

## Socioeconomic and Cultural Barriers to Development Administration in Nigeria

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### Abstract

This study was carried out to investigate the socioeconomic and cultural barriers to development administration in Nigeria. Evidential documented secondary sources related to the subject were used to gather the data that in this paper. Qualitative method of data analysis was adopted upon which thematic, analytical and explanatory techniques were used as tools in the analysis of the data collected. It is found that development administration gains popularity in recent days to address the developmental needs of the Third World nations which are far behind the corridor of development. However, the practice is not without challenges: Statism and rent seeking; mono-cultural economic policy/the Dutch disease; misguided trade policy; entrepreneurial achievement; corrupt financial system; culture of violence is some of the socio-economic and cultural barriers to the practice of development administration in Nigeria. It is acknowledged that economic development does not exist in vacuum; for Nigeria to experience viable economic growth and development, socio-economic and cultural problems such as corruption in government circle; mono-cultural economy; statism; urban violence and wastage of public funds must be addressed. The paper assured that Nigeria as a country has the hope of restructuring its economy in the 21st century. The task is before the Nigerian government to rise up to the challenges of eradicating socio-economic and cultural barriers blocking the wheel of development administration practice.

### **Background to the Study**

Development is the top priority of national government in every Third World country and governments play a key role in national development. The purpose of development is very popular. Who can argue against overcoming the limitations of illiteracy, improving health and nutrition of a nation's population, and producing more food so as to decrease hunger? Thus, while the goals of this type of directed social change are widely agreed upon, yet how these goals are to be attained is often contentious (Erhun, 2015; Omede and Izebokhae, 2019; Sapru, 1980; Singhal, n.d). Public administration is considered an important mechanism in this development process. Government uses its administrative authority to achieve national development task by formulating, organizing and implementing large-scale action policies and programmes. To handle these complex activities of the government, instrument of development administration is employed (Chandler and Plano, 1982; Omede and Izebokhae, 2019). As a result, development administration was inaugurated during the 1950s by the west, as a developmental plan of action capable of fostering nation-building in order to salvage the backwardness of many post-independence Third World countries. Thus, development administration was recognized as a development pathfinder as well as a development catalyst capable of satisfying the development desires of the Third World countries (Emordi and Onuegbu, 2020).

In Nigeria, the evolution of development administration in Nigeria can be traced in the 1948 general directives from the colonial office in London to the colonial government with the specific instruction of reforming the local government and civil service, so as to expand the tasks of government through the mobilization and utilization of local human and material resources in order to aid development. Development administration was further applied in Nigeria through; the establishments of agencies and management techniques aimed at achieving development goals, coupled with the establishment of public corporations and agencies for the management of public resources (Emordi and Onuegbu, 2020).

There is a concern that in every society, there must exist some problems. These problems could be in the areas of politics, commerce, education, agriculture, communication, housing, transportation, health etc. Ojong and Anam (2018), expressed that the importance of agriculture in the development of the Nigerian economy cannot be overstressed. In order to solve these problems as they might exist at given points in time, government is always seen formulating policies in response to them and in relation to the objectives of growth, national development and well-being of the citizens. This is necessary because if attempts are not made to address these problems as they arise, they may degenerate into uncontrollable stages with the society's social-economic growth and development endangered (Okoli and Onah, 2002). For this, the scope and effects of public policy is usually very pervasive and dominant particularly in developing nations like Nigeria (Abah, 2010; Ikelegbe, 2006). It is the making and implementation of public policies that determine, for instance, the level of provision of social services, the availability of financial services for economic activities, the level of industrialization, the level of employment opportunities, the level of social or economic inequality, the availability of health facilities, the level of social security, the pace of educational development etc (Ugwuanyi and Chukwuemeka, 2014) of which development administration practice is imperative.

Interestingly, there indications that development administration has emerged to address the developmental needs of the people and the society. However, for the fact that development is still a very big issue among developing nations of the world such as Nigeria means that all is not well with the process development administration. Tukur (2004) shares the same sentiment when he says that the challenges affecting the ability of states particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria to effectively administer development are multi-faceted and range from environment to environment. Likewise Azu (2019), who is of the opinion that:

*The developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America are basically concerned about the perennial problem of development that confronts them since independence. Government of these states demonstrate this concern by formulating and implementing relevant and appropriate polices that would address the identified social-economic and political problem issues that constitute obstacle to their development (32).*

While Erhun (2015), points this scenario that despite various measures taken by successive administrations to stem the tide of economic problems, the Nigerian economy continues to manifest signs of stress and strains as a result of underdevelopment resulting from neglect of the cultural aspect of development. Economic growth is impeded despite all attempts to achieve socio-economic growth and development as reflected in collapse of family institutions, increase in crime, religious crisis, breakdown in social order, decay in social infrastructure, breakdown in law and order etc. This paper, therefore, investigates the socioeconomic and cultural factors impeding on the practice of development administration in Nigeria.

