

Public Policy-Making and National Development in Nigeria: Examining Experts' Involvement in Policy Regimes

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Abstract

A good public policy is expected to stimulate and sustain development. This is not so in Nigeria and most developing countries. Seemingly, most Nigerian public policies are like mere documents containing the prejudiced views of policy-makers. This paper, therefore, examines the involvement of experts in policy-making in Nigeria and the effects on national development. What are the problems of policy-making in Nigeria? Are experts allowed to participate in policy-making in Nigeria? How does this affect national development in Nigeria? Thus, the article specifically seeks: the problems of policy-making in Nigeria, the extent of involvement of experts in policy-making in Nigeria, and the effects of non-involvement of experts in policy-making on national development. The paper adopts the PCLW (Perception, Commitment, Learning Disposition, and Will) theoretical perspective as its framework of analysis. The observation method is used for the collection of primary and secondary data and this is synergic with the PCLW theoretical framework employed. The article contends that until experts are fully involved in policy-making regimes, public policies will remain the influenced viewpoints of policy-makers incapable of engineering national development. The paper, therefore, recommends the full involvement of experts in policy-making in every public policy domain towards making policies more realistic and responsive to the yearnings and aspirations of the people.

Keywords: Public Policy-Making, National Development, Experts Involvement, and Policy Regimes.

Background to the study

Every country relies on its public policies for the development of all the sectors of its economy. As Echikwonye & Beetseh (2011:53) aptly argued, "if policies are poorly framed and implemented members of the society are bound to suffer". This implies that poorly conceived and implemented policies i.e. policies made without the participation of the experts in the various sectors cannot translate to development. For instance, a country requires a good national policy on education to promote standards of education, a good national policy on environment to regulate hazardous industrial activities to minimize environmental pollution/degradation, a good national policy on taxation to promote people-oriented tax regimes, a good national health policy to promote qualitative and affordable health for the people, a good aviation policy to reduce incidences of air crash, a good national monetary policy to stabilize the economy, a good national policy on energy to stabilize electric power generation, a good national policy on

security to provide security of life and property, a good national policy on agriculture to ensure stable indigenous food security/supply, a good national electoral policy to ensure credible elections and stable democracy, and so on. It infers that no sector can succeed without a 'good policy'. No wonder Chijioke (1987:8) appositely argued that “a government without a definite programme of action is like a traveler without destination. He may cover many kilometers and yet not to be able to say where he is going or how far he has gone”.

Public policy-making, therefore, is a people-oriented and people-inclusive activity as it affects the entire gamut of human existence. Of a fact, for one individual to live fairly comfortably, he requires all the aforementioned sectors and others too numerous to mention to function as the dysfunctioning of one sector will affect the whole and this would adversely effects the individual's well-being, willy-nilly. It is manifest that no one person and/or group of persons can understand and explain the varied problems of the various sectors in a country towards providing answers to all. Policy-makers, therefore, are required to mobilize relevant human capital (experts) from every nook and cranny of a country in search of good public policies towards national development. Not surprising, Iyekekpolo (2011:1) contended that “the development of any nation does not rest on the government alone but on the contributions of every citizen generally and stakeholders in particular”. Thus, public policy, as construed by many scholars, is the strategic use of human and material resources to alleviate national development problems (Chandler & Plano 1988:107; Dimock, et al 1983:40; Echikwonye and Beetseh 2011:54; Barret & Fudge 1981:5; Robert & Clark 1982:116), and so on. The poor socioeconomic conditions in Nigeria and the inability of the ruling class to create conditions necessary for higher national development after more than one decade of uninterrupted democratic rule, therefore, may not be unconnected to lack of experts' involvement in public policy regimes. Most developing countries, therefore, are still battling with challenges of development in all the sectors of their economies due to their inability to arrive at good public policies to drive their various sectors to success and Nigeria is not an exception. It is this probable link between experts' involvement in public policy-making and national development in Nigeria that this paper interrogates.

The problematic of this article is that since political independence in 1960, Nigeria's ruling class has been making public policies ostensibly to tackle one problem or the other, yet almost all the sectors are having a myriad of questions of development begging for answers. Most Nigerian public policies failed and are still failing. Some of such failing public policies in Nigeria include: the associated gas reinjection policy, the national policy on education, the national policy on environment, the national policy on science and technology, the national economic empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS), the green revolution programme, the national youth service corps scheme, the war against indiscipline and corruption policy, the seven point agenda, all regulatory policies in the oil and gas sector, and so on. This largely explains the increasing problems of insecurity, poverty, unemployment, corruption, food security, want of infrastructure, mega flooding, perpetual gas flaring with attendant stupendous economic waste and chronic environmental degradation as well as concomitant spreading of human/plant diseases, and resultant low life span/harvest in oil-bearing communities.

This has generated general feelings of disappointment amongst citizens on successive Nigerian governments and the ruling class. The incessant failure of public policies in Nigeria has also instigated two major strands of argument. One, that public policy makers plan without data and facts, and engage in best guess estimating i.e. planning without fact - disjointed incrementalism (Alegbeleye 1996; Anyanwu & Zander et al 2011, Uhegbu & Nwokocha 1998; Hughes 1991), and so on. Two, that, experts are not put into effective utilization in public policy-making and implementation domains (Taiwo 2002; Eseduwo 2012; Wodu 2013; Awana 2013) and so on. It is worrisome, therefore, on what and/or who to blame as most sectors of the Nigerian economy are undergoing one paralysis or the other.

Thus, to guide our enquiry on 'Public Policy-making and National Development in Nigeria', we hereby pose the following questions:

- a. Is the failure of most sectors in Nigeria a function of the failure of public policies?
- b. Is the failure of public policies in Nigeria a function of non-involvement of experts' in policy-making?
- c. How experts' participation in policy-making does affect national development?

The article, therefore, specifically seeks:

- a. The problems of policy-making in Nigeria.
- b. The extent of involvement of experts in policy-making in Nigeria, and
- c. The effects of experts' participation in policy-making on national development.

This will be done within the context of the Nigerian PCLW theoretical perspective.

Literature Review

The boundary of what should be considered public policy remains a contentious issue in political science discourse. This argument has led to several definitions of public policy by different scholars. Nonetheless, no one definition has been commonly accepted. Interestingly, there are a number of general explanations on the term, public policy, viz: (i) public policy as a government programme of action; (ii) public policy as important activities of government; (iii) public policy as a purposive course of action followed by an actor or a set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern; (iv) public policy as whatever government wants to do or not to do, and so on (Egonmwan 1991:1; Sharkansky 1970:5; Anderson 1975:10; and Dye 1972:18). These explanations can be categorized into two broad assumptions i.e. public policy as decisions and intentions of government; and public policy as actions of government. To a large extent, the explanations held by the foregoing authors are right as they consciously relate public policy to purposeful decisions or events of government. Nevertheless, these explanations have their shortcomings in scope and content as they failed to sufficiently point out the gap between government intentions and realities. They also failed to outline the distinction between routine actions of government e.g. personnel matters, administrative matters, granting of licenses, and so on, and policy matters e.g. defense, education, housing, environment, agriculture, industry, health, technology, and so on. This has brought modifications to the definition of public policy which we now turn to Dror (1973:14) in his work, *Public Policy-making Re-examined* defined public policy as a major guideline for action. In his words:

Public policy, in most cases, lays down general directives, rather than detailed instructions, on the main lines of actions to be followed. It is thus not identical with the game-theory definition of

'strategy' as a detailed set of decision covering all possible situations. The military definition of 'strategy' as a general guide for action in contrast to tactics is closer to what is meant by policy.

