

Re-Inventing the Nigerian Public Service in an Age of Reforms

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Abstract: The growing discontentment with the performance of public sector necessitated some sweeping reforms across the globe. Unfortunately, these reforms had to erode the prestige of the public servants and diminish their scope. The study proposed some strategies of re-inventing the public sector through creating new and lost values that can enhance their relevance in an age when public sector reform is the order of the day.

Key words: Re-inventing, public service, age of reforms, public sector, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The public sector has for long enjoyed a pride of place particularly since the post-industrial revolution era. Public administration moved away from being mere watchmen to being the engine of the society and became the major provider of various services including regulatory and distributive ones. Generally, all societies have some forms of public service provisions for reasons of economics, risk and moral responsibility. Governments in many parts of the world are structurally and constitutionally tied to the civil service, irrespective of the system of government (Olagboye, 2005). This explains why the relationships between government and the civil service have endured in spite of the various forms of government the country has been experimenting with since independence.

Examining the situation in Nigeria, Nnadazie (2004) posited that the roles and functions of civil service in Nigeria are largely conditioned and determined by the character of the state in Nigeria and its changing roles in the society. He argued that as an instrument of the state and part and parcel of the executive arm of the government, the civil service is structured and organized towards the realization of the aims and objectives of the state in the society. This explains why Olagboye (2005) noted that the basic role of the civil service in the society is dynamic, being a function of the social, economic and political conditions prevailing in the country and at any point in time.

Indeed, it has been argued that at independence in 1960 the public service in Nigeria was regarded as one of the most important legacies of some sixty years of British

colonial rule (Gboyega and Abubakar, 1989). Moreover, given the performance of the public service in the first few years of independence, there was great hope that the expectations of Nigerians for rapid socio-economic development would be fulfilled with reasonable efficiency. This was because giant strides, were taken in the provision of social infrastructures and capital investments.

As a result of the pivotal role of public bureaucracy in development, there have over the years been linkage between bureaucracy and socio-economic development. The concern has been with “how administrative competence contributes to development performance (Adamolekun, 2006).

Unfortunately, the governance context of public administration in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has attracted considerable attention since the late 1980s (Adamolekun 2002). The public service, particularly that of the civil service, which was seen as the custodian of rules and regulations and the engine of development had lost its prestige and confidence. The aftermath of this is the invention of series of reforms, which have led to privatization, down sizing and right sizing of the public service and even minimizing the role of the public sector in the national life.

It must be pointed out however, that this trend in public sector reforms has begun in Europe in the late 1970, particularly in Britain since, Margaret Thatcher took up office (Kickert, 1997).

With the way administrative reforms have been going and definitely no one can predict the end, there is therefore the need for public servants and scholars of public service to do a re-thinking so as to re-invent the

myth, relevance and prestige of the public sector in an age of massive reforms and when the world itself is ageing. The basic problem in this paper is that public service has become so intertwined with the government of any country that its foremost role cannot simply be wished away. Moreover, there is the tendency or likelihood that any attempt to undermine its role may cause disaffection among the public servants. This may in turn create on the one hand low morale on the part of these officers and on the other hand lead to tendency by these bureaucrats to frustrate the efforts of such governments. Moreover, these reforms in recent time have elevated markets as its sole arbitrator of value. This in turn undermines equitability and might increase poverty as well as depriving the people a sense of belonging to the country.

The objective of the study therefore, is to examine the causes of these possible disenchantment with the public service, as well as the implication of the current reform efforts so as to be able to come up with strategies to reposition the public service.

THE TRADITIONAL ROLE AND PLACE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE IN DEVELOPMENT

The civil service is seen as the machinery that is usually responsible for the execution of government policies and programmes. It is seen as the main instrument, which mirrors the image of government to the masses of the people (Adebayo, 1986). Indeed, the public service creates public value. Benard (1996) for instance, identified seven areas in which public service creates public values. These include one; it sets the conditions to a large extent, for economic development. Two, it sustains political and social cohesion. Three, it is responsible for the legal and administrative environment in which private business activity takes place. Four, It affects production decisions and costs through regulatory controls, services, transportation, transfer payment and tax credits. Five, it changes patterns of demand redistributing the income.