### **Development**

Defining development has remained problematic in the social sciences. In its generic connotations therefore, development is quite challenging to define, and reducing the attempts to a focus on the other possible subdivisions of development, does not make the embedded tasks easy. This leads to a multiplicity of definitions (Okeke and Aduma, 2020). Lawal and Oluwatoyin (2011), thus opine that development as a concept is a victim of definitional pluralism. The contentious notion of what actually constitutes development was clearly expressed by Dickinson as cited in Singhal (n.d, 841) that:

Everyone is talking about development, but what is it in reality? One thing is certain: it has no simple meaning. Development means something different to each one who speaks. To this, it means that the meaning of development is relative. It is best determined and defined in relation to peculiarities of the society or place. Singhal and Rogers in Singhal (n.d, 841) agree that:

*The problem of development may be the major problem confronting the world. About 950 out of 1000 people born between now and the year 2000 will be in the Third World countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia.*

So, understanding development problems is crucially important (Singhal, n.d). Singhal (n.d) is optimistic that:

*Development in any particular nation consists of a synergy of such development goals as promoting literacy, improving nutrition and health, limiting family size or increasing productivity. The precise nature of particular development problems varies from one country to another, depending on their unique economic, social, political and cultural characteristics.*

Singhal and Rogers in Singhal (n.d, 841), therefore, defined development as:

*A widely participatory process of directed social change in a society, intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom, and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment.*

According to Lawal and Oluwatoyin (2011), a country is classified as developed when she is able to provide qualitative life for her citizenry. Okoli and Onah (2002), further contend that development as a concept is the attainment of an ever shifting but always higher levels of equilibrium between the positive (functional) and negative (dysfunctional) elements within the society and the individual. Okoli and Onah (2002), add that as a practice and process, development entails simultaneous disrupting and reordering of society to achieve material and nonmaterial abundance, and as a strategy, development aims at restructuring and reinforcing the society to maintain or equilibrate the socio-psychological balance of the individual. These authors (Okoli and Onah, 2002) still amplify that development is at once a societal and an individual phenomenon. In these regards, they argue that as a societal phenomenon, it is all-encompassing and demands the involvement and participation of all sections of the society simultaneously, and as an individual phenomenon, it dwells in the realms of socio-psychological conversion.

### **Culture and Development**

Development involves two basic processes improving and refining that which is already in existence and adapting same to contemporary requirements and finding solutions to new problems or new forms of solutions to old problems. It is a creative response to social, economic and political affairs. One can only develop what is already in existence but where what is in existence is destroyed there is nothing to develop for you cannot put something on nothing. As a result of the fact that Nigeria has failed to recognize the place of culture in the attainment of socio-economic development, she has not been able to harness same for national development. The word culture came from a Latin word *cerele* meaning to cultivate or to tend. It means to take active care of something. Piddington (1950), in Erhun (2015), defined culture as the sum total of the material and intellectual equipment wherewith a people satisfy or meet their biological or social needs and adapt themselves to their environment. Thompson 1991 viewed culture as a society's total way or pattern of life. The Ministry of Information and Culture of Nigeria, (1988) in Erhun (2015), defined culture as the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempt

to meet the challenges of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours. As noted by Taylor, (1971) in Erhun (2015), culture is that complex whole which includes the knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society.

Culture is what man interposes between himself and his environment in order to ensure his security and survival (Ayandele, 1981). To Duro (2001), the word culture was is the embodiments of the attitudes of a people to their traditional values which are essential for factors of development and progress. According to Udu (2002), for human beings to build houses, cultivate farms, construct bridges, dams, electricity generating plants, provide qualitative education, manage successful businesses or organizations, control population growth, prevent or cure sicknesses and diseases, ensure social trust, good governance and law and order etc., they need an established critically receptive body of ideas and beliefs, designs, techniques and methodologies rules and regulations. In other words, they need culture. As noted by Tunde Babawale (2007), culture entails all that people have learned and preserved from past collective experience and transmitted into the future by learning.

Culture is the primary means of survival and adaptation of man, offering a summation and distillation of the past that provides sound basis for living in the present and marching into the future. Bates et al (1975) in Erhun (2015), are of the view that in the absence of culture man is prone to losing all knowledge of even the basic means of survival and that it will be catastrophic for the prevailing culture of mankind to be wiped out. An understanding of the cultural aspect of a society is crucial to adapting development approaches to local context and ensuring successful outcomes. Development is not only about economic or material growth or social progress. Economic views cannot be dissociated from other aspects of life. Cultural factor also influence the way humans understand and implement their civic and economic affairs, their relationships to other humans, their histories, the world of nature and most importantly the principles of development. The purpose of development and the criteria by which it may be evaluated are culture-based and culture-bound. Development extends to culture. The culture of the people must be recognized, sustained and preserved in order to give them a sense of belonging in any development agenda. The development process must be viewed from a wider perspective whereby issues of the whole human person, rather than the essentially economic man are incorporated. Development as a strategy for improving the quality of life and the stability of the economy must be viewed from the angle of culture in order to enhance socio-economic development. Culture is a catalyst for comprehensive societal change, with the ability of generating positive and sustainable transformations of economic development. It is an important factor in building social inclusion and eradicating poverty, providing for economic growth and active participation in development processes, as well as an essential component of sustainable development (Erhun, 2015).

