

New Public Administration Practice and Good Governance in Nigeria: The Dilemma and Way Forward

¹Mbon, Namso Ekpo, ²Olufolakemi Oludami Afrogha, ³Emmanuel A. Ndaeyo, Ph.D

¹Department of Public Administration, Akwa Ibom State University

²Department of Financial Studies, Affiliation: national Open University of Nigeria and Water SISULU University South Africa

³Department of Public Administration, Akwa Ibom State University

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2025.12030024>

Received: 08 January 2025; Accepted: 27 February 2025; Published: 01 April 2025

ABSTRACT

Public administration has been practiced indispensably by the governments the world over with focus on management of government affairs. The administrative mechanism enhances coordination of government activities and the sequence delivery of services for public interest. Between 1960s and 80s, experts in the field clamoured for a change in the normative to suit the perception of globalization and liberalization activities and also, public administrators to be accountable to the public. Therefore, the nomenclature new public administration emerged to break the boundary between the general public and administrators with emphasis on ethical values to promote good governance. This study, therefore, set out to examine the dilemmas of new public administration practice and good governance in Nigeria. The paper adopted descriptive method of research and also anchored on public choice theory. The paper revealed some dilemma in practical approaches to implementation of new public administration principles particularly, non-adherent to the ethical values and rule of law in dispensation of government businesses by the public office holders. As a way forward, the paper recommended robust re-orientation for public officials on ethical values and ensure judiciary system assume new meaning and content in the dispensation of justice on offenders of ethics of the public service. These will give direction to changes in the whole public administrative system and make progress for the realization of good governance.

Keywords: Dilemma, Good governance, Unethical Practices, Public Administration, Service Reforms,.

INTRODUCTION

Public administration has been practiced indispensably by both developed and developing Nations with more functions embedded in its scope. It focuses on the management of governmental affairs at all levels and keep increases with increasing complexity in the development of societies and expected competing demand for national services and conflicting interest in the global societies. The practice therefore became broad with combination of theories purposefully to promote government activities in the society, encourage public policies to address social needs. The managerial process in the practice reconcile effectiveness and efficiency in the public domain to promote public governance through democracy, competence, honesty and advance core value of development which to Okoje (2007) include self-reliance, self-esteem and freedom. Convincingly, the imminence of public administration has been achieved through bureaucratic mechanism by enhancing and coordinating government activities for sequence service delivery for public benefits.

Presumably, when government defile accountability to public goods, this suggests that bureaucracy has become unresponsive and the functions negates the purpose and trivial the role of administration. This affect implementation of public policy and defective in managerial capacity. Consequently, the tendency to

accomplish good governance and strike development which remain prerequisites in the society interrupt spontaneously. As opined by Feybadebo (2007), good governance ensues when the operation of governance guarantees the operation of legal and ethical principles of the political community. Good governance is striving for the rule of law, transparency, effectiveness, equity, efficiency, accountability and strategic vision in the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority (UNDP, 2002) and the tool used for the accomplishment of such task in the society is public administration.

However, the drastic changes in both economic inequalities and political system in the early 1960s made public administrators to contend with difficulties of rendering effective service primarily on budgeting, decision making and effective implementation of decisions for public concern. It was reasoned that the old methods of public administration practice were not capable to cope with the challenges unless a new administrative paradigm was developed to drive the change. The perception encouraged a landmark event in the field of public administration to put states economy in the right perspective and ensure accountability of public expenditures. Thus, between early 1960s and 1980s, experts in the field clamoured for change in its normative to suit the number of economic activities that were accelerated by fundamental changes brought by the prescripts of globalization and Liberalization in nations and for public administrators to be accountable to the public. These and other factors prompted enlargement in the scope of administrative techniques and breakages of undue bureaucratization for efficiency and effectiveness towards enhance social capacity and people-oriented service.

In other words, the view was to reinvigorate public service that would dismantle virtual institutionalization of corruption, lack of financial accountability, probity, transparency, disregards to the rule of law and insular tendencies to meet the challenge of people centric service. The action was pathway for transformation of systemically declined and appalling standard of service delivery to more expanded, improved administrative and professional instrument of governance. As contended by Basu (2007), the era needed transparency in governance and 'open' citizen friendly administration to drive performance the change. Ultimately, the dynamics in state functions forced the remodelling of the scope of public administration to advance the changes in the society because public administration was seen as the device that could be used to reconcile bureaucracy with democracy which to an extent serves as pillars of good governance.

