

Political Gladiators and Max Weber's Bureaucracy: A Study of Select Public Sectors in South-South States of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The paper investigated the influence of political gladiators on Max Weber's bureaucracy, a study of the selected public sector in the south-south states of Nigeria. The specific objectives are: examining the extent to which leadership influences work design in the public sector; assessing the decision-making process on promotion in the public sector, and investigating the influence of organizational policies on the recruitment process in the public sector. The study used a sample of 200 respondents. A twenty-item, four-Likert scale questionnaire was administered to the respondents. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested using the correlation coefficient (r) of Karl Pearson. We used SPSS and LISREL software programs to analyze the data. The result of the hypothesis test showed that there is a significant relationship between leadership and work design: decision-making has a significant influence on promotion, and there is a significant relationship between policymakers and the recruitment process. Among other things, the following recommendations were made: leadership should be based on expert knowledge and qualifications: Decisions should be broad-based and rational to allow for good policy formulation and implementation mechanisms.

Keywords: Political gladiators, Bureaucracy, Public sector and Organizations

INTRODUCTION

The bureaucratic theory of management, developed by German sociologist Max Weber, is the cornerstone of administration in many of the world's governmental and military institutions. The notion of bureaucracy is predicated on stringent regulations and expert authority guidance. The proponents argued that this would enhance the effectiveness of the management system, prevent biases, and ensure that job descriptions are transparent to all members of the organizational hierarchy. According to Weber, the most logical and rational type of management is a bureaucratic organization, where hiring and promotion decisions are guided by professional merit and skills. Increasing efficiency in the Nigerian public sector is a key factor in the reasoning behind the majority of the public service reform. It is encouraging to see that some of the Public Service reform panels recognize this problem and focus on training as a means of enhancing performance in the public sector [1]. But Max Weber's brilliantly designed bureaucracy has been rendered less effective and efficient by a confluence of institutional and

political-cultural issues. However, during the past 150 years, social scientists have engaged in a significant amount of scholarly discussion regarding the birth and development of contemporary bureaucracy in organizational administration [2]. It is widely acknowledged that Max Weber's groundbreaking work offered a comprehensive analysis of goal-oriented organizations created by rational principles to effectively achieve their objectives. Information flows up the chain of command, hierarchically ranking officers, and assigned functional tasks within the organization are defined by impersonal norms that clearly outline officers' roles, responsibilities, standard operating procedures, and behavior. The goal of each of these ideal traits is to facilitate the effective achievement of the organization's objective. The concept of bureaucracy in organizations has helped us comprehend how organizations function better. The Nigerian public sector organizations like most African nations, public sector has greatly borne the brunt of an overbearing political class. However,

public sector organizations to the Nigerian constitution should function within the confines of its powers. It, however, over the years become subject to the Shenanigans of the political class such that the quality-of-service delivery has been greatly influenced by it. In other words, political gladiators are responsible for the major/vital decisions. Fubara [3], in probing into the strategic decision processes behind the often-dismal performance of public organizations, found that decision processes are influenced by political actors. To accomplish the essence, including the political gladiators, modern management necessitates the combined efforts of crucial public and private sector actors. The need for the main governmental agencies to stay ahead of the state's issues has grown as society expands to include larger and more complicated activities and acts. A few of these challenges include cultivating human capital for more creative and directed development,

improving service delivery, managing urban areas, promoting environmental sustainability, maintaining disciplined fiscal operations, and implementing global best practices that would ensure increased population welfare and well-being. All of these tasks call for a crop of skilled, motivated employees in human resources at different governmental levels. This group of innovative talent is supposed to be found in the formal bureaucracy or upper echelons of any organization. They must use their artistic talents in the management of government projects, policies, and initiatives. Formal bureaucracies can be seen as think tanks for public administration, particularly when it comes to coming up with creative ideas that drive the many functions of modern government. The leadership structure in the Nigerian public sector in a democracy is headed by politicians who are responsible for the productivity, efficiency, or otherwise of any of their public sector organizations.

Statement of Problems

Public sector decline and performance failure is a well-known worldwide issue that has recently drawn attention in Nigeria. For example, this same issue has been covered in several excellent newspaper articles, such as those published in the Nigerian Chronicle on May 29, 2011, the Guardian on February 10, 2012, and Business Day on July 2, 2010. The public sector frequently experiences escalating crises, which are costly to the economy in terms of money, time, frustration, and human capital wasted. The world can shift quickly at times, and if the government doesn't take proactive measures, it may find itself stuck. This appears to be the situation in Nigeria today, as the government functions in multiple capacities as representatives of the various states, catering to the

wants and desires of the populace as well as the requirements of a contemporary state. The numerous governance crises engulfing the African continent and persuasive accounts of the bureaucracy's alleged inability to set policy in a variety of public administration domains. This is sometimes attributed to the enormous and overwhelming influence of the political class in general and most specifically the one responsible for the placement of this technocrat or experienced hands in positions of governance. These individuals often referred to as political gladiators form the crux of this paper. Thus, the objective of the study is to investigate the influence of political gladiators on bureaucracy in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to investigate the influence of political gladiators on bureaucracy in Nigeria.

The specific objectives are:

- i. To assess the extent to which leadership influence work design in the public sector.

- ii. To examine the decision-making process on promotion in the public sector.
- iii. Investigate the influence of organizational policies on the recruitment process in the public sector.

Hypotheses

Three (3) hypotheses were derived directly from the specific objectives of the study stated above and are presented in null (H_0) form below.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between leadership and work design in the public sector.

