. In this definition, the term state includes government; in another usage, the two terms are synonymous. Among types of states that developed at various times in history were the city-states of ancient Greece, in which sovereignty rested with the free citizens of an independent city. During the Middle Ages, Europe was divided politically into many small principalities, the boundaries and sovereignties of which changed frequently. From this condition of political anarchy, the modern nation-state, which consists of a group of people with the same or similar nationality inhabiting a definite territory, emerged by a gradual process extending over centuries. The type of government has varied, first taking the form of absolute monarchies and later of constitutional monarchies or republics, some of them federations or unions of semi-independent states. In the 20th century totalitarian dictatorships, in which one ruler assumes absolute power, have been established in some states. But at the wake of the 21st century was the concept of a democratic state. (Microsoft Encarta, 2009). Definitions of the developmental state abounds. The work of Edigheji (2008) is helpful to bring some structure to the conceptual discussion. He distinguishes three broad groups of definitions, each emphasizing another set of features i.e. (1) Where the ideological disposition of the political elites is emphasized, in that the political elite possesses primacy over the ideology of development (e.g. work of Manuel Castells); (2) Where the institutional and organizational structures are emphasized, e.g. “embedded autonomy” as in the work of Peter Evans; and (3) Political institutions that can sustain processes of public deliberation and that enables the broad citizenry to determine and influence the developmental agenda (Kothari, 2006).

Following these broad dimensions, the developmental state is one endowed with qualities of having the capacity to achieve what it sets out to do in terms of economic and societal goals – either through direct intervention particularly by using the regulatory capability of the state; through direct delivery of public goods and services or through more indirect means by mobilizing other resources and rewarding these to work towards the development goals as formulated through legitimate political processes and institutions. Fukuyama (2008) distinguishes between the economic, political and social dimensions of development. This is helpful since in their own rights, or in combination, these provide possible key levers for any development strategy. In order to be regarded as developmental, it follows that the state can focus its energies on only some of the levers, instead of trying to achieve them all simultaneously. The five levers are (i) economic growth; (ii) state building; (iii) rule of law; (iv) democracy and (v) social mobilization. Suffice it to say that these factors are encompassing in the concept of development. Fukuyama cautions, that particularly with respect to the political dimension, one has to note that although they all constitute “institutions” each of these three components of political development has different effects on growth. Relevant to the African context analysis points to the fact that state capacity would seem to be much more important than either rule of law or democracy, particularly at low levels of per capita GDP (i.e., below $1000).5 (Fukuyama 2008: 27) Proceeding to the issue of democracy (i.e. accountability), Fukuyama finds that the actual impact of democratic institutions on growth is highly contextual. He cautions that in countries ruled by competent developmental states, greater political participation, particularly if introduced suddenly, may lead to increased demands for redistribution and rent-seeking, both of which may be detrimental to growth. He finds though, on the other hand, in countries with some...
combination of predatory states, low capacity, and high levels of corruption like Nigeria, democratic accountability may be the only route available to institutional change and long-term growth.

With respect to social mobilisation, and drawing on the work of Samuel Huntington, Fukuyama points to an often manifested negative relationship between the mobilization of new social actors and development, especially when existing political institutions fail to accommodate their demands for participation and do not meet their newly articulated demands. Something like this scenario is unfolding today in Andean countries like Ecuador and Bolivia, where newly mobilized indigenous communities are demanding greater political participation in destabilizing ways. If the political system succeeds in incorporating these actors, it is positive for both political stability and long-term growth.7 This situation would be akin to the transition from limited access societies to open access societies as referred to by North et al. Notwithstanding our emerging consensus around what the developmental state is, or is not, how growth (as distinct from development) is to be achieved is still poorly understood. However, some issues are becoming clearer. The first of these being that the national context and the historical path of the country in which development is to take place are critical determining factors. This automatically rules out the idea of transplanting ideas that has worked in one society, as is, to another society with different dynamics. The work of Acemoglu (2008) with respect to open access orders and limited access orders/ natural states is very instructive in this regards. The second being that the absence of adequate provision by the state of public goods and services, e.g. roads, electricity, modern communications and technology infrastructure and public services, e.g. education and health are major impediments to bring about growth and development. Accordingly there seems to be a self-fulfilling prophecy for poor growth if the state cannot/ could not in the past fulfill its role in terms of the provisioning of public goods and services. The third set of factors relate to the issue of good governance in relation to economic growth and national development. The long-run association between good governance and high incomes is indisputable. The existence of a causal link from the former to the latter is widely accepted. However, there is no evidence that we can systematically rely upon improved governance to generate increased growth over periods of 10 to 20 years. Econometric evidence points to a relation between income levels and governance criteria, but not growth. Rodriks (2008) goes as far as to state that large-scale institutional transformation—of the type entailed by the governance agenda—is hardly ever a prerequisite for getting growth going. In this respect he points to many of the Asian fast growth economies, the most notable being China, that does not do well on any assessment with respect to standard good governance criteria. He concludes for most countries the “good governance” and the “governance for development” agendas are likely to differ substantially. In the fourth instance, a rudimentary state with some minimum capacity is a precondition for growth and development.

III. The Concept Of Development

The concept of development was initially viewed from the dictionary point of view which means ’to change gradually, progressing through a number of stages towards some sort of state of expansion, improvement or completeness or a state in which the subjects true identity is revealed. But after the second World War, especially in the 1960s, development became described as ‘a high national income, accompanied by a market economy and a specialized society in which most people work not to meet their own immediate needs but to produce particular goods and services needed by others and purchased in cash (Onah, 2010). This was in line with W.W. Rostow’s description of society as ‘a high mass consumption society’. In such societies, development was seen in terms of structure and growth of the national economy; and the degree of development and underdevelopment was measured in terms of National Income whose two most common indicators are- per capita income and average annual rate of growth in National Income. This concept of development waxed unquestioned in both developing and developed nations until the mid 1960s when people began to ask whether the ‘high mass consumption society’ that developing nations are aspiring to is ideal. This point marked the departure from the economic concept of development to the new concept of development, whose most fundamental feature is their concern with mankind.

The concept of development has been variously discussed in literatures especially in the social sciences such that its definition has negated a single generally accepted definition. Okoli and Onah (2002) had asserted that development involves progression, movement and advance towards something better. It is improvement on the material and non-material aspects of life. It involves actions, reaction and motion. A developing community is thus a community on motion, a people in search of self improvement; and a group concerned with, and committed to, its advancement through its own efforts. He also observed that development goes beyond economic and social indicators to include the improvement of human resources and positive change in their behaviour. For us, development includes increase in citizens’ access to; food, water and shelter; information and means of communication; healthcare delivery; good motorable road; good education, and justice.
When these are obtainable, there will be increase in the individual’s dignity, happiness and patriotic values and quality of life. This is probably why Todaro (1982) defined development as a “multi-dimensional process involving the re-organization and re-orientation of the entire economic and social system. This involves in addition to improvement of income and output, radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures as well as in popular attitudes, customs and beliefs”. The main contention according to Ujo (1994) is that development is both a physical process and a state of mind. The transformation of institution is one aspect. The other aspect is that the thinking of the people must change. According to Emezi (1979), the actions, reactions and interactions which qualify for inclusion as elements of development’ are products of rational thinking, conscious planning, and genuine citizens’ involvement. They are not chance events or chance phenomena, as observed by Okoli and Onah. They relate first and foremost, to the economic system because they seek to raise living standards, widen extensively the scope of productive work at the community level and create and strengthen the necessary foundational infrastructure for higher, larger and more beneficial changes in the economy. Secondly, they relate to the social system because they affect education, health, housing, social ethic and justice and these are matters of both the body and the mind which jointly facilitate individual growth and development in the society. Thirdly, they relate to the political system because they seek to create better patterns of legitimacy patterns that create conditions which enable all or the most significant groups in the population to participate in the political process of making decisions and allocating scarce resources and values of their communities. According to Onah (2007), the most fundamental feature of what we may, for want of better term, call the ‘new’ concepts of development, is their concern with mankind as development is conceived as a state of human wellbeing rather than as the state of national economy. The conceptualization of development in the aspect of the state of national economy is referred to as the economic development but when it is mixed with another like socio-economic, it definitely should be looking at the totality of the well being of man hence the social or societal progression of man alongside his economic well-being completely defined a developed man. This concern was expressed in a statement known as the Cocoyoc Declaration, which was adopted by participants at a seminar organized by the United Nations Council on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Cocoyoc, Mexico, in 1974. The declaration states:

Our first concern is to redefine the whole purpose of development. This should not be to develop things but to develop man. Human beings have basic needs: food, shelter, clothing, health, education. Any process of growth that does not lead to their fulfilment—or even worse, disrupt them—is a travesty of the idea of development.

In line with the above assertion or declaration, Dudley seers (1969), one of the first economists in the developed world to emphasize this aspect of development, wrote:

The question to ask about country’s development is therefore; what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then, beyond doubt, this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result “development” even if per capita income doubled.