The nomenclature of new public administration emerges to break the boundary between the general public and administrators with emphasises on ethical values to assure accountability and inevitably change the whole system of public administration. This presupposes the fundamental of good governance rests on the rudiments of new public administration which overhaul the entire administrative system to assure ethical values in governance for public interest and human development. Extensively, the determinant in the sphere for countries that are backward, Nigeria inclusive, in socio-economic and political development depends on ability to manage public affairs effectively and efficiently. Indeed, there must be conformance with administrative competence, public accountability, participatory development, devote to rule of law, and building especially political strong institution to strengthen other instructions of government for achievement of good governance. Therefore, this paper investigates the dilemmas of new public administration practice and good governance in Nigeria. Pertinently, the researcher seeks to examine the extent to which new public administration practice impacts on good governance in Nigeria.

Concept of New Public Administration (NPA)

New public administration denotes the drastic changes that took place in the public administration due to the advancement of new technology and its impact on state activities, changes in human society as well as unprecedented expansion in the paper of political science. New public administration stands for overhauling the public administrative system to accommodate the public interest which the old public administration was silence in its perception and bring new shapes and dimensions in the supply of public services. It is the application of private sector administrative techniques in providing the needed quality services to citizens.

New public administration conceives the determination of goals and objectives selection of programmes to match the goals and projection of activities needed to implement the programmes through public private

partnership in a manner that will develop the society. It is a new approach that breaks the autocratic conservative operations in the public sector as suggested by Weber's top to bottom bureaucratic models and quantum of state intervention in economic and social affairs, to liberalize administrative techniques that emphasizes ethics and value system for public interest such that, policies or services are jointly carried out both by the government and private sector.

As put forward by Obi and Nwanegbo (2006), NPA is used to explain a management culture that emphasizes the centrality of citizens or customers as well as accountability for results. Basu (2007), argues that new public management sought to move from bureaucratic to post bureaucratic or entrepreneurial government. The NPA is concerned with various techniques that have been set to achieve the threshold of accountability, justice system that enforces law in government activities and a just social system to advance good government, and enforce development in economy nations. However, NPA could be seen as the process of abdicating the old administrative orientation and incorporate process orientation based on programme appraisal, transfer of responsibilities to create flexibility in managerial performance, motivation with focus on human for effective and efficient service delivery.

Concept of Good Governance

Governance has been debated as a concept that depicts plethora of actions, activities or exercise of power in governing the society, organizations or groups in the entire universe. In the government circle, it denotes the control of institutions of government on the led by the leaders in the country. World Bank (1993) sees governance as a system through which power is exercised in the management of a country's political economic and social resources for development. International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2016) describes governance as all aspects of the way a country is governed its economic and policies regulatory framework. Realistically, governance refers to the extent a country applies its resources and developed the strategic plans so as to enable the realization of development objectives. To authenticate governance, there must be some level of good governance which indicate accountability, transparency, rule of law, and viable institutions of government to promote economic development.

As asserted by Adegbami and Adepoju (2017), good governance is a process through which institutions of government conduct public affairs and manage public resources through what United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP) (2002) described as striving for the rule of law, transparency, equity, effectiveness/efficiency, accountability, and strategic vision in the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority. Public administration instruments are used in the allocation of the 'Needs' and 'Wants' to the public and the manifestation of the expectation hinges on policy initiation, formulation and implementation by the public servants (temporary political office holders) and effectively and efficiently assisted by the civil servants (permanent civil career servants).

Given the above premise, transparency and accountability would drive the success in nation prosperity in social, economic and political dimensions. This corroborates Fagbadebo's (2007) opinion that the attainment of good governance depends on the operation of governance by adhering to the prevailing legal and ethical principles of the political community. Presently, the judicial system in the country seems disdain on equality before the law and divorce protection of individual within the ambit of the law. The Judiciary arm of government expected to be critical for checks on ethical conduct in government now become a "barking dog who cannot bite" the public office holders embezzle and prefer to go to court in the light of any financial misappropriation case taken against them by any authority.

Sharman, Sadana and Kaur (2013) identifies good governance with making excellent use of public resources with foundation of the rule of law, enforcement of contracts agreement between the individuals, maintenance of law and order, guaranteeing security to the people, economising on cost and resources, protection of government and proper delivery of services to the society. Confirming on the idea therefore, the best application of public resources has always been located within the locus of transparency, accountability, the rule of law, effective service delivery and participatory oriented governance and also allowing civil

organization to freely appraise performances. The people must contribute freely and openly on policy demand without forceful implementation of vague policy programmes back with propaganda to salvage the essence of such programme and project. Ikenga and Chima (2021) buttressed the idea by asserting that, to guarantee good governance practice, government policies should be published for assessment by the citizens for certainty on their goals.