Richard (1969, as quoted in Egonmwan 1991:2) recommended that policy be considered as “a long series of more or less related activities rather than single discrete decision”. He added that the sense of continuous activity and adjustment involved in policy-making is best conveyed by describing it as a process rather than as a single once-for-all act. Richard's definition may be ambiguous to a large extent, yet it points to an important description of public policy as a patterned process of activity rather than simply a decision to do something. Jenkins (1978, as quoted in Egonmwan 1991:3) also defined public policy as “a set of interrelated decisions by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where those decisions should, in principle be within the power of those actors to achieve”. Jenkins definition is in a similar perspective with Richard's definition above. Jenkins definition exposes us to some salient characteristics of public policy. His choice of the word 'selection' demonstrated his recognition of both decisions and actions purposely preferred by government amongst other competitive alternatives towards solving a problem as very important elements of public policy. Raymond and Kenneth (1968, as quoted in Egonmwan 1991:3) made distinction between routine decision, tactical decision, and policy. According to these scholars: (i) Routine decision refers to trivial or repetitive actions; (ii) Tactical decision refers to a situation where the issue at stake is more complex, requires more thought and details of guidelines to be followed; and (iii) Policy refers to decisions with some ramifications and longest time perspective requiring most information and contemplation. From the above distinction, it is clear that public policy is different from the day-to-day activities of government. Public policy, therefore, is the gamut of subset of deliberate and proactive decisions taken by government directed towards solving specific problems.

It has been argued emphatically by Anderson (1975:10) that “public policy typically involves a pattern of action extending over time and involving many decisions, some routine and some not routine. This implies that policy-decisions are usually not routine decisions. Egonmwan (1991:4) clarified it that policy-decisions are taken to cope with uncertain situations whilst routine-decisions are usually taken to cope with relatively stable situations which are predictable.

Chijioke (1987:8) in his article, 'Some Problems of Policy-Making' made some distinctive innovations on the definition of public policy as “a government programme contained either in the nation's laws or in a public statement by a competent functionary of government”. A more encompassing definition of policy is the one given by Victor (1976:149-165) that:

A policy is simply actions taken or to be taken and actions not taken or not to be taken by government or private organizations. It is a statement of what an organization wants to do, what it is doing, what it is not doing and what would not be done. It can also be regarded as general rules, regulations, guiding practices or actions in a particular activity or problem area.

In this paper, therefore, public policy refers to proposed preferences of government in written or unwritten form to guide definite line of actions and behaviour in relation to certain spheres of

activity towards solving a specific problem. These proposed preferences appear and/or contained in government statements, legislative enactments, executive directives, administrative orders or guidelines (government white papers), appropriated fiscal estimates, and so on.

Operationalizing Key Concepts

The following concepts require clarification and/or operational definition as they are central to this article and as such, frequently used. These include:

- (i) Public Policy-Making,
- (ii) National Development,
- (iii) Experts Involvement, and
- (iv) Policy Regimes.

- (i) **Public Policy-Making:** In this paper, Public Policy-Making denotes the processes and actions involved in arriving at the proposed preferences of government to guide definite line of actions and behaviour in relation to certain spheres of activity, ostensibly to solve specific societal problems. These include government statements, legislative enactments, executive directives, administrative orders or guidelines (government white papers), appropriated fiscal estimates, and so on. Thus, this article sees policy-making as a 'process' that involves a number of functional and interconnected activities such as: (a) policy-formation phase, (b) policy-implementation phase, and (c) policy-feedback/evaluation phase.
- (ii) **National Development:** This refers to the holistic growth of all sectors of the Nigerian economy e.g. education, health, transport, infrastructure, agriculture, environment, energy, science & technology, commerce & industry, manufacturing, politics, and so on, for the benefit and socioeconomic and political well-being of Nigerians, irrespective of Nigeria's heterogeneous populations.
- (iii) **Experts Involvement:** In this article, Experts Involvement represents the consultation and attendant participation of those who have the technical know-how (specialists) in the policy-making circle as it affects making policies for the various sectors of the Nigerian economy.
- (iv) **Policy Regimes:** This refers to the different public policies and different administrations and/or eras of public policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria, since independence (1960).

Conceptual Framework/Theorization of the Discourse

On the question of public policy-making and national development in Nigeria, relevant extant literature is reviewed as point of departure for the search for answers to the foregoing questions. Many scholars have blamed public policy failures on non-involvement of experts in policy-making. Thus, it has been widely argued that the difficulties of implementing federal pollution control programmes cannot be ascribed only to the destabilizing effects of the federal intrusion into delicately balanced political situations (Davies and Davies 1975), but must also be related to the technical and scientific inadequacies of current environmental policies. Enforcement would be easier if more were known about the health and other effects of pollution and about methods of controlling particular types of pollutants. Environmental standards, for instance, could be

based on generally accepted scientific evidence. In a situation in which controversy over questions of fact was greatly reduced, conflicting interests would probably prefer to fight their battles during the policy adoption stage rather than during implementation (Davies and Davies (1975) and Majone and Wildavsky 1979; Pressman and Wildavsky 1973:164). Poor policy choices create problems for implementation, outcomes and impact. Such policies may be infeasible, un-implementable and unattainable. Outcomes may be poor and impact largely negative and unintended (Ikelegbe 1996:142). Egonmwan (1991:6) also outlined four factors responsible for the likely success and/or failure of a policy, viz:

- (i) the socio-political context in which the policy is proposed and executed;
- (ii) available institutional capabilities i.e. the institutional arrangements available for the implementation of the programme;
- (iii) institutional performance in terms of how well agencies are able to carry out their avowed responsibility; and
- (iv) Proper identification of target group(s).