Digging deep into what development means and what it is not, Okoli (2007) contended that development can and in fact, does encompass positive (functional) and negative (dysfunctional) aspects and consequences simultaneously. Accordingly, as a concept, development is the attainment of an ever-shifting but always higher level of equilibrium between the positive (functional) and the negative (dysfunctional) elements within the society and the individual. As a practice, it entails a simultaneous disruption and re-ordering of society to achieve material and non material abundance and eroding the socio-psychological balance of the individual.

However, as a strategy, development should aim at simultaneously disrupting and re-ordering society to achieve material and non material abundance and reinforcing and restructuring society to equilibrate the socio-psychological balance of the individual. As a societal phenomenon, it dwells in the realms of socio-psychological conversion. To achieve development of any sort, the pattern of relationship between the executive and the legislature is very important. It is in this regard that the next section dwells on the relationship between the political and permanent executives. This is in lieu of the fact that development packages are policy issues which emanates and get executed by the executive arm of government.

IV. Relationship Between Political And Permanent Executives

Power is the most important variable in the study of bureaucracy. The control of bureaucracy by political leaders has of late diminished due to the growth in the size and discretionary powers of bureaucracies. The relationship between the political leaders and bureaucracy is very intricate and complex, symbiotic as far as the formation and implementation of policies is
concerned. Bureaucratic help, guidance and support are vital to the political leadership and bureaucrats have many assets: their permanence, freedom from electoral worries, their knowledge of the files, and their control of communication - which they can use to get their way in encounters with political masters. Relationship between the bureaucracy and the politicians shows that there is a general trend towards strengthening of bureaucracies vis-a-vis the political structures. But to generalize this is not easy, keeping in view the fact that the specific situation varies from country to country. In Britain, bureaucrats are recruited and trained to show political sensitivity; their influence will, therefore, be interpretative. But French political system, being characterised by greater political instability and the traditions of stronger political authority, makes too much use of bureaucracy.

Bureaucratic power is concentrated in the two wings of the administrative system: Grand corps and the Polytechnicians. Due to their broad based education, highly elitist character, the bureaucrats are well equipped to exercise power and keep a grip over administrative machinery. In Nigeria, bureaucracy professionalism has not been successful even when there are many universities that offer the course public administration to train future bureaucrats and host of other institutes that are specialist in training bureaucrats such as ASCON yet It appears that bureaucracy occupies a relatively subordinate position vis-à-vis the political executives in the Nigeria. The political executives have all the power because there is a system of appointment of political executives on a very large scale at the will of the President, and these appointments are done in a hasty manner. To be significantly recognized, the permanent bureaucrats trade grounds with their political counterparts to get enriched. Both the political and permanent executives connive to bastardize the system. As a result, the permanent executives emerge more powerful and influential. This is why this paper takes a paradigm shift in the issue of development to see the role of the state in its provision of development or otherwise. To do, the concept of bureaucracy will be examined.

a) Bureaucracy: The Meaning, Definitions, The Good And Bad Sides

The term bureaucracy is derived from the French word ‘bureau’ which means ‘office’. Literally, bureaucracy means that power is in the hand of officials. Sociologists use the term to designate a certain type of structure, a particular organization of rationally coordinated unequal, and reject the term which equates bureaucracy with “red tape”, inefficiency and the likes. But in Public Administration, Redtapism is brought to fore because of the below expectations level of policy implementation and execution the government offers to the people. Howbeit, most social scientists define bureaucracy in a more neutral way as the formal organization of administrative tasks. In defining bureaucracy as the formal organization of administrative officials, social scientists have tried to avoid prejudices. A bureaucracy is not necessarily rigid, insensitive or power striving. Nevertheless, the idea of bureaucracy, as it is used in social science theory does carry special connotations. Hence bureaucracy is a kind of formal administrative structure that has distinctive characteristics and problems.

Max Weber has been credited with having made the most thorough analysis of bureaucracy. Accordingly, he is ranked as the greatest exponent of bureaucracy as his work in this area is treated in academic discourse as a classical piece. Consequently, Weber’s conception of bureaucracy becomes crucial to this paper. Max Weber (1946) conceived bureaucracy thus:

The fully developed bureaucratic mechanism compares with other organizations exactly as does the machine with the non-mechanical modes of production. Precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs - these are raised to the optimum point in the strictly bureaucratic administration ... Its specific nature develops the more perfectly the more bureaucracy is ‘dehumanized’; the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business, love, hatred, and all purely personal irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation.

Complementarily, Webster’s Third International Dictionary (1971) defined bureaucracy as a system of administration marked by constant striving for increased functions and power, by lack of initiative and flexibility, by indifference of human needs or public opinion, and by a tendency to defer decisions to superior or to impede action with red tape... the body of officials that gives effect to such a system.

Coser and Rosenberg (1976) defined bureaucracy as that type of hierarchical organization which is designed rationally to coordinate the work of many individuals in the pursuit of large-scale administrative tasks; an administrative organization based on a hierarchical structure and governed by written rules and established procedures; The authority attached to an official and the position of an official within the hierarchy depends on the office held, rather than the personal attributes and status of the incumbent. A type of organization marked by a clear hierarchy of authority, the existence of written rules of procedure, and staffed by full-time, salaried officials, often held to be one of the characteristics of an early state or civilization. It is the administration of a government...
chiefly through bureaus or departments staffed with nonelected officials. Simply put, Bureaucracy is Government by permanent office-holders. It is a professional corps of officials organized in a pyramidal hierarchy and functioning under impersonal, uniform rules and procedures. Its characteristics were first formulated systematically by Max Weber, who saw in the bureaucratic organization a highly developed division of labour, authority based on administrative rules rather than personal allegiance or social custom, and a "rational" and impersonal institution whose members function more as "offices" than as individuals. For Weber, bureaucracy was a form of legalistic "domination" inevitable under capitalism. Later writers saw in bureaucracy a tendency to concentrate power at the top and become dictatorial, as occurred in the Soviet Union. Robert K. Merton emphasized its red tape and inefficiency due to blind conformity to procedures, as initiatives are forbidden and laws are obeyed to the last letter. This is why more recent theories have stressed the role of managerial cliques, occupational interest groups, or individual power-seekers in creating politicized organizations characterized by internal conflict.

Nobbs (1984), Olugbile (1997) and Mullins (1999) summarized the main features of Weber’s ideal bureaucracy. These are: (1) appointment of officials according to technical qualifications and merit as officials are not elected; (2) rules and regulations govern official’s specialized work as officials work impersonally showing neither fear nor favour to anyone; (3) promotion allows efficient officials to climb higher in the hierarchical power structure as officials enter a career and do not expect preferential treatment, or property rights related to the office; (4) fulltime officials devote themselves to the work of the organization as officials are expected to carry out their duties impersonally and completely; (5) continuous business is carried on faithfully by the officials as the office does not come to an end with the death of the holder; (6) written documents are used to conduct official business as everyone is subject to formal equality before the rules; (7) public and private life are divided by the segregation of organizational activity from the official’s private life as public monies and property are separated from the official’s private property; and (8) limited compulsion by officials is allowed but without hatred or passion, and hence without affection or enthusiasm.

Highlighting the good sides Laski (1931), emphasized the fact that since the work is professionalized; nepotism is guarded against and the conditions of work operate in favour of economic morality and against corruption. In his own submissions, Gouldner (1954); Bovee et al. (1993) and Giddens (1996) argued that rules in bureaucracy act as substitutes for orders, since they comprise an explicit body of standing obligations. They narrow workers’ areas of discretion. They remove some of the personal friction associated with strict surveillance while one works. They alleviate the problem of repeatedly choosing specific individuals for unpleasant aspects of jobs since those aspects become a routine part of certain jobs. They remove alibis for not acting as management wishes. The public character of the rules allows deviation to be detected by large number of people and makes punishments legitimate, since correct behaviour and penalties for deviation are known in advance. Victimization is less likely to be alleged or suspected. The rules specify a minimum level of acceptable performance. Bureaucracy allows individuals to work without emotional commitment, if they wish so. Moore (1962) stated that bureaucracies have the virtue of securing cooperation between the numbers of people without those people necessarily feeling cooperative. No matter what they feel about each other, or about their tasks, sheer discharge of their stated functions ensures that the total bureaucracy is working. In another instance, Wilmot (1985) claimed that on the positive side, bureaucracy is economical. According to him: Like other social structures and pattern of routine such as habits, norms and culture, it regulates behaviour, lays the basis for reciprocal expectations, and reduces arbitrariness, unpredictability and potential disorder. The criterion of expertise, as a basis for recruitment makes the ideal of the “right man for the right job” possible. This together with the division and specialization of labour, hierarchical control and accountability from above theoretically increases the probability of performing the set objectives of complex, large-scale tasks. The assurance of a fixed salary and the existence of public, rational criteria for assessing performance and conduct, allow the ideal bureaucrat to concentrate on the specific task he has been assigned and for which he is qualified.

