

THE ROLE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ONICHAKWE, Charles Chimezie

E-mail: onicharles2000@yahoo.com

*Department Of General Studies, Federal Polytechnic, Ukana,
Akwa-Ibom State, Nigeria.*

Abstract

Emerging trends point to good governance as a panacea towards accelerated development in economic, political and social sectors of nations. As such, states (Nigeria inclusive), wishing to realize, promote or maintain economic, political and social strides, should strive to embrace good governance. Efficient political and economic strands promote social order. The leaders and the led should embrace the good governance philosophy if development administration is to meet the underlying rationale it stands for. Both the leaders and the led have their (individual) roles to play to embrace good governance and strengthen development administration. Highly developed nations can attest to promotion of national development through the application of good governance in their development administration. The paper in an attempt to highlight the nexus between good governance and development administration, examined the concept of good governance, government, development, administration and development administration. The paper was prepared based on secondary data from library research, review of literature such as text books and journal publications. The paper points out the elements and criteria for good governance and development administration, advocating that Nigerian government and the civil society should embrace good governance if our development administration is to create the impact it desired. Good governance in development administration is showcased in government's ability to design, formulate and implement policies and programmes which are development oriented and committed to the improvement of the quality of life of the citizens. It is especially accepted, that to promote good governance, the civil society should be obedient to the policies or constitutional dictates expected of them. However, the government through its arms should lead while the citizens follow.

Key Words: Good Governance, Government, Administration, Development, and Development Administration.

Introduction

The prevalent rate of underdevelopment among the Third World countries seems unabated. The level of their national development is still below expectation years after political independence. Remarkably, national development remains a vital future of a nation, as such, its realization is dependent on efficient application of good governance and development administration. This will culminate into the improved economy and better standard of living among the citizens. Government, as an arm of the state, is constitutionally bound to formulate and implement policies that will promote stability in the state. The ability of the government to accommodate public opinion in decision-making, implement such policies with intermittent evaluations to ensure compliance is vital. It is equally ideal, to guarantee the principle of rule of law objectively as this will, in no doubt, promote peace in the society.

Formulation and implementation of friendly policies will attract and encourage the citizens to participate both in economic and political activities freely within the confines of the state's policies. The smooth operation of economic and political activities will ensure social order. Good governance equally accommodates aspects of a civil society inclusion as stated earlier. Sharma, Sadana and Kaur (2013:64) observed that,

Good governance establishes the rule of law, enforces contracts and agreement between the individuals, maintains law and order, guarantees security to the people, economizes on cost and resources, protects the government and properly delivers services to the society. It also determines an optimal size of the government and makes best possible use of government resources.

Implementing a roadmap or adopting a framework on a people-oriented policy by the succeeding administration, though on a different political platform, is an element of good governance. Rather than implementing good policies initiated by an opposition party, political office holders often jettison the implementation and completion of such policies or projects. This accounts for a high rate of abandoned projects scattered in all the nooks and crannies of the Nigerian nation.

Governance requires all hands to be on deck. It entails the sum total of the ways in which individuals and government institutions manage their common affairs for the good of the state and the citizens.

Elements of good governance include;

- (1) Political accountability
- (2) Regular elections to legitimize the exercise of political power or democratic polity.
- (3) Participation by various social, economic, cultural and professional groups, in the process of governance and decentralization or power to local organizations
- (4) Freedom of information
- (5) Efficient and effective administrative system
- (6) Transparency

- (7) Rule of law
- (8) Independence of the judiciary
- (9) Cooperation by government and civil societies
- (10) Bureaucratic accountability

This paper has been written on the basis of secondary data from library researches, review of relevant literature such as text books and journals.

Dichotomy between Governance and Government

Governance is “the manner in which authority, control or power of government is exercised in mobilizing a society’s social and economic resources, to add the issues of public interest” (Sharma et al, 2013:85). Since governance is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented, an analysis of governance focuses on the formal (government) and informal actors (citizens and other bodies) involved in decision-making and implementing the decisions made and the formal and informal structures that have been put in place to arrive at and implement the decisions. Governance refers to the process of managing the affairs of the state (Nkana, Ekpu and Dode, 2013:7). Governance can be defined as the process of decision-making and the process by which the decisions are implemented.

