THE NIGERIANA CIVIL SERVICE AND PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract
The concept of human development in a developing country like Nigeria has consistently posed serious challenges since 1960 to date. The quest for procedural rationality as a basis for organizing and executing government activities has been consistently articulated with respect to the pursuit of public administration in a democratic dispensation. This paper examines the extent to which the Nigerian civil service has promoted sustainable human development over the years. This entails focusing on the theoretical examination of sustainable human development as well as the challenges of governance and bureaucracy. Methodologically, this paper is based on documentary analysis of relevant records. The need for the bureaucracy to be effective in promoting sustainable human development is underscored in the paper.

Keywords: Civil Service, Reforms, Ministries, Appointment, Promotion.

INTRODUCTION
The origin, structure and performance of the contemporary civil service in Nigeria are highly traceable to colonial administrative formation. Civil Service in Nigeria has its origins in organizations established by the British in colonial times. The Nigerian Civil service is a body of government employees entrusted with the administration of the country, and mandated to carry out the policies of the government of the day. In other words, it is the body of civilian employees of any level of government, not subject to political appointment and removal, normally hired and promoted largely on the basis of competitive examination.1

Nigeria gained full independence in October 1960 under a constitution that provided for a parliamentary government and a substantial measure of self-government for the country's three regions. Since then, various commissions have studied and made recommendations for reforming of the Civil Service, including the Margan Commission of 1963, the Adebo Commission of 1971 and the Udoji Commission of 1972-74. A major change occurred with the adoption in 1979 of a constitution modeled on that of the United States. The Dotun Philips Panel of 1985 attempted to reform to the Civil Service. The 1988 Civil Service Reorganization Decree promulgated by General Ibrahim Babangida had a major impact on the structure and efficiency of the Civil Service. The later report of the Ayida Panel made recommendations to reverse some of the past innovations and to return to the more efficient Civil Service of earlier years.2 The Civil Service has been undergoing gradual and systematic reforms and restructuring since May 29, 1999 after decades of military rule. However, the civil service is still considered stagnant and inefficient, and the attempts made in the past by panels have had little effect on the promotion of sustainable human development in Nigeria.

The ministries are responsible for various parastatals (government-owned corporations) such as universities (Education), National Broadcasting Commission (Information) and Nigerian National Petroleum Corp (Petroleum). Other parastatals are the responsibility of the Office of the Presidency, such as the Independent National Electoral Commission, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the Federal Civil Service Commission.3

Meanwhile, the above development has x-rayed the genealogical administrative setting of Nigerian Civil Service, from 1960 to date. The central point is that: Have various civil service reforms that have taken place in Nigeria immensely promoted sustainable human development? Hence, strong human resource management, manpower planning and utilization, effective organizational performance, efficient employee-employer relations in a given establishment and high level bureaucratic stability have eluded the post colonial Nigerian Civil Service, a concomitant damaging effect on the promotion of sustainable human development.
THE NIGERIAN CIVIL SERVICE

The Civil Service of any country enjoys efficiency and effectiveness to the extent the government of the day objectively yields to its procedural capacity objectives and bureaucratic stability, geared towards the promotion of sustainable human development. This in no small measure ensures effective nation building and economic stability. The Nigerian Civil Service, according to Akinwumi, is said to be an exception of this assertion.\(^4\) For instance, certain administrative confusion has clouded the atmosphere of Nigeria’s civil service, especially as regards nomenclatural positions of top civil servants occupying sensitive offices, while in active service. For instance, until the 1988 reforms, the Nigerian civil service was organized strictly according to British traditions: it was apolitical, civil servants were expected to serve every government in a nonpartisan way, and the norms of impersonality and hierarchical authority were well entrenched. As the needs of the society became more complex and the public sector expanded rapidly, there was a corresponding need to reform the civil service. The Adebo Commission (1970) and the Udoji Commission (1972) reviewed the structure and orientations of the civil service to make it more efficient instrument for promoting sustainable human development. Idris affirms that although these commissions recommended ways of rationalizing the civil service, the greatest problems of the service remained inefficiency and red tape.\(^5\) Again in 1985, a study group headed by Dotun Phillips looked into the problems. It was believed that the 1988 reforms, the most current measures aimed at dealing with the problems of the service as of 1990, were based on this report.