Perception of New Public Administration

The public administration of early sixties was primarily concerned with the sterile principles prominence on budgeting, efficiency, decision making and implementation of decision policies. The aftermath of the Second World War posted challenges that provoked quest for reconceptualization of public administration that would be capable to deal with the change in economic and social structure of the period. The enthusiasts faulted ineffectiveness of the old public administration to include chains ethical value, development of individual member of organization and social and economic equality to be everyone advantage. The mix presumably saw government as the central institution of public administration in its governance because of the locus of governmental bureaucracy which Mbon (2023), contends as a regulatory instrumentality for accomplishment of government actions.

Concertedly, the focus of the change was to prepare public administrators for reformulate policies and methods of administration to address the grip of disillusion by the public against the leaders in the public sector triggered by distrust and deterioration consequent by pervasively corruption and accountability in public affairs. This assumption was to manifest through ability of public administration experts to map out appropriate decisions on distribution of wealth (Ekong and Mbon, 2024) and also strengthen priorities for efficient resource allocation. Apparently, sustainable allocation of resources invigorates development which are products of objective structures created for present and future benefit of the public. , As opine by Magbadelo(2020), government cannot claim to exist for the citizens without rendering services to the public with accountability and transparency. In other words, public administration was implanted with orientation to pay more attention to constantly changing human society and for administrative system to take into account the changes and build up policies in accordance with the change society. In a narrow perspective therefore, practical aspect of new public administration mostly concerned with adoption of private sector techniques in providing high quality services for citizens and advocacy of managerial autonomy in public affairs. Again, the fabrics of new public administration was to ensure positive relationship between public resource management capacity and quality of life for the general public. As contended by Henry (2007), there should be empathic relationship between government and the people and also encourage public policies that responses to social needs and institute effective and efficient management skills and inner human concern for the citizenry.

Theoretical Framework

The paper was located on service quality theory developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1980s. The theory explains the expectation and performance perception of customers in the contemporary research. The theory advances the decree to which a service meets or exceeds the expectation and needs of customers as a product of performance. The theorist suggests certain dimensions and factors for service performance. The dimension includes Reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness are the dimensions while the determinant factors includes; accuracy, professionalism, personnel, feedback, attention and service delivery. These predicts the willingness of government to render services in conformity to the needs of the citizens through participatory performance as associated with new Public Administration (Zeithaml, Valerie, Parasuraman and Berry, 1999). Emphatically, quality service delivery in the public sector is achieve from the chain of ethical principles offered b centrality of citizens who are the receiver or customer to the Public Sector. Practically, the theory drives the essence of new public administration emphases on people-oriented service achiever by admitting private management techniques to deliver service to the public and attain good governance.

METHODOLOGY

This paper adopted the library research method and employed a historical and descriptive investigative approach. It employed relevant data derived from several documentary sources such as books, encyclopaedias, peer-reviewed journals, periodicals, newspapers, and other archival records and online materials. The data gathered were selected based on relevance and analysed using the content analysis method.

New Public Administration and Good Governance in Nigeria

The pedestal of good governance is achieved within the vein of new public administration which emphasizes the rule of law, coordinated public institution's that guarantee's accountability, transparency and citizens inclusion in decision making, public administrators are the centrality of the pedestal. Although elected and appointed leaders are made for representation, bureaucrats are leading the way in restoring trust in government. This is because, the realization of the objectives and goals of government rely on mechanism of bureaucracy through the application of public administration practice and theories. Therefore, functions of the state considerably influence the manifestation of new public administration practice to aid in the actualization of the crucial role of state in good governance. Meanwhile, the attainment of the state function primarily rests on operationalization of people-oriented government pivoted by democratic governance. These expresses adherent to the rule of law, human right, freedom, civic participatory process in governance as a pathway to good governance.

This assertion suggest accountability as the fundamental but the case seem different in Nigeria context, as analyst consistently criticise the level of efficiency in management of public fund. The abysmal nature of service delivery in conformity to the new public administration ethics by the public officials allude corruption and poverty and also neglect protection and advancement of democratic values. Unfortunately, public bureaucrats who are the career officials and, by the nature of the permanency, can be held accountable for any misdeed by the appointees have been wile by making heads of ministries a political appointment. In other word, the permanent secretaries who assist the minister at the national level and commissioners at the state level on crucial decision making at various level and stages now became political appointment. This contradict the ethical role of public bureaucratic system in rooting out corruption by proper assessment of government policies and standardize to benefit the public needs.

