

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND SECURITY STATISTICS

1. Introduction

If Nigeria is to make any progress in the understanding of public administration, we must first define some terms since what is today called 'Public Administration' is an amorphous area of activity in which almost everybody speaks a language peculiar to him and yet claims to be referring to the subject.

The term 'administration' covers almost every sphere of human activity. It can be taken to mean anything, ranging from the direction of the affairs of an enterprise to the simple act of paying monthly pensions. In other words, administration is concerned primarily with the identification of goals and objectives, with policy formulation and the role of political leadership. As far as the organisation's