## **Administration**

There are various valid ways of conceptualizing administration. It is accordingly not one of those concepts that social science researchers quickly claim the meaning has been under scholarly disputations for ages. Each of the usages of administration definitely conveys its intended meaning, devoid of disputations. It is therefore accurately possible to regard administration as a process and also as a body of persons. Administration can therefore refer to the process of achieving organizational goals through the coordination of human and material resources. As a body of persons, it can mean a body of non-elected government officials or an administrative policy-making group (Merriam-Webster, n.d in Okeke and Aduma, 2020). In this context, administration is interchangeable with the bureaucracy (the non-pejorative notion of bureaucracy), as this conceptualization begins to approach the idea of public administration. Administration may then also be private or public. It can still take the form of other classifications such as educational administration, business administration, sports administration, etc. Invariably, the focus of this contribution is public administration. And under this background therefore (under the setting of public administration) the paper refers to administration as a process and also as a body of non-elected government officials (Okeke and Aduma, 2020).

## **Development Administration**

There is no dearth of definitions of development administration. Development administration evolved from the following scenario: A large group of needy nations necessitating developmental concerns, and the mechanisms of ensuring they are developed (in the thoughts of the relevant development thinkers). The concept therefore, has been almost only used validly with reference to the developing nations of Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. And so, as an area of study, it resulted chiefly from American academic interests in foreign aid programmes and more precisely in the transfer of administrative skills, structures and training programmes to Third World nations. The concept was perhaps first used by Donald C. Stone, although the term was popularized by Riggs and Weidner in the 1960s (Anyebe, 2017; Dwivedi, 1999; Kotze, 1985).

Development administration, according to Schaffer (1969) in Ohemeng (2017), is a distinctive form of administration for development programmes, policies, and plans in those conditions (traditional, transitional or newly independent, and less-developed political system) in which there are unusually extensive needs (which could coincide with urgently expressed demands of political elites, modernizing ideologies, and exercises in mobilization), precisely where there are peculiarly few resources and exceptionally severe obstacles to meeting the needs. To him, the distinction of development administration is exactly in the inconvenient combination: extensive needs, low capacities, severe obstacles. Concisely, development administration, focusing on the state bureaucracy and political institutions, should create an innovative atmosphere or environment through which governments in developing societies and their developmental partners, particularly the United States and the United Nations, could operationalize and share developmental goals by combining planning (thinking) and

acting (doing), minimizing parochialism, diffusing influence, increasing tolerance of interdependence, and avoiding bureau pathology. As Hope (1984) has cogently summarized, the goals of development administration are to stimulate and facilitate defined programs for social and economic progress: or, put another way, development administration is the administration of policies, programs, and projects to serve development purposes. It indicates the complex of the agencies, management systems, and processes a government establish to achieve its development goals. It thus encompasses the organization of new agencies, such as planning organizations and development corporations, the orientation of established agencies, such as departments of agriculture, the delegation of administrative powers to development agencies, and the creation of a cadre of administrators who can provide leadership in stimulating and supporting programs of social and economic improvement (Schaffer, 1969 in Ohemeng, 2017).

According to the dominant premise of development administration, there are significant and fundamental differences between the public administrative process in less-developed countries and in developed ones. In many respects, the notion of development administration questions the relevance of classical or traditional systems, concepts, and methods of public administration to the demands and challenges in less-developed countries. For instance, there are those who doubt the relevance of the classical Weberian bureaucratic model to those demands. The argument is that having evolved from the experience of Western developed countries; they were not designed to be responsive to them. The theme of development administration was therefore to develop the administrative capacities of these societies on the premise that economic development can only be achieved with better administrative capabilities. Development administration scholars conceived of administrative capability as involving the ability to mobilize, allocate, and combine the actions that are technically needed to achieve developmental objectives (Ohemeng, 2017). It should be about civil service structure and extra-governmental institutions. Such capabilities were concerned with the deliberate or artificially induced acceleration (predominantly by public authorities) of growth processes, national goals, and modernization and action programs, with attention to normative prescriptions and value judgments concerning the direction of change. The idea was thus attuned to the problems and needs of developing societies, stressing the setting that provides the political, economic, cultural, and historical context within which administration functions (Ohemeng, 2017).

Development administration emanated from the field of comparative public administration, which primarily deals with the comparison of administrative systems of different nations at varying stages of development. Development administration now became an offshoot of the embedded comparisons. A Comparative Administration Group (CAG) was founded in 1960 by the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) and the real impetus for its work came in 1962 with a financial aid from Ford Foundation totaling \$500,000.00. Solving the administrative problems of the developing countries was the major thrust of the work carried out by the CAG. The group's interpretation of

development administration was highly prescriptive, suggesting easy ways of overcoming administrative problems to the Third World countries, under a paradigm of administered social change. The CAG, headed by FW Riggs (between 1962 and 1971), conducted some extensive research and later published several reports intended to support the Third World countries in their bid to develop by Western standards (Hope, 1984; Ibietan and Folarin, 2013; Ibietan, 2014). Riggs (1970) in Okeke and Aduma (2020), then refers to development administration, as the administration of development programs, which includes the methods used by large-scale organisations, notably governments, to implement policies and plans designed to meet their developmental objectives, whereby by implication, rather than directly, development administration, involves the strengthening of administrative capabilities. Here therefore, two possible interpretations of development administration (the administration of development and the development of administration) become intertwined. And this gives rise to a chicken and egg relationship between development and administration. In other words, Administration needs to be developed, for development to take place and development is a function of effective administration. Development administration is accordingly definable as the combined process of both the 'administration of development' (implementation of development policies and plans) and the 'development of administration' (improvement of administrative capabilities) (Riggs, 1970 in Okeke and Aduma, 2020).