Pervasively, the bureaucrats collaborate and assume agentive position of assisting the political appointees to loot public fund and help them to paper clip the loophole. Again inescapably, in a bit to secure self-development or employment in the public sector, citizens would be demanded for bribe by public officials to secure reasonable and prompt positions. Indeed, Nigeria has been plagued by multiple corruption and employment scandals within the civil/public services sector.

Unethical practices in the Civil Service in Nigeria

Some of the key scandals Civil/Public Services in Nigeria includes;

- (i) Embezzlement of billions of Naira pension funds by government officials meant for retired civil/public servants (*Punch News*, Nigeria, 2021)
- (ii) Recruitment fraud within government agencies where positions are often sold for highest bidders or awarded based on nepotism rather than merit (*The Guardian News*, Nigerian, 2020)
- (iii) Ghost workers scandal through fictitious or non-existent employees on government payroll across different Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDA' s) (*Vanguard News*, 2019)
- (iv) Bribery and Extortion by government officials demanding kickbacks for contract awards, promotion, posting and other administrative tasks (*The Cable*, 2021).

(v) Fraudulent contract awards/and inflating of contract cost to cronies and high profile political/influential individuals within the civil service.

(vi) Abuse of power by government and political elites by appointment of unqualified or incompetent individuals or personnel to key positions or government agencies.

(vii) Manipulation of recruitment process through falsification of credentials, recruitment examination malpractices by recruiting agencies and officials which are insider in the recruitment process (*Vanguard News*, 2019)

The foregoing shows the deep-rooted nature of corruption in Nigeria' s civil service and the challenges it has on delivery of essential services for development in order to ensure good governance. Intellectually, this bastardize the image of bureaucracy ranging from irresponsiveness to the catalytic role of public efficiency to technical exacerbating of public trust of accountability and lack of transparency. Undoubtedly, new public administration practice has limited it focus, hence, deteriorating in practical aspect of redistribution of wealth and services essentially to the general public and keep intensifies poor performance by succeeding leadership structure. In this dimension, public governance post array of distrust by elected officials, from electoral processes to the point of entry to the office. The entire electoral processes in Nigeria has been taken a toll of fraudulent practices, accorded by corruption. The entire leadership in the country see election, appointment and promotion as opportunity or means of enriching themselves by amassment of public wealth. This obliterates the creative managerial spirit with open flexibility to use the available public resources to achieve measurable performance for the interest of the people.

As posited by Heinrich (2007), attainment of good governance is tied to administrative effectiveness through performance management and infusing quality management principles to ensure positive results or value for money. In similar vein, Essien (2015) observed that Nigeria is characterized by bad governance and poor service delivery, political despair and disappointment and constitute ineffective public administration. From this standpoint, although corruption is incipient in all human societies and activities, but it has become the most single bane that has brought negative impact on good governance in the country. The nation descended into abyss of corruption to the extent that, the system of government revolves within the hands of kleptomaniac resulting in socio-economic problem that the country is facing today. The impact of corruption by the official has been so rampant such that, it distorts and retrogresses development in the country.

Some of the corrupt and accountability cases involving public office holders in Nigeria are shown in the table below:

Table 1: Some revive cases of corrupt public officer

S/N	Name/ Position of the Public Officer	Charges/Case	Amount	Verdict
1	Bello Matawella Former Governor	Money laundering	N70 Billion	Under Investigation
2	Kayode Fayemi Former Governor	Fraud cases	N 4 Billion	Under Investigation
3	Ayo Fayose Former Governor	Fraud cases	N 6.5 Billion	Under Investigation
4	Chimaroke Nnamadi Former Governor	Fraud cases	N 5.3 Billion	Under Investigation
5	Sulli Van Chime Former Governor	Fraud cases	N450 Million	Under Investigation