Prasad (2002) defined government as the machinery and institutional arrangement of exercising the sovereign power of serving the internal and external interest of the political community. The scope of governance is wider than that of government. The actors in governance include government, NGOs, media, financial institutions, lobbyists, multinational corporations (MNCs), cooperatives, research institutes, educational institutions etc.

Origin and Growth of Good Governance

The Third World countries gave currency to this phenomenon as they are credited to coining the concept of “good governance” and it found its place into the lexicon of Public Administration since 1990s. This concept is tied to developmental aid to Third World countries by the western countries after the cold war era between USA and USSR. Expressing the importance of this concept “good governance”, the World Bank (1989) had identified four dimensions to include:

- (a) Public sector management
- (b) Accountability
- (c) Legal framework for development and
- (d) Information and transparency

The World Bank equally opined that good governance is central to creating and sustaining an environment which fosters strong and equitable development and it is an essential complement to sound economic policies. In a paper titled “Governance and Development”, World Bank (1992) enumerated three aspects of governance as:

- (i.) The form of polity and the way authority is exercised in society (parliamentary or presidential, military or civilian and authoritarian or democratic).

- (ii.) The process by which authority is exercised on the country's economic, political and social spheres and extent to which the citizens are involved and given responsibility.
- (iii.) The capacity of governments to conceive, formulate and execute policies and in general, to discharge governmental functions as effectively, adequately and efficiently as possible.

The concept of good governance is examined in the context of a broad vision of development and globalization and its facts include efficient functioning of these arms of government – the executive, legislature, and judiciary. The expectation is that each of these arms should carry their individual tasks with dedication and integrity with the active participation of the citizens with the government in policy making, planning, implementation and monitoring. Through the instrumentality of the rule of law, the mal-governance can be eliminated; this is an aspect of good governance. The central, state and local governments in Nigeria ought to discharge their duties as to showcase accountability, transparency, responsiveness, decentralization and people - friendly administration.

Elements of Good Governance

Good governance is a dynamic administration construct that embraces fast changing political, social and economic arrangements. It tries to transform the political, economic and social life of the citizens within the framework of parliamentary democracy. Sharma et al (2013:69) present the elements to include:

- (a) **Participation** They see participation as key to good governance. Citizens participate in the organs of government - executive, legislature, judiciary and regularly exercise their rights to franchise. Participation could be either direct or through the representatives.
- (b) **Accountability** The test of a vibrant democracy is the degree of success in ensuring accountability of those who rule, to those from whom they derive their authority.
- (c) **Transparency** A major premise of good governance is the citizens' access to information, and a good government must ensure free flow of information to citizens. In a parliamentary democracy, transparency in government becomes a necessity and this becomes possible by the basic doctrine of separation of power, and checks and balances among the executive, legislature, and judicial branches. Transparency requires that the decisions are taken and their enforcement is done in a manner that is in conformity with the rules and regulations.
- (d) **Rule of Law** This is a framework that is enforced in an impartial manner for protecting human rights, securing social justice and checking abuse of power; it is a prerequisite for good governance.
- (e) **Consensus Oriented** Good governance should aim at reaching broad consensus after mediating different interests in the society for the best interest of the

community. It aims at sustainable human development and also to achieve the goals of such development.

- (f) **Effectiveness and Efficiency** Good governance also rests upon the fact that the process and institutions should produce results to meet the needs of the society. It also entails proper utilization of resources at their disposal as well as in the government.
- (g) **Responsiveness** Good governance would be possible only when the institution and processes are responsive and serve all stakeholders within a reasonable time-frame.
- (h) **Inclusiveness and Equity** Good governance advocates that people should not be excluded from the mainstream of the society and the marginalized are able to avail opportunities.

Having highlighted the above elements, Nigerian leaders, present and in future, should ensure that these elements are domesticated. Democratic system of governance with more modifications may help to cure the problems of good governance.

Concept of Development Administration

As a guide to understanding development administration, the paper shall present the views of scholars on development and administration that gave birth to another concept, Development Administration.