Anderson (1975:68) also summarized the causes of policy failure as follows: (a) Wrong identification of problem; (b) Wrong answers to problem; (c) Wrong drafting of a bill leading to a legislation, and (d) Neglect of implementation analysis while formulating policy. He concluded that the way a bill is drafted has effect on its execution and actual intent of public policy-implementation. Dror (1971, as quoted in Egonmwan 1991:120) identified lack of open and explicit public policy-formulation process to allow exhaustive stakeholder analysis and expert opinion as a major cause of policy failure. He pointed out that elite dominance of public policy-making is fundamental to policy failure. Dror (1971) thus argued that the ruling elite in less developed countries formulate public policies in accordance with their level of understanding of policy issues, and the interest of the small ruling elite and their associates. The willingness to diversify policy analysis as a major precondition for the success of public policy was stressed by many scholars. In their common conclusion, they contended that, willingness to accept more analysis as basis for policy formulation in some areas especially where external resources are involved and unwillingness to allow analysis to play any role in some other cases...intuition, commonsense, personal, religious and ethnic considerations hold sway in policy formulation (Riggs 1963:120; Heady 1966; Etzioni 1964:310; and Egonmwan 1991:121).

The central idea in the foregoing arguments is that policy-making must recognize the role of expertise in the identification of policy problem, exploration of policy alternatives and recommendation of the appropriate policy choice. The arguments, therefore, point to the fact that policy-implementation will be problematic if the above preliminary requirements of policy-formulation are not considered, properly. Sapru (2004:14) sheds more light on this fact that public policy-making has to rely more and more on the technical advice of specialists and on the administrative experience of generalists.... The administrative apparatus, which is supposed to implement the policies, imposes its own limitations in the making of policies which may have some reasonable prospects of successful implementation. The implementation aspect of public policy, administrators are continuously determining what the law is, what it means in terms of action, what the rights of parties are with respect to both the transactions in process and transactions in prospect (Appleby 1975, as quoted in Sapru 2004:141). Sapru (2004:141)

concluded that the successes or failures of most public policies may be seen to be related to this fact. Thus, the failure of public policies is largely a function of the policy-formulation process which according to Ogban-Iyam's PCLW framework, is largely a function of the qualitative and quantitative interactions of perception, commitment, learning disposition, and political will of policy-makers.

Williams (1971:147-8) also identified ways in which policy failures can be prevented. He therefore, exhorts policy-makers to pay more attention to implementation capacity and sets out the following checklist of questions: (a) How well articulated is the policy to the implementers? (b) How capable are the policy-makers of developing meaningful guidelines for and assistance to implementers? (c) How capable are the implementers to develop and carry out a new policy? (d) How much ability/power does either have to change (i.e. the policy-makers and implementers) the existing order? In the same vein, Sabatier & Mazmanian (1979:484-5) also identified five conditions for effective policy-implementation, viz: (i) whether the programme is based on a sound theory relating to changes in target group behaviour to the achievement of the desired end stated objectives; (ii) whether the statute (of other basic policy-decision) contains unambiguous policy directives and structures of the implementation process so as to maximize the likelihood that target groups will perform as desired; (iii) whether the leaders of the implementation agencies possess substantial managerial and political skills and are committed to statutory goals; (iv) whether the programme is actively supported by organized constituency groups and by a few key legislators (or the chief executive) throughout the implementation process, with the courts being neutral or supportive; and (v) whether the relative priority or statutory objectives is not significantly undermined over time by the emergence of conflicting public policies or by change in relevant socioeconomic conditions that undermine the statute's 'technical' theory or political support. All the arguments and prescriptions of the authors reviewed presupposed a link between actions or inactions of policy-makers at the policy-formulation stage and the success or failure of the policy at the policy-implementation stage. It is instructive from the foregoing contentions that problems can be avoided at the policy-formulation stage by anticipating complications and difficulties in advance. This, they argued that public policy-making can be better performed by the experts in the relevant policy domains. We now turn to the specific literature on experts' involvement in Nigeria's public policy regimes.

Wodu (2013:3) while analyzing the role of Nigerian Engineers in the nation's infrastructural development stated that ... "the Nigerian Engineer is adequately equipped professionally and managerially to midwife strategic plans of the government in infrastructure, economy and national development and is very ready to be 'involved', but is always excluded". Awana (2013:4) also contended that the engineer is the lead professional at the driving seat of any nation's infrastructural development and the economy as evident in the developed world and in most Asian countries unfortunately, it is not the case in Nigeria, as engineers are being relegated, sidelined, neglected, looked down upon and/or not recognized in government and governance. In the same strand of argument, Echikwonye and Beetseh (2011:62) argued that experts should be permitted to formulate policies on projects which are highly technical. According the duo, "the practice whereby the ruling elite embrace all the decision-making responsibilities to

themselves should be avoided and that, specialists should be invited to make policies that really require professional flavour". They conclude that any policy that is not well researched on is probable to meet the rock at the stage of implementation; and the effect may be stunted development. Sambo (1999:66) also puts it that a country should pursue a consistent and lasting policy for research in all facets of life, including the overriding need to set-up a special camp of researchers on strategically designated areas of the country for the full time profession of data gathering, analyzing and implementation.

Rourke (1976:120-125) in his work, *Politics and Public Policy* identified the following advantages of using experts and professionals in public policy-making: (i) Policy advice emanating from experts and professionals tend to be more independent, innovative, diverse and free from internal limitations, values and politics; (ii) Experts and professional bodies outside government provide opportunity for alternative opinion and perspectives to be heard; (iii) External experts' involvement provide for broader participation and/or presentation of broader segments and of the informed citizenry in policy-making; and (iv) The patronage of experts in public policy-making further enables manpower availability to government, expertise, competence, experience and skills that may be lacking or inadequate in the public service, and It enables cooperation of such manpower of eminence that may not accept or be disposed towards civil service appointment.

All the works reviewed point to a link between public policy-making and national development on one hand, and on the other hand, they point to a nexus between experts' involvement in public policy-making and the failure and/or success of public policies. The review also brought to fore, the underutilization of indigenous experts in public policy-making processes. Nonetheless, there is still need to go on with the case study on public policy-making and national development in Nigeria to verify how accurate the pointers are since most of the authors reviewed generalized the scope of their findings. We now turn to our theoretical framework for further understanding and possible explanation of the question of public policy-making and national development in Nigeria.

Theorizing the Discourse

This article employs the PCLW Theory as its framework of analysis. Ogban-Iyam (2011) in his work, *Conscious and Sustained Human activities: The Dynamics of Policy Making and Implementation* postulated the PCLW framework as a pre-theory to explain problems of policy-making and implementation. PCLW, according to Ogban-Iyam, constitutes the following certain commonalities in most conscious and sustained human activities: Perception (P); Commitment (C); Learning disposition (L); and Will (W). The theory argued that it is the quality of the interactions of the perception, commitment, learning disposition, and will components of an actor engaged in a conscious and sustained activity that affects the quality of the actors' performance (Ogban-Iyam 2011:1). The main sets of assumptions of the PCLW theory include:

a. That, generally, human beings must have some perception of what it is that they want to do; that they commit some resources (time, psychic and/or physical) to what they want to do and/or must do as a matter of necessity; that they tend to want to learn to do what they want or what is regarded as a necessity; that people also tend to give up their quest without achieving their

set goal or persist until their want is satisfied; that some people give up more easily than others in their quest, irrespective of the sunk cost (time and resources they have already spent or committed) to the achievement of the set goal; and

b. That, generally, people spend more of their time and resources on things that they want and/or things that are necessary for them than on those things that are not; that the more important an activity to people (whether by necessity or by mere desire) the more they are willing to learn to do it and the longer they persist in an attempt to achieve their goal; that the activity may be of different levels of complexity; that the degree of complexity to the persons concerned depends to some extent on their perception and previous learning; and that the more perceptive one is the more one can unravel complex problems.