Compared with the 1960s and 1970s, the civil service by 1990 had changed dramatically. It had been politicized to the extent that most top officials openly supported the government of the day. The introduction of the quota system of recruitment and promotion, adherence to the federal-character principle, and the constant interference of the government in the day-to-day operation of the civil service especially through frequent changes in top officials and massive purges--meant that political factors rather than merit alone played a major role in the civil service.\(^6\)

The 1988 reforms formally recognized the politicization of the upper echelons of the civil service and brought about major changes in other areas. The main stated objective of the reforms was "to ensure a virile, dynamic and result-oriented civil service geared towards the promotion of sustainable human development of the country". As a result, ministers or commissioners vested with full executive powers were fully accountable for their ministries or commissions. The director general had become a political appointee whose length of tenure was dependent on that of the government of the day; in practice, this meant that directors general needed not be career civil servants; thereby reducing the latter's career prospects. Each ministry had been professionalized so that every official, whether specialist or generalist, made his career entirely in one ministry, whereas previously an official could move among ministries. A new department - the Presidency - comprising top government officials was created at the federal level to coordinate the formulation of policies and monitor their execution, thus making it a clearinghouse between the president and all federal ministries and departments.

The reforms created a new style of civil service, but the structure might change under later governments with different priorities. According to Abdullahi, in the past, the attempt by every government to effect changes in the civil service produced many discontinuities.\(^7\) Ministries have been constantly restructured, new ones created, and existing ones abolished. Nevertheless, the 1988 reforms might solve some of the problems of the civil service, because most civil servants tended to remain in their jobs despite reorganizations. Also, the move of the capital from Lagos to Abuja the early 1990s will provide new opportunities to apply the federal-character principle in replacing Lagosian civil servants unwilling to move.

The civil service in 1990 consisted of the federal civil service, the twenty-one autonomous state civil services, the unified local government service, and several federal and state government agencies, including parastatals and corporations. The federal and state civil services were organized around government departments, or ministries, and extra ministerial departments headed by ministers (federal) and commissioners (state), who were appointed by the president and governors, respectively. These political heads were responsible for policy matters. The administrative heads of the ministry were the directors general, formerly called permanent secretaries. The "chief" director general was the secretary to the government and until the Second Republic also doubled as head of the civil service. As chief adviser to the government, the secretary conducted liaison between the government and the civil service.\(^8\) The major function of the director general, as of all senior civil servants, was to advise the minister or the commissioner directly. In doing so, the director general was expected to be neutral.

In the initial periods of military rule, these administrative heads wielded enormous powers. For some time, the military rulers refused to appoint civilian political heads. Even after political heads were appointed, it was years before the era of "super permanent secretaries" to end. According to Bamidele, that happened in 1975 when after Gowon's fall, the civil service was purged to increase its efficiency. Many of the super permanent secretaries lost
their jobs, and the subordinate status of permanent secretaries to their political bosses was reiterated. Another consequence of the purge, reinforced subsequently, was the destruction of the civil service tradition of security of tenure. The destruction was achieved by the retirement or dismissal of many who had not attained retirement age.