Six, it is a major purchaser in the private economy, In doing so, it greatly affects overall resource allocation. Seven, it in no small measure influences national economic efficiency as well as the rate of technological and organizational innovation, the direction and speed of adjustment. In the same vein, Ayo (1998), identified five roles of the public sector, They include one maintain constitutional order, two achieving technical competence, three coping with

public expectations, four managing complexity, uncertainty and changes and five behaving ethically.

In the main, the public bureaucracy is “the instrument which government uses to regulate and manage all aspects and areas of the society. It is through it that government develops and implements policies. It is from the government bureaucracy that all the other institutions obtain various types of approvals, licenses, permits, etc., which are critical to their assistance and operation (Phillips, 1990). Moreover, government allocation of resources passes through the bureaucracy to all other areas of the society, directly or indirectly. This makes it expedient for all other institutions to deal with the civil service at one point or the other in their existence and operations (*ibid*). Phillips concluded that, “the critical importance of the civil service in any society cannot possibly be in doubt. In fact, the condition of a society reflects its civil service.

According to Adebayo (1981) the public, therefore, form their impressions of government and their concept of the powers and authority of government, from the acts of civil servants. The civil service as the repository of knowledge and experience plays the role of educating new Ministers and breaking them in when they first come to government.

PROBLEM OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND THE GROWING IMPETUS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

According to Kickert (1997) there are several explanations for the fact that the 1980s and 1990s have been the ‘golden age’ of administrative reform throughout the Western world. The most obvious has been identified as financial-economic need to reform. In order to avoid the consequences of raising taxes or terminating public tasks, administrative reforms have been seen as a means of performing the public tasks better, with less cost. This is because it emphasizes an increase of productivity, greater efficiency, better value for money and so on.

Rhodes (1997) aptly summarized the factors that fuelled administrative reforms in Western Europe. They include the following:

- Economic depression and fiscal pressures leading to budget deficits.
- The New Right’s ideological distrust of ‘big government’ and accompanying determination to redraw the boundaries of the State.

- Europeanisation, which further increased regulation and introduced new administrative pressures (for example, regionalisation).
- Public disenchantment with government performance. Government does too much and whatever it does, it doesn't work.
- International management fashions, especially the New Public Management (NPM).
- Information technology which made it easier to introduce NPM.

In Germany, there has been quite noticeable process of reforms and innovations at local German authorities since about 1990 through the introduction of the new steering model or *Neves Streuerungs* (Reichard, 1997). This model was basically fashioned after the Dutch local government reforms in the 1980s. The prominent role played by local authorities derives from the fact that the central government plays a relatively minor role in the Federal Republic of Germany (Kickert, 1997).

With financial pressure in the 1990s and partly as a result of the great cost of German reunification, the local authorities began to fashion out organizational structures that can enhance efficiency and cost-reducing measures which could assist them to provide their citizens with the relevant local services (Richard, 1997).

The model is made up of the following features;

- Output-and result-orientation:
- Output budgeting and performance indicators:
- Service and client orientation.
- Concern-division model.
- Delegation of responsibility to business units (Kickert, 1997).

The 1980s also witnessed far-reaching reforms in European countries such as Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and Austria. This made the reforms to be popular across Western Europe.

The public sector reform has gained wide importance across the various countries. As observed by Wright (1997) the reform of public administration has been placed on the policy agenda of almost every European government whatever, their political complexion although the timing, the pace, the extent, the nature, the reasons and the impact vary greatly across European countries. These vast array of administrative reforms being pursued by European governments were meant to modify the size, the structure, the functions and functioning, the efficiency and even the culture of traditional public administration.

It has been argued that various reforms in the country have failed to a great extent because public servants were not fully committed to their implementation since, among other reasons, they were not directly involved in formulating them. Deriving from this is that one of the unanticipated consequences of administrative reforms in the country is that civil servants hardly show full commitment to reform exercises that do not emanate from them. Furthermore, even when such reforms are initiated by government, the public servant has to be fully involved from the conception stage so that he does not feel alienated.

Indeed, the power sector reforms as well privatization as oil sector reforms as well as the due process have been greatly slowed down by the attitude of the public servants and their resistance to change. Added to this, is the failure of government to fully communicate its intentions to the public in order to carry them along. As a result of this, the public who are supposed to be the final beneficiary of successful reform have been critical of government's effort. Hence, there is institutional resistance by the public servants as well as social and cultural resistance by the public. All these thereby inhibit the expected success of the reforms.