Development The liberal and Marxist scholars have presented their individual concepts of development. According to Obi and Obikeze (2004), these views are:

- (1) **Liberal View of Development** The sociological import of the French Revolution is that it gave rise to liberal ideology. The main thrust of the revolution was to have a change that would usher in liberty, equality and fraternity. Liberal perspective on development prefers to judge the extent of social justice from the individual rather than that of society as a whole.
- (2) **Marxist Perspective on Development** This view is equally regarded as radical view, hence, its call for revolution to bring about speedy development rather than mere reform. This view is credited to Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin. This Marxist – Lenin philosophy is simultaneously the science of laws of governing the development of nature, society and thought and the world outlook of the working class, affirming communist ideals and moral principles. Since World War II, Marxist theory has focused on unifying themes of international inequality and the dependence of poor countries on the rich for their economic development. They opined that development will only come when there is justice, and equality- a point of agreement with the liberal scholars.

Obi and Obikeze (2004) opined that beyond the narrow economic criteria, development must be conceived as of a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structure, popular attitudes and national institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth and reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute

poverty. They have outlined that development in all societies must have the following objectives:

- (i) It must focus on the people, be people-centered and for their overall advancement and benefits.
- (ii) To increase the availability and the distribution of basic life sustaining goods such as food, shelter, good health and protection from danger.
- (iii) To raise the level of living, and in addition to higher incomes, the provision of more jobs, better education and better attention to cultural and humanistic values all of which will serve not only to enhance material well being but also generate individual freedom and participation in the decision of issues affecting his society.
- (iv) To expand the range of economic and social choices to individual and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence, not only in relevance to other people and nation - state but also to the process of ignorance and human society.

Thus, development is a complex phenomenon comprising many dimensions, political, administrative etc. In all, development should aim at improving the living standards of greater number of people in the society, before we can conclude that there is development in such society as Okereke and Ekpe (2002:21) have outlined development indicators to include:

- The growth rate of the Gross National Product (GNP)
- Level at which income is equitably distributed
- The rate of poverty reduction
- The level of labour output per man
- The extent of agricultural development
- The level of industrialization
- The rate of technological advancement
- The rate of capital formation and
- The extent to which the economy is diversified

Administration In the view of Sherma et al (2013:4) administration, is the organization and use of men and materials to accomplish a purpose. They see it as specialized vocation of managers who have skills of organizing, directing men and materials.

Obi and Obikeze (2004) opined that administration is the process of coordinating and harmonizing mobilized efforts to achieve organizational goals. They see it as conscious, rational and deliberate application of prudent behaviour based on rational principles to direct, coordinate, control, motivate and channel the activities of others to attain a particular goal. It entails the combination, utilization, coordination of men, materials, machinery and money within an organization for the accomplishment of identifiable goals. They summarized the elements inherent to include:

- (1) Administration involves inter-personal relations.
- (2) Group efforts
- (3) There are set objectives to be accomplished
- (4) Set guidelines
- (5) Efficiency is important in administration.

Development Administration

The essence of development administration remains the fact that public administration has a decisive part to play in an attempt to promote development. Okereke (1999) defined development administration to mean all those activities of government and its agencies aimed at the attainment of higher levels of development. He further conceptualized it to mean all the attempts by developing countries to use the institution of state bureaucracy as the primary instrument for the provision of those indicators of government. The goal of development oriented administrative activities is to improve the levels of physical development in these societies and by so doing improve the living-standard of the people. In the view of Ofoeze (1997:14), development administration is the tendency towards a system of administration in which the state penetrated the grassroots level using its own civil servants to achieve the development purpose of the state government at that level. This is aimed at ensuring all inclusiveness.

Obi and Obikeze (2004) opined that development administration is the systematic and organized use of well designed, articulated and deliberate administrative strategies to effect positive changes to the poor state of man and advance his living conditions.

According to Ekot (1999) and Ndoh (1999) in Okereke (1999), development administration entails efforts and innovations adopted by development controls that will enable government to coordinate efficiently and effectively human and materials resources in achieving development objectives, the aim of this is to reduce impediment towards, and achieving a high standard of living comparable to the advanced nations. This activity entails proper planning, recruitment, training, development and management of personnel from almost every profession and skill. Collapsing the notions of these scholars, one can deduce that development administration can be used to initiate and execute such projects as schools, roads, wells, electricity, health centres and improvement of the general wellbeing of the people, promoting social orderliness. As such, administration is poised to be development oriented rather than being rigid to rules and obedience to the status quo.

Wider conceptions on development, administration and indeed development administration have been explored as a guide to consolidate the direction of the paper. It is of great importance to note that development administration as a concept is synonymous with developing nations seeking a semblance of the highly developed nations.