Since the restoration of civil democratic rule on May 29, 1999, the Government has adopted some measures to restore the dignity and glory of the Civil Service and place it in a proper position to effectively perform its critical role in societal development. These measures include:

(a) **De-militarization of the Civil Service by:**
   (i) Ensuring that the system is guided by the relevant provisions of the Constitution, the Public Service Rules, the Financial Regulations and Circulars; and
   (ii) Revisions of Rules, Regulations and Procedures in the Civil Service in a way that underscore Government “concern for discipline and proper conduct and practices by public officers in accordance with ... rules ... designed to enhance fairness, accountability and good governance”;

(b) **Re-introduction of the Pooling System. The new polling system is a qualitative development over those of pre–1988 Reforms in that it:**
   (i) Ensure that officers, whether generalists or specialists, are posted to where they will maintain and develop their professional skills, thereby promoting professionalism;
   (ii) Enhance a harmonized development and management of common professional cadres;
   (iii) Promote healthy changes in the manning of ministries, thereby injecting new ideas and fresh blood into the system;
   (iv) Help to transfer skills and experience within the service;
   (v) Broaden the world outlook and vision of civil servants and develop esprit-de-corps throughout the Service;
   (vi) Promote national unity and integration by ensuring that staff of ministries reflect the ethnic, geographical, religious and other divides of Nigeria; and
   (vii) To correct the distortions in the placement of staff arising from the 1988 Reforms;

(c) **Correction of the various distortions introduced by the 1988 Reforms:**
   In this respect, the Government is implementing most of the recommendations of the Ayida Review Panel on the Civil Service Reforms: Main Report, but with qualitative improvements to reflect the new political dispensation and emerging global changes;

(d) **The restoration of the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation which is helping to:**
   (i) Provide leadership, direction and favourable image for the Civil Service;
   (ii) Maintain the Civil Service political neutrality and cohesiveness;
   (iii) Promote high morale and esprit-de-corps amongst civil servants;
   (iv) Coordinate training policies and programmes;
   (v) Improve staff welfare and development;
   (vi) Manage common establishment matters;
   (vii) Foster professionalism; and
   (viii) Promote cordial and mutual relationship between the political officers and civil servants.

(e) **The institution of centralized coherent and systematic training throughout the Civil Service to de-militarize the mentality of civil servants, polish their administrative skills and develop their professionalism. The new innovations in the training programmes under the new dispensation are that:**
   (i) The training and retraining of civil servants, including Permanent Secretaries, have been regularized;
   (ii) It is now compulsory for all categories of staff to attend some training programmes;
   (iii) Career progression in the Civil Service is now tied to the attendance of prescribed training courses;
   (iv) There is extensive use of on-the-job and in-house methods of training by ministries to capture, reflect and address their specific requirements;
   (v) Seasoned retired civil servants are now engaged, on contract basis, to train and retrain civil servants on time-tested skills and methods of Civil Service, as well as share their experiences with serving civil servants; and
   (vi) Training need assessments are undertaken before training programmes are embarked and after the training, evaluation of the impact of such training are conducted through different methods, including promotion examinations. This was not the tradition under military dispensation.
(f) **Comprehensive restructuring of the entire system**

The strategies the government has adopted to manage the reforms are:

i. Separation of the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation from that of the Secretary to Government of the Federation as provided in the 1999 Constitution.

ii. Restructuring of the office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation into five distinct components in a mutually connected relationship.

iii. Civil Servant – driven implementation of reforms.

iv. Return to the restrict applications of extent rules and regulations concerning recruitment and due process in the conduct of Government business generally.

v. Streamlining and coordination of intra and inter-ministerial functions to achieve a common objective.

vi. Liaison with other Public Services across the world (and also multilateral organizations like the Commonwealth, United Nations Development Programmes, World Bank, etc – A. S. M. Babura).

vii. Revisiting the structure and functions of Strategic Public Service Departments such as National Planning Commission and other Professional Departments.”

**CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS AND ITS PROBLEMS**

The Nigerian Civil Service has undergone several reforms since its creation by the British colonial power in 1861. It is, however, the 1988 Civil Service Reforms that introduced profound distortions in the Civil Service. The objectives of the 1988 Reforms are to:

(a) Enhance professionalism, decentralization and delegation of functions;
(b) Institute checks and balances;
(c) Promote general modernization;
(d) Enhance the combination of responsibility with authority;
(e) Align the Civil Service with the spirit of executive presidentialism; and
(f) Enhance efficiency, effectiveness and speed of operations.\(^9\)

The highlights of the 1988 Reforms are:

(i) The merging of ministerial responsibilities and administrative controls and their investment in the Minister as Chief Executive and Accounting Officers;

(ii) Replacement of the designation of Permanent Secretary with “Director-General”, whose tenure will terminate with the Government that appointed him/her and who will serve as Deputy Minister;

(iii) Greater ministerial responsibility in the appointment, promotion, training and discipline of staff;

(iv) Vertical and horizontal restructuring of ministries to "ensure overall management efficiency and effectiveness …"

(v) Permanency of appointment, as every officer, is to make his/her career entirely in one Ministry;

(vi) Abolition of the Office of the Head of Civil Service; and

(vii) Abolition of the pool system

In reality, however, the 1988 Civil Service Reforms led to the:

(a) Conscious and deliberate politicization of the civil service;

(b) Misuse and abuse of power by Ministers and Directors-Generals who saw their Ministries as a separate entity and run them as personal properties;

(c) Increase in the cost of running the civil service due to:
   (i) the imposition of uniform structures on ministries;
   (ii) the proliferation of parastatals; and
   (iii) increase in human personnel without a corresponding increase in the productivity;

(d) Absence of a coherent and systematic training policy throughout the Civil Service;

(e) Glaring shortage of skilled manpower, especially in the technical and professional cadres in virtually all the ministries;

(f) Prevalence and virtual institutionalization of corruption; and

(g) Disregard for the rules, regulations and procedures resulting in arbitrary decisions and general loss of direction; and

(h) Complete emasculation of the Federal Civil Service Commission regulatory role in the appointment, promotion and discipline of Federal Civil Servants.

Thus, the 1988 Civil Service Reforms despite its lofty ideals of efficiency, professionalism, accountability, and checks and balances, did not achieve its desired objectives, especially in the area of promoting sustainable human development, which is an irresistible panacea for a more enhanced and virile economic stability in any state.
In fact, “the harm done during the reforms was so much and so deep that it would take time, patience and determination to restore the lost glory of the Service”.

The Ayida Review Panel on the Civil Service Reforms was inaugurated on 10th November 1994 to, amongst others, re-examine the 1988 Reforms. The Report of the Panel was highly and constructively critical of the 1988 Reforms. Amua\(^{11}\) emphasizes that it reversed most of the reforms of 1988, namely, that the:

(i) Civil service should revert to the system that is guided by the relevant provisions of the Constitution, the Civil Service Rules, the Financial Regulations and Circulars;

(ii) The Ministers should continue to be the Head of the Ministry and should be responsible for its general direction but he/she should not be the Accounting Officer. Instead, the Permanent Secretary should be the Accounting Officer of the Ministry;

(iii) The title of Permanent Secretary should be restored. She/he should be a career officer and should not be asked to retire with the regime that appointed him/her;

(iv) The post of Office of the Head of Civil Service should be re-established as a separate office under the President and a career civil servant should be appointed to head the office;

(v) The pool system be restored for those professional and sub-professional cadres that commonly exist in ministries /extra ministerial departments;

(vi) Ministries /extra-ministerial departments should be structured according to their objectives, functions and sizes and not according to a uniform pattern as prescribed by the 1988 Reforms. Each could have between two (2) to six (6) departments;

(vii) Personnel management functions in the Civil Service should be left to the Federal Civil Service Commission with delegated powers to ministries;

(viii) Financial accountability in the Civil Service should be enhanced through strict observance of financial rules and regulations;

(ix) Recruitment into the Federal Civil Service at the entry point should be based on a combination of merit and Federal Character, but further progression should be based on merit;

(x) Decree 17 of 1984 which empowers government to retire civil servants arbitrarily should be abrogated;

(xi) The retirement age in the Civil Service should be sixty (60) years irrespective of the length of service;

(xii) Government should harmonize the pension rates of those who retired before 1991 and those who retire after 1991; and

(xiii) Salaries, allowances and welfare packages of civil servants should be substantially reviewed upwards and should be adjusted annually to ameliorate the effects of inflation, and discourage corruption.