The truth again is that development administration originated from the roots of what Mhango (2018) describes as Europe's (America's) portrayal of itself as the teacher of development to Africa and others. No wonder therefore, Rodman (1968), cited in Okeke and Aduma (2020) saw development administration as the term used in a broad sense, to embrace the variety of approaches and points of view, which marked the study of public administration in developing countries. Development Administration is about innovative projects, programmes and policies, focused on the development of a nation, aimed at the socio-economic and socio-political development of society in general, as enunciated and executed by policymakers and implementers (Juneja, 2020).

But a model of Development Administration must contain the following points:

- i. It must reject the status quo and be directed towards positive change and results.
- ii. As it is result-oriented, every development function should have a defined objective.
- iii. Planning is essential in deciding the framework of resources and time to be allotted to a development function.
- iv. It entails innovation.
- v. It is dynamic in approach and encourages new and better ways of achieving objectives.
- vi. It focuses on planning for the people, and planning with the people.
- vii. It is necessarily people-centered, must empower society as a whole and not mere product or profit-centered (Juneja, 2020).



Essentially therefore, the objective of development of administration can be summarized as follows:

- i. Building of decision-making capabilities.
- ii. Development of skill and specialization to tackle complex personnel issues.
- iii. Giving of importance to training, the effective use of technology to bring about change in administrative approach.
- iv. Increasing of administrative capacity, capabilities, removing of corruption and bringing in more accountability.
- v. Creating of leaders out of bureaucrats for promotion of development initiatives (Juneja, 2020).

Hope (1984) in Ohemeng (2017), explains that achieving independence, however, did not solve these countries' problems. The government machinery, particularly the bureaucracy, was inadequate, and faced tasks it had not been set up to perform. Creating an effective governmental system, with an efficient and capable bureaucracy that could meet these developmental needs, then became paramount. Development administration thus emerged out of the realization that governments and their bureaucracies in less-developed countries needed to be recreated and revitalized as a prerequisite for transforming those societies.

### **Theoretical Underpinning**

This paper is anchored by the Structural Functionalism theory (easily called functionalism). Functionalism is closely associated with the work of Talcott Parsons (Schneewind, 2015). Crossman (2020), highlights that Emile Durkheim, Herbert Spencer and Robert K. Merton were also linked with the development of structural functionalism. But Parsons wrote more than 150 articles and books on functionalism. He addressed in these works how individuals become members of a given society in order to guarantee the survival and stability of the social system. He saw society as a global social system based on an integrated value system. The individual person then participates in the social system by interacting with the other members in line with the various roles and positions such individuals hold in that system. The global social system itself then consists of hierarchically ordered subsystems, characterized by corresponding institutionalized norms. These norms are supposed to be congruent with society's integrated value system on one hand and on the other hand, they determine the expectations and rules attached to specific positions and roles (Okeke and Aduma, 2020; Schneewind, 2001).

Structural functionalism then holds that society is more than the sum of its parts, as each aspect of it works for the system's stability. It accordingly emphasizes consensus and order, social stability and shared public values in the society. Consequently, dysfunctionality in the system leads to change because societal components must adjust to achieve stability. Thus, when one part of the system is dysfunctional, it affects all the other parts, creating social problems, and prompting social change (Crossman, 2020; Okeke and Aduma, 2020). But functionalism is criticized for ignoring the negative implications of social order, as it actually justifies the status quo and the process of (cultural) domination that maintains it. It therefore does not encourage people to take an

active role in changing their social conditions, even when doing so may be beneficial to them. Functionalism's critics thus accuse it of seeing the agitation for social change as undesirable because the various parts of society will compensate in a seemingly organic way for any problems that may arise (Crossman, 2020; Okeke and Aduma, 2020). Nevertheless, in the application of structural functionalism to this work, it is suggested that a dysfunctional administration breeds national failure in development administration.

### **Relevance of Development Administration in Contemporary Nigeria**

In recent times the development of developing countries has again become the subject in developmental discourse. Poverty, sickness, war, etc., continue to afflict most developing countries, even in the midst of plenty in terms of natural resources. It is not surprising that poverty reduction strategies continued to be developed for such countries. Unfortunately, the concentration of development continues to be determined by the market, and championed by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United States government, and other partners. Nevertheless, the market-based approach continues to lead to state or administrative reduction or thinning out through different strategies, despite the shortcomings of such policies, such as structural adjustment programs. What, then, needs to be done in the midst of these developmental problems? The answer may be in revisiting the very notion of development administration (Ohemeng, 2017).

Development administration scholars of old and in modern times have identified the importance of administration in development. It seems, however, to have been ignored by proponents of the market idea for developing countries. With the recent focus on the developmental state, the ideas and ideals of development administration have become much more pertinent. One area development administration scholars have concentrated on is the role of the state, especially a capable bureaucracy, in spearheading development. Writing on the role of the public bureaucracy in development, Stone (1965) in Ohemeng (2017, 4) observed:

The task of national development therefore becomes in large measure, one of developing political and administrative capabilities to provide leadership and direction. These capabilities are especially critical in administering and coordinating the myriad of activities which must be carried out with varying priorities and according to different time periods. ...For this purpose, the natural and human resources of the country must be identified and utilized to the fullest extent and in the most economical manner. We see in this complex of administrative tasks the greatest challenge facing our administrative capabilities.