In applying the PCLW framework to enhance our understanding of problems of policy-making and implementation, Ogban-Iyam (2011) identified the following relationships: One, that the ability of and ease with which a country formulates and implements a policy is positively related to that country's policy-makers/policy executives' perception of existing options; their commitment to formulate and implement the policy; their willingness to learn; and the strength of their political will to withstand the obstacle(s) and pay the cost associated with such objectives; Two, the greater the perception, commitment, disposition to learn, and the stronger the political will of the policy-makers/policy executives of a country the greater their competence or ability to formulate and implement a policy of their choice or vice versa; and Three, a country that is able to resist the dictates of an external actor in its choice of a policy is likely to be cohesive and being cohesive in its choice, it is likely to stand by the implementation of its choice. Thus, PCLW assumed that whenever a choice is dictated externally there is already an indication of a weak will or lack of exercise of political will. The PCLW framework, therefore, is not only essential for the identification and explanation of problems of policy-making and national development in Nigeria, but also has the indicators for the evaluation of the extent of experts' involvement as well as the success or failure of public policy regimes in Nigeria.

Based on the assumptions of the PCLW theory, therefore, it is hereby hypothesized that:

- (I) the failure of most sectors in Nigeria is a function of the failure of public policies;
- (ii) the failure of public policies in Nigeria is a function of non-involvement of experts' in policy-making; and
- (iii) Experts' participation in policy-making determines the success or failure of public policies and as such affects national development.

Methodology

The paper employs a hybrid of quantitative and qualitative methods. Thus, the observation method is used for the collection of primary and secondary data. A sample of 50 randomly selected respondents from indigenous experts' groups, viz: Nigerian Society of Engineers, Association of Geologists & Environmental Practitioners, Selected University Departments, all to find out through structured questionnaire/personal interviews: (a) if policy-makers involve experts before public policies are formulated in Nigeria; and (b) to find out from some selected policy documents whether the policy goals/alternatives were subjected to expertise scrutiny and clarification of uncertainties. We also consulted relevant books, journals, official documents, the

internet, and so on, to find out why public policies always fail in Nigeria and how this affects national development. Finally, the simple percentage method and tabular presentations were used to analyze both the secondary and primary data collected for this article.

Discussion of Findings

In this section, we will present and discuss our findings by way of answering the research questions and testing our hypotheses. Let us start by looking at Nigeria's public policy-making structure.

Structure of Policy-Making in Nigeria

This paper identifies four prominent categories as constituting the shape of Policy-making in Nigeria, viz:

- (i) Regime-type;
- (ii) Institutional Factors;
- (iii) Non-governmental Organizations; and
- (iv) External Influencing Agencies. We will briefly look at them in order to locate the structure and how public policies are formulated in Nigeria.

(I) Regime-type: - The two most prominent regimes that shape policy-making in Nigeria are Military and Civilian regimes. First, Nigeria is noted for its long years of military rule. Under such military regimes, the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria stands suspended. The military enacts their policies through edicts and decrees. The policy-making organ in military dispensations is the supreme military council. Policies under military are passed on relevant levels and/or ministries/departments/agencies of governments like military orders. Participation in policy-decision making is highly restricted under military rule. Two, Nigeria also experienced civilian regimes. Under civil rule, the constitutional framework guides policy-making. The constitution recognizes legislative lists spelling out areas exclusively met for federal government to legislate upon (Exclusive legislative list), those that require federal-state legislations (Concurrent legislative list), and areas met for only state government to legislate (Residual legislative list). Policy-making under civilian dispensation is designed ostensibly to promote broader participation. However, the democratic institutions are yet to mature into semi-autonomous and interdependent structures of public policy-making and implementation. The civilian regime thus demonstrates more institutional outlook on the policy-making process in Nigeria. The most prominent institutions that shape the policy-making structure under civilian regime include the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, and the bureaucracy. For instance, see the structure of associated gas re-injection policy-making in Nigeria under military rule in figure 1 and same structure under civilian regime in figure 2.

Figure 1: Associated Gas Re-injection Policy-formulation and Implementation Structure in Nigeria (Military Regime)

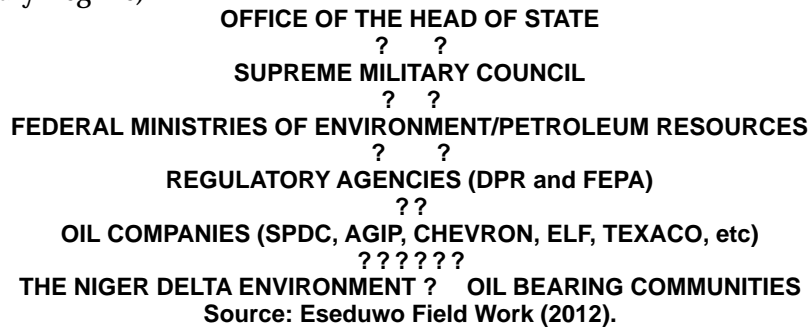
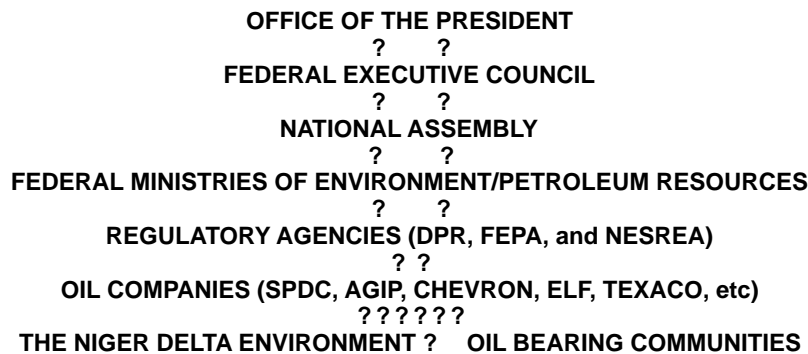


Figure 2: Associated Gas Re-injection Policy-formulation and Implementation Structure in Nigeria (Civilian Regime)



Source: Eseduwo Field Work (2012).