6	Abdullahi Adamu Former Governor	Fraud cases	N15 billion	Under Investigation
7	Rabiu Kwakwanso Former Governor	Non remittance of pension fund	N10 Million	Under Investigation
8	Theodore Orji Former Governor	Money laundering	N5.51billion	Under Investigation
9	Peter Odili Former Governor	Fraud cases	N100billion	Under Investigation
10	Danjuma Goje Former Governor	Fraud cases	N 5billion	Under Investigation
11	Aliyo Wammako Former Governor	Diversion of fund	N15billion	Under Investigation
12	Timipre Sylva Former Governor	Money laundering	N19.2billion	Under Investigation
13	Suler Lamido Form Governor	Fraud cases	N1.35billion	Under Investigation
14	Diezani Madueke Former Minister of Petroleum	Serveral billions of naira (N) and millions of dollars (\$)	Money laundering	Under Investigation
15	Olu Agunloye Former Minister	Fraud cases	\$6billion	Under Investigation
16	Sadiya Umar-Farouk Former Minister	Fraud cases	N37.1 billion	Under Investigation
17	Betta Edu Suspended Minister of Humanitarian affairs	Fraud cases	N81.6 billion	Under Investigation
18	Hadi Sirika Former Minsiter	Diversion of public funds/money laundering	N8billion	Under Investigation
19	Yahaya Bello Former Governor	Money laundering	N80.2 Billion	Under Investigation
22	Willie Obiano Former Governors	Diversion of funds, money laundering	N4 Billion	Under Investigation
23	Godwin Emefiele Former Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria	Fraud cases; unlawful printing of Naira notes and embezzlement	\$4.5 Billion (approx. N5.8 Trillion)	Under Investigation

Source: Punch Newspaper January 14, 2024, nairametrics.com

The table above shows the impunity of embezzlement, diversion and misappropriation of public funds by public officials which has stunt the achievement of good governance in Nigeria.

Dilemmas of New Public Administration Practice in Nigeria

Nigeria is a country blessed with enormous human and material resources but still grapples with qualitative improvement in the living standard of members of the society. This is judged by inability of the government to engage in development oriented administrative practices to improve the living standard of the people. The

realities of the situation downed due to the emergence of self-profitable leadership style adopted in the country by the administrators. The achievement of the ideals of development need a public bureaucracy that is oriented toward delivery on the people-oriented services and the possibilities for advancing the idea is adherent to the rule of law and ethical values of the public service. Admittedly, the public sector economy in the country appears to have disoriented to corruption, unaccountable, inefficient in-service delivery. The civil service saddled with the responsibilities of advising as well as implementation of policy programmes has colluded with the politicians to render the bureaucracy worthless in performance thereby circumventing the rules of the service.

Several attempts by the federal government to re-invigorate quality public services by the introduction of series of reforms, its justification still remain elusive on services delivery to promote good governance. Concertedly, every government through its machinery must objectively deliver public goods efficiently in a predetermined manner, when this is not achievable the administrative system is terribly defective. As posited by Olowu (2010), the primary responsibility of any public administrative system is to deliver services that the private sector may or may not deliver at all or to deliver services to those who cannot afford the market price of the product. The tonic for governmental action ought to be the desire to satisfy the yearning of the people in terms of the expected public goals or deliverables and must meet the needs of the citizens through its differentiated structures and institutions of service (Magbadelo, 2020).

However, the ills of public administration practices in Nigeria has, to greater extent, made possible the bane to Nigeria development because the anticipated role of the public service has been eroded. Primarily, non-adherence to ethical principles of new public administration and lack of political will by the leaders has thrown country to woe of achieving development. As asserted by Magbadelo (2020), when government institutions cannot deliver services expected from them, the organizational entities and system is faulty. Resulting from the above, Nigeria public officers and institutions managing public affairs and resources without paying attention or recourse to normative character of new public administration as well as ethics, morality or values impair the chances of good governance.

In other word, transparency and accountability in the dispensation of public affair does not conform to the quantum of changes brought by new public administration in terms of ethical execution of public policies. Suffice to admit that, the administrative system derogates the aspects of new public administration intent to achieved considerable progress in service delivery to attain good governance. This results in overwhelming low-quality service delivery and lack of trust in public service. The failure of government and its institutions manifest from the ingress of corrupt practices and failure in the entire bureaucratic mechanisms and public sector. The civil servants contemplate the political class looting public funds, they also poach public fund to equate or fit in themselves with the political office holders without consideration to civil service rule.