From Stone's (1965) in Ohemeng (2017) perspective, the primary obstacles to development are administrative rather than economic, and not deficiencies in natural resources. He goes on to argue that developing countries generally lack the administrative capability to implement plans and programmes, and that most persons charged with planning and other development responsibilities in individual countries,

as well as persons made available under technical assistance programs, lack adequate knowledge and adaptability in designing and installing organizations, institutions, and procedures suitable for the particular country. What Stone observed in the 1960s is perhaps more relevant today than it was during his time. For instance, the emergence of Information Communication Technologies has rendered bureaucracy's way of doing things a bit more archaic. These bureaucracies continue to face capacity issues that must be seriously addressed to help governments implement their development plans. Administrative capacity thus continues to be a major problem, so that development plans, including poverty-alleviating strategies and fighting corruption, remain a mirage. The need to rebuild a public bureaucracy, just as in the 1960s, is now back on the drawing board. It does not, however, mean implementing a one-size-fits-all approach, but taking into consideration the ecology of the country: As the United Nations said in the 1960s, "the public service should in a very real sense belong to the society it serves, sharing its culture, its values, its problems and its ambitions. Even when external advice and assistance are available and accepted, they must be given an indigenous character, for the public administration is an integral part of a nation's institutions" (UN 1961 in Ohemeng, 2017).

In current development discourse, however, the focus is more on building a democratic developmental state, a situation projecting an effective role for the state in marshaling all forces to enhance development. Such state needs strong, efficient, and effective government machinery (public bureaucracy) that can continue to bring all sectors to the table collaboratively to discuss, develop, and implement public policies. From this perspective, we need the ideas and ideals projected by development administration in helping to build such democratic developmental states in the developing world.

### **Economic Context of Development Administration**

It has been recognised that public administration is an important dimension of the process of economic growth in developing countries (Riggs, 1966). Taking the Riggsian notion of development in terms of an increase in the capacity of a social system to shape or reshape its environment, it can be hypothesised that economic growth would generally accompany administrative development. Ilchman and Bhargava have also stressed the need to consider administrative capabilities as important variables in any model of economic growth (Ilchman and Bhargava, 1970). The relationship between economic development and administrative reform has not paralleled that of developed (mainly Western) nations. In contemporary modernised states, economic growth preceded administrative reform, while in most of the developing countries it has been the opposite. For faster economic development, economic planning has become an accepted strategy in most of the developing countries. Development administration in such countries generally revolves around the administration of planning. Montgomery (1966) has observed that development administration connotes "carrying out planned change in the economy (in agriculture or industry, or the capital infrastructure supporting either of these) and, to a lesser extent, in the social services of the state (especially education and public health" (78).

In a developing country, generally, the state acts as the dominant change-agent and therefore its capacity to carry out economic development programmes is an important determinant of outputs. The administrative system, in order to enhance its capacity to achieve developmental goals, usually has to adopt a new set of values. The programmatic values of the polity have to be encased in terms of administrative values and institutional apparatus. Essentially, this implies that changes and modifications in the structural and behavioural patterns may have to be brought in line with the functional content of development administration" (Pai Panandikar, 1964). A lack of development-oriented structural and behavioural patterns has been the major cause of the low success of planning in most countries. For example, as Frank Sherwood has noted, public enterprises have proved to be almost parasitic from the viewpoint of economic growth in several countries. Sherwood has demonstrated that, although public enterprises are justified in the emerging nations as instruments of public administration capable of promoting economic growth, in fact, they cost more than they earn and survive because they are subsidised by the public treasury (Sherwood, 1970). However, considering the growing importance of such economic-administrative organisations in "developing" nations, due attention has not been given to their study in comparative public administration. Limited economic resources of a country often put constraints on the ability of its administrative system to achieve developmental goals.

A developing country may not be able to create an adequate salary system for the public officials; for the existence of a sound salary system depends "not only on the mobilisation of funds by taxation and the distribution of wages through a responsible payroll system, but also on the existence of an economic base" (Riggs, 1970). Some scholars have even emphasised the need to provide market-based economic incentives for public officials (Berliner, 1970). This reflects a new trend of thought on the part of comparative administrative theorists.

It is increasingly recognised that public officials in the emergent nations are generally dissatisfied with their low salaries, and such dissatisfaction is seen to be a prime cause of official corruption. Still, in spite of the importance of the subject of official corruption in the context of politico-administrative development, not much research has been done in this area. However, it can be hypothesised that depending on different ecological settings, official corruption may or may not prove dysfunctional to development administration. "Formalism," as already noted, can likewise have positive consequences in certain situations (Huntington, 1968).

### **Socio-Cultural Context of Development Administration**

Riggs has hypothesised that only in more advanced countries are formal or complex organisations (in the sense the term is used in sociological literature) created. "The less developed a social system, the more difficult it is for that system to create organisations; the fewer the organisation in a society, the more difficult it is for that society to develop" (Riggs, 1970). Riggs has not specified, however, the difference between the capabilities of complex administrative organisations and "non-organisations" to achieve developmental goals. Although the underlying objective of the study of comparative

public administration has been to understand and explain the administrative systems in cross-cultural settings, not much study has been made of the interaction between development-oriented administrative systems and the cultural settings in which they work. It is recognised, however, that in institutionalizing administrative change, cultural factors need to be taken into serious consideration.