Generally, African countries have over the years strived to employ the machinery of public administration to fast-track socio-economic development and put behind them their state of backwardness. While noticeable achievements have been made, nevertheless, much still remains to be accomplished.

Unfortunately, as DTA (2000) observed the post-independence governmental bureaucracy in most sub-Saharan African countries lacks accountability to the civil society, legislative and judicial checks and balances and transparency. This has resulted in institutional instability, the privatization of the state and patrimonial economic management and incentives, whereby clientelism replaces moral and political legitimacy and political and personal loyalty and obedience are rewarded more than merit. The combination of political/social instability and the patrimonial state has proved to be the most destabilizing ill infecting post-independence Africa's institutional and economic health.

As noted by Mukandala (2000) the administrative and management branch of the African State (civil service and parastatal enterprise sector) has found it rough going in the 1980s. He noted further that the economic decline which has characterized this decade has brought in its wake many changes and also has posed formidable challenges for the African bureaucracy both now and in the future. Mukandala (2000) articulated 6 major criticisms

that had been raised by the World Bank and the Western states against the prevailing situation in Africa in the 1980s. First, it was observed that the post-colonial African states became involved in too many activities with little or no tangible benefit to show for the effort. Hence, the call for state minimal involvement. Second is high government expenditure, particularly in the area of subsidy. Third, the bureaucracies of African states have been criticized for being archaic, centric, rigid and wasteful. Fourth, the bureaucratic morphology has been criticized for being too large in size and overbloated. Fifth, is the incompetence of the bureaucracies in policy-making, policy implementation and evaluation. Sixth is the problem of political accountability and fundamental human rights.

Following the perceived shortcomings, there were suggestions that the state should reduce its involvement in activities such as services, commerce, industries, among other things. The need to disengage from subsidy, the need for managerialization reforms that would enhance efficiency and effectiveness, reduction of personnel, to mention a few. All these have resulted in the structural adjustment of the 1980s in many African States and the various reforms. As argued by Mukandala (2000).

The economic crisis and its effects have had a deep and wide-ranging impact on African political economies, in general and on their public administrations in particular. He noted that this has impacted on the bureaucracy in five inextricably linked ways, namely: Debilitating disagreement on causation and amelioration: Fragmentation of bureaucracy, projectivization of public organization, privatization of public resources and state displacement.

The erosion of the prestige of the public service in Nigeria became apparent with the 1975 purge of the public service in which an estimated 10,000 public servants were dismissed. The reasons adduced for the purge were alleged inefficiency, old age, declining productivity and doubtful probity (Adebayo, 1981).

According to Ola, since the 1975 purge, the prestige of the service had been going down in public eye. He noted that, the public servant does not earn a salary comparable to his peer in the private sector. His job now does not seem to have a sure measure of security. His horizon since the military take over and the coming of the Presidential system has also been further curtailed. Indeed, Nigerian public bureaucracy is beset by an avalanche of ecological factors, which undermine its performance. These, Adebayo (1981) identified as institutional, political, psychological.

Nepotism is often a problem. Tribal and linguistic ties are hard to ignore and the old school boy's ties Network

can be an extremely strong one. Others have been fast at working for their purses thereby making negative impact on fellow public officers who see them. Added to these are problems of role confusion, inadequate co-ordination of its various activities low planning capacity, policy instability as well as excessive orientation to the distribution rather than the production of good and services.

Essentially, it must be acknowledged that reforms have been identified as essential means of bringing about positive change in the Nigerian public sector even prior to independence.

The call for good governance in sub-Saharan Africa has among other things necessitated the current drive for the reform of the public section in Nigeria.

Essentially, the primary objective of the various reforms has always been to revamp, reinvigorate and make the public service a truly resilient, virile and dynamic instrument for policy formulation and the effective implementation of government programmes.

Regrettably the various reforms were at best implemented half-heartedly with emphasis on cosmetic and peripheral issues and, in some cases, only on the remunerative aspects of the recommendations.

However, the Public Service Review Commission of 1972 headed by Chief Jerome Udoji could be seen as the first comprehensive administrative reform in the country. The Commission recommended among other thing a new style public service operating on the basis of results oriented management techniques such as project management, Management By Objectives (MBO) and planning, programming and budgeting.