However new public administration approach was formulated to renew the concern of State institutional structures and the capacity of public administrators in solving the problems of good governance. Moreover, new Public administration was to strengthen the role of public administration in protecting an advancing democratic value as well as ensuring accountability, deliver on public benefits and also determine the effects of government policies by its bureaucratic mechanisms. Deductively the envisage practice has pervasively butcher the expectation and creates dilemmas such as:

(i) **Democratization of public bureaucracy:** The position of permanent secretaries has been pitched to political appointment whereby bureaucrats canvas to be appointed. This has made the bureaucrats tilt towards negative tendencies and display unethical values, incompetency and inefficiency and neglect the core of service delivery performance. Therefore, image of bureaucracy gradually gravitates to the dictate of politicians within their sphere and accede to their corrupt intent diminishing their professionalism.

(ii) **Poor remuneration status:** Poor remuneration remains a persistent struggle in Nigeria by the labour unions even at increase in cost of living accompanied with high inflation rate. Desertion on remuneration status still remains a major issue and affect negatively service delivery in the public sector. Government

refusal to develop a salary structure that can at least afford a good living of the workers in the public sector affect the moral of civil service performance. Again, the disparity in salary structure and earnings of some agencies with that of career civil servants alongside the pay of political office holders affect the orientation of Public sector workers resulting in divergent from the ethics and norms of the service.

(iii) **Ethical value in public office:** In Nigeria the value of public officers has constantly abated particularly in public affairs. The public interest is relegated such that democratic or public governance now become personified. UNDP (2002) describes new public administration striving for the rule of law, transparency, equity, effective/efficiency, accountability and strategy vision in the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority. Public office holders see assumption of offices as an opportunity for their personal gain to embezzle, misappropriate public funds and exhibit dominance of power and continue to beget boundary wall between the general public without accountability.

(iv) **Equitable distribution of social opportunities:** Nigeria public affairs have been badly ruffled by inequitable distribution of social and economic justice as reasonably expected to be everyone advantage. As remarked by Nwanegbo (2006), new public administration is used to explain management culture that emphasizes centrality of citizens or customers as well as accountability for result. This suggests inequality in dispensation of Justice whereby the opportunist always have advantage over others due to their position and enclave. This is against derailment from the approach of new Public administration which locates in realization of social justice and equality.

(v) **Legitimacy of leadership:** The legitimacy of leadership is predicated on electoral processes to signal free, fair and equitable opportunities in election contest. Electoral processes in Nigeria lack credibility to produce a political leadership with public support of the mandates. Elected officials emerge through rigged elections occasioned by public unacceptability. This denies citizens participation in support for government policies thereby entrenching powerful leaders in public institutions. As observed by Ikenga and Chima (2021), credible election allows citizens to select leaders who would perform and contribute to socio-economic development.

However, in an effort to address the rife of defection in service delivery in the Nigeria Public Sector, the federal governance has navigated numbers of Civil/Public Service reforms. The reforms have often emerged in response to pressure for transparency, accountability, efficiency toward service delivery in the public sector to coordinate and strengthen government for attainment of good governance in the country. As stated by Mbon, Titus and Ataire (2024), coordination of governance promotes accountability, inclusiveness and also guarantee socio-economic prosperity in a country.

Civil/Public Service Reforms in Nigeria

Although Nigeria have engaged in numerous service reform to reposition the Civil/ Public Service for efficient service delivery, notable among the reforms are summarizes below:

(i) **The Civil Service Reforms of 1972:** The objectives of the reform were to review the structure and orientations of the civil service and make it more efficient for greater performance in a view to boost national development.

(ii) **The Public Service Reforms of 1975:** The objectives were to restructure the civil service for greater efficiency and effectiveness in the wake of the 1974/75 oil boom and reduce bureaucratic bottleneck in administrative practice. The commission for the reforms made several recommendations including introduction of private sector-oriented services in the public affairs. Approaches suggested to accomplish the objectives were adoption of Management by Objectives (MBO), Project Management (PM), Planning, Programming Budgeting System (PPBS) as well as replacement of the Confidential Reporting System (CRS) with Open Reporting System (ORS).

(iii) **The Civil Service Reforms of 1988:** The objectives were to revitalize and reform the civil service structure, with focus on meritocracy and efficiency. The reform attempted to integrate the administration of the civil service with the perception of the political system adopted in the 1979 constitution by the government. Although the reform Committee did not produce official report or provide any white paper, the military administration promulgated Decree 43 of 1988 to legalize the reform.

(iv) **The Civil Service Reforms of 1999:** The objectives of the reform were to address issues of corruption, inefficiency and lack of professionalism that had marred the public sector over the period of military rule. The focus of the reforms was to restore public confidence, enhance efficiency and effectiveness, enhance capacity building via introduction of modern management practices and information technology in public sector affairs, enhance policy alignment with national development goals to promotes integrity and accountability, and decentralization of authority by granting more autonomy to local government.