Riggs has observed, "every culture offers both points of support for and obstacles to change or development" (Ibid). David Apter has described values supporting development as "instrumental" and those obstructing it as "consummatory" (Apter, 1965). Thus, he has suggested that modernisation is facilitated in a society having instrumental rather than consummatory values. However, no hypotheses have been advanced that the Western societies necessarily have more in the way of instrumental values or that non-Western societies have a more consummatory orientation. One theorist has gone so far as to argue, "genuine cultural hurdles to development are not very numerous in any particular region" (Bharati, 1963). Administrative behaviour is affected by the values cherished by the society in which it works. The extent of this influence would depend on "the relative strength of special values developed by the administrative structure vis-à-vis the values of surrounding society" (Subramaniam, 1967). Thus, administrative culture is influenced by the society's value-structure. However, civil servants recruited at a young age and trained with some degree of isolation from the rest of the society can develop their own value system, which is somewhat different from that of the parent society. Such a semi-autonomous value-structure of the administrative system may or may not aid the achievement of developmental goals in socio-economic spheres. Perhaps this would depend upon the extent to which an "instrumental orientation" became dominant in the administrative system.

### **Socio-economic and Cultural Barriers to Development Administration in Nigeria**

It is underscored that development administration is closely related to its external environment. It is influenced by its political, economic and socio-cultural contexts and, in turn, influences effectively. Since development implies the ability of a social system to shape or reshape its environment, its study should naturally be ecological in character. As Edward Weidner has observed.

Environmental factors in general and cultural factors in particular are important to those who attempt to bring about major change in a society. Such factors condition the outcome of any governmental program or other innovation. Therefore, changes in man's culture and environment are among the goals of highest priority in the country's most committed to change (Weidner, 1970).

Within any society, political, economic, and socio-cultural developments interact with the administrative system, as all social systems (including the administrative system) "enter into transactions with their environments, influencing and being influenced by them" (Riggs, 1970). An administrative system is influenced significantly by demands and supports from its environment, which in turn are shaped and reshaped by the administrative system through its outputs. The social environment of administrative systems must be seen as both multifaceted and in dynamic interaction with these systems.

To this reason, Adebayo and Waziri (2012), acknowledged that Nigeria development challenges are well-known and documented. It is remarkable to note the consistency at which the major economic development issues often feature at different national and international fora. USAID (2002) stated that such reports can be found in Obasanjo Economic Blueprint of 1999, the Poverty Reduction Initiative of 2000. In year 2000, the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER) published a well researched paper on the problems of economic development in Nigeria. The institute titled the book NISER Review of Nigerian Development, 2000. The results to be addressed are the cultural impediments to socio-economic development in Nigeria. Nigeria's socio-economic and cultural barriers to development administration include:

### **Statism and Rent Seeking**

This is identified as one of the most serious obstacles to Nigeria's march to economic development and sustainable human conditions. Statism implies the domination of economic policies of a particular country by the state. Statism is a philosophy which considers the government as the most appropriate manager of the economy, and gives individual governmental authorities substantial power over fundamental economic activities such as entrepreneurship and innovation, employment and Finance (NISER, 2000). The danger of statism in a developing country is monumental. Statism gives room for rent-seeking, the illegal accumulation of state wealth at the expense of the poor. Instead of allowing for smooth economic competitions, the state appears to be at everywhere protecting the selfish interest of the ruling elites (Olukoshi, 1992). Since Nigeria's independence, statism has been a major guiding principle of the government in driving the forces of economic development. It is therefore not surprising that in most statist countries, rent-seeking behaviour is a common occurrence. This partly explains the reason why Nigeria is a corrupt and rent-seeking society.

**Corruption:** Growing at independence as a fatal problem, corruption in Nigeria has reached an alarming stage. Though, corruption is a worldwide phenomenon, it has been observed as being a pervasive problem commonly found among the civil bureaucrats who have been in charge of Nigeria's development agenda. It is so pathetic to note that despite the effort of the Federal Government at combating the menace, the incidence of political corruption has defied major diagnosis. Thus, at the state level, it has become a major avenue for mismanagement of public funds and pursuit of economic interests which portend many dangers for sustainable democratic governance in the country. Corruption has so pervaded the entire Nigerian society such that it is difficult to know people who are still morally upright. The most devastating effects of corruption on development, is the supports it is giving to rent-seeking thereby hampering capital development projects. Large scale government industrial projects had been ruined by corruption in the past and a lot more are still being constrained by the pandemic (Onimode, 2003). It is not surprising therefore that corruption is found in the oil, agricultural, communication, transportation, health and other sectors. Like other African countries, corruption in Nigeria is a major obstacle to sustainable development (Adebayo and Waziri, 2012).

**The “Commanding Heights” Philosophy:** This involves state ownership of all major industries, state mobilization, direction of investment resources, and state planning. This policy implies that the state is found in every sector of the economy, private sector initiative is restricted while foreign investors see the economy as an unpredictable economy. Under successive military governments in Nigeria much power was concentrated in the Federal Government, this largely prevented free market competition and the emergence of a viable private sector that could accelerate economic development. Though, with the advent of genuine democratic governance, the Nigerian government is said to have considered the privatization of public enterprises as an alternative option to getting rid of economic recession, price fluctuation and technological backwardness (USAID, 2002). Another factor that has hindered Nigeria's economic development is military rule.