In continuation, every sovereign state designs the kind of civil service that complements its statute and accomplishes its national mission. One of the clearest manifestations of the dire situation of Nigeria is the absence of mission in the character, orientation or perhaps the lack of it, in the Nigerian public service. The Nigerian civil service is terribly ossified. The civil service is normally the thinking arm of the sovereign nations, and often draws from a country's most unique talent pool; from its established centres of knowledge production - the universities, the research centres and the entire schools system. It generates ideas to create and continuously renew the charter and mission of nationhood.\(^{12}\)

In the case of Nigeria, reflecting the collapse of almost all its strategic national institutions - the bureaucracy, the judiciary, the police, the schools system, etc.- what we now have is a paradoxical service: ignorant, unimaginative, over bloated and careerist. In some very important respects, there is strength in that background, and in many other fundamental respects, there is weakness of the sort that can lead to a potential misreading that might end up misdirecting the necessary changes required to transform the Nigerian service for greater efficacy.

From 1957 when the first set of Nigerians were carefully recruited directly to the colonial Administrative Service then under the leadership of the English Chief Secretary, Sir Ralph Gray, preparatory to home rule, it was assumed that Nigeria would build upon the best tradition and values of its inherited service. But midway into the postcolonial state, that service lost its direction, and was further destroyed and corrupted by the buffalo soldiers who ruled and co-opted the civil servants into their buccaneering ways.\(^{13}\) According to Priskeley, what emerged, especially by 1970, after the civil war, with the forced removal of many officers among some of the more experienced and efficient of that generation, and compounded by the Murtala/Obasanjo shenanigans of 1975 was a cynical and careerist service.\(^{13}\) Babangida's regime further attempted some reform, giving permanent secretaries new titles and new executive authority, revising the tenure principle of the permanent under secretary. The current reform plans by this administration, and announced by secretary to the federal government risks further politicization of the service. Destroying the tenure of the permanent secretary will create new avenues and incentives for even greater corruption.
We duly note the excuse Oronsaye gives for his reform plans. The top, he says, is too overcrowded, and too linear in its regional character. It goes right to the heart of the contradiction that has become the Nigerian public service.\(^{14}\)

For long, officers were not recruited, promoted, and maintained per efficiency, but on selective quota - the so called "federal character" requirement. Many junior and inexperienced people, with varied and even occasionally ambiguous levels of skill, training, and preparations from so-called "disadvantaged" states were brought in and sometimes promoted and privileged over more tested and senior officers from other parts of the country.

**FEDERAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION INNOVATION ON APPOINTMENTS, PROMOTION AND DISCIPLINE**

The new innovations, which the Commission will hopefully bring to bear on the Civil Service Reforms, are:

**Recruitment**

(a) That professional examination bodies and professional organizations should be involved in the recruitment exercises. This will bring about standardization, uniformity and transparency;

(b) That transfer and secondment into the Federal Civil Service should be limited to critical areas of needs in order not to jeopardize the promotion prospects of serving officers; and

(c) That a database inventory to determine the capacity and requirements of the Civil Service and utilization of such resources through a suitably designed pooling mechanism be established. This will help check the suppression of vacancies where they exist.

**Promotion**

(a) That promotion in the Civil Service should be based on the attendance and successful completion of short-time training programmes by civil servants on their professions, management and leadership;

(b) That promotion in the Civil Service at certain Grade Level be tied to membership of professional organizations;

(c) That officers on secondment to international organizations abroad should, on their return, be permitted to sit for promotion examination and if successful, should be granted appropriate notional promotion to enable them be at par with their colleagues;

(d) That notional dates of conversion/upgrading of officers should be the dates of acquiring the relevant additional qualifications;

(e) That officers who pass promotion examination but could not be promoted due to vacancy constraints should not be subjected to repeat such examinations when vacancies become available. Such officers should be promoted in order of merit of their performance in the examination whenever vacancies are available; and

(f) That officers who passes the required promotion examination should have their salaries upgraded to the next level and the salary be made personal to them.