Over a decade later, the Dotun Phillips Committee's Report identified a number of lapses within the Nigerian civil service. He noted that the operations were slow and tradition-bound and were largely not result-oriented. Its organization had become ponderous and largely unsystemic and was significantly lacking in professionalism (Phillips, 1989). Other undesirable attributes manifested include over-centralization, incessant conflicts between the cadres, scanty, emphasis on results and concrete performance. Counter-productive separation of authority from responsibility at the top of the civil service hierarchy, dangerously low staff morale and productivity, inappropriate staff deployment practices.

These inadequacies therefore provoked the 1988 Civil Service Reforms which was meant to achieve enhanced professionalism, significant decentralization and delegation, enhanced accountability, enhanced checks and balances, general modernization, combination of

responsibility with authority, alignment with executive presidentialism and enhanced efficiency, effectiveness and span of operations (Phillips, 1990).

Even, the reversal of the 1988 Civil Service Reforms by the Ayida Panel and the Akhigbe Special Committee did not in any way deny these shortcomings, However, as noted by Nnadozie (2004) one obvious implication of our discussion of the Civil Service in Nigeria so far is that the roles and functions of the service are largely conditioned and determined by the character of the state in Nigeria and its changing roles in the society. The point of emphasis here is that the political and social environment of the civil service has definitely been impinging on its performance and relevance.

Be that as it may, the public service would have to be assessed based on its roles and the expectations of the public. This led Ayo (1998) to query that how shall our series of governments within governments be so administered that it shall always be to the interest of the public officer to serve, not his superior alone, but the community also, with the best efforts of his talents and the soberest service of his conscience? He noted that, rather than serve as institutions pursuing and meeting with peoples' interest, or public interest, Nigerian public administrators have been accused of being a parasitic class. He argued further that focusing on the implementation of development programmes, under the influence of higher civil servants, federal and state agencies more often than not pursued goals and projects that are remote from basic needs of Nigerians. He identified problems such as selfishness of the bureaucrats, coupled with clashes between the administrative and professional officers, failure to maintain administrative ethics and accountability, among others. He concluded that in spite of the various civil service reforms, professionalism, adherence to a code of ethics and enhanced citizen participation have not helped in Nigerian case.

Coupled with and indeed deriving from the negative views about the efficiency and effectiveness of public service in Nigeria is the general tide at international level calling for new orientation and changes in the governance context in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This new context is based on minimizing the role of the public sector in national development and emphasizing public private balance (Adamolekun, 2002)

According to Adamolekun and Kiragu (2002) three major factors have been driving the public administration reform efforts in Sub-Saharan African countries since the early 1990s. These are economic reform, democratization and the search for administrative efficiency with a view to improving the quality of goods and services delivered to the public.

The impact of globalization and the prevailing wind of change at international level when Obasanjo took over in 1990 created impetus for administrative reforms. This was enhanced by the situation at domestic level with inefficient, ineffective and highly corrupt public service. It is not surprising then that President Obasanjo resolved to embark on massive reform of the country's public sector.

According to Oshionebo, since the inception of the present democratic dispensation in May 1999, government has felt a compelling need to implant in the public service system, the ethical foundations and norms of good governance and its associated virtues of transparency, accountability; due process, etc. This was because of the pervasive corruption in all facets of Nigeria's public life, which made Transparency International to rank Nigeria as one of the consistent top three most corrupt countries in the world.

The Obasanjo administration has been committed to far-reaching reforms with the adoption of current National Economic Empowerment Development Strategies (NEEDS) and all sector reforms. The bottom line of these reforms is the development of the private sector as the engine of growth. Government is to provide the enabling environment, reform the way government and its institutions work, implement a social charter and ensure value re-orientation.

In developing the private sector as the engine of growth, the Obasanjo administration, through the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) embarked on gradual privatization of public enterprises to make them more efficient as well as to relieve the government of the burden of financing them. First, the administration established the National Council on Privatization (NCP) and later the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE). In the main, the gain of the privatization has been summarized as follows:

The privatization programme has done a lot to reduce government's direct involvement in enterprise development and management. This has resulted in the reduction of bureaucratic bottlenecks and enabled a smoother decision making process (FGN(a)). This has reduced the financial burden of government.

An important aspect of the reforms is the due process mechanism which is a mechanism for ensuring strict compliance with the openness, competition and cost accuracy, rules and procedures that should guide contract award within the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN(b)). Central to this process is the Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU).