**Military Rule:** The emergence of the military on Nigerian political scene for twenty-nine years prevented foreign investment because military authoritarianism was not conducive for the rule of law which used to be grounds for smooth capitalist business. Thus, for almost three decades of military rule in Nigeria, the business environment suffered many setbacks, this was because the draconian government removed professionalism in economic planning and replaced it with mediocrity. Thus, the growth of military regimented lifestyles consequently facilitated the growth of statist culture, corruption and authoritarianism. As a vicious circle, authoritarian government built hostile environment and prevented foreign investment, while many domestic industries were closed down under the aegis of bad economic policy and inflation. More interestingly was the fact that under the regimes of Gen. Ibrahim Babangida and late Sanni Abacha, Nigeria's economic development reached its stalemate. While the former regime introduced SAP that compounded the economic conditions of Nigerians, the later perpetuated a lot of human rights abuse, which subsequently earned Nigeria sanctions from top capitalist nations like the United States and the United Kingdom. No wonder, pro-democracy activists have argued that a stable government is a potentiality for economic growth and human development (Oyediran, 1979 in Adebayo and Waziri, 2012). Dibia (2000, 49-53) noted that under the military it was common for the federal government to claim monopoly of state resources and manager of the nation's development agenda. Though, the military has been disengaged from Nigerian politics since May 1999, political analysts opined that majority of ex-military leaders are still in the corridors of power.

#### **Mono-cultural Economic Policy/the Dutch Disease**

Because of the misguided economic policies of successive Nigerian government, today Nigeria's national income largely depends on sales of crude oil to foreign multinationals. Today, the oil sector has dominated all other sectors of the economy leaving agriculture and manufacturing sectors worse off. In its research, USAID (2002) called this phenomenon the “Dutch Disease”. It is an economic policy whereby only one commodity forms the major exportable commodity resulting ultimately in severe economic instability and vulnerability to the price behaviour of the commodity. USAID (2002)

Stated that one the common features of the Dutch Disease is the long-term neglect of other sectors of a country's economy. It observed further that most countries trading in the developing countries depend largely on this policy to make their foreign incomes. Nigeria is a typical example of a country suffering from this disease. The reason for reaching this conclusion is based on the overbearing role of oil in the country's Gross Domestic Product. Today, oil forms over 95% of total export earnings, and these earnings alone comprise of GDP on an expenditure basis. About 75% of consolidated government revenue also comes from oil (Olu and Akande, 1999; NISER, 2000).

### **Misguided Trade Policy**

One of the factors in Nigeria's economic history that has hampered economic development was the policy of indigenization, import substitution and industrialization (ISI). By systematically shielding Nigeria away from international competition, the ISI policy ensured the progressive degradation of the country's competitiveness in almost all products other than oil. ISI prevented economic growth because government investment in indigenous industries cut short what would have been the role of global capitalist investors. No wonder, it had net negative effects on the balance of payments of the government. Thus, it was not as if Nigeria did not have the resources to develop its economy but that the Nigerian government embarked on a misguided economy policy. USAID (2002) has succinctly explained the reasons why the Nigerian economy has failed to develop.

### **Entrepreneurial Achievement**

While the Nigerian state cannot but accept the blames being passed on it, it should be noted that many of its citizens lack the will and the achievement personality style to aid development. In contrast individuals with development motives tend to think towards innovation and development. They believe so much in originality and thus are motivated to contribute their quotas to human progress through advancement in science, technology and scholarship etc. (Dibie, 2000). Experiences in contemporary Nigerian society have shown that most Nigerians lack achievement motivation, and often prefer to engage in activities that are less stressful and less tasking. Much of their labour power is devoted to earning illegal profits. Although, government has recently embarked on activities that will increase public awareness on the importance of entrepreneurship for economic growth in a depressed economy, like that of Nigeria; there are still many people in the country, who are yet to understand the need for them to be self-reliant through entrepreneurship. Self-reliance worldwide has been known to be correlated with increases in productivity, innovation and home-grown economic culture. Thus, entrepreneurial business is constructed as another tool for economic self-actualization of African and Asian countries.

### **Corrupt Financial System**

Corruption in Nigeria's financial system has been described as one of the problems of underdevelopment in the country. Corruption was said to be behind the collapse and closure of some previously ailing banks in the 1980s. By the end of 1990s, banks, which



ought to play a prominent role in attracting international investment, had lagged behind the global capitalist competitive markets. Worried by the financial recklessness and indiscipline in the banking industry, the Federal Government under President Olusegun Obasanjo had to merge the surviving banks into 25 Mega Banks. This was done in December, 2005 in order to refocus the banks for the challenges of the 21st century global capitalist system. The guiding philosophy of the Federal Government in this regard was that the private sector needed a financial system that could withstand international standard, and that could bring about sustainable economic development (UNDP, 2007); and for that process to take place the corrupt and wrecked financial system of the past must be a thing of the past. While the Federal government was trying to solve this problem, there emerged another serious challenge which had its roots in the Nigerian multi-ethnic rivalries; this was the problem of violence. Since 1999, Nigerian state has not known absolute peace; it has been battling with different forms of violence, religious, political and ethnic and ethnic clashes. Most recent, is the persistent Niger Delta crisis. Thus, this culture which is preventing private business in the country has been referred to as the culture of violence.