**Discipline**

(a) That the extension of suspension and interdiction of an officer beyond three months in the first instance must be approved by the Commission failing which the Commission reserves the right to recall such officers;

(b) That Ministries/Extra-Ministerial Departments should respond to all disciplinary cases pending before them for review within four weeks and those for retirement from Service in public interest should be concluded within two weeks;

(c) That Ministries/Extra-Ministerial Departments, in handling delegated disciplinary cases, should forward to the Commission minutes of deliberations to ensure standardization and uniformity and that all such actions are taken in accordance with the extant rules;

(d) That all cases involving criminal offences and which attract legal proceedings like theft, embezzlement and fraud be allowed to go through the normal judicial process in accordance with Public Service Rules on charges of misconduct in the matter; and

(e) That decisions of the Commission on all appeal cases be conveyed directly to the appellants through their Ministries/Extra-Ministerial Departments.

**The Major Problems**

The Civil Service Reforms and restructuring processes are not without problems. The major problems, however, is the very poor remuneration package of civil servants. Civil servants are the most disadvantaged and depressed wage earners in Nigeria. The salaries and allowances of civil servants are very poor in relation to the rising cost of living and the amount required for reasonable subsistence. In mid-2000, senior level officials were earning less than Two Hundred United States Dollar (US$200). Also, the gap in salaries between the public and private sector is 300 – 500%. Even within the public sector, the salary of the civil servants is worse. For instance, the least paid staff of the Central Bank of Nigeria earns higher than a Grade Level 13 officer in the Civil Service. Also,
the pay package of a Director in the Civil Service is only about 20% of that of his/her equivalent in the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC).

For the Federal Civil Service Commission, the major problem is how to confront the increasing and persistent pressure for employment into the Federal Civil Service. In year 2000 alone, over 100,000 well qualified graduates applied for employment into the Federal Civil Service. This has serious implications on the logistics of the Commission, and the selection of candidates for appointment into the Service

FIFTY YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE IN NIGERIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

Fifty years of Nigeria’s existence is not only characterized by the under development of the bureaucratic setting, but has also generated orchestrated economic crunch, political instability, social disorder and manpower decay. The Nigerian Civil Service for the past fifty years, has suffered a tremendous set back from the hands of various military and civilian governments that have ruled this country. Simply put, promotion of sustainable human development, which, under normal circumstances, should have been the major preoccupation of post-independent governmental machinery, is addressed with profound ignominy, complacency, lethargy and absolute indifference. To this point, civil servants suffer administrative stagnancy, obsolacy, and other form of clecheic practices generated by pronounced unwillingness of government machinery to re-position the nation’s civil service in real truth and in spirit.

Historically speaking, Nigeria rose from two protectorates in 1914 to three provinces in 1939, three regions in 1945, four regions in 1965, up to twelve states, later nineteen states in 1976, to twenty-one states, later thirty, and presently thirty – six states. We have 774 local government councils and six geopolitical zones, spread across the country, in order to ensure administrative convenience and balanced federation. According to Ujo, people with the relevant qualifications and experiences required to manage all these institutions remain a rare commodity. The duplication of administrative institution also involved a big overhead costs which reduced money that is available for development.15

Conscious of these problems many attempts were made by the various governments to reform it. Committees and commissions were set up. They include The Gorsuch Commission (1955); The Mbaneo Commission (1959); The Newns Commission (1959); The Morgan Commission (1963); The Elwood Grading Team (1966); The Adebo Commission (1971); The Udoji Commissioner (1972); The Dotin Commission (1985). With the exception of the Udoji Committee most of the other ones were concerned with condition of service, salaries and wages, structure, grading of posts and organisation of departments and ministries. The Udoji Commission was set up to correct the failures of the earlier commissions. The Commission made the following recommendations:

- The adoption of result oriented public service
- The adoption of a unified civil service structure
- That administration should be transformed into management
- That reward should be related to job content and performance
- That merit should be the criterion for promotion
- That public sector reward should be harmonised with private sector reward
- The adoption of modern management technique such as PPBS, MBO and project management and;
- That personnel management to be modernized.16

The implementation of the recommendations of the report led to upward review of salaries and wages of workers. Other innovations include enhanced staff development programmes; Institutes of administration of some universities were strengthened to train professional civil servants. Three regulatory agencies were set up. They are Public Complaint Commission, Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau and Code of Conduct Bureau. The Udoji Commission did not lead Nigerian public service to the Promised Land. The Babangida Administration embarked on a major reform in 1988 with the aim of professionalizing the civil service.17 The regime also introduced the policy of privatization, commercialization and rationalization of the public service. Most of the recommendations of the 1988 reform were reviewed and reversed by the Longe committee. The last in the series of reforms in fifty years of the Nigerian public service was the monetization policy under Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. Like other reform measures the monetization policy suffered from poor implementation.

From the foregoing, it could be seen that the major tendencies of the public service of Nigeria in the last fifty years are growth without effective promotion and sustainable human development, motion without movement, and formalism. Fifty years of public service in Nigeria witnessed an unprecedented proliferation of administrative institutions. At the federal level there is a central government administrative structure with numerous ministries such as Agriculture - Aviation - Commerce and Industry - Defence - Education Energy (Gas, Petroleum and Power) - Environment - Federal Capital Territory - Finance Foreign Affairs - Health - Information & Communications - Interior - Justice - Labour Mines and Steel Development - Niger Delta - Science & Technology - Transportation - Tourism,
Cultures National Orientation - Water Resources - Women Affairs - Works, Housing & Urban Development and Youth Development etc. Equally, there are non-ministerial units like Commissions, Advisory bodies and public corporations. Apart from headquarters office, there are numerous branch offices otherwise called field offices at the state and even in some local government areas. The same type of arrangement exists in each of the 36 states. With these structures, the public service became the highest employer of labour.\(^{15}\)

The unfortunate situation is that most of those employed neither have the necessary qualification nor relevant experience. Efforts are made to train some of them. To this end, a number of institutions were established, they include Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, National Institute for policy and strategic Studies, and the Civil Service Institute. These institutions did not improve the performance of public servants and have not contributed immensely to the promotion of sustainable human development, since their establishment. There are many examples to support this assertion. Everyday, thousands of illegal weapons are smuggled into the country to fuel religious and ethnic conflicts. About half of the goods imported into the country are smuggled, yet there is a section of the public service well paid and highly motivated to prevent this problem.

Millions of Naira is lost everyday due to the activities of illegal bunkering. Yet there are public servant engaged to ensure that this does not happen. The basic function of the state is the maintenance of law and order. Yet Nigeria is under siege due to the activities of robbers and kidnappers. Indeed, our law enforcement agency is suffering from personality functional decay with the idiosyncrasy of corruptocracy and profound administrative profligacies.

The second major tendency in the fifty-years of the public service is what we describe as motion without movement… Put differently we say that the spirit is willing but the body is weak. Nigeria can be described as a minefield of regulatory agencies like the INEC, ICPC, EFCC, Public Compliant commission, National Universities Commission, Bureau for Public Enterprises JAMB, NECO, and National Commission for Colleges of Education. The activities of these bodies have not moved the country forward. For example the international community described the 2003 election in Nigeria as flawed. That of 2007 was described as the worst in the world. Corrupt deals used to be in the range of thousands of Naira, but with the coming on board of the EFCC and ICPC it is in billions of Naira. The geometric increase in corruption in Nigeria could be described as the 8th wonder of the world.