Origin of Development Administration

The birth of development administration could be traced to comparative administration. Comparative administration is the theory of public administration applied to diverse cultures and social settings (Obi and Obikeze, 2004).

The term development administration is of recent origin. It was first coined by Goswami in 1955 and later popularized by scholars like F.W Riggs, Edward W. Weidner, Joseph La Palombara, Albert Waterston etc. Weidner was the first who popularized the concept of development administration (Sherma et al, 2013:179).

Development administration strategy is seen as bourgeoisies-oriented for rural transformation (Ekpe and Awofeso in Okereke, 1999:124).

Problems of the Third World countries like social stagnation, under-developed economies, parochial loyalties to caste, illiteracy, poor health, tribal or ethnic groups, lack of managerial and technical skills, weak or under-developed political administrative institutions etc attracted the main tasks that were geared towards accelerated economies, social political development and national consolidation. Development became the focus of the Third World nations in the beginning of 1960s. This prompted the western countries responses to their development challenges. Leading in these responses was the conceptualization of development administration. Academic experts in public administration and several American public administrators were sent to foreign countries in the 1950s to assist in administrating economic programmes or technical experts to strengthen the public administration institution of some of the newly independent countries (Obi and Obikeze, 2004:172). The proponents of development administration are of the opinion that the best developmental channel for emerging new states is the strengthening of the administrative capabilities of the public bureaucracy and later turning it into an instrument for development through strategies, actions and approaches that are reflective and adjustable to the situational circumstances.

Sherma et al (2013:181) have identified the features of development administration to include:

- (a) **Change orientation** The distribution feature is its central concern with socio-economic change. It is this special orientation which distinguishes it from traditional administration which is basically concerned with maintenance of status quo.
- (b) **Result orientation** It has to be result oriented since changes have to be brought rapidly and within a definite time schedule. Its performance is directly related to productivity eg in per capita income etc.
- (c) **Commitment** In development administration, the organizational role expectation is commitment to socio-economic change and concern for completing time bound programmes. Bureaucracy is expected to be involved and emotionally attached to the jobs they are called upon to perform.
- (d) **Client orientation** Being client oriented, it has to be positively oriented towards satisfying the needs of the people in specific target groups. The satisfaction of these needs constitute the criteria for evaluating performance of the development administration. The people are not to be passive beneficiaries; they are the active participants in the development of public programmes.
- (e) **Temporal dimension** Since economic changes have to be brought as quickly as possible, time assumes considerable importance in development administration. All development is prepared for a certain time frame and must be completed within that.

Rationale for Development Administration in Third World Countries

In Africa, Asia, and Latin America (South America), indexes of development are lacking. This dearth is manifest in uncontrolled inflation, lack of portable water, inadequate food production, shelter, inadequate social services and wide spread corruption. Others include declining educational standards, examination malpractices, increased industrial actions, increased foreign debts, ethnic tension, terrorism, wars, unemployment, religious intolerance, armed robbery, riots, assassination, political instability, high rate of illiteracy and conflicts. These vices have negated development in these nations. Arising from these negative attributes, development is crucial among the Third World countries to eradicate these anomalies and ameliorate their general welfare which is at the lowest ebb. Development administration is crucial in developing countries as it will enhance their level of political, economic, social and cultural well-being with the aid and instrumentality of public administration.

Conceptual Thrust Good governance remains the driving force for development administration to take a pride of place in Nigeria as a nation. This will enable her citizens enjoy a better standard of living. According to Okereke (1999:1), all under developed societies are in need of development not only because they want to be like Europe and America, who are normally looked upon as models but because they desire a better living standard for their people.

It is only good governance that will systematically change the prevailing inadequacies prevalent in the development administration of Nigeria. Incoherent administrative practices since independence, in the face of unimplemented sweet administrative policies, have presented development agenda as a rhetoric due to lack or absence of good governance in development administration.

Good governance entails institutional framework and processes that promote the tenets of development administration. Efficiently, development administration will bring about economic and political upliftment, enhancing the people's trust in government. This will ultimately promote social orderliness. Besides, efficient government institutional framework and processes, the civil society has to be loyal to the constitutional dictates.

The Criteria for Good Governance and Development Administration as a Panacea for National Development

In an effort to realize good governance in development administration, these directional actions are instructive.