### **Culture of Violence as a Threat to Capitalist Development**

Whether in government enterprises, private sector businesses or international trades, many social scientists who have written extensively on the Neo-liberal economic agenda have argued that violence impedes development. Violence creates hostile environment for economic growth and also creates fear in business people. A violent environment can never be conducive for peaceful trade negotiation. From the Nigeria Civil War of 1967-1970 to several religious clashes in the North, ethnic clashes in the South, insurgence of Niger Delta crisis and Political and Sectanan clashes in the North. Adams (2000) commented that violent political, ethnic and religious clashes are evidences of the failure of the Nigerian state.

### **Empirical Justifications**

Existing empirical studies are available to indicate that there are certain socio-economic and cultural barriers to development administration in Nigeria. For instance, Ugwuanyi and Chukwuemeka (2013) in their study revealed that the factors and circumstances that constitute serious obstacles to effective policy implementation by the public bureaucracy in Nigeria, include the ineffective and corrupt political leadership under which the public bureaucracy in Nigeria thrives; the pervasive and deep rooted corruption within the public bureaucracy and the pressure and influence of primordial demands and values on the bureaucracy which negatively affect implementation activities and processes. Edeh (2019) found that the administrative obstacles of male and female heads of department correlate with their job performance, and that a significant relationship exists between physical facilities and job performance of heads of department. According to the study, the impact in the variation is a clear testimony of the fact that administrative obstacles and job performance does not differ significantly from one another.

Azu (2016), in his study highlighted some factors that constitute challenges to public policy implementation in Nigeria and recommended certain strategies through which policy implementation could be improved; and argues that since administration is the engine room of development of any state, in order to fast track national development, it is imperative that emphasis is laid on developing the administrative machineries through which administration for development can be enhanced. Bamigbose (2020), emphasized that Nigerian bureaucrats have critical roles to play in achieving development administration goals and objectives. Benyin and Ugochukwu (2015) revealed that despite the country's (Nigeria) attempt to advance development; several challenges have posed a great threat to her progress. These setbacks according to Benyin and Ugochukwu (2015), range from imposition of policies on her citizens, lack of adequate human resources or capital to implement development plans/policies, corruption and lack of credible leadership among others. Their (Benyin and Ugochukwu, 2015) study concluded that once the identified setbacks are tackled then development will be realized in the country.

Similarly, Okeke and Aduma (2020), in their study found that in current contexts of development administration, under the technology-driven era, administration of development cannot effectively proceed without the development of administration. Adebayo and Waziri (2012), in their study found that the failure and crises experienced in Nigeria today have been linked with cultural factors such as corruption, leadership failure, lack of entrepreneurial skills, over dependence on western values and culture, insincerity and weak bureaucracies. Akindele, Olaopa and Obiyan (2002), in their study concluded that there is need for a re-orientation by the Nigerian citizenry and Public Bureaucrats vis-à-vis the principles of meritocracy and non-partisanship in dealing with socioeconomic, cultural and political issues within the nation's administrative landscape.

Cinjel and Danjuma (2020), found out that Public Administration is essential in the act of governance and also aid government in executing its policies and programmes. According to them, Public Administration plays a crucial role in promoting national development in Nigeria, concluding that there is a connection between sound administration and good governance. Omede and Izebokhae (2019), found that all successful programmes of political developments are usually supported by effective administrative systems. Nigeria as a federation still faces several challenges of development and these demand greater co-operation on the part of public administrators. The degree of success or failure Nigeria will attain in her future development programmes will depend largely on the quality input and exemplary commitments of her public administrators in the planning and execution of these programmes (Omede and Izebokhae, 2019). Emordi and Onuegbu (2020) found that the experimentation of western development ideologies in Nigeria actually aided the expansion of the Universities but undermined the realization of free, quality and accessible University education for all and sundry.

## **Conclusion**

Development administration is becoming increasingly “fashionable” throughout the public administration literature, its focus, at least in the foreseeable future, is expected to remain on the study of those governmental administrative systems (or organisations), which are engaged primarily in the task of bringing rapid socio-economic and political change. Importantly, the dominant concern of those using the concept is likely to be with the “emergent” nations, which are facing the challenges of socio-administrative changes. It goes without saying that majority of the developing nations has traditional administrative structures, which are assigned the tasks of development administration. Early development administration scholars showed how administrative capabilities could and should be built. It is time for those interested in the development of developing countries to revisit these ideas, and use them for shaping administrative institutions that have suffered under the neoliberal mantra of development.

Statism and rent seeking; mono-cultural economic policy/the Dutch disease; misguided trade policy; entrepreneurial achievement; corrupt financial system; culture of violence are some of the socio-economic and cultural barriers to development administration in Nigeria. It is imperative that in current development discourse, however, the focus is more on building a democratic developmental state, a situation projecting an effective role for the state in marshaling all forces to enhance development. Such state needs strong, efficient, and effective government machinery (public bureaucracy) that can continue to bring all sectors to the table collaboratively to discuss, develop, and implement public policies. From this perspective, we need the ideas and ideals projected by development administration in helping to build such democratic developmental states in the developing world.

Most importantly, economic development does not exist in vacuum; for Nigeria to experience viable economic growth and development, socio-economic and cultural problems such as corruption in government circle; mono-cultural economy; statism; urban violence and wastage of public funds must be addressed. Interestingly, Nigeria as a country has the hope of restructuring its economy in the 21st century. The task is before the Nigerian government to rise up to the challenges of eradicating socio-economic and cultural barriers in the wheel of development administration.

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