In spite of these numerous positive connotations of bureaucracy, there still exist some negative connotations from the standpoint of modern management. With the exception of Max Weber, other sociologists and Philosophers have been very critical of bureaucracies. Karl Marx believed that bureaucracies were used by the dominant capitalist class to control the working class. From the Marxists’ point of view, bureaucracies are characterized by strict hierarchy and discipline, veneration of authority, incompetent officials, lack of initiative or imagination, fear of responsibility and a process of self aggrandizement. For the Marxists therefore bureaucracy only exists to benefit the capitalists and helps to subdue the working class and in the process the workers become alienated. Laski (1931) however averred that in public bureaucracies, the
concentration of power in the hands of bureaucrats can jeopardize the liberties of individual citizens. The bureaucracies become the exclusive preserve of oligarchies of specialists. It becomes uneasy and sometimes difficult to control the expert, with his specialized knowledge, skill and data. Because the bureaucrats are often called upon to justify or rationalize their actions, some of them fear to take some necessary initiatives, risks and experiments thereby introducing timidity and conservatism into the system. As a result of their openness to public criticisms, the bureaucracies are usually trying to ensure accuracy and insisting on rehearsing every possible criticism. This again leads to timidity and undue and prolonged delays in taking actions and decisions. Merton (1957) suggested that bureaucracies are usually characterized by red tape, formalism and rigid rules. Merton argued that behaviour becomes stereotyped in ways that are not necessarily appropriate to the specific set of circumstances currently confronting the bureaucrats. He also identified the tendency for goals to become displaced on to procedures and rituals in some bureaucracies. Merton went further by saying that the system can easily breed over conformity, timidity and conservatism.

Discipline and seniority adherence can become overemphasized, with great importance placed on people doing as they are told whether or not they have been told to do the right thing. The experts tend to become narrow-minded and blinkered, developing ways of not seeing circumstances that do not fit easily with their pre-programmed behaviour. In bureaucracies, Merton argued that a defensive ‘esprit de corps’ can develop among colleagues, who combine to protect persons and procedures rather than concentrating on problem-solving. Finally, Merton concluded by saying that the emphasis placed on precision and reliability in administration have self-defeating consequences in that rules designed to be means to ends become ends in themselves. In cases where officials are to serve the public, the very norms of impersonality which govern their behaviour run them into trouble with the public in relation to their environment.

Corroborating Laski and Merton’s submission, Sofer (1973) argued that bureaucracy generates forms of professionalism and specialization that result in conservatism, timidity, rigidity and dependence on seniors and may divert attention from the need to adaptability in the face of changing circumstances. Juniors lean on the rules to protect their rights, and seniors may easily become trapped in cage of prescription. With growth in the use of scientists and professionals, bureaucratic structures and prescriptions are challenged and modified by staff whose training, dispositions and affiliations incline them to discipline that is derived from outside the organization.

There is also the size effect. Bureaucracies can be disadvantageous when it becomes too large to deal adequately with individual or personal situations. The larger the bureaucracy the bigger its problems as there comes a time when size (bigness) becomes a problem, what economists call limit to scale. Wilmot (1985) argued that routinisation is opposed to man’s freedom, his spontaneity, the very notion of intentionality. This is so, because bureaucracy replaces decision-making activity with routine procedures, thus negating the principle of accountability which is an essential component of the system. This displacement of accountability where the superior rather than the actor is held accountable for his action, allows the bureaucrat who has committed crimes in the name of procedure to excuse himself by saying that he was only obeying orders. Wilmot went further by saying that the hierarchical structure of appointment, control and accountability, without any element of consensus runs counter to the notion that decisions should be taken with the consent of the workers or subordinates. Wilmot finally stated that the division and specialization of labour without a conscious effort to educate bureaucrats about their roles in relation to the overall structure of the bureaucracy are likely to cause anomalies. Warren Bennis (1968) perhaps best summarized the many deficiencies of bureaucracy when he listed the following:- (1) bureaucracy does not adequately allow for personal growth and the development of mature personality; (2) bureaucracy develops conformity and ‘group-think’; (3) bureaucracy does not take into account the informal organization and the emergent and unanticipated problems; (4) its systems of control and authority are hopelessly outdated; (5) bureaucracy does not possess nor prescribe adequate means of resolving differences and conflicts between ranks and most particularly between functional groups in the organization; (6) communication and innovative ideas are frustrated or distorted due to hierarchical divisions; (7) the full human resources of bureaucracy are not being utilized due to mistrust and fear to reprisals; (8) bureaucracy cannot assimilate the influx of new technologists or scientists entering the organization; and (9) it modifies personality structure so that people become the dull, gray, conditioned “organization man”. These and more are the foundational problems of bureaucracy in all societies, which can be seen as threats to bureaucracy. The basic threats are outlined below.

b) Threats to Bureaucracy

There are identifiable four relevant threats to bureaucracy, such as:

1. Rapid and unexpected change: Bureaucracy with its nicely defined chain of command, its rules and rigidities, is ill-adopted to the rapid change, the environment in most cases, demands in contemporary times.

2. Growth in size: This happens where the volume of an organization’s traditional activities is not enough
to sustain growth. A number of factors are at work here, these include: (i) Bureaucratic overhead; (ii) tighter controls and impersonality due to bureaucratic sprawls; and (iii) outmoded rules and organisational structures.

3. Complexity of modern technology where integration between activities and persons of very diverse, highly specialized competence is required. Today’s activities require persons of very diverse, highly specialized competence. Hurried growth, rapid change and increase in specialization - all these put together against bureaucracy will make it to begin crumbling.

4. A basically psychological threat springing from a change in managerial behaviour. This rests on: (i) a new concept of man, based on increased knowledge of his complex and shifting needs, which replaces an over simplified, innocent, push-button idea of man; (ii) a new concept of power, based on collaboration and reason, which replaces a model of power based on coercion and threat; and (iii) a new concept of organizational values based on humanistic democratic ideals, which replaces the depersonalized mechanistic-value system of bureaucracy.

These threats of bureaucracy notwithstanding, modern organizations have had needs to clinch on it and as such make a high case for the need of bureaucracy (Warren Bennis, cited in Aluko and Adeposo, 2004).

c) Need For Bureaucracy

There are four historical conditions which have helped to promote the development of bureaucracy in the contemporary society vis-a-vis its need. These are:

1. Large Size: This is undoubtedly the single most important and popular factor that led to Bureaucratization. For the most part, the existence of bureaucracy in any sense is associated with large organizations. Dimock and Hyde (1940) stated that “The broadest structural cause of bureaucracy, whether in business or in government is the tremendous size of the organization”. Bureaucracy is therefore seen as the inevitable and product of increased size and complexity of organizations. All the characteristics of bureaucracy are built around the framework of large system water ways in ancient Egypt, the maintenance of a far reaching network of roads in Roman Empire, the control over millions of people’s religious life by the Roman Catholic Church would probably not have been possible without bureaucracy (Stoner and Wankel, 1988). To Weber, bureaucracy is an inevitable feature and the outcome of modernization and the increasing complexities of human Institutions. He saw bureaucracy as the decisive feature of modernity, the key to change in economics, politics, law and even cultural life. It is the effort to run large organizations with greater effectiveness that brought bureaucracy (Warren Bennis, cited in Aluko and Adeposo, 2004). The running of bureaucracy entails large money in the economy hence complexity revolves around money economy.

2. Development of Money Economy: This promoted the development of bureaucratic organizations in the sense that payment of money for services rendered creates a proper degree of commitment among bureaucrats and the work force. A money economy brings into association people who have no other interactions. Their relations may be limited to the exchange of goods or services for money without further involvement. According to Simmel (1955) the growth of money economy contributes to impersonality in social relations. When compensation is based strictly on money, people tend to restrict their relations with one another and to ignore personal considerations. In contrast, a slave or volunteer economy cannot foster bureaucratic development. A slave is too dependent on his master and would not want to assume responsibility or exercise any personal initiative. Unpaid voluntary workers are too independent and will necessarily refuse to follow bureaucratic procedures. In such a situation rigid discipline cannot be strictly enforced. Payment of services rendition brings out the need for bureaucracy because the complexity of the economy rotates around money economy.

3. Capitalism: It is conceptually difficult to separate a money economy from capitalism as both go hand in hand in promoting bureaucracy. History has shown that it is under capitalism that formal and complex organization emerges to ensure that governmental operations succeed. Bureaucracy thus understood, is fully developed in the private economy, only in the most advanced institutions of capitalism. To Weber the distinguishing characteristic of modern capitalism was the “rational organization of free labour”.