The third major tendencies in the fifty year of public service in Nigeria is what Fred Riggs described as formalism which is the degree of discrepancy or incongruence between the formally prescribed and effectively practiced norms and realities and the existence of discrepancy or gap between the stated objectives and real performance. Public administration in Nigeria, according to Hasna, is based on the British Whitehall model both in structure and values.\(^{19}\) This is only in theory. In practice it operates in the style of prismatic-sala model with characteristic like overlapping structures, heterogeneity and formalism. For example a ministry in Nigeria is in every aspect organized like a ministry in the UK with modern gadgets and furnishing. What is different is the behaviour of those of public servant in both countries? While those in UK achieve their goals in terms of service delivery and promotion of sustainable human development; those in Nigeria will “achieve their pockets” and promote corruption. While administration in UK means service, in Nigeria it is an opportunity for personal enrichment. While public administration in UK performs what Merton described as manifest function, its counterpart in Nigeria performs latent functions. In doing their job, public servants are expected to implement the law, that is to say that they are only expected to do only those functions prescribe by law. While these laws existed in Nigeria, they are not strictly followed.

During the administration of General Yakubu Gowon public servants acquired a lot of powers, due to the absence of politicians. This is the so-called golden period of administrocracy or the years of super-permanent secretaries. As Lord Acton correctly observed: “power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely”. The axe fell on public servants when General Murtala retired hundreds of them. This did not prevent public servants from doing business as usual. The effect of this is that it has remained a shadow of itself and a sick child in Africa. No doubt, the future is bleak and there is no light at the end of the tunnel. The reality of today is a pointer to the future. Those things that determine personnel administration in Nigeria today are the power of lobbying, godfatherism cultism and patronage. No country in the world has ever promoted sustainable human development with this type of values where the main interest is to loot the treasury.\(^{15}\)

THE NIGERIAN CIVIL SERVICE AND THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

There is no doubt; the post independent civil service in Nigeria has not adequately promoted sustainable human development in the bureaucratic setting. This has actually hampered the optimum goals of the entire administrative system, characterizing itself in poor organizational performance, required administrative efficiency and effectiveness in the day-to-day administration of both federal and state ministries as well as parastatals and
agencies. Hence, experts in public administration have been busy theorizing impracticable ideas on Nigeria’s civil service, without articulating the best practicable means of using the said civil service to promote sustainable human development in the country.

For emphasis sake, Sustainable human development is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for generations to come. The term was used by the Brundtland Commission which coined what has become the most often-quoted definition of sustainable development as development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Sustainable development ties together concern for the carrying capacity of natural systems with the social challenges facing humanity. As early as the 1970s, “sustainability” was employed to describe an economy “in equilibrium with basic ecological support systems”. The field of sustainable human development can be conceptually broken into three constituent parts: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and sociopolitical sustainability.

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

- The concept of ‘needs’, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs.

Conclusion
The Civil Service of any country is a moving force that pilots its administrative machinery. The fifty-one year existence of Nigeria’s Civil service, vis a vis, its promotion of sustainable human development have been critically appraised, with the conclusion that the civil service is still characterized by unequivocal sense of contradictory systemic malfunctions and profound character of administrative ineptitude, bureaucratic inertia and, personality decay. To this end, actualization of sustainable human development in the context of contemporary civil service in Nigeria is a fundamental mirage. First both the military and civilian administrations have placed little or no premium on such efforts. Again, the Nigerian civil service truly needs bold and far reaching reforms, not tepid, and arbitrary changes. We need to keep the permanent secretary, permanent. We need to create a lean, dynamic, and imaginative service. We need to recruit the highest quality of individuals to the service, and above all, instrumentalize the service as the delivery arm of government. We need to remove quota as a condition for the recruitment of the Administrative cadre of the service, and base both recruitment and advancement on merit.

Accordingly, the problem of Nigerian Civil Service is not necessarily administrative reforms and their implementations, but how to assimilate the able-bodied manpower, who are graduates roaming the streets of the country searching for gainful employment on daily basis. The government should do something about this, otherwise, Nigerian bureaucratic system may end up producing what we do not consume and consuming what we do not produce. Hence, this is a serious challenge to public administration in the twenty-first century Nigerian Civil Service.

References