(v) **The Public Service Reforms of 2006:** The objective of the reform was to address the challenges of ineffectiveness and inefficiency in service delivery, improve human resource management, enhance citizen's participation and engagement in the decision-making process, reduce corruption and also strengthen institutional of public instructions.

(v) **The Public Service Reforms of 2012:** The objective was to optimise the operations of the federal civil service with focus on reducing the number of agencies and enhancing service delivery mechanisms.

(vi) **The Civil Service Reform of 2021:** The reform was a broader continuation in efforts to modernize the civil service to enhance efficiency and transparency in response to digital transformed needs. The objective includes, to enhance effectiveness and efficiency by reducing bureaucratic red-tapism, adoption technology of inclusion on information to improve service delivery, development of workforce in accordance to contemporary work task, strengthen accountability and transparency, enhance policy consistency and coordination, digitization of public service via electronic governance to achieve national development.

To further address the challenges of bureaucratic inefficiency, ineffectiveness, corruption, encourage participatory governance to provide adequately the citizen's needs, the federal government has introduced other programmes such as SERVICOM with the aims to reposition public service to deliver quality service to the citizens.

SERVICOM policy was introduced to invigorate the lost faith in public service Nigeria in 2005 by formulation of customer's/ client's charter. The Charter seeks to incorporate quality into the public service by adoption of customer relations, customer feedback on services and complain procedure/grievances redress mechanisms. The Charter emphasizes on customer satisfaction in service through quality service requirement and promotion of services pragmatically in consonant with the ideals of new public administration to prepare ground for good governance. All these civil as well as public service reforms has sought to improve the performance of the Nigerian administrative system and foster good governance.

Problems of Civil/ Public Service Reforms in Nigeria

Despite the commitment of government by the instructions of sweeping reforms in the Civil/ Public Service, the implementations present numerous defective factors including;

(i) Corruption by pervasive culture of graft which undermine the integrity of the public workers and the trust citizens in governmental affairs.

(ii) Instability in governance which disrupt continuity in policy implementation because each successive administration often pursue its agenda which result in policy inconsistency.

(iii) Inadequate funding by neglect of sufficient budgetary allocation for key sectors often stall the required level of performance and hamper efficient service delivery.

(iv) Limited engagement of stakeholders like; civil society, private sector experts and the general public to contribute ideas affect alignment with the needs and expectation of the public. As postulates by Mbon and Akpan (2022), inclusiveness and mobilization form the basis for governance.

(v) Cultural dynamics and societal norms often affect the reforms due largely to societal perception and traditional practices by acceptance of the new policies formulation.

(vi) Lack of cohesion and consistency in policy formulation brought by lack of focus and prioritizing reform initiative and demonstration of commitment through policy advocacy.

However, the overall efforts by the government to initiate reform strategies in the public sector has always been to improve governance framework by organizing human resource decently to stimulate good governance and national development. But the above challenges suggests lack of strong consensus between the desire of the reform and and the public servants. Optimistically, Nigeria can enhance the effectiveness of the reform through sustainable changes through leadership commitment, collaboration and engagement of stakeholders and adaptation pragmatic and eclectic approaches to meet the needs of the public. Ultimately, the system should develop evaluation framework on performance metrics as well as legal and regulatory principles for accountability to create a coherent civil/public service landscape for good governance.

CONCLUSION

The paper has examined the momentum change in the method of public administration to foster development in order to meet the new challenges of the society. The changes ordered several reform and programmes to regularize new public administration practice which emphasises on principles of ethics and value system to meet the need of people through good governance. The paper discovered that, the crucial role of state in attainment of these principles is not visible because all the efforts have been impaired by lack of congruity between the salacity of the reforms and programmes and the will of those charge with implementation of governance in the country. This of course created quantum of contended dilemmas such as democratization of public bureaucracy, poor remuneration status, ethical values in public offices, and equitable distribution of social opportunities and legitimacy of leadership. Therefore, the combination of these evil wrecks the principles of new public administration and grave the potential of good governance in Nigeria.