4. Protestant Ethic: Weber’s main thesis is that the ‘Protestant ethic’ which strongly emphasized hard work and other individualistic values gave rise to capitalism and capitalism in turn gave rise to bureaucracy. One important sociological dimension of the ‘protestant ethic’ is that attitudes towards work changed and there are strict adherence to ethics to ensure control and payment.

d) Bureaucracy in Developing Societies

Recent trends indicate that in the emerging developing societies, bureaucracy has come to acquire the following features: Bureaucracy has been regarded as an important instrument for modernisation, growth and development. But experiences generally in third
bureaucracy had discerned. In fact, the structural and behavioural characteristics of bureaucracy proved to be instrumental in impeding development. Secondly, unlike the developed countries there is less differentiation of functions in the developing countries as a result of which the powers and importance of bureaucracy crossed its legitimate limits. Thirdly, appointments are done on the ground of merit, which is judged through a public competitive examination comprising both written and personality tests. But the intervention of primordial factors such as personal, caste, tribal, ethnic or religious considerations is still a tragic reality. Favours are bestowed on the basis of non-merit factors to those who qualify the written tests. Appointment to important posts is done mainly on the non-merit considerations. Ethnic considerations have emerged as a strong basis for public appointments. In states like India, there is a system of reservation of seats to the members of most and other backward castes and classes in the matters of public appointments. This is done with a view to make bureaucracy a representative bureaucracy. Such practices tend to limit the ability of states to make effective rules for the society. There is absence of uniform procedures regarding the selection and recruitment of bureaucrats. This adversely affects bureaucratic efficiency which results in administrative inefficiency. Fourthly, the politicisation of bureaucracy is another characteristic in the developing countries like Nigeria. The concept of “committed bureaucracy” was mooted by Gandhi in the late 1960s implying that bureaucrats should be committed to the party in power. But due to great public cry, Mrs. Gandhi had to later revise her stance clarifying that what she wanted was commitment to the basic law of the land rather than the government. But the fact is that there has been erosion of the principle of bureaucratic neutrality in India. The appointment to top officials both at the centre and the states are done on the basis of personal, ethnic, caste and party considerations. The reshuffling and transfers of civil servants before and after the elections have become a common phenomenon. The situation in African states is still worse than the situation in Asia. In Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Nigeria, and Uganda as the policy of political mobilisation became an established feature of political systems, the political parties felt it necessary to look for the support of the bureaucratic machinery. As a result, a variety of pattern of links between the political parties and the bureaucracy came into play in these nations. Owing to these relationships, the bureaucracies in these states appear to function in a subservient status vis-a-vis the office of the Presidency within the framework of African socialist ideology and beneficent welfare capitalism. The enmity between the political parties and the state bureaucracies have at times become quite intensive, giving more impetus to the office of Presidency and to the institutionalization of patrimonialism and personal rulership. Such phenomenon is present in the Latin American countries also. Fifthly and finally another feature of bureaucracy in developing countries is the existence of large scale corruption within its ranks. It is only but obvious to state that corruption rocks in Nigeria to the extent that some scholars refer to it as endemic and pandemic, and as such affects development adversely, especially in the underdeveloped and developing countries.

e) Development and the role of bureaucracy in third world countries

After 1945 War, the former colonies were to attempt a mammoth exercise to bring about development in their respective countries. The goals of the rapid economic development were to be combined with the democratic political development. Development meant nation-building, growth, equity, democracy, stability and autonomy. These countries had inherited colonial bureaucracy. The characteristics of colonial bureaucracy included centralization of authority, hierarchical, generalist administrators, neutrality, etc. Such a bureaucracy was clearly elitist, authoritarian and paternalistic. Any organization of such characteristics as colonial bureaucracy cannot be effective in playing a role in the development process. Therefore the task of policing and revenue collection came to be doubted as the effective tool for development and growth.

But some scholars made a plea to these countries to attempt to strengthen the centralized, efficient and strong bureaucracies, if they were to achieve the task of economic, social and political development. La Palombara argued that a powerful bureaucracy is essential if one is to override the disintegrating influences of artificial political boundaries, the competitive forces of familial and tribal structures, the difficulty for organising and financing political parties, the low energy output of the population and the tendency of the population to want to expand funds on consumer gadgets rather than on capital formation. In developing states, powerful bureaucracies are simply necessary evils that one must learn to tolerate, hoping for the best from a democratic standpoint. It can be concluded with these discussions that despite the serious criticism and the dysfunctionalities with which bureaucracy suffers, it has come to stay as a vital and effective institution of governance. No political regime of whatever nature and ideology can do without it. However, there are considerable differences about the way the bureaucracy functions and the kind of role it performs in different political regimes depending upon the way its members are recruited trained and inducted in the political system. Its specific role in governance would also depend upon the relationship with other political institutions and the political leadership in the country concerned. In the past two decades, the emergence of new public management movement in
most countries has sought to downsize the role and apparatus of bureaucracy in most political regimes; but nowhere in the world has bureaucracy come to be completely abolished, which reinforces its continued importance in shaping the activities of modern political regimes, particularly economic development, efficient administration and stability.

In fact, the success of the plan formulation and implementation, effectiveness and efficiency of governmental operations, achievement of targets and organisational goals largely depend upon the functional efficiency of the administrative and technical personnel at all levels. The top level administrators, however, should be able to relate the accelerating rate of technological change to present and projected programmes. They should be aware of economic and social forces which have an import on governmental business. The civil service by and large claims to be responsive. It is apparent that the single most important motivating factor for staff is the opportunity to be of service to the public. It seems almost miraculous that the desire to genuinely serve the public should be born, should survive and should flourish amidst all the politics, tensions and impersonal imperatives of modern bureaucracy. The concept of service has thus remained conspicuous in spite of the many changes which might have been expected to erode it. This calls to question the functions of Bureaucracy in Modern times.

f) Functions of Bureaucracy in Modern Times

In modern democratic political nations, bureaucracy is entrusted with the function to implement the rules and policies made by the legislature. Rule implementation is considered to be ‘mechanical’ and a ‘quasi-automatic process’. But this view is ‘oversimplified’ as administrators help their ministers to prepare the decisions as they cannot draft all the rules and regulations without the help of the bureaucrats. Therefore, the help given by the administrators to their ministers is of great magnitude in view of the fact that even rule-making has become a very complex function. The political regimes are involved in the preparation of both short and long-term socio-economic development plans and policies. Hence it would be ironic to say that the administrators just play a role in the implementation of the rules and programmes formulated by the state from time to time, instead, their contribution in the filed of formulation of the rules, regulations, policies, and programmes is very important and of far reaching consequences. But, even the process of implementation should not be considered as “automatic and mechanical”. Rule implementation is also a decision making process as the administrators have to choose one path from among various alternatives available to them (J. Blondel, in Kothari, 2006).

V. The Nigerian Bureaucracy

It is not everywhere and in all society that one finds all the Weberian attributes and characteristics of bureaucracy. This is because Bureaucracies are products of the specific settings from where they originate. For instance, Weber’s bureaucracy is associated with the ‘protestant ethic’ and the German tradition and as such has a complete Western perspective and orientation. It is therefore interesting to note that bureaucracy has its socio-cultural dimensions. That is, there are certain ways in which culture of a society determines the type of bureaucracy that emerges within the society. This has been aptly demonstrated in Crozier’s (1964) study of the French bureaucracy. In essence therefore, we can talk of British, American, Japanese or even Nigerian bureaucracy.

By a hair’s breadth conception, the Nigerian bureaucracy includes the administrative machinery, personnel of government and the corpus of rules and regulations that govern their behaviour. A broader and more elastic conception of the Nigerian bureaucracy has been provided here to include the following: (1) Civil services of all the thirty-six state governments and the seven hundred and seventy-four local governments that constitute the Federal republic of Nigeria presently; (2) Parastatal and public enterprise bureaucracies; (3) Armed forces bureaucracy; (4) Internal security or policy bureaucracy; (5) Higher education bureaucracy; (6) Teaching service bureaucracy; (7) Public media bureaucracy; (8) Judicial service bureaucracy; (9) Political party bureaucracy; and (10) Private sector bureaucracy (Anise cited in Aluko and Adeposo, 2004).

a) Problems of the Nigerian Bureaucracy

There are ways in which the cultures of societies determine the functioning and the operations of the bureaucracies in such societies. Nigeria is not an exception to this rule. Ekpo (1979) observed that the Nigerian bureaucracies are corrupt, inefficient and overstuffed. Complementing this is the Udoji Report of 1974 which charged the bureaucracies with nepotism, ethnic loyalties, corruption, elitism, inability of superiors to delegate responsibilities: unreliability of junior staff in executing delegated tasks: failure of all to apply specialized knowledge and training skills in the management of the public service and failure to appreciate the importance of timeliness or efficiency in the performance of tasks. The report concluded by saying that the entire Nigerian bureaucracy was not results-oriented. Too bad it seems.

In some other instances, Amucheazi (1980), Anise (1986) among others have observed how politics enters into the spheres of administration and in the process the whole bureaucratic apparatus is disrupted and put into dismay. The whole political bureaucracy...
which ought to be a non-partisan and neutral body with no permanent loyalties to any group has had to take sides in many instances. This was aptly reflected in the Western Region crises between 1962 and 1963 when the government bureaucracy became partisan. During the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970) the federal bureaucracy as a whole were openly partisan and strongly in the defence of the federal case. As a result of the inefficiency and ineffectiveness and lack of public accountability of those in the executive arm of government, the band wagon effect has been transferred to bureaucracies that served them. By the same token and in the same manner, the bureaucracies have grown inefficient and unaccountable to the people in the delivery of goods and services. Anise (1986) argued that what has grown in the Nigerian bureaucracies is the awareness of institutional, elite class interests preserved and nourished through an interconnected chain of internal bureaucratic networks of influence and shared self-protectionism. Over the years, routine bureaucratic services have been slowly converted into an intricate network of favours provided only in exchange for some other kinds of favours given or expected. Because the Nigerian society has been excessively corrupt, the bureaucrats too have grown corruptible and corrupt. Thus in Nigeria, corruption is seen as a permanent integral feature of bureaucracy, necessitating what is known as bureaucratic corruption. It is therefore not unusual to find the bureaucrats bending rules and jumping official procedures and protocols in order to achieve selfish ends.