The due process mechanism is an essential element of providing a good and efficient procurement system that is a critical cornerstone of good governance. It has also

installed good practices and reduced costs and ensured value for money in the procurement of public goods, works and service.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND THE UNANTICIPATED CONSEQUENCES OF THE CURRENT REFORMS

Public sector reform has gained wide importance across the various countries. As observed by Wright (1997) the reform of public administration has been placed on the policy agenda of almost every European government whatever their political complexion although the timing, the pace, the extent, the nature, the reasons and the impact vary greatly across European countries. These vast array of administrative reforms being pursued by European governments which were meant to modify the size, the structure, the functions and functioning, the efficiency and even the culture of traditional public administration.

These various reforms include:

'downsizing', 'resource – squeeze', 'cut-back management', 'effectiveness', 'efficiency' and 'economy' – the famous '3Es', 'privatization', 'outsourcing', 'marketisation', 'quasi-markets', 'surrogate markets', 'new public management', 'contractual', 'customerisation', 'automisation', 'agencification', -(*ibid*).

As observed by Kickert (1997) with regards to Britain, the 3 fold description of new public management in terms of businesslike management, service and client orientation and market-type mechanisms such as competition constituted the major administrative reforms efforts embarked upon since the era of Margaret Thatcher.

The establishment of Rayner scrutinies in 1979 by Thatcher could be said to be the beginning of the businesslike management. This was followed in 1983 by the Financial Management Initiative based on automated information. As a follow up to this, the Next Steps report publication proposed the improvement of executive service delivery agencies to achieve higher efficiency, better quality, more value for money. The next stage was the Citizen's Charter white paper made by John Major in 1991 meant to improve the quality as well as quantity of service delivery by making them more service and client oriented. This later culminated in the market and competition that led to extensive privatization of British public corporations and agencies since 1979. This was articulated in Major's 1992 policy document titled *Competing for Quality*. Essentially, this was meant to compel every public organization providing goods or services into a market test every five years.

Rhodes (1997) divided the British government's reforms programme into 6 broad aspects. These include,

introducing the minimalist state, reasserting political authority, extending regulation and audit, reforming the structure, reforming public sector management and transforming the culture.

In France, the managerial reforms that were introduced by the *Circulaire* Rocard of 1989 emphasized three major reforms that were more or less like management techniques of businesses. These include, one, *cercles de qualite* which was a Japanese technique popularly known in Western businesses as Total Quality Management. Two, *projets de service* which were meant to create more autonomy to the top management to the top executive agencies. Three is *centres de responsabilite*. Essentially, this was made up of management contracts between central government and the executive agency in which the tasks and means were specified.

It was quite clear to majority of Nigerians that by the time President Obasanjo took over the mantle of leadership in 1999 that the economy was at the state of comatose. Given the fact that the performance of a country's economy to a great extent depends on the vision, efficiency and effectiveness of the public bureaucracy, it would not be out of place to identify the public sector with Nigeria's economic woes.

No doubt, a number of justifications have been made for the current reform efforts across the globe and particularly in Nigeria as one elaborated upon in the study. However, there are some flaws in using market and market competitiveness as model for public administration. Bernard (1996) provided some incisive criticisms of this tendency. Some of these include.

One, it minimizes and marginalizes the role of democratic decision-making and public governance. This is because, traditionally, the public sector cannot and should not be drawn into maximizing of profit, which is the case in the private sector. Efficiency test in the private sector is the amount of profit made. Whereas, in the public sector, service to the people is what determines efficiency. Two substituting the markets and market substitution erodes democratic decision making and undermines equitability and would increase poverty. Three while markets have their uses, they should not be used for determining our value as a community of people. Four, markets hardly consider morals. As Bernard noted, the growth of slavery showed that markets may not have moral considerations. Moreover, slavery did not collapse on its own. It was political intervention and armed resistance that pulled it down. The implication of this is that public sector has the tendency to determine moral value more than markets. Five, the elevation of markets as the sole arbitrator of value may likely deprive people of a sense of belonging to a community of society.