Hypothesis Two

The decision-making process has no significant relationship with promotion in the public sector.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between organization policies and the recruitment process in the public sector.

Significance of the Study

1. The findings from the study will provide the general public with information on the influence of political gladiators on bureaucracy in the public sector.
2. The study will make available rich empirical data that could be used by students, researchers, and management/administrative practitioners.
3. The study will also expand the frontier of knowledge on political gladiators and bureaucracy Nigeria's public sector.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey design. Survey design is a type of ex-post factor method that uses a questionnaire to predict and describe significant impacts and relationships among many variables. This helped in the measurement of linear or multivariate variables and their impact on one another. This study was carried out in three public sector organizations; the Ministry of Education, Calabar, Cross River State, the Ministry of Justice, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, and the Ministry of Commerce & Industry Port Harcourt, Rivers State. All operating in the South-South States of Nigeria.

The study analyzed the use of frequencies and simple percentages. The hypotheses were tested using the correlation coefficient (2) by Karl Pearson. The data analysis software used was LISREL, along with SPSS. In terms of statistical methods, the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CAF) was used for the reliability (Cronbach's alpha) value and validity test. The multivariate statistical approach is used to determine how well the measured variables represent the number of constructs. The most prevalent

The population of this study consisted of management staff and senior staff mostly appointed by their state Governors (political godfathers), with a total population of two hundred top government appointees. We adopted a random sampling technique to select the response sample from the total population of 200 staff of the three sectors; Cross River State of the three sectors; 94, Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice 37, and River State Ministry of Commerce and Industry 69 without being biased. We studied the entire population because the entire 200 staff constituted the sample size of this study.

Data Analysis

application of this particular type of factor analysis is in social science research. The consistency of a construct's measures with the researcher's perception of the construct's or factor's nature is tested using CFA. After using mean score descriptive analysis to examine the average response of survey participants, correlation analysis was performed to determine the direction and strength of the link between the instrument's items.

RESULTS

1. Correlation table for hypothesis I

Variables	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r
Leadership (x)	106	1308	1302	0.507
Work Design (y)	116	1434		
Significant at 0.05 degree of freedom 13, critical r value .514				

2. Correlation table for hypothesis II

Variables	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r
Decision making process(x)	420	1886	1532	0.95
Promotion	348	1316		
Significant at 0.05 degree of freedom 8. Critical r value .632				

3. Correlation table for Hypothesis III

Variables	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r
Organization policies (x)	107	1309	1301	0.506
Recruitment process	115	1433		
Significant at 0.05 degree of freedom it 12. Critical r value 0.503				

DISCUSSION

According to the first hypothesis's findings, work designs and leadership in Nigeria's public sector are positively correlated. This implies that bureaucratic tendencies in public institutions are manifestations of the slow pace in which top administrators make decisions in a wide array of chain of command and span of control [4, 5]. Most public institutions in Nigeria have presented inefficient and wasteful outcomes in their service(s) to the Nigerian public. The study shows a significant relationship depicting

that if the leadership is good then the organization can function effectively and efficiently. The outcome of hypothesis two demonstrated a strong positive correlation between public sector decision-making processes and promotions. This is evident in the fact that vital decisions can mar or improve organizational services, or product delivery because if organizational managers withhold promotion, this will lead to demoralization and affect productivity negatively and vice-versa. Specifically, in Nigeria, public institutions

are bedeviled with corruption, incompetent staff, absenteeism, and low productivity among other things [6, 7]. These have resulted in poor service delivery and other unethical dilemmas prevailing in most public institutions in Nigeria [8, 9]. The findings in hypothesis three revealed that in public sector companies, there is a substantial correlation between the recruitment process and organizational policies. Although public institutions are primarily established to provide one or more forms of services

to society which private entities cannot provide equitably much is still needed to improve the structural behavioral and policies perspective/dimension of public sector operations in Nigeria [10]. Policies are formulated by top management who are the political class. Recruitment, promotion, and mode of work in terms of design criteria in the public sector, especially in the Nigerian context are based on top management decisions, policies, and of course leadership style.

CONCLUSION

The study empirically examined political gladiators on Max Weber's bureaucracy: A study of select public sector organizations in the South-South States of Nigeria. The study found that political agents/godfathers have influenced the rational motive of public sectors and this has to a large extent affected administrative leadership, decision-making, and policy formulations. Also, it is ideal that there exists a high degree of impersonality of officialdom held in public parastatals and thus should reflect to a large extent a true bureaucracy devoid of bias, and irrationality, but the reverse is the case. Because, the analysis shows godfatherism, nepotism, cronyism,

employment racketeering, prebendal politics, etc., as active players in the management of the public sector. The study also discovered that a variety of variables contributed to Nigeria's godfatherism policies. These include, among other things, the impact of money politics, the power of the incumbent, political thugs, greed, selfishness, lack of exposure, incompetence, ambition, nepotism, and regionalism in politics. The aforementioned negative emotions affect bureaucratic institutions/organizations because the activities of the godson must be in line with the interest of the godfather rather than the rational corporate share values of the organization.

Recommendations

Leadership selection should be based on expert knowledge and qualification suitability.

Decisions should be broad-based and rational by the organizational philosophy and mission statement. Good policy formulation and implementation

mechanisms should be structured to enable organizations to adapt best practices and "modus operandi" and management control that can be easily and significantly adjusted to meet both internal and external environmental demands.

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