In pursuit of private goals, several officials in the Nigerian bureaucracies form cliques and informal groups in order to maximize their benefits: all at the expense of the attainment of institutional goals. In effect, bureaucracies which are corrupt and steadily suffer goal displacement can hardly be expected to be efficient. If the bureaucracies are efficient at all in any way, it is in the special role of protecting its class interests rather than serving the masses whose interests it was created to serve. Like the human relations school would argue, to understand bureaucracy, one has to transcend its formal structure into interest groups and other social groups’ activities that impinge on the individual role within a bureaucratic set up.

There are also allegations of favouritism and nepotism in the Nigerian bureaucracies. The power of the bureaucrat is stretched to the limit or even beyond limit. The bureaucrat is made to do things beyond the realms of his power and office as he is made to do things which he is not competent or qualified to do. There is a lack of compartmentalization of roles. We thus have a bureaucracy that is functioning on other criteria other than the Weberian model. Coupled with the above is the ‘collectivistic’ tradition in Nigeria. Like in most African societies the individual does not exist for himself but for his nuclear, and the extended families as well as his town and the immediate environment. In many instances rules are bent in order to assist a kin, a closer relation, someone from the same clan, village or town. This is a thing that disrupts rather than support bureaucracy and in the end what you have is an inefficient system. This is what Okoli (2003) called Cognitive Melodrama at the Micro Level.

The impact of the ethnic factor on the Nigerian bureaucracies cannot be overlooked. Both in the public and the private sectors, personnel selections and appointments are based on non-bureaucratic criteria such as the state of origin, home town, ethnic group that reflect the peculiar problem of the Nigerian nation as against objectively measurable criteria like qualifications, professional competence, intelligent quotient and the likes. As a matter of fact, the ethnic factor has been entrenched in the 1979 Constitution and the subsequent ones under the name ‘Federal Character’. Presently a ‘Federal Character Commission’ has been established to monitor both public and private bureaucracies and ensure that this clause is implemented. The use of subjective criteria like ethnicity in deciding who is to be employed is a negation of bureaucratic ideals any day. Invariably the best applicants from the South are kept out of the bureaucracies for the worst from the North. Okoli calls it Cognitive Melodrama at the Macro level. No wonder the Nigerian bureaucracies are grossly inefficient. While one can sympathize with the reasons for adopting the Federal character concept, there is also the inherent danger that the adoption can become an obsession and consequently become demoralizing, demotivating and counter-productive. In many instances, it had been a source of acrimony and resentment thus leading to general paralysis of the bureaucracies. Anise (1986) stated that there have been complaints from serving bureaucrats in Nigeria against the frustration which the Federal character concept poses to serving bureaucrats from states which are not favoured by its implementation. According to Olugbile (1997) nepotism had shaded into ethnicity. The favoured bureaucrat is selected over his peers (and sometimes even over his seniors). He is advanced preferentially.

He is moved to strategically preferred positions in the bureaucracy and he is more likely to be let off with infractions of the bureaucratic rules. Olugbile concluded by saying that something needs to be done about this culturally ingrained habit and tendency, which everyone knows from theory is supposed to be deleterious to the harmonious functioning of the bureaucracies. This is because it destroys trust, creates suspicion and insecurity, and puts people in bureaucracies to suffer later on.

The issue of discipline has also been identified as a problem having its toll on the Nigerian bureaucracies. There are factors within the Nigerian culture which makes the enforcement of discipline a
He is quite in a fix and a big dilemma. This is a typical bad precedence and amounts to injustice and betrayal tradition while to pardon the erring accountant brings a King’s letter will amount to insult and disrespect for accountant should be pardoned. To disregard the permanent secretary’s town pleading that the accountant in his ministry for fraud and the erring what does a permanent secretary do when he suspends stipulated by bureaucracy to the letter. For instance, which he cannot strictly enforce the code of conduct misfit. Most top bureaucrats always face this dilemma, and sometimes discover that there will be situations in which he cannot strictly enforce the code of conduct stipulated by bureaucracy to the letter. For instance, what does a permanent secretary do when he suspends an accountant in his ministry for fraud and the erring accountant brings a letter from the king of the permanent secretary’s town pleading that the accountant should be pardoned. To disregard the King’s letter will amount to insult and disrespect for tradition while to pardon the erring accountant brings a bad precedence and amounts to injustice and betrayal of trust. What does the Permanent Secretary do then? He is quite in a fix and a big dilemma. This is a typical example of what happens in the Nigerian bureaucracies most especially public ones. From all indications, there are several problems confronting the Nigerian bureaucracies in general but some can be conveniently traced to the culture of the people as shown in the foregoing discussions in this paper. However, there are some structural impediments to bureaucracy.

b) The Structural Impediments to Public Bureaucracy in Nigeria

Identifiably, the structural problems besetting the civil service in Nigeria fall roughly into four basic categories, namely: Personnel regulations, Personnel qualifications, Organisational structure, and Work environment. Each plays its role in diminishing the administrative capacity in public bureaucracy. The personnel regulations state requirements for entry into the bureaucracy as well as procedures for promotion and dismissal. Public service in Nigeria stipulates a long list of requirements for entry, including federal character (Nnoli 1980). Theoretically, positions are supposed to be filled on the basis of merit. However, political, family, ethnic, and religious factors are important considerations in attending to bureaucratic appointments (Mohr 1987; Adebayo 2001; Yesufu 1992). Recruitment, however, is only part of the problem. Once ensconced in a bureaucratic position, officials are promoted primarily on the basis of seniority. Rules for promotion fail to distinguish between productive and non-productive workers. Dismissal is rare except during the mass purge of Murtala /Obasanjo Administration in 1975-1976. It is hard to lose a government job in Nigeria (Adebayo, 2001). As regards personnel qualifications, employees entering the public and civil services through the use of political or family influence may lack the required technical skills for their positions. Moreover, on-the-job training programmes are weak and ineffective (Otobo 1992). Poorly trained individuals remain poorly trained. Also complicating the skills problem is the emphasis on filling slots rather than matching employee skills with the needs of the position. Thus, many of the skills that public bureaucrats possess are wasted (Okafor and Bode-Okunade). The public service tends to be overstaffed with individuals who lack the requisite skills for their positions (Jike 2003; Otobo 1992; Nwachukwu 1988). In addition to the above factors, most public servants are poorly paid. Most public servants earn just a little in the face of rising inflation brought about by deregulation policies of government (Onyeonor 2004). Accordingly, most have resorted to multiple job-holding in the informal sector thereby impacting negatively on their attitude and commitment to work. The energies expended in a second job are lost to the places of their primary assignments (Okafor 1998). Besides poor salaries, there are other factors in the workplace that impinge on the effectiveness and efficiency of public bureaucrats, including poor and outdated equipment, lack of office space and poor filing systems etc. (Okoh 1998).

c) Reasons for the Deviation from Weber’s Ideal Bureaucratic Principles

Couple of reasons do suffice but the few below takes precedence. First it is argued that the Weberian bureaucracy is completely westernized and very prescriptive. It does not coincide with reality as it does not prescribe the way things work in reality or real life situations. Secondly, it is argued that the Weberian bureaucratic model does not take enough cognizance of the ways in which culture determines or influences organizational behaviour vis a vis work relationships, values, norms and ethics. Cultural variation dominates social life. Thirdly, the Nigerian society is built on the “we or the collective tradition” which negates the “I or the individualistic tradition” specified in the Weberian model. Fourthly, in the Weberian bureaucracy there is strong emphasis on formal relationship whereas the Nigerian culture recognizes the informal aspects of social life as revealed by the Hawthorne studies. Fifthly, unlike in the Western bureaucracies where particular importance is
not attached to face-to-face interactions in formalized settings, in the Nigerian culture there is demand for face-to-face interactions in every sphere of social life.

In situations where a bureaucracy deals with the public, the common requests or the questions are - 'Who is the boss, I like to see him?' who will treat this case, let me have a discussion with him. This is reflected in some local Yoruba slogans such as “Oju loro wa” and “Ka foju rin ju” all which literally means desire for face-to-face interaction. Generally, there is this act of "who do you know. In Igbo parlance, it is called Ima Mmadu or ima onye or nni ma mmadu. This is what Okoli (2003) referred to as cognitive melodrama. These scenarios have contributed significantly to the departure from the real bureaucratic ideals in Nigerian bureaucracy. Finally, the Nigerian tradition demands for both vertical and horizontal communication as against the adoption of vertical communication channels only as stipulated and specified in the Weberian model. The submission here is that even though information goes up and down it must also spread horizontally, that is, from one department to another or to colleagues and peers at work.