Wright identified some paradoxes of administrative reforms which are products of the unanticipated consequences of these reforms in developed countries. Some of these are relevant to the Nigerian situation. One is that the craving for higher efficiency in public service creates its own problems. This is because efficiency in the delivery of public goods involves complex political and social externalities. Wright observed that public administration involves juggling with multiple, interlinked and often conflicting or nebulous requirements. He argued that, In terms of the efficiency paradox, the question is whether efficiency is likely to be maximized by systematically denigrating and openly despising the ethos and ethics of public service and by a whole swathe of measures demoralizing and demotivating those who uphold the principles of public good. If citizens are turned into customers we will also slowly transform officials into producers, motivated by the logic and the rewards of the private market place.

In Nigeria, the general criticism that have greeted the current reform efforts by the public is based on generally belief of the citizenry on the public good.

The second relevant paradox raised by Wright is that the reformers' ambition to reduce the role of the state engenders a strong state to initiate and implement them. Moreover, a number of the reforms involve increased state activity. In the case of Nigeria, it took strong determination and political will on the part of President Obasanjo to be able to embark on the little reform he had been able to make so far.

In the main, the unanticipated consequences created by the current administrative reforms in Nigeria include mass retrenchment, taking essential services out of the reach of the common man, removal of the principle of permanent tenure, demoralizing and demotivating the public servants, disengagement of experience and productive hands among others.

RE-INVENTING PUBLIC SERVICE IN NIGERIA THROUGH CREATING VALUES THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THIS AGE

The Nigerian state has its peculiarities and unique environment and challenges. The on-going reforms are definitely having some consequences, both anticipated and unanticipated. To think of re-inventing public service means it had in the time past shown great relevance to the society and has probably been losing such prestige. Obviously, the prestige and scope of the public sector are gradually being eroded. The private sector is growing stronger and stronger. The questions that arises are what

is the future of the public sector? What is the future of the public servants themselves? Should the public servants fold their arms? Should they resort to strikes? Should they resign to fate? Or should they begin to seriously brainstorm so as to create new values that can re-position them and the public service, which they so much cherish? It is quite obvious that resigning to fate or embarking on strikes or protests may not work. Since the reform is a global one and since we are in a monolithic and unipolar world, definitely, reforms have become imperative. Indeed, the most reasonable option for now is to do a re-thinking and begin to create new values that can re-invent the public service and make it regain its relevance. Bernard (*ibid*) reminded us that the best way to predict the future is to create it.

The public servants need to do a re-thinking and reflect on the following issues.

- What led to the increase in the scope and prestige of the public service?
- At what point did the public service begin to suffer set-back?
- What role did the civil servants play in this setback?
- What were the things they ought to do which they did not do?
- What were the things they did which they ought not to have done?
- What were the domestic and international factors that created these problems?
- What should be done to re-position themselves and the service?
- What are the skills, knowledge, strategies and wherewithal available for the bureaucracy?
- What values should be created in the various departments and units to reposition the service?
- What roles should the professional associations, unions and the higher civil service play in this new move? One regular method the public servants have been adopting in recent time is strike. The public service is made up of various unions. These unions are notorious for strikes and at the same time clamoring for better conditions. Corrupt officials are members of the unions and these union hardly sanction them. Election into these unions now involve a lot of scheming and the contest could in some cases be more fierce than when contesting political posts.
- How do the public servants perceive the concept of public in line with service, public trust, impartiality, equity, transparency, accountability and honesty (Adamolekun, 2007).

The public servants should see their situation from the perspective of a manufacturer whose goods are boycotted by customers and regulatory agencies. All that the company needs to do to remain in business is to go back to the drawing board to create new concepts, re-strategize and re-launch its products and even outdo its other competitors. Failure to do such is a sign of weakness and mediocrity.

According to Babalola values in public sector should be vision based, accountability focused, lean structure, up mentality, excellence oriented and service (delivery) inclined. He posited further that creating values through public performance should include productivity improvement, exceptional (extraordinary) feat, reduction of wastage, functional job satisfaction, output (quality) assurance, results improvement, managerial improvement, achievement orientation, networking (working together with clients/citizens), clients/citizens, satisfaction and earnings related to performance or productivity.

Adamolekun (2002) suggested the need for a road map or an agenda for action to be able to move the country's public institutions from their prevailing mediocre/poor performance to re-engineered, strong and improved performance that would be capable of ensuring reduced poverty, reduced corruption, quality service delivery and progress towards prosperity for all. He identified eight major points that should be of relevance to us and desire serious consideration.

