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RETHINKING THE FEDERAL CHARACTER PRINCIPLE AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE NIGERIAN CIVIL SERVICE

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Abstract

The paper examined the application of the federal character principle and its implication on service delivery in Nigerian federal civil service. The Nigerian federal civil service is the bedrock of Nigeria's quest for socio-economic development. However, over the years, service delivery and development have remained a hydra-headed problem. The paper relied on secondary data. Findings of the study show that there is a relationship between the federal character principle and employees' service delivery as well as poor attitude to work by bureaucrats. Therefore, in order to achieve efficient service delivery and better attitude to work by civil servants, it is recommended that government should imbibe the prescripts of Marx Weber's bureaucratic theory as regards recruitment based on merit, technical competency and qualification, as well as re-examine the reliability and validity of the application of federal character principle. It is

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also recommended that recruitment should be within grade levels 03-06 while recruitment into the senior officers cadre should into grade levels 07-17 and appointments should be strictly based on merit.

Key Words: Federal Character Principle, Representative Bureaucracy, Merit, Civil Service, Service Delivery.

Introduction

Sharply divided and plural societies all over the world attempt to manage their diversities and divisive tendencies through one or a combination of policy alternatives in the organization and management of their public services for performance; and Nigeria is not an exception (Ayoade, 2000; Abdullah, 2007). Often times, these policy alternatives turn out to be delicate arrangements. However, when carefully conceived, crafted and practised, it provides opportunity for centre-seeking and centre-fleeing forces to interact peacefully and co-habit on agreed terms. This been proved to have an enhanced productivity. One of such policy alternatives adopted for the management of the public service in Nigeria for even representation is the federal character principle, which was borne out of the need to ensure an even spread of government appointments in all the states and local government councils in the country (Nzeshi, 2012).

Nigeria is a federation comprising 36 states structure with a population of more than 150 million people. The Country has more than 250 ethnic groups, which necessitated an arrangement that could accommodate people from the different segments of the country into the public service (Gberevbie, 2012). The notion of federal character presupposes the existence of a federal society. However, as a federal state, Nigeria was faced with the challenge of how to imbibe the principle of federalism in practice. As a result, the quota system was introduced into the Nigerian

public service in 1958 by the government in order to ensure an equitable representation of the various groups in the country. Following the 1967/70 civil war in Nigeria, successive governments in Nigeria has continued to search for peaceful coexistence of the various ethnic groups in Nigeria and an attainment integrated national development. In this search, the 1979 Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) reported that inter-ethnic rivalries in Nigeria between one ethnic group or combination of ethnic groups and others are struggles to secure the domination of government at the exclusion of others. The committee submitted that it is essential to have some provision that will ensure that the predominance of persons from a few states or from few ethnic groups is avoided in the composition of government or the appointment or election of persons to high offices in the Nigerian state (CDC, 1979: viii).

To further consolidate the gains of the quota system, the Federal Military Government of Generals Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo in the drafting and approval of the 1979 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria during the transition to civilian rule (1976-79) introduced into the Nigerian political and administrative landscapes the principle of federal character. Section 14, subsection 3 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria states that:

The composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic of other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies.

The federal character principle is a legal instrument put in place to regulate appointments, promotions, security of tenure and severance in every gov-

ernment department in a federal system. The principle also seeks to regulate the attainment of equal educational opportunities for citizens within the Country. The awkward application of the federal character principle tends to pose challenges to the productivity or the service delivery of the Nigerian public service through the circumscription of merit. Such practice of the principle of federal character in personnel procurement without due regard for merit, is more likely to mire efforts at sustainable development in a society. Hence this paper seeks to assess the applicability of the federal character principle and its effect on the service delivery in the Nigerian Civil Service which is the organ responsible for the implementation of government's programmes and policies in Nigeria.

The Problem

The civil service is a body without which the business of government would be impossible to operate. The role of civil servants is so vital that such personnel are expected to be productive, progressive and enterprising. Hence the need to employ well educated, skilled and experienced people. However, for political reasons, the Federal Civil Service now combines the administrative ethics of merit and the political doctrine of federal character principle as a recruitment policy because of the need for the achievement of a representative bureaucracy. The federal character principle was incorporated as an employment policy having taken into cognizance the impervious and persistence demand by each ethnic group, no matter how small numerically, or how poor materially, or how backward educationally for a fair and dignified place in the Nigeria sum. For some time now, the Federal Civil Service has come under criticism because its performance or service delivery and productivity left much to be desired. Many attribute its unproductive and inefficiency to the adoption of the Federal Character Principle which they believe negates the administrative ethics of merit system – skill, qualifications and experience through training which are the basic criteria for efficiency.

Federal institutions seem to recruit on nepotism and favouritism without minding the effect of such practices to the productivity, and efficiency of service delivery as well as quality of output to the nation. Even when the federal character principle is observed, the competence and efficiency of the candidates are hardly considered since they are often relatives of those saddled with the responsibility of the recruitment exercise. By so doing, due process is bypassed and consequently unsuitable candidates are employed in the Nigerian civil service having been able to cut corners in the recruitment exercise. This problem has been a hydra-headed challenge to the Nigerian Civil Service and is found in virtually all government institutions, agencies and parastatals. This problem, if left unchecked, is more likely to mire efforts at sustainable development in the Nigerian society. Therefore, this paper seeks to examine the relationship between the federal character system and service delivery function of the civil service with the aim of putting forward recommendations to curb the menace. Hence the paper will attempt to provide answer to the following questions: What is the relationship between the federal character system and the service delivery function of the Civil Service? What are the factors militating against service delivery in the civil service? What are the possible solutions to these factors?

Conceptual and Theoretical Discussion

According to (Obiyan and Akindele, 2002), the federal character principle essentially refers to the recognition of the plural nature of the country in recruitment, distribution of administrative and political offices and power as well as the resources of the country. The essence of the federal character principle is to allow the composition and conduct of public institutions and affairs to reflect the country's diversity in terms of religion and geographical region. It is premised on the ground that when national institutions and affairs are reflective in composition and conduct of the pluralism of the country then, a sense of belonging is likely to be evoked from the citizenry. It can be deduced from the above submission that federal

character principle is in part, designed to deal with the problem of imbalance, marginalization and discrimination. The question then arises as to whether the principle can be rightly used to address the problem of discrimination in the composition and conduct of public institutions and affairs as well as ensure effective integration of various sections of the Nigerian society.

According to Olagunju (1987) the federal character is a deliberate design to accommodate less dominant but often forcibly expressed interests. Ezeibe (2013) also agrees with Olagunju and then posits that the federal character principle involves a deliberate plan to construct a suitable means of ensuring the proper distribution of amenities and government projects in the country. Implicit in the above definitions is that the federal character is introduced where there are observed differences in culture, tradition and inequality either in human, natural or both. Therefore, the federal character is a palliative principle aimed at uniting the once existed autonomous sub-nationalities through quota system for purposes of equality of opportunities and peaceful co-existence. Heirmexy (2011) noted that the federal character is introduced for the equitable sharing of posts as well as even distribution of natural and economic resources. In his own contribution, remove parenthesis (Anyadike, 2013) contends that the federal character principle is a political settlement that enables every section of the Nigerian society to be represented in government. He argued that the new phrase, 'federal character' in its application and implementation is a mere euphemism for ethnic balancing which has the potential of solving the problem and fear of domination and is liable to bring about the stability that is needed for development to take place in the country. From Heirmexy's and Anyadike's assertions, it can be deduced that the federal character is a political means of giving posts or making sure that every section of the Nigerian society is represented in government.

The concept of the federal character or quota system became part of Nigeria's political vocabulary when it was adopted by the Constitution Drafting Committee in 1975. The phrase "Federal Character" was first used by the late General Murtala Mohammed in his maiden address to the opening session of the Constitution Drafting Committee on the 18th of October 1975. The federal character principle, according to the committee reflects the distinctive desire of the Nigerian people to promote national integration, foster national unity as well as the need to give the citizens Nigerian a sense of belonging irrespective of ethnic origin, culture, language or religion diversities (Ayoade, 2000 & Ikelegbe, 2004). The Federal character principle is a quota system and quotas are seen by employers as an unsavory strategy for ratifying the effects of the past 'or present unfair discrimination'.

Recruitment is "a set of activities used to obtain a sufficient number of the right people at the right time from the right place and its purpose is to select and place those who best meet the needs of the work place, and to develop and maintain a qualified and adequate workforce through which an organization can fulfill its human resource plan. Erasmus, Swanepoe, Schenk, Van der Westhuizen, and Wessels, (2005) conceive recruitment as "those activities in human resource management which are undertaken in order to attract sufficient job candidates who have the necessary potential, competencies and traits to fill job needs and assist the civil service organization in achieving its objectives. It is clear from the foregoing that, to achieve organizational goals, the right recruitment policy must be in place. According to Van der Westhuizen (2005) the recruitment policy stipulates broad guidelines for the way in which a public sector organization intends to handle the process of recruitment. In brief terms, this implies that the recruitment policy must indicate the organization's position concerning the general objectives of recruitment and the principle of equal opportunities during recruitment.

The federal character principle or quota system as enshrined in Nigeria's Constitution since 1979, seeks to ensure that recruitment and

appointments to public service organizations reflect the linguistic, ethnic, religious, and geographic diversity of the country. In the light of the above, the application of the federal character and quota system in the recruitment of civil servants and by extension the Nigerian public servants has confused striking a balance between merit and the quota. This has had adverse consequences for both governmental institutions in terms of discipline, morale, and overall efficiency, productivity and service delivery. The basic idea of the principle is to have an even representation of all states, ethnic and other sectional groups in the federal public or civil service.

Reasons for the Application of Federal Character Principle in Recruitment in the Nigerian Federal Civil Service

The ecology of public personnel policy in the federal civil service is influenced by the peculiar nature of the Nigerian federation. The Nigerian civil service is the administrative machinery through which government implements its policies and programmes. It comprises ministries and extra ministerial departments, agencies, commissions as well as parastatals. Establishments within the ambit of the service have their administrative arrangements for recruitment and selection, training, transfer, secondment, promotion, discipline, salary administration, industrial relations and disengagement. However, public personnel policies that direct this practice reflect constraints which affect the productivity and service delivery of workers. Ecological factors have influenced the formulation of recruitment and selection policies in Nigeria. A significant ecological factor is the diverse and populous nature of the Nigerian society. These diversities and complexities are seen in the ethnic, cultural and religious dimensions of the nation. There are more than 252 known ethnic groups in Nigeria, each with its own dialects, customs and traditions (Osaghae, 2011). These features provide the rationale for Nigeria's adoption of a federal system of government, which is more difficult to run and maintain, compared to other systems of government. This complex nature of the Nigerian society affects the harmonious relationship between formulators and implementers of

public personnel policies. In terms of analysis, the constraints of implementing public personnel policies on recruitment and selection in the Nigerian civil service could be traced to the misunderstanding of bureaucratic roles. Olowu, Otobo, and Okotoni, (1997) noted that over three decades after independence, the public service overtime lost its inherited commitment to political neutrality, professional and developmental meritocratic ethos.

Immediately after independence, the Nigerian state was faced with a situation where the political space was dominated by Northern elites, while the administrative machinery of the bureaucracy was dominated by the Southern intellectuals and intelligentsia. For the political executive to successfully carry out its policies, it required a facilitator in its bureaucracy, which the North was unable to provide in terms of people with required skills, educational qualifications and experience. In this regard, the South with more qualified human resources dominated the public bureaucracy. This meant that while the North dominated the political space, the South, on the other hand dominated the bureaucracy. It was in a bid to resolve the problem of Northern political domination and the Southern dominated bureaucracy that gave birth to the introduction of representative bureaucracy that rides on the wing of “Federal Character Principle” (Ayoade in Ibeto and Aremu, 2013). Thus, the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria recognized the imperative of the federal character to Nigeria’s administrative system as provided in the section 14 (3) of the Constitution. The reason this principle is considered more important than merit in the recruitment of federal civil servants is because those in the disadvantaged areas - mainly the Northern part as opined by Olowu et al (1997) are the political leaders of the country. This made it possible for them to use their positions to protect their region using the principle. However, a new problem has since emerged in the area of quality of human resources in the public sector. While the Civil Service Commission appoints senior personnel on salary Grade level 07-17 to reflect the federal character and quota system, the various ministries and extra-ministe-

rial departments appoint junior officers on Grade level 03 -06 under the delegation and supervision of the Civil Service Commission Decree 43 (1988) and Section 170 of the 1999 Constitution as amended.

The Relationship between Recruitment and Service Delivery

It has been observed that the assumption underpinning the practice of human resources management (HRM) is that people are any organization's key resource and service delivery and organizational performance largely depends on them (Armstrong, 2009). Therefore, if an appropriate range of HR policies and processes are developed and implemented effectively, HR will make a substantial impact on service delivery. Yet, Guest, Michie, Conway and Sheenan (2003) posit that the case for an association between human resource management, service delivery and workers productivity are based on two arguments. The first one being that the effective deployment of human resources offers one of the most powerful bases of competitive advantage. The second argument is that effective deployment of human resources depends on the application of a distinctive combination of practices, or the use of a consistent set of human resource practices. Furthermore, Guest et al. (2003) stress that there is a plausible case that HR management will be more effective if it fits the business strategy of each organization.

According to Collins and Druten (2003), researchers have produced compelling evidence for the causal link between how people are managed and workers' productivity and service delivery. They argue that the effectiveness of a recruitment policy, particularly employee selection procedures, performance appraisals, rewards and benefits management, as well as employee training and development (the matching model of HRM) often have a direct bearing on workers' productivity and service delivery. It has also been argued that, the result of effectively managing human resources is an enhanced ability to attract and retain qualified employees who are motivated to perform (Schuler and Macmillan, 1984).

To them, the benefits of having the right employees motivated to perform include greater profitability, enhanced service delivery, low employee turnover, high product quality, lower production costs, and more rapid acceptance and implementation of corporate strategy. However, the application of the federal character or quota system in recruitment into the federal civil service negates this synergy

Shortcomings in the Application of the Federal Character Principle in the Nigeria Public Service

The federal character principle made its debut into the Nigerian political and public administrative landscape through the drafting and adoption of the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. An investigation of the principle reveals that it is a normative expression of the historical belief of Nigerians in equal access to and participation in the political and administrative affairs of the country in the area of policy formulation and implementation. To support the above view, Alubo (2003) points out that the lack of representation in policy making and implementation by some segments of the Nigerian society in the past has denied them the opportunities for education and economic advancement.

In order to drive the implementation of the federal character principle, the Federal Character Commission (FCC) was established by decree 34 of 1996, and the powers of the Commission was summarized by Mustapha (2007) to include: working out a formula for the sharing of posts and services; compliance monitoring; enforcement of compliance through legal actions; demanding and reviewing data on staffing; and institutional investigations. The FCC is a Commission under the presidency. Its members are appointed by the president but subject to the ratification of the Nigerian Senate. To ensure equity in representation, the law establishing the Commission states that the executive chairman and secretary are to be appointed in such a way that if the chairman comes from the North, the secretary must be chosen from the South and vice versa. How-

ever, Nzeshi (2012) argues that “since its establishment, the Federal Character Commission has been headed mostly by Northerners.”

The implication of the request to amend the FCC act shows that the principle and the structure put in place to enforce its implementation is not totally effective as envisaged by the government. This is amply corroborated by Nzeshi (2012) who submits that “the inefficiency of the FCC to effectively enforce its mandate as a government watchdog in identifying and addressing inequality is increasingly worrisome. In emphasizing the shortcomings of the application of the Federal Character principle in Nigeria, Gboyega (1989) points out that “...the issues of making public institutions reflect the federal character was taken up haphazardly giving rise to arbitrariness and victimization of some unfortunate public servants.” In the same vein, Ekeh (1989) contends that “its most radical and damaging application has been in the bureaucracies and public services of the federation. . . permanent secretaries have been kicked around, removed and sometimes dismissed.” He argues further that the application of the federal character principle “has invaded the integrity and standards of public bureaucracy and . . . other governmental bodies that normally require safeguards from the ravages of politics.” Furthermore, the negative effects of the federal character on public sector performance in Nigeria can be gleaned from the work of Forrest (1993), where he argues that the implementation of the principle of federal character in the public service “not only led to poor appointments but also enhanced mediocrity rather than merit.” To promote administrative effectiveness for performance in the Nigerian public service, Utomi (2005) argues that “we need to engage on the issues of competence, commitment, corruption and conflict of interest and career certainty. From there come both threats to the effectiveness of the civil service and opportunities for the service to be the anchor of a Nigerian renaissance.”

The contributions of a foremost scholar and practitioner in Nigerian public administration, Adamolekun (2008) to this discourse were more

probing as the researcher quences thus: “Has the federal character principle promoted or retarded national loyalty and stability? Or has the area or ethnic region of a person become the key factor in determining his quality as an individual?” He argues further that “only a critical assessment of ...years of implementing the federal character principle...would help determine the desirable way forward.”

Some scholars like Igwe, (2012) etc, argue strongly that the Federal Character Commission does not perform in the spirit and manner of the Federal Character Principle in the recruitment of civil servants in the Nigeria Civil Service. That stands to be the main reason why the Nigerian Civil Service is characterized by incompetent leadership, unqualified, less-qualified and inexperienced civil servants, inefficiency and ineffectiveness and among others. Igwe, (2012) argues that the Federal Character Principle has only managed to further deepen disunity, promote incompetence in the civil service and advance inequality, sectional nepotism and corruption. The “federal character” principle that was introduced as Nigeria’s path to achieving “representative bureaucracy” was morphed into the bad practice of politicization. Capacity development programmes for public servants that were a major concern during the immediate pre and post-independence years were progressively neglected notwithstanding the strong case made for it in the Udoji report 1974 (Adamolekun, 2007).

It is very clear from the above submissions why administrative effectiveness in the Nigerian public service that is needed for the attainment of sustainable development may continue to be a mirage. Contributing to the debate on public sector ineffectiveness, Suleiman (2009) contends that “poor capacity of the majority of civil servants, sometimes to the point of illiteracy” arising from the application of the Federal Character is one of the reasons for poor performance of the Nigerian public service. The views of Suleiman (2009) and Adamolekun (2009) go to support the argument that the neglect of capacity development programmes for public servants and the implementation of the Federal Character offer

a credible explanation on the ineffectiveness of the Nigerian public bureaucracy for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Also, Tonwe and Oghator (2009) submit that the “federal character allows ethno-regional patrons and their clients to exploit and mismanage state resources without contributing to any meaningful development.” Supporting the importance of merit as a strategy for manpower procurement in the nation’s quest for administrative effectiveness and enhanced performance for sustainable development, Soludo (2012) argues that the emergence of a merit driven culture is, therefore, a key outcome of Vision 20:20:20 and an area of immediate policy focus. To this end, a comprehensive review of ethnic balancing measures and diversity management related laws such as the implementation of the federal character principle should be undertaken with a view to ensuring greater promotion of merit for sustainable development in Nigeria. According to The Transformation Agenda (2011-2015), Nigeria’s inability to attain sustainable development in the past has been attributed to the nation’s inability to tackle development challenges such as poverty, unemployment, corruption and the lack of security hinged on bad governance and ineffective institutions/agencies of government.

In the light of the above, the poor implementation of the principle of federal character in the Nigerian public service is, therefore, capable of bringing into the service incompetent workforce that lacks the ability to implement the policies of the government designed for sustainable development. Gberevbie (2010) however argues that: “Predicating employee recruitment on the federal character does not mean that such an employee cannot contribute meaningfully towards the enhancement of the goals of the organization.” This is particularly so where appropriate recruitment strategies involving the screening of potential employees based on relevant skills, experience and educational qualifications are adopted. What is important therefore is the ability of the individuals employed and his/her willingness to work for the organization. In addition, through the schedul-

ing of proper staff training and development by organizations of their workforce, organizational productivity is enhanced even where incompetent employees would have been employed through inappropriate recruitment strategies.

In the same vein, Olaopa (2012) commends the federal character principle as one of the “effective nation-building strategies invented for managing the combustive diversity in Nigeria.” He however argues that “this principle has badly eroded professional and competency capacity of the public service.” In this regard, it is clear that the application of the Federal Character principle has failed to offer credible solutions to administrative ineffectiveness in the Nigerian public service and has actually become a drag on sustainable development. The implication of the foregoing is that unethical behaviour among public officials and low productivity in the Nigerian public service can be explained by the appointment of incompetent personnel. These people employed through the application of the federal character principle that makes it possible for people from the different segments of the Nigerian society to be represented in government without due consideration for merit and quality training to enhance productivity. From the contributions of the above scholar, issues of competence, commitment, corruption and conflict of interest as well as career certainty, etc are shortcomings in the application of the Federal Character Principle in the Nigeria public service which in turn affect the service delivery function of public servants.

Concept of Service Delivery

Service delivery simply put is getting public goods and services as expected and as quick as possible by (recipients) citizens. According to Akhakpe (2014), service delivery is the degree and hallmark of excellence in the public service. To Franz (2011), it involves considerable human activities. Hence human resource management is important as human element is often the key ingredient of service industries. Public ser-

vice delivery is one of the major challenges facing developing countries Nigeria inclusive. This should be a top priority of the government if the country is to make substantial progress in socio-economic development. In Nigeria, a number of problems confront and complicate public service delivery. For example, poor or faulty recruitment policy leads to poor selection of human capital coupled with corruption and decayed infrastructure. The quality and availability of essential services is a major indicator of good governance because public service delivery underpins the social contract between the state and its citizens which in turn portrays a healthy society. With a healthy society, invariably, there tends to be an increase in workers' productivity.

Concept of Civil Service

The term civil service is not easily defined. To avoid any ambiguity or misinterpretation, Section 318 of the Nigerian 1999 Constitution as amended, defines the civil service of the Federation as: *Service of the federation in civil capacity as staff of the office of the President, the Vice President, Ministry or Department of the Government of the Federation assigned with the responsibility for any business of the Government of the Federation (FRN, 1999)*. The civil service which lies at the centre of Public Administration structure is the major instrument through which the Nigerian government, be it colonial, military or civilian administration manage development (Olu-Adeyemi, 2009).

Civil servants according to Anazodo, Okoye and Chukwuemeka (2012) as well as Kolawole (2008) are by law and professional orientation required to be apolitical and be loyal to the government of the day. The apolitical character he said; gave civil servants an advantage of service till retirement age without the fear of vagaries and incessant turn-over in government. The only constraint in this respect is individual's decision to resign or retire or be disengaged by disciplinary measures imposed by misconduct or other perceived act of omission or commission. It is a sys-

tem of service, with recruitment on merit. Security of tenure and due recognition of service and merit are also established through timely promotion. This gave the state a class of non-political permanent corps of loyal and industrious officials who form the backbone of Public Administration (Basu, 2004). In the light of the above contributions by scholars, the civil service is the nerve centre on which policy implementation hinges, apart from its strategic advisory role in policy formulation. It is the civil service that provides the substantial goods and services needed as catalyst for development by both public and private sectors of the economy.

Theoretical Framework

There are several theoretical windows through which a subject matter could be examined, especially in social and management sciences where perspectives often differ based on scholar's orientation and worldview. It is in the light of the foregoing that we undertake this endeavour. When issues of recruitment policy and service delivery in the public service are raised in contemporary times, Weber's (1947) bureaucratic theory which is one of several comes out forcefully. Max Weber, an influential German sociologist and the greatest apostle of bureaucracy, viewed bureaucracy as a special form of administration that is fully developed in what he terms "the modern state" in "the most advanced institutions of capitalism" (Morrison, 2006). These forms of institutions have gradually been displacing traditional administrative systems. Morrison (2006) claimed that by observing the roles of officials within the legal-rational authority structures, one could identify the distinctive characteristics of bureaucracy, which is: a clear hierarchy of officials, clearly defined responsibilities and spheres of authority and officials appointed on the basis of merit (in terms of their competency and qualifications) to carry out their functions.

For Weber (1947) the ideal bureaucratic organization was essentially the well-designed machine within which all the component parts work efficiently and without distraction towards clearly defined goals. Accord-

ingly, Max Weber showed the way forward on how to achieve organizational effectiveness through the theory of ideal bureaucracy; and it is doubtful if any modern human organization, whether in public and private sector can function adequately without adhering to the principle of rationality in employee procurement and rewards as postulated by Max Weber (Anyebe, 2004).

The features of the Weberian (legal-rational) model are: hierarchy which implies structure; promotion based on professional merit; skills as guide for recruitment; the development of career service; reliance on and use of rules and regulations that are scientific; impersonality of relationships among career professionals and their clientele in the bureaucracy, specialization along functional lines; authority and responsibility; and proper documentation or record-keeping in a formal organization or nation (Anyebe, 2004; Henry, 2007).

Arising from the above, the questions that come to mind are: how has the public service adapted to Weber's bureaucratic model of rational legal authority for administrative effectiveness in Nigeria? As a federal state, how has the principle of federal character used in the appointment and promotion of employees helped to bring into the public service the required competent workforce for enhanced performance? What are the merits and demerits of the introduction and the current implementation of the federal character principle in the Nigerian public service especially relates to as it sustainable development? These questions underline the attempt at interrogating the utility and viability of the application of the federal character principle in the nation's quest for achieving administrative effectiveness for sustainable development.

The bureaucratic theory is relevant and applicable to the study. Thus, the integration of bureaucratic theory in the study enables us to have the bases for accessing the Nigerian federal civil service as regards recruitment policy of the federal character and quota system and its implication on workers' service delivery and productivity. The theory also enables us direct our search-light to investigate possible causes of poor ser-

vice delivery and low productivity in the Nigerian public sector. The theory is relevant and applicable to the study based on the fact that the input (quality of applicants) determines the output (productivity and service delivery). However, all theories are born refuted and the bureaucratic theory is not an exception. The psychological consequences of the theory ignored individual goals and aspirations. It rather treated their goals as derivational that tend to subvert organization rational needs and ends. Yet, tension between the authorities of position and skills is unexamined.

Conclusion

With the Weberian prescriptions of the ideal bureaucratic theory underlying the foundation for this study, it is posited that for governments to operate the most efficient and effective administrative organization that would be beneficial to all, her recruitment policy into the federal civil service should be unfettered. It should also be capable of absorbing the best qualified, technically competent, disciplined and committed personnel that would in turn help government to achieve the goals of governance and administration. It was concluded from the findings of this study that Nigerian civil service is faced with poor recruitment policy which have affected service delivery. In view of the literature review and findings of this study, it is clear that the ball now lies solely on the federal government to make amendments to the federal character principle as regards recruitment of workers.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion drawn from the findings of this research, and in order to achieve greater public goods and service delivery in the Nigerian federal civil service, the following is recommended:

1. The Nigerian Civil Service should imbibe the prescripts of Marx Weber's bureaucratic theory as regards recruitment and global best practices that place preference on recruitment based on merit, technical competency and qualification.

2. To achieve better employee work attitude in the Nigerian federal civil service, it is imperative to re-examine the reliability and validity of the application of the federal character principle.
3. Application of the federal character principle in recruitment should be contextualized within grade levels (03 -06) while recruitment into senior officers cadre and appointments should be strictly based on merit.

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