VI. Public Administration, Public Bureaucracy and National Development: The Nexus

Administration is a universal practice and also of universal importance. It exists whenever people cooperate to achieve the goals of their groups and such achievements require planning, organization, command, cooperation and control. It involves the mobilization, deployment and direction of human and material resources to attain specified objectives. Public Administration may be considered as both a field of action and a field of study. As a field of action, Public Administration refers to the mechanics and structures through which government policies are implemented. As a field of study, Public Administration refers to the academic discipline which studies the mechanics and structures through which government implement its programmes. According to Woodrow Wilson, Public Administration is a detailed and systematic application of law. Hence every particular application of law is an act of administration. In the words of Dwight Waldo, “Public Administration is the art and science of management as applied to the affairs of the states.....” Luther Gulrich, sees “Public Administration as that part of science of administration which has to do with the government and thus concerns itself primarily with the executive branch of government where the work of government is done.” According to Wikipedia (2011), Public administration houses the implementation of government policies and an academic discipline that studies this implementation and prepares civil servants for this work. As a "field of inquiry with a diverse scope" its "fundamental goal... is to advance management and policies so that government can function." Some of the various definitions which have been offered for the term are: “the management of public programs”; the "translation of politics into the reality that citizens see every day"; and "the study of government decision making, the analysis of the policies themselves, the various inputs that have produced them, and the inputs necessary to produce alternative policies." Public administration is "centrally concerned with the organization of government policies and programmes as well as the behaviour of officials (usually non-elected) formally responsible for their conduct". Many unelected public servants can be considered to be public administrators, including police officers, municipal budget analysts. Public administrators are public servants working in public departments and agencies, at all levels of government.

Public Administration, as an aspect of governmental activity is very old. It is as old as human history. In European languages, the term Public Administration began to creep in during the seventeenth century to separate the absolute monarch's administration of public affairs from his management of his private household. It was a period in which the church was separated from the state and the government was superimposed on all other societal institutions within a definite territory. In every society there are some activities like maintenance of law and order and defence which have to be undertaken in public interest. Public Administration as a system of organization is mainly concerned with the performance of these activities. Political decision makers set the goals for the political system. It is the business of Public Administration to work for the realization of these goals. At the present stage of man's evolution, Public administration has proved to be indispensable. The scope of Public Administration has expanded with the rise of the modern administrative state. Its growing importance in the conduct of human affairs is evident in the birth of numerous public laws, growth of public profession, accumulation of huge arms and increasing coverage of taxes and public expenditure. The domain of state functions is almost all-comprehensive in socialist countries. Even the capitalist states have expanded their functions under compulsions of welfare considerations. The post-colonial 'third-world' countries have embarked upon Development Administration to speedily bring about state sponsored socio-economic reconstruction, thereby necessitating the need for public administration.

Public Administration is a specialized academic field. It deals essentially with the machinery and procedures of government activities. Administration has been defined as a cooperative human effort towards achieving some common goals. Thus defined, administration can be found in various institutional
settings such as a business firm, a hospital, a university, a government department and so on. As an aspect of this more generic concept, Public Administration is that species of administration which operates within a specific political setting. It is a means by which the policy decisions made by the political decision makers are carried out. Public Administration is decision making, planning the work to be done, formulating objectives and goals, working with the legislature and citizen organizations to gain public support and funds for governmental programmes, establishing and revising organization, directing and supervising employees, providing leadership, communicating and receiving communications, determining work methods and procedures, appraising performance, exercising controls and other functions performed by government executives and supervisors. It is the action part of the government, the means by which the purposes and goals of the government are realized.

The 'Public' aspect of Public Administration gives the discipline a special character. It can be looked at formally to mean government. So, Public Administration is government administration, the focus being specifically on public bureaucracy. This is the meaning commonly used in discussing Public Administration.

Public Administration is the complex of governmental activities that are undertaken in public interest at different levels such as the central, state and local government levels. The discipline of Public Administration aims at a systematic study of these activities. Government, as political authority, is the major regulator of social life. With the emergence of democracy and the concept of welfare state, the governmental activities have increased by leaps and bounds. The historical movement has thus been from regulation to service and welfare. The police state has gradually given place to popular governance in the modern time. Governance in its broadest sense becomes 'a prime necessity in the government. This calls for a new climate in the bureaucracy. Public Administration in practice has to absorb the principles of democracy as an overarching form of the government.

Policy Sensitivity: As governments are called upon to play increasingly active roles in times of rapid changes and social crisis, innovative and timely policy formulation becomes a prime necessity in the government. This would necessitate a new preparedness within the administrative set-up that had hardly any precedence in the past. Implementation Capability: Effective policy implementation is going to test the coping capacity of the governments in today's complex situations. Goals have to be clearly set; planning, programming and projections have to be followed step by step; and project management in all its ramifications has to have top priority in government. The strength of administration and the legitimacy of the government itself would depend more and more on the administration's capacity to deliver the goods in time and in response to the demands of the citizens.

Shared understanding of social reality: The capacity to cope with social and administrative complexity can be enhanced by a deliberate policy of organizational openness. The underlying assumption here is that administration needs to understand the diverse interests and influences. In today's complex administrative world, construction of administrative reality has to be based on the shared understanding of its actors such as the men at the top, the middle managers, the employees and the citizens. The centralised, insular bureaucracy does not fit in with the contemporaneous socio-administrative realities.

Administration as a learning experience: Shifting social reality and complex environmental conditions impose certain rigours on Public Administration today. Rusted 'principles' of the past or the administrative recipes of bureaucratic routine are no longer appropriate tools for analysis and problem solving. Public Administration in modern time has to be proactive, innovative, risk-taking, and often adventurous. This new, entrepreneurial zeal is expected to transform 'bureaucracy' into a new kind of learning organization, more adaptable to changes, more open to new insights and innovations, and more accessible to the clientele.

These are the major concerns of government in all democratic countries. In the developing countries, these have added significance, as Public Administration has a pivotal role to play in the socio-economic reconstruction of post-colonial societies. The discipline of Public Administration cannot live in isolation. It has to develop in close association with the dynamic social...
changes. As a body of knowledge, it must develop explanatory strength to analyse socio-economic complexity and assist in the ushering in of a new society free from exploitation and human misery, poverty and deprivation of the past era.

Public Administration is a collective caring process for the welfare and well-being of all. It, therefore, involves the harmonization of personal and group goals. This act is achieved by the bureaucrats and bureaucracy.

The bureaucracy, broadly defined, is that apparatus of government designed to implement the decisions of political leaders. Political leaders make policies, and the public bureaucracy executes it. If the bureaucracy lacks the capacity to implement the policies of the political leadership, those policies, however well intentioned, will not be implemented in an effective manner (Anise 1984). It is one thing to promise development, it is quite another to actualize it. Viewed in this light, the role of public bureaucracy in the process of economic, social, and political development looms large indeed. However, the role of bureaucracy is critical to all areas of the development process in Nigeria. Public bureaucracy is a very vital element of the development process in Nigeria especially in the rural areas. Bureaucratic capacity determines what will get done, when it will get done, and how well it will get done. The greater the capacity of the bureaucracy to implement complex economic and social development plans, the higher the development potential of that society. This is not to suggest that bureaucracy is the only force in the development process, as bureaucratic capacity is not a sufficient condition for development, but it is most assuredly a necessary condition. By definition and for the purpose of this paper, public bureaucracy is used to refer to the administrative machinery, personnel of government at the federal, state and local levels and the corpus of rules and regulations that govern their behaviour (Okafor, 2005). The ability and capacity of the bureaucracy to administer the policies of the state determines the state of development in Nigeria. The need for rural development in Nigeria implies that Nigerian public bureaucracy has been incapable of formulating and implementing good policies capable of changing the living conditions of the Nigerian citizens especially those in the rural areas. This call to question how the decadence in Nigerian public bureaucracy was evolved? In answering this question, Okafor, (2005) asserted ...when Nigeria achieved her independence in 1960, the shortage of qualified administrators was critical. Most colonial administrators departed with independence, creating a huge void that could only be filled by pressing poorly trained and inexperienced native officials into senior positions. Further aggravating the shortage of trained personnel was the desire of Nigeria to nationalise their public bureaucracy (Yesufu 1969; Adu 1969; Palmer 1988). The departure of the colonial administrators was severely aggravated by a variety of additional problems. The rank and file of the nationalists who agitated for independence became the rank and file of the public bureaucracy. A government job was their reward for agitating for independence. In much the same vein, the political leaders of various regions in Nigeria felt an urgent need to reinforce their popular support by providing jobs for the unemployed. As most regions had little or no industry to absorb the people, mass employment meant government employment. The bureaucracy became a welfare agency (Ejiofor and Anagolu 1984).

In the years following Nigerian independence, the inherent weaknesses of public bureaucracies were perpetuated by the urgency of the development process following the oil boom. Hence, many agencies were duplicated for similar duties. If existing agencies faltered in the execution of development policies, new agencies were created to expedite matters (Nwosu 1977). The decades of independence and the post-Civil War era have been described as the decades of public bureaucratic inflation and decay in Nigeria (Ademolekan and Gboyega, 1979). The rots and decay in services rendered by the public bureaucracy over the years are evidenced in the speech made by President Obasanjo while launching initiative to reform public bureaucracy service delivery in which he said: ‘Nigerians have for too long been short-changed by the quality of public service... We shall ensure they get what is better’ (New Age, June 17, 2005). Hence, the need to critically understand what led to the decay and rots in the services delivered by public bureaucracy in Nigeria. These service deliveries are core responsibilities of the Nigerian Civil Service.