Figures 1 and 2 orchestrate the top-down nature of public policy-making in Nigeria. It is observed that both under military and civilian regimes, associated gas re-injection policy-formulation and implementation structure remains the same except a change in the principal actors and institutions. It is also illustrative of the fact that communication amongst the stakeholders end at the Petro business level as indicated by the two sets of descending and ascending arrows in the figures above. Thus, it implied that most public policies in Nigeria are mere creations and/or impositions of the Supreme Military Council during military regimes; and Federal Executive Council creations and/or impositions during civilian regimes. The legislature that has the law-making function plays no significant role in the formulation of most policies and/or legislations in Nigeria. The legislature only legitimates the executive bills that translate to public policies without independent expertise scrutiny and assessment on the sacred floors of the National Assembly. This is due to the absence of institutionalized experts' advisory units in both the lower and upper Houses of the Nigerian national Assembly. It is observed also that the inter-ministerial collaboration for associated gas re-injection policy formulation/implementation is very poor. Effective associated gas re-injection policy-formulation/implementation requires more than the Federal Ministries of Environment and Petroleum Resources. The Ministries of Science and Technology, Agriculture and Natural

Resources, Foreign Affairs, Finance/Budget/Planning, and Justice at both federal and state levels supposed to form the core of associated gas re-injection policy-making/implementation in Nigeria. That is the practice in Ghana, Cameroon, Saudi Arabia, Britain, USA, Venezuela, Norway, India, Brazil, and so on (Hens and Boon 1999:1; Chen 2007:3; Pelofsky 2010:4; Gervet 2007:7).

(ii) Institutional Factors; - The institutional factors were subsumed in the explanations of the regime-type, especially the civilian regime. The structure of public policy-making, therefore, cannot be properly understood without understanding the environment in which it is conditioned. The important institutions that form the structure of policy-making in Nigeria under normal circumstances (civilian regime) are the executive, legislative and judicial arms of government, and the bureaucracy.

(iii) Non-governmental Organizations: - Apart from the institutions of government that shape the structure of policy-making in Nigeria, there are some non-governmental organizations that influence Nigeria's policy-making structure. These include the political parties, pressure groups, the media and the citizenry. The views of these non-governmental organizations and the citizenry in the form of demands and pressures constitute critical values that often alter extant public policies and calls for amendments/enactment of new policies in Nigeria e.g. the petroleum industry bill, the public information bill, gas reinjection bill, etc. For instance, the Izon Youth Council (IYC) in its Kaiama Declaration calls for an effective gas re-injection policy. The activities of the various volunteer groups (non-militant and/or militant) in the Niger Delta necessitated the new Petroleum Industry Bill in the offering. Of recent, Civil Society Organizations protested to the National Assembly demanding for the speedy passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (Channels Television 9.00 am News, May 12, 2011), and this spurred some actions in the National Assembly in respect of the Bill.

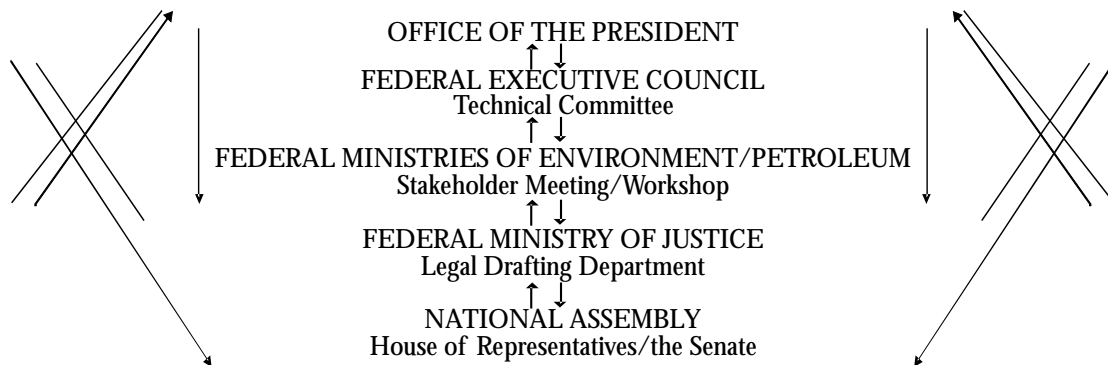
(iv) External Influencing Agencies: - Public policies in Nigeria, like in other countries, are highly conditioned by the external environment. The external environment ipso facto influences the economic and political processes of the country and as such, shapes and reshapes policy outcomes. This external influence is brought to bear on Nigeria's socioeconomic problems by international agencies and multinational oil companies such as the World Bank (WB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Health Organization (WHO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), AGIP, Chevron-Texaco, Exxon-Mobil, Total-Fina-Elf, and so on. These and other external agencies too numerous to mention influence public policy-making processes and structure in Nigeria. All of them compete for favourable public policies as it affects their spheres of business. As argued in the organizational process model of public policy-making, all these external agencies struggle to win government policy-decisions through their inputs in terms of resources including technological capacity and information at their disposal. It is the result of such bargains and compromises between government and external agencies that policy-decisions represent.

How Public Policies are formulated in Nigeria

Having identified the structure of policy-making in Nigeria with special reference to associated gas re-injection policies, we now turn to how policies are made in Nigeria still using associated gas reinjection policies as our point of analysis. Thus, how were they initiated? Who drafted them? And how were they drafted? These are the salient questions this sub-section addressed. The first draft of the associated gas re-injection policies under civilian regimes was done by a technical committee. The technical committee was set up by the Federal Government through the Federal Executive Council. Membership of the committee was drawn from the Federal Ministry of Environment, the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources and the Presidency. The technical committee is often given time frame and terms of reference as to come up with appropriate regulations to stop gas flaring in Nigeria. The technical committee's main sources of information were documents on the procedures, processes and methodologies applied in some developed and developing countries. Thereafter, the committee submits its recommendations to the Federal Executive Council.

The Federal Executive Council after going through the report of the technical committee directs the Federal Ministry of Environment to fine tune the committee recommendations in terms of technical extremities and jargons, as well as considering the implementability of the recommendations vis-à-vis the peculiar circumstances of the Nigerian oil & gas industry and the surmountable gas flare-induced environmental problems. It is at this point the Federal Ministry of Environment convenes stakeholder meeting/workshop, inviting representatives from the State Ministries of Environment, the leadership of Petrobusinesses, and others to attend (See Federal Ministry of Environment Brief on Gas Flare-Down, September 4, 2007; Federal Ministry of Environment Memo on Monitoring of Gas Flare-Down Programmes September 24, 2007; and Federal Ministry of Environment Memo to Federal Executive Council on Implementation of Government Policy on Gas Utilization and Elimination of Gas Flaring, October 12, 2007) . After the stakeholder meeting/workshop, necessary adjustments are made and the second draft is represented to the Federal Executive Council. The Federal Executive Council then redirects the Federal Ministry of Justice to come up with a bill for an Act to abate associated gas flaring. This is done by the Legal Drafting Department of the Federal Ministry of Justice made up of lawyers with legal drafting background. The bill is then submitted to the National Assembly through the Secretary to the Federal Government of Nigeria as an Executive Bill. Prior to the passage of the bill into law, the bill is referred to the House Committee on Oil and Gas. Thereafter, it is prepared for public hearing. At this stage, a lot of inputs are sent to the National Assembly by different individuals and groups representing various interests. Subsequently, it is passed into law as the Associated Gas Re-injection Act by the National Assembly for the President's assent. Figure 3 depicts the foregoing stages of the Associated Gas Re-injection Legislation in Nigeria.