The Way Forward

The landmark on the discussion showed vacuum in actualization of new Public administration practice to evoke good governance in Nigeria. Therefore, it is pertinent to engage in robust reorientation for public officials on ethical value and ensure the judicial system assume a new meaning and content in the dispensation of Justice on offenders of ethical values of the public service. Secondly government should endorse building of political institutions through significant checks on electoral legitimacy to strengthen representation and legislative affairs. Thirdly, remuneration play critical role in socioeconomic development of nations. Thus, government should adopt and implement adequate remuneration and rank payment significantly in the public service to secure equality of interest. Fourthly, there should be actions to eradicate disparities in social, political and economic opportunities to encourage equality. These would give direction to changes in the whole public administration system and make progress for the realization of good governance in the country.

REFERENCES

1. Adegbam, A. and Adepoju, B. (2017). Good governance in Nigeria: A catalyst to national peace, stability and development. *African Research Review*, 11(4), 144-155.

2. Basu, R. (2007). *Public administration: Concepts and theories*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt Limited.
3. Buchanan, J. M. (2003). What is public choice theory? *Economic Education Bulletin*, 43(5), 1-4.
4. Cyprus, A. (2024). Five former Nigeria officials embroidered in 6.03 trillions naira, EFCC probe case. Naira metrics.com.
5. Ekong, D. and Mbon, N. E. (2024). Application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and the practice of public administration. *AKSU Journal of Administration and Corporate Governance*, 4(2), 233-241.
6. Essien, D. E. (2015). The challenges of good governance and service delivery in the 21st century. *International Journal of Civic Engagement and Social Change*, 2(2), 53-66.
7. Fagbadebo, O. (2007). Corruption, governance and political instability in Nigeria. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 1(2), 28-37.
8. Heinrich, C. J. (2013). Measuring public sector performance and effectiveness. In Peters, B. G. and Pierre, J. *Sage Handbook of Public Administration*. London: Sage Publications.
9. Henry, N. (2007). *Public administration and public affairs*. New Delhi: Prentice Hall.
10. Ikenga, F. A. and Chima, O. (2021). Fundamentals of good governance: The panacea for development performance in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration, Finance and Law*, 22, 22-41.
11. Magbadelo, J. O. (2020). The problematic of service delivery in the Nigerian Federal Civil Service. *Annals of social sciences and management studies* 5(3), 53-59
12. Mbon, N. E. (2024). Bureaucracy and the realization of sustainable development in Nigeria: Issues and the way forward. *Journal of Association of Nigeria Public Administrators*, 2(1), 172-179.
13. Mbon, N. E., Titus, D. A. and Atairret, C. A. (2024). Federalism and the quest for national restructuring in Nigeria: Issues and prospects. *International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation*, 11(11), 264-275.
14. Mbon, N. E. and Akpan, I. M. (2022). Small and medium scale enterprises and national development in Nigeria: A case study of Akwa Ibom State. *AKSU Journal of Administration and Corporate Governance*, 2(1), 150-163.
15. Obi, E. A. and Nwanegbo, C. J. (2006). *Administration: Theory and applications*. Onitsha: Book Point Ltd.
16. Obiodun, S. (2024). EFCC revives 13 ex governor's 772 billions fraud cases. Punching.com
17. Olowu, D. (2010) Civil Service Pay Reforms in Africa. *International Review of Administrative Services*, 76(4), 632-652.
18. Premium Times Nigeria. (2013). How pension fraud was committed in Nigeria-witness. Retrieved from: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/135119-pension-fraud-was-committed-in-Nigeria-witness.html>
19. Parasuraman, A, Zeithaml, V and Berry, L. (1988). SERVQUAL: Multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12-40
20. Sharma, M. P., Sadana, B. L and Kaur, H. (2013). *Public administration: Theory and practice*. Allahabad: Kitab Mahal.
21. The Cable (2021). How Nigerian officials extort bribes for basic services. Retrieved from: <https://www.thecable.ng/how-nigeria-officials-extort-bribes-for-basic-services>
22. The Guardian Nigeria (2020). Recruitment scandals hit government agencies. Retrieved from: <https://guardian.ng/features/recruitment-scandal-hits-government-agencies>
23. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2003). *Human development report 2002: Deepening democracy in fragmented world*. New York: UNDP.
24. United States Institute of Peace (USIP) (2022). *Democracy and governance*. New York: United States Institute of Peace
25. Vanguard News (2019). Ghost workers; FG uncovers N7bn salary fraud in 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2019/08/ghost-workers-fg-uncovers-n1.7bn-salary-fraud-in-2017>
26. World Bank (1993). *Governance*. Retrieved from <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>.
27. Zeithaml, V., Parasuraman, A. and Berry, L (1999). *Delivery quality service*. Free Press.