Contemporaneously, one of the major problems that grossly characterized the Nigerian civil service is gross irregularities that are politically based. The importance of civil service cannot be over-emphasized, and its restructuring cannot therefore be underestimated. For government plans and policies to succeed, the fingerprint and input of civil service is very necessary. This is because the civil service provides the policy framework and institutional mechanism that implements government policies. It is therefore, necessary to ensure political neutrality of the civil service as the civil service is important in the life of every nation because it is a body or a department in the executive arm of the government responsible for the execution of the policies and programmes of the government. The civil service and civil servants perform purely administrative and executive functions, which entail formulation and implementation of government policies (Suleiman, 2009).
VII. The Concept Of Rural Development And Rural Development In Nigeria

Although policy makers and the development community have widely used the phrase “rural development,” what constitutes rural development seems to have changed significantly over time, especially during the last three decades. Until the 1970s, rural development was synonymous with agricultural development and, hence, focused on increasing agricultural production. This focus seems to have been driven primarily by the interests of industrialization to extract surpluses from the agriculture sector to reinforce industrialization. With the focus on increasing agricultural production, the stated objective of most countries was to promote smallholder agriculture. This is why Adelemo (1987) sees the concept of rural development to include resetting displaced communities or adopting new types of housing unit. He continues that rural development should include alongside land-use development, economic factors such as land carrying capacity for each area, its farm land, irrigation improved farming method and finance. From the above, it is obvious that scholars tilt the concept of rural development toward their area of specialization and perhaps, interest hence the assertion that the concept lacks a unified definition. However, if the opinion of Simon (2004) about development is worth anything, it means there is the possibility for the level of rural development to be reversible as poverty levels, life expectancy and educational attainment etc. can all decline as a result of inappropriate policies, corruption and bad governance, natural disaster or human-induced disasters, war and civil conflicts in the rural area.

Over time, this smallholder agriculture-centric concept of rural development underwent changes. In the early 1980s, the World Bank defined rural development as “…a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people-the rural poor.” Four major factors appear to have influenced the change: increased concerns about the persistent and deepening of rural poverty; changing views on the meaning of the concept of development itself; emergence of a more diversified rural economy in which rural non-farm enterprises play an increasingly important role; and increased recognition of the importance of reducing the non-income dimensions of poverty to achieve sustainable improvements in the socioeconomic well-being of the poor.

The general and broad objective of Rural Development according to Koinyan (1990) is; to enable the people of the rural areas realise their full potential, build self-confidence, dignity and fulfilment. It should free people from the evil of want, ignorance, deprivation and exploitations; and correct the existing imbalances and injustices in the society. The World bank refer to it as the modernisation and monetisation of the rural societies as well as its transition from the traditional isolation to the national development, hence it seeks to equip the rural people with skills and knowledge which will enable them to have full control of their environment and exploit everything in the environment to their advantage in their production process.

However, the concept of rural development in Nigeria lacks a unified definition as different scholars tend to view it from varying perspective. Some scholars look at rural development from the aspect of education/training like Haddad (1990), and Hinzen (2000). Obinne (1991) perceived rural development to involve creating and widening opportunities for (rural) individuals to realize full potential through education and share in decision and action which affect their lives. He views rural development as efforts to increase rural output and create employment opportunities and root out fundamental (or extreme) cases of poverty, diseases and ignorance. Others like Olayide, Ogunfowora, Essang and Idachaba (1981) viewed rural development as means for the provision of basic amenities, infrastructure, improved agriculture productivity and extension services and employment generation for rural dwellers. An understanding of the concept of development will give a clearer picture of rural development. Hornby (2000) defines development as the gradual growth of something so that it becomes more advanced, stronger, etc; the process of producing or creating something new. This definition implies that development involves a gradual or advancement through progressive changes. Umbevali (2006) sees the changes to be multi-dimensional involving changes in structures, attitude and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth; the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty. He asserts that development involves economic growth component, equality or social justice component, and socio-economic transformational component which are all on a self sustaining basis. Viewing the concept differently, Simon (2004) sees development as an improvement in quality of life (not just material standard of living) in both quantitative and qualitative terms. He opines that development must be seen as actually and temporally relative, needing to be appropriate to time, space, society, and culture. From the foregoing, it is obvious that rural development is not a one-off thing or an immediate and snap phenomenon. Rather, it is a gradual and progressive towards perfection having a set standard in mind. Oluyide et al (1981) see rural development as a process whereby concerted efforts are made in order to facilitate significant increase in rural resources productivity with the central objective of enhancing rural income and creating employment opportunity in rural communities for rural dwellers to remain in the area. It is also an integrated approach to food production, provision of physical, social and institutional infrastructures with an ultimate goal of...
bring about good healthcare delivery system, affordable and quality education, improved and sustainable agriculture etc. As it is today, rural development needs to be given priority attention. Several reasons for such urgency include high and unacceptable rate of poverty, poor access to social and economic infrastructure and services such as access to safe drinking water supply and sanitation, higher rate of health indicator such as infant mortality rate, malnutrition and disease prevalence and lower enrolment of children in school. Obot (1987) suggests that rural development achievement could be measured in the areas of roads, water supply, housing, electricity, building of model communities, access to quality education, improved health care delivery and availability of food and agricultural products for the rural settlers. The objective of the National Policy on Rural Development as outlined by Ogbazi (1992) encapsulates an ideal situation of an acceptable level of development in the rural area. These objectives can be paraphrased to include:

- Promotion of the social, cultural, educational and economic well being of the rural population
- Promotion of sustained and orderly development of the vast resources in the rural areas for the benefit of rural people
- Increase in and diversification of job opportunities and improvement of income in the rural areas
- Mobilization of the rural population for self-help and self-sustaining programmes of development, and
- Up-lifting of the technological based industries in the rural area.

The establishment of the Millennium Development Goals has significantly reinforced the concerns about non-income poverty. With the paradigm shifts in economic development from growth to broadly defined “development”, the concept of rural development is now used in a broader sense. It is also more specific “in the sense that it focuses, in its rhetoric and in principle, particularly on poverty and inequality.” In more recent years, increased concerns on the environmental aspects of economic growth have also influenced the changes. Today's concept of rural development is fundamentally different from that used about three or four decades ago. The concept now encompasses "concerns that go well beyond improvements in growth, income, and output. The concerns include an assessment of changes in the quality of life, broadly defined to include improvement in health and nutrition, education, environmentally safe living conditions, and reduction in gender and income inequalities." Today, there seems to be a universal consensus that the ultimate objective of rural development is to improve the quality of life of rural people. This makes it essential to go beyond the income-related factors such as prices, production, and productivity to a range of non-income factor that influence quality of life and hence inclusiveness of rural development. Inclusive rural development is a more specific concept than the concept of rural development. In broad terms, inclusive rural development is about improving the quality of life of all members of rural society. More specifically, inclusive rural development covers three different but interrelated dimensions. The first is the economic dimension that encompasses the provision of both capacity and opportunities for the poor and low-income rural households in particular to benefit from the economic growth process in such a way that their average incomes grow at a higher rate than the growth of average incomes in the sector as a whole. The economic dimension also includes measures to reduce intra- and inter-sectoral income inequalities to reasonable levels. Second is the social dimension of supporting social development of poor and low-income households and disadvantaged groups, eliminating inequalities in social indicators, promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment, and providing social safety nets for vulnerable groups. Third is the political dimension of improving opportunities for the poor and low-income people in rural areas, including women and ethnic minorities, to effectively and equally participate in the political processes at the village level and beyond compared with any other categories of the population within and outside rural areas.

Overtime, successive governments have embarked on several programmes targeted at rural development. Other approaches have been by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), cooperatives, individuals through private initiatives, corporate bodies as well as International Organizations. The various programmes initiated and chiefly targeted at the rural sector by government include the following:

- National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP)
- River-Basin Development Authority (RBDA)
- Agricultural Development Programme (ADP)
- Operation Feed the Nation (OFN)
- The Green Revolution (GR)
- Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (ACGS)
- Directorate for Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI)
- Better Life for Rural Dwellers (BETTER LIFE)
- National Agricultural Insurance Corporation (NAIC)
- National Directorate of Employment (NDE)
- National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA)
- National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)
- National Rural Roads Development Fund (NRRDF)
- Rural Banking Scheme (RBS)
- Family Support Programme (FSP)
- Universal Basic Education (UBE)
- Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS)
A cursory look at the introduction, establishment, implementation and the objectives of majority of the above programmes will reveal that they were mainly targeted at rural development in an attempt to better the lives of rural dwellers, stimulate and enhance economic growth, as well as get the rural sector to contribute meaningfully to the national economic and social development. These programmes have direct or indirect impact on rural development and can broadly be grouped into specific and multi-specific programmes. The specific programmes are those directed mainly at agriculture, health, education, housing, transport, infrastructure, finance and manufacturing. These programmes and projects were made possible only by the efforts of the bureaucracy. However, one will be correct to argue that the rate of rural-underdevelopment in Nigeria, in spite of a handful of rural development related policies and programmes, is significantly related to the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of the Nigeria public bureaucracy, which of course is the core of the Public Administration.