Figure 3: Stages of the Association Gas Re-injection Policy-Making in Nigeria under Civilian Regime



Source: Eseduwo Field Work (2012)

Figure 3 shows the stages of associated gas re-injection policy-making in Nigeria. It is observed that the special research (basic and/or applied) was not experimental. This implies that the recommendations of the technical committee on gas flare regulations were based largely on external (secondary) data other than internal (primary) data. Issues of gas flaring are environment-based therefore more reliable information can be sourced from internal sources (Nigerian environment) other than external sources (other countries' environment). It is also observed from figure 3 above that there is no place for academics from science departments in Universities located in the Niger Delta for inputs through special researches. There is no place too for the involvement of the Federal Ministry of Science & Technology. The technical committee stage did not also show any involvement of the State Ministries of Environment in the Niger Delta States. The figure above did not also show any point of involvement of the Nigerian Society of Engineers and relevant indigenous expertise bodies. Is the technical committee alone capable of the whole gamut of information required for a functional gas reinjection policy without the involvement of other indigenous experts? To what extent Experts' are involved in public policy-making in Nigeria? We shall still use the gas reinjection policy-making example. This we now turn to.

Experts' Involvement in Nigeria's Public Policy Regimes

Starting with the Nigerian Society of Engineers as relevant experts in gas reinjection, were they consulted and/or involved in the making of associated gas reinjection policies in Nigeria? Table 1 illustrates their responses.

Table 1: Responses from the Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE), Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers State Chapters

1 S/NO	2 VARIABLE	3 PATTERNS OF CONSULTATION/EXPERIENCE/RESPONSE						4 TOTAL RESPONDENTS
		Special Research (Basic or Applied)	Technical Committee	Stakeholder Meeting/workshop Discussions	Not All	Low	High	
1	Involvement of NSE in the making of Associated Gas Re-injection policies in Nigeria.	0 (00.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	21 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	21
2	Utilization of inputs of the NSE in the Associated Gas Re-injection Policy Document.	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	21 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	21

Source: Eseduwo Field Work (2012)

Table 1 shows the data collected from twenty-one members of the Nigerian Society of Engineers (seven each) from Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers State Chapters. It is observed that the Nigerian Society of Engineers was not involved at all the stages of consultation, viz: special research, technical committee, and stakeholder meeting/workshop on associated gas re-injection policy-making. We were informed during face-to-face interview with members that the tradition of the Nigerian Society is that if the national working committee is consulted on an issue bothering the states, such issues are referred to the appropriate state(s) to properly investigate and offer technical advice to the national. It was revealed that no such references have been made by the national and no direct consultation of the state chapters by associated gas re-injection policy-makers. One of such interviews was held with one of the officials of the Nigerian Society of Engineers at 3.00 pm on Monday, January 31, 2011 in the State Secretariat, Yenagoa. It was also revealed that the membership of the Nigerian Society of Engineers cut across all the engineering disciplines such as mechanical, chemical, petrochemical, civil, electrical, electronics, structural, petroleum, aeronautic, agricultural, and so on. The non-inclusion of the Nigerian Society of Engineers in the stakeholder meeting/workshop on associated gas re-injection policy-making, therefore, is an aberration to the standard practice of consultation and stakeholder analysis in technology-intensive policy-making. The Nigerian Society of Engineers has a lot to offer in the erection of associated gas re-injection and utilization facilities and as such, must be involved at all stages of consultation on associated gas re-injection policy-making/implementation if gas flare-out deadlines should succeed in Nigeria. The absence of it, therefore, depicts low involvement of indigenous experts in Nigeria's public policy regimes.

Another source of indigenous experts in Nigeria whose counsel is required in gas reinjection policy-making is the Science and Technology Departments of universities in the Niger Delta region. They also have sufficient information for a workable gas reinjection technology in Nigeria. Were they consulted and/or involved in Nigeria's associated gas reinjection policy-making process? Table 2 demonstrates their responses.

Table 2: Responses from three Science/Technology (S & T) Departments from the NDU, DELSU and UST

1 S/NO	2 VARIABLE	3 PATTERNS OF CONSULTATION/EXPERIENCE/RESPONSE						4 TOTAL RESPONDENTS
		Special Research (Basic or Applied)	Technical Committee	Stakeholder Meeting & workshop Discussions	Not All	Low	High	
1	Involvement of S & T Departments in the making of Associated Gas Re-injection policies in Nigeria.	0 (00.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (21%)	23 (79%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	29
2	Utilization of inputs of S & T Departments in the Associated Gas Re-injection Policy Document.	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	22 (76%)	7(24%)	0 (0.0%)	29

Source: Eseduwo Field Work (2012)

Table 2 shows the information gathered from twenty-nine academics drawn from three science/technology departments (Chemistry, Physics, and Geology) as follows: ten (10) respondents from the Niger Delta University (NDU), Wilberforce Island, Amassoma Bayelsa State; ten (10) respondents from the Delta State University (DELSU), Abraka; and Nine (9) respondents from the Rivers State University of Science & Technology (UST), Nkpolu - Port Harcourt. It is observed that academics in science-based departments in Universities located in the heart of the Niger Delta Region where gas flaring is rampant were involved minutely i.e. 21% only at the stage of stakeholder meeting/workshop. And 79% of the respondents confessed that they were not involved at any stage of consultation on associated gas re-injection policy-making, not even at their conventional stage of 'special research' (Basic and/or Applied). In the same vein, their little input through paper presentations at a few stakeholder workshops were not utilized as 76% of the respondents confirmed 'no utilization at all' while only 24% confirmed 'low utilization' of such inputs through stakeholder workshop papers. This is another major deviation from the standard practice of information gathering and technical analysis in technology-intensive policy-making. Paradoxically, the existing knowledge on associated gas re-injection and utilization technology all over the World revolves around the academics through university-based research and development (R&D). Yet, they play no significant role in the associated gas re-injection policy-formulation process in Nigeria. It was discovered through face-to-face interviews with academics that their role ended in presentation of papers on topics given by organizers in National Stakeholders Forums. This is also evident in the official documents earlier observed on the nature of consultation. It is also evident in the data collected from the randomly selected twenty-nine academics that consultation/utilization of indigenous experts' advice is low in Nigeria's associated gas re-injection policy-making/implementation domain. This is an obvious aberration of the universally accepted role of experts in public policy-making. The Nigerian Government's effort to involve indigenous experts in public policy-making, therefore, is grossly inadequate.