One, there is the need to evolve a Nigerian public service culture or tradition which is value-based. It is expected that this would draw from universal public service values such as public trust, impartiality, equity, transparency, ethical standards, selflessness, etc.

Two the is the need for continuous adjustment of the mission and role of public institutions in line with democracy, functioning market economy as well as a vibrant voluntary sector.

Three, the need to develop and nurture public service leaders-both political and technocratic ones at all levels of government through innovative capacity building programmes.

Four, introducing and implementing public service interchanges with the private sector, universities and the voluntary sector to widen the scope of public officials. From what we see at present, it appears there is no proper linkage between the universities and the public. This has resulted to the present wave of unemployment and ethical lapses. The university ordinarily is for learning and character building. It is unfortunate that products of our universities who should set the standard in all ramifications are culpable in many respects.

Five, enhancing high performance and ability to cope with increasing complexity of managing public sector organizations in the 21st century. The Millennium Development Goals are there to be pursued. The public service has great roles to play here (and must be seen to be playing these roles meaningfully).

Six, developing e-government as a channel for delivering services, increasing efficiency and fostering greater transparency. This is because we are in IT driven age. Increasingly public servants in the country are being exposed to information technology.

Seven, enabling citizens to play their role in demanding accountability and quality service delivery.

Eight, there as the need for renewal and strengthening of public institutions by creating well equipped small permanent structures that can permanently be responsible for reforms that would meet emerging changes in our society.

The time has come in building an enduring partnership between the various professions and unions in the public service on the one hand and public and private on the other hand. People should strive towards more professionalism and make more positive impact on the clients.

One of the ways of re-inventing the public sector is not only creating value in the course of their duties as public servants but also by developing some skills and values of the citizenry. A public servant can make a farmer to create new value in the way he or she approaches his or her farming. This applies to other areas of human endeavor. There are new areas to explore through new value Such as tourism, sports, concept creation, making initiatives to explore new areas or ventures. The public service must make itself more relevant in the lives of individuals, organizations, communities, families, religious organizations, etc.

While the new reforms are reducing the scope of activities of the public service, the public service can begin to device other areas of affecting the lives of the people outside the traditional area.

Time has come to do a re-thinking. The skills, knowledge and experience that are deposited in the civil servants should be used to open up new areas.

CONCLUSION

Just like the on-going reforms are narrowing down the scope of the activities of the public service, it is the opinion of this researcher that if the public servants do a serious re-thinking, they can create new value in their workplace. They can at the same time begin to be affecting the lives of individuals and citizens as well as

communities more positively. It must be acknowledged that the various reforms that have eroded the prestige and scope of activities of the public sector are in most cases designed by technocrats who are themselves public servants in some of the cases.

The various impact made by private sector management on public administration is quite appreciated, however, we must avoid allowing market to determine and overrun the public sector. There are many opportunities created by the new age of information technology and globalize world that can stimulate new values that can redraw the map of public sector.

Nigeria is a country where there are many natural and material resources. The country is also rich in human resources. Things can be turned around by creating new values that would empower not only the public servants but people of the country irrespective of where they are located. The public sector should play leading role in public-private sector initiative, community development, poverty alleviation and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). If the public sector would not move into oblivion, it has to generate ideas, create values, increase the valency of the civil servants as well as the citizenry. The time has come in this age of reforms and at a time when the world is ageing, for the public service to reinvent itself and return to its pride of place.

In the United State of America, the call in Reinventing Government and the call for government that works better and costs less became apparent with the economic recession of eighties as well as Reagan's bureaucratic bashim. Hence, the call for business like management and the necessity for cost reduction, effectiveness and efficiency (Kickert, 1997).

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Pension reform, public workers' productivity and welfare in Nigeria; lessons for some other African countries. Jan 2010. J Irnhanlahimi. Irnhanlahimi, J.E (2010) Pension reform, public workers' productivity and welfare in Nigeria; lessons for some other African countries; <http://www. Ageing populations and public pension schemes>'. IMF Occasional Paper.Â The experience of retired employees (Pensioners) in Nigerian civil service before the adoption of a contributory pension scheme (CPS) has been described as rather imagine than experience. There had been reported cases of operation and administration of pension funds being endemically corrupt and full of unethical practices. This led to incessant pension payment denial to the retirees. This study