VIII. THE ROLE OF PUBLIC BUREAUCRACY IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Civil Service in Nigerian and that of many countries is regarded as a bureaucracy. But Public Bureaucracy is more than the civil Service hence Public Service. This is because bureaucracy is a large organization that is controlled and funded by the government. The civil service comprises all servants of the state other than holders of political or judicial offices who are employed in a civil capacity and whose remunerations are paid wholly and directly out of the money voted by the parliament. The civil service is part of the machinery of the executive branch of the government and exists to put into effect government policies. The effectiveness of government, especially in relation to rural development therefore, depends on the efficiency of the civil service and its ability to respond in practical terms, to its policy decisions. It is for these reasons that the civil service is often described as the custodian of the government’s reputation, for if it is unable to carry out the policies faithfully and efficiently, it does not only frustrate the government, but it might seriously undermine the government’s position and stability in power. This is why it is called the core of public administration.

Public Administration is often referred to as the action part of Government. Civil servants are often referred to as public administrators and, therefore, are identified by several functions they perform. These functions are regarded as the role of public administration in national development as they represent the relationship between the public bureaucracy and rural development. These roles are as follows:

Assisting in Policy Formulation: Policy formulation is the exclusive preserve of politicians and political office holders. But they may not be able to do this without the assistance of civil servants, who usually provide the necessary data and information which will guide policy choices by political masters. Civil servants go to the field to collect data, analyse them and provide policy alternatives with supportive arguments on each. The final policy choice and decision are not the responsibilities of civil servants but they reserve administrative discretons on certain matters of public policy urgency, especially at the implementation stage.

Policy Execution: The primary function of civil servants is to carry out government’s order and directives without complaints. Official policies are practically implanted by civil servants. They are expected to perform such function to the best of their administrative and technical ability. When this particular function is performed religiously, rural development is ensured as they are nothing but policy decisions taken which awaits implementation by the bureaucrats. This is the core role of public bureaucracy in achieving rural development though it is not exhaustive.

Assisting in Law Making: The executive, under a democratic regime, presents bills to the parliament for legislation. Conventionally, it is the duty of civil servants to draft the bill and fleshed it up with the necessary details before presentation to parliament for debate. After becoming law with the assent of the president, it is also the duty of civil servants to work out modalities for its operations. Therefore, the bureaucrats are inexonorable in the law-making of the administration. Little wonder the saying that Public administration is the administration of “law”, simply put, law in application.

Provision of Social Amenities and Services: Civil servants engage in the provision of some social services as their official assignment. Therefore whoever has, as his official assignment, the provision of social amenities has the sole responsibility of ensuring rural development. Therefore, the Public Bureaucracy has the responsibility of providing social services to the rural populace.

Continuity of Government: Civil servants in the past, especially during the numerous military regimes Nigeria has witnessed, had always played prominent roles in maintaining the continuity of government. Civil servants often provided continuity in government by ensuring provision of social services in all its ramifications. This responsibility leads them to playing a major role in rural development because government exist to provide development and so whoever keeps the government going, keeps development going, especially in the rural areas.
IX. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper made some findings among which are the following:

1. The rapid unending expansion of developmental activities has created complex problems and the greatest single obstacle to progress is the shortage of trained manpower. This problem can be surmounted only by instituting right type of personnel policy with the objective of producing, as rapidly as possible, the skilled and knowledgeable personnel needed in modern administration. This is because in scientific management, efficiency is understood to be synonymous with economy in progress. Therefore, the untrained staffs should be trained and the trained matched with their acquired skill to avoid underutilisation. We should therefore, stop filling the vacancies in the public bureaucracy but match vacancy with skill.

2. Emerging trend from recent studies has shown that higher civil servants form a ‘distant social group’ or to serve as the ‘representative’ of the upper classes as Karl Max foretold, and this trend encourages Mediocrity in Public Administration than Meritocracy, sufficing favouritisms, nepotisms, clientelism and even prebendalism as recruitment into public bureaucracies are seen as political compensations and an avenue to score political points to the detriment of rural and national development because an unqualified labour is a big liability and a destructive force in the whole machinery of development. This is what Federal Character Principle has bequeathed to Nigeria. To solve it means to revert to Weber’s Merit principle as the basis of recruitment and promotion in the Bureaucracy.

3. Numerous problems are connected with the administration of development plans and specific development. These includes long delays in execution of the plan, increased costs over the projected costs because of delays and inflation and because of bloated contract price and kick-backs, inferior construction, low yields on investments, unnecessary disposal of resources among a number of small and uncoordinated job. They are called Administrative problems. There are three other sources of administrative confusion and incompetence such as a. The lack of trained experts to administer the complex programme and projects so vital to economic development. b. Lack of political support for civil servants and bureaucrats; and c. The casual way in which third world bureaucrats manipulate or alter statistical data to conform to political requirements. The solution is employment of skilled and qualified staffs on the basis of merit and not mediocre and depoliticisation of the system.

4. Political and economic constraints in the third world countries have altered the quality of lives in many ways. When government makes laws, however, it turns round to aid and abet the noncompliance of such laws by the public. Corruption has been traced to the administrative styles of these countries and Nigeria has been identified in the forefront. For example, the ridiculously low salary of civil servant makes them easily vulnerable to receiving bribes. Added to this is the highly unequal distribution of political power or lopsidedness of political power, which is often the case in plural societies. This is known as Political constraints. Its solution is political will to serve and deliver the goods to the people and a change in their parochial rationality.

X. CONCLUSION

Inexplicably, in most rural areas, says Okoli and Onah (2002), there are no motorable roads to link one community to another, thus leaving many of these communities in dreary isolation to one another. Where any exists at all, it is characterised by innumerable potholes, deep enough to snap a car’s shock observer or give the rim a terminal damage. The state of our roads is most horrible in the Riverine areas with their marshy and difficult terrain. There is also deplorable lack of potable water in Nigerian rural areas. While some communities are lucky to have rivers, streams and springs, others are not fortunate, as some have shallow ponds as the only sources of water for man and animals. In such circumstance, people are bound to drink dirty and contaminated water. Such a source of water supply undoubtedly, constitutes breeding grounds for parasites that cause diseases. Agriculture is the primary occupation and major source of livelihood in rural areas, as large segment of the population lives in rural areas as peasant farmers. The farming system is predominantly traditional, using the hoe and the cutlass. The farmers practices shifting cultivation, thus planting on a small piece of land for two or three years and move to another site some distance away. Nevertheless, a majority of our rural people suffer from malnutrition and hunger. In and around the villages, one readily comes across children with distended tummies and spindly legs who are oblivious of a better milieu. These “living that are better dead” infants, toddlers, youths etc are malnourished. Poor education is another feature of Nigerian rural areas. The privilege of education which for instance, is supposed to be a birth right of every Nigerian child is an illusion to many poor rural dwellers. In some places, there are no schools at all, while in some others, the schools are shabby, ill-equipped and poorly staffed. Though most rural communities have now struggled to get primary schools established in their areas, no matter how dilapidated some of them may look, this cannot be said of secondary schools and
technical colleges which are either non-existent or are located in places very far from some communities, mostly private-owned commercial schools. The fees generally charged in these schools are very high and the costs of books are beyond the means of parents. Hence, because of poverty and other problems, many parents cannot afford to give educational opportunities to their children. Furthermore, rural areas in Nigeria also lack health institutions. There are hardly any well-equipped hospitals, health centres, clinics and maternity homes in rural areas. In some places, no medical institutions of any sort exists at all. And where they exist, the people have to travel between 5 to 35 Kilometres or more to reach the nearest one available. In such a situation, health care of such rural dwellers is left squarely to fate and practically in the hands of rural quacks and traditional medicine.

To reduce poverty and avert rural underdevelopment, we have to review the nation’s approach to the implementation of poverty reduction and other human wellbeing related policies and programmes and which, historically, have been a top-down approach – with government developing programmes for the people rather than programmes designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated by the government of all levels in collaboration with the people themselves, hence Nigeria’s NV20:2020 recommendation of a decentralised approach to the development and implementation of pro-poor programmes. Again, the administrators who have the responsibility of converting these policies to projects and programmes and its realisation must be proactive this time if the rural areas must cease to fit the description which Okoli & Onah (2002) gave them. According to them, “rural areas in Nigeria are characterised by oppression, degradation and deprivation. The rural people have fewer opportunities for education, employment and good living. They lack economic and social amenities such as good roads, electricity, pipe-borne water, hospitals, bridges, banks, industries, telephone, etc. Generally, the rural communities are poor and economically underdeveloped. Its inhabitants are mainly farmers who maintain small holdings and practise seasonal farming; their production is mainly on subsistence level and food crops productivity and standard of living are low. They are certified victims of preventable diseases, which derive from malnutrition. Inside the rural dwelling place, man, woman and children are herded together under conditions which defy all rules of hygiene, a condition of life so poor that it prevents the realisation of man’s total potential.

To ensure the improvement of the living standards of the low-income people living in the rural areas through transformation of the socio-spatial structures of their productive activities, vis-a-vis the reorganisation and mobilisation of the rural masses and resources, so as to enhance the capacity of the rural populace to cope effectively with the daily tasks of their lives and with the changes consequent upon this, the Nigerian bureaucracy must rise to the occasion and face the challenges of rural development head-on, if any meaningful National Development is intended.

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