- (a) **Administrative Reforms** Good governance depends on bureaucracy and the civil society to an extent, however, it leans much on the former. Good governance is impossible without change in the existing mindset of the bureaucrats. Multi-faceted initiatives are required to have wider accountability of all public servants, towards the public satisfaction and delivery of service. Change should be manifested in attitudinal reforms at different levels of bureaucracy and not only in structures and procedures.

- (b) **Electoral Reforms** Today, democracy has been transformed to mere electoralism. Electoral reforms had to precede political reforms; free and fair elections with citizens being able to exercise their franchise without any fear should be domesticated as well. Strict implementation of the electoral code of conduct to ensure that the ruling party does not abuse the state machinery to influence the polling process.
- (c) **Judicial Reforms** Judiciary is being looked up as the last hope of common man. As such, it should function independently from the dictates of executive or legislative impulse. Judicial functions without impulse can set the pace for good governance. Concrete efforts should be made to make judicial system handy, cheap, speedy and substantial. The rule of law is to be adhered to.
- (d) **Curbing Corruption** Corruption is becoming endemic in human society. Corruption in political, economic, social and administrative domains slows efficiency, effectiveness, equity, economy, accountability, justice and responsiveness. Effective institutionalization and reforms to curb corruption should be domesticated. The current effort of President Muhammadu Buhari is instructive and commendable.
- (e) **Developing A National Outlook** Nations, Nigeria inclusive, should strive towards tolerance among different ethnic societies within the polity to promote national unity. Nepotism and ethnicity should be jettisoned in our national life. Nigeria is a secular state. There should be no attachment to any particular religion in our national life.

Conclusion

As development administration strives to meet with its expectation, the attachment of good governance will definitely propel it to the forefront. There is the need to apply new public management. Good governance entails balanced governance with conducive and uninterrupted relationship between the government and the civil society as active player. The challenge of good governance requires government activities to be reinvented, bureaucracy to be repositioned, civil society activities to be re-energized with a social motive. Re-invented governance should be visionary, egalitarian and energized in a manner with less machine-like and less hierarchical structure and procedure.

Recommendations

It remains an acceptable fact the place of good governance in development administration. The application of various streams of elements and criteria for good governance as presented by this work will enable Nigeria development administration arrangement to yield its expectation. The three arms of government should be allowed to efficiently perform their functions without influences. Administrators (political appointees and bureaucrats) should be trained and equipped with administrative tools to realize efficiency.

The civil societies (NGOs, private market operators, etc) should compliment government's efforts by being law-abiding. The solution to underdevelopment associated with Nigeria and Third World countries lies in good governance.

References

- Ekot M.(1999): Development Administration in Nigeria: a lesson from past agricultural programmes in *Okereke (ed) Development Administration in Nigeria: Issues and Strategies*. Owerri: Concave Publishers.
- Ekpe, A., Awofeso O (1999): Policies, Strategies and Constraint to Rural Development in Nigeria (1976-1996) in *Okereke (ed) Development Administration in Nigeria: Issues and Strategies*. Owerri Concave publishers.
- Ndoh C.A. (1999) Development Administration. The Nigeria experience in *Okereke (ed) Development Administration in Nigeria. Issues and Strategies* Owerri: Concave Publisher.
- Nkana N.S., Ekpu F.S., Dode R.O. (2013) *Citizenship and peace studies*. Uyo. Chf.
- Obi E.A., Obikeze O.S. (2004): *Public administration in Nigeria: A development approach*. Onitsha. Book Point Ltd.
- Ofoeze H.G.A (1997): *Local government in Nigeria: An historical discourse*. Abakaliki. WAD.
- Okereke O.O. (1999): *Development administration in Nigeria: issues and strategies*. Owerri. Concave Publisher.
- Okereke O.O, Ekpe A.E. (2002): *Development and under development*. Enugu. John Jacobs classic Publisher Ltd.
- Prasad R.N (2002): *Government in India*. New Dehli. Concept Publishing.
- Sharma M.P. Sadana B.L. Kaur Harpreet (2013): *Public administration, In theory and practice*. Marg Allahabad. Kitab Mahal.
- World Bank (1989): Sub-Sahara, Africa. From Crises to Sustainable Growth, A long Perspective Study. Washington D.C. World Bank
- World Bank (1992): Good Governance and Development. Washington D.C. [www.documents.worldbank.org.1992/04](http://www.documents.worldbank.org/1992/04).