The length and breadth of Government's consultative efforts fell into the entrepreneurial hands of multinational companies who monopolize both the productive capacity and dominate the core technical advice structure in Nigeria, as in the oil and gas industry (Eseduwo, 2012:32-55). This was confirmed by a Director in the Oil and Gas Division of the Federal Ministry of Environment in a face-to-face interview. (An Interview with a Director in the Oil & Gas Division of the Federal Ministry of Environment, the Environment House, Abuja, from 3.10pm 4.20pm, on Wednesday May 4, 2011). According to the Director, all the technical policy-inputs made by relevant Government Ministries/Departments/Agencies and sincere International Bodies/Non-Governmental Organizations to bring about effective environmental regulatory policies are further upturned by Petrobusinesses through their domineering influence on the Nigerian oil-driven economy.

Reasons for Public Policy Failures and the Implication on National Development

Policy-making and policy-implementation are inextricably tied together. The problems of policy-making, therefore, are the causes of policy failure. It is at the stage of implementation that the failure or success of a policy can be determined. Many scholars have identified several causes of policy failure in spite of the theory and model of policy-making applied. We will, therefore, summarize some of the common problems of policy-making and implementation, using the PCLW Framework.

A great deal of inputs from patriotic indigenous experts in all fields who have more stake in the success of policies are required to sort out anticipated complications and uncertainties at the formulation stage of policies towards the effective implementation of such policies in Nigeria. In sum, public policies failed in Nigeria as a result of the following factors amongst others:

- (a) Inadequate definition of policy problem as a result of non-involvement of appropriate indigenous experts and attendant dearth of relevant information about the problem.
- (b) Over-ambitious policy goals as a result of lack of proper analysis of policy-problem and attendant insufficient policy-alternatives due to non-involvement of relevant indigenous experts.
- (c) Lack of well-defined programmes for attainment of policy-goals as a result of wrong policy-choice due to non-involvement of appropriate indigenous experts.
- (d) Choice of inappropriate organizational structure.
- (e) Lack of continuity in commitment to policy.
- (f) Lack of clear definition of responsibility.
- (g) Socio-cultural and political oppositions during implementation due to non-involvement of the relevant stakeholders in a particular public policy domain.
- (h) Compromises during implementation defeating policy objectives due to lack of political will.
- (i) Ruling class insensitivity to public demands.
- (j) Wrong timing of public policies.
- (k) Corruption in public policy-making and implementation circles, and so on (Also see Egonmwan 1991:155).

From the foregoing, it is axiomatic to infer that most public policies fail in Nigeria fundamentally due to low perception, commitment, learning disposition and political will of policy-makers. This is so because the higher the perception of policy-makers, the higher the commitment, and the higher the commitment, the higher the crave to learn more about the policy problem in question and the attendant zeal to consult widely and the higher the involvement of indigenous experts, and the higher the involvement of indigenous experts at the policy-formulation stage, the greater the political will to implement such public policies, and the greater the political will of the ruling class to implement public policies, the more successful public policies would be, and the more successful public policies are, the higher the growth rate in all sectors, and the higher the growth rate in all sectors, the more sustainable national development of the Nigerian federal enterprise. The personal knowledge and attitude of public policy-makers, therefore, is a deciding factor of a nation's national development. This underscores the fact that only a thoughtful and public-spirited political leadership that prioritizes public good and embraces the tenets of participatory public policy-making can stimulate national development. A great deal of underutilization of indigenous experts in Nigeria's public policy regimes exists as orchestrated in the field study. This explains the concomitant public policy failures and abysmal national development in Nigeria since political independence in 1960. If experts were deliberately involved in public policy-making in Nigeria, a lot would have changed for better. We now turn to the role of indigenous experts in public policy-making and national development.

The Role of Experts in Public Policy-Making and National Development

Most countries deliberately invest on their experts and professional groups for effective policy-making and implementation. The role of experts and professionals in government business in such countries, therefore, increase on a daily basis. Governments of advanced nation-states bequeath policy-analysis functions to experts through consultations and seek policy advice from experts and professionals outside governmental circles. Ikelegbe (1996:179) confirmed this fact in his work, *Public Policy-Making and Analysis* that:

As the problems confronting society become more complex and the search for optimal policies to solve them become more acute, government and the wider society are turning to the experts and professionals for analysis and prescriptions. The inputs of experts are now being sought at the policy stages of problem identification, study and analysis, as well as the search for alternative policy choices.

As earlier noted, Rourke (1976:120-125) identified five main advantages of using experts and professionals in public policy-making (See p.7. to avoid repetition). In the same token Ikelegbe (1996:179-80) also identified another set of benefits derivable from soliciting experts' advice in public policy-making. First, the solicitation of experts' advice bequeaths some positive orientations to the citizenry about the government. Second, it gives the impression of a government in search of the best in the analysis of and resolution of public problems. Third, it gives the impression of government emphasizing merit, competence and experience. Fourth, experts' input in public policy-making tends to lead to some form of technical legitimacy, portraying the policy as reflective of the wisdom and competence of the society's manpower capacities. Five, the citizenry and particularly the strategic and informed population tend to be

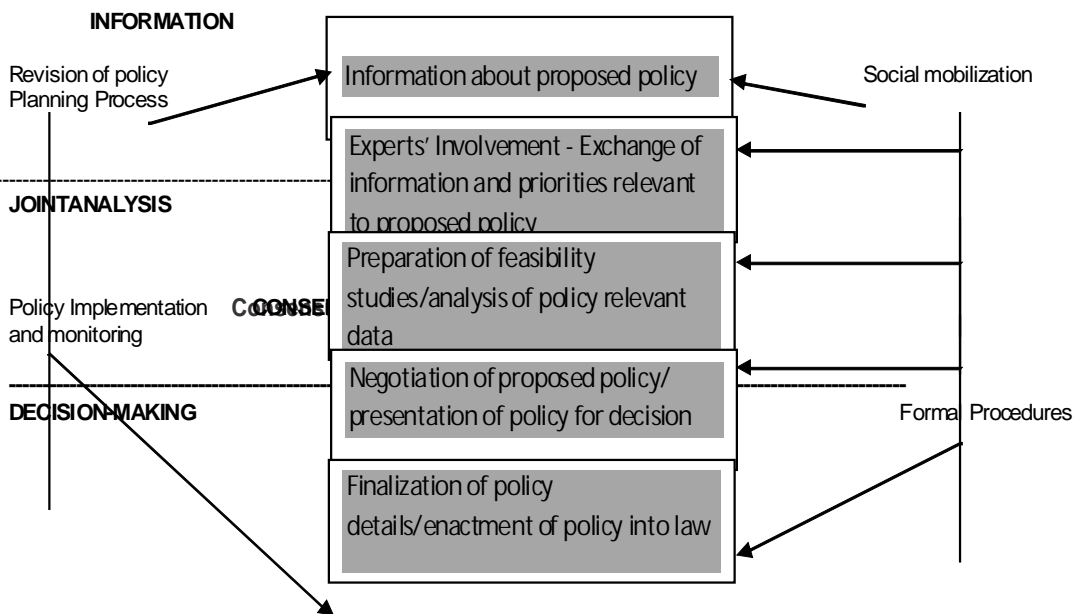
more supportive and persuaded about the need for, the soundness of and the efficacy of the policy choice that has so benefited from society's expertise. Six, it may contribute to society's technical capacities as it enables the much needed mix between theory and practice. Seven, it provides relevant practical experience for the intellectuals, scientists and researchers drawn from the universities and research institutes. This kind of practical experience is enriching and enables the testing of theoretical postulations, the shaping of modifications of past positions, and the growth of knowledge, which is more apt, relevant and realistic.

The foregoing authors have excavated much about the benefits of involving indigenous experts in public policy-making. These revelations largely validate our line of thought and provide good grounds for the testing of the hypotheses of this study. The phenomenon of experts' involvement in public policy-making as explained by the foregoing scholars revealed that experts and professionals alike are usually persons who have achieved eminence in their fields and of course, fields relevant to a particular sphere of public policy. Such experts are usually drawn from the universities, research institutes and professional bodies. They sometimes serve in specialized ministries/departments/agencies of government. In countries like U.S.A, Britain, Japan, China, Brazil, India, and so on, government has begun a system of awarding problem and policy studies to universities, groups of academics, research institutes, and even provides specialized, consulting and research organizations (Also see Ikelegbe 1996:180-81). In the United States, the Rural Corporation has been quite prominent in designing management strategies for agencies. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is also another body that has impacted positively on America's public policy-making domain (AAAS 1975:810-814). In Nigeria, similar institutes, organizations and bodies exist without effective utilization. Some of such bodies include: the Centre for Advanced Social Science Research (CASS), the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP), Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), the Nigerian Society of Engineers, the Raw Materials Research and Development Centre amongst others. The external corporate and university policy involvement tend to have the advantage of high expert inputs and more innovative and objective conclusions (Rourke 1976:157-58) aptly argued. The implications of non-involvement of the foregoing bodies in Nigeria are incessant public policy failures and stunted national development.

Participatory Public Policy-making: An Imperative for Nigeria's National Development

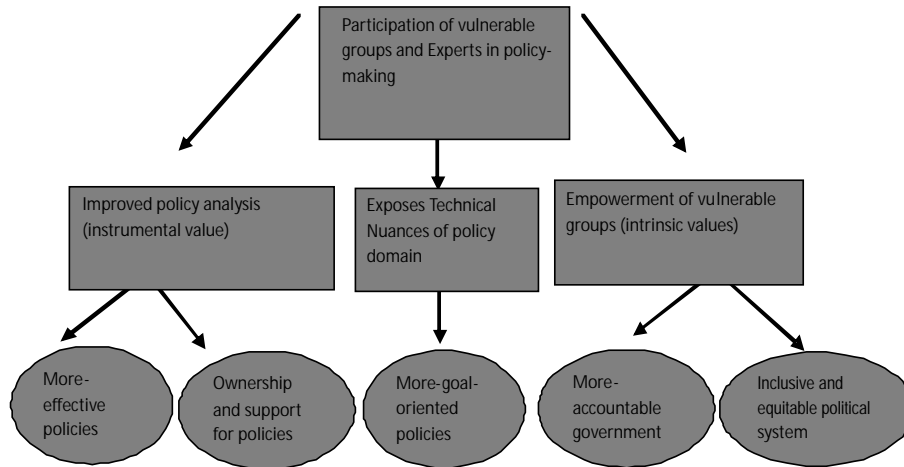
Having exposed to the numerous benefits accruable to a country for involving indigenous experts in public policy-making, a participatory public policy-making model is imperative for Nigeria's national development. It is through a participatory approach that public policy-makers in Nigeria could accommodate not only experts but also all stakeholders in any public policy domain. This is demonstrated in figure 4.

Figure 4: The Participatory Policy-making Process



Many reasons were adduced for giving vulnerable groups greater voice, including technical and ethical rationales (Kende-Robb and Wicklin 111, 2007: 97). They include direct benefits for vulnerable groups (intrinsic value) and benefits for policy-formulation (instrumental benefits). Including vulnerable groups in policy-formulation and implementation leads to better policy analysis e.g. vulnerable households like oil-bearing communities in the Niger Delta Region are often the first to experience the direct and indirect impacts of policies and also the impact of the environmental pollution through gas flares and oil spills. They are, therefore, in a vantage position to truly feel and explain their experiences and perspectives. Research has shown that vulnerable groups have the capacity to appraise, analyse, plan, act, and monitor to a far greater extent than had previously been acknowledged or assumed (Holland and Blackburn 1998; Robb and Scott 2001; and Chambers 2007). It is logical that better-informed technical diagnosis leads to better policies. Public debates can help identify the most appropriate policy combination to promote growth, reduce poverty, and protect the environment. Policies formulated by a broader range of stakeholders are likely to have fewer unanticipated and unintended consequences and to be more predictable in their impacts. Again, participatory processes help foster sense of belonging, understanding, and support of policies and their effective implementation as the hoi polloi through participation will own up policies as they are part of the formulation/implementation process. This is quite instructive to public policy-makers in Nigeria. The benefits of the participatory model of public policy-making are shown in figure 5.

Figure 5: Benefits of the Participatory Policy-making Model



Adapted from Kende-Robb and Wicklin 111 (2007:97); and Eseduwo Fieldwork (2012)

Figure 5 depicts the benefits derivable from involving stakeholders and indigenous experts in policy-making. The end result is an inclusive and equitable political system with high potentials for national development.

Conclusion

In sum, based on the findings of this paper, the failure of public policies in Nigeria is largely a function of the actions and/or inactions of policy-makers in the policy-formulation process. The article, therefore, argues that until experts and stakeholders are fully involved in Nigeria's public policy-making regimes, public policies will remain the influenced viewpoints of policy-makers incapable of engineering national development. The need to involve experts to sift the nuances and uncertainties surrounding any public policy area and the involvement of all stakeholders to ignite support for public policies, therefore, are the overriding factors for the much-vaunted growth of all the sectors of the Nigerian post-colonial economy.

Policy Implications

The policy implications of this paper, therefore, include:

- a. The full involvement of indigenous experts in policy-making in every public policy domain towards making policies more realistic and responsive to the yearnings and aspirations of the people.
- b. Vulnerable stakeholder groups should be given opportunity to partake in the public policy regimes as policies directly affect them and future generations.
- c. An improved commitment, learning disposition and political will of public policy-makers is a desideratum for effective policy-making in Nigeria.
- d. The awareness of the interconnectedness between good public policies and national development will be a step in the right direction towards remedying policy failures.
- e. The Nigerian ruling elite should have a positive change of attitude towards the promotion of public goods other than unproductive accretion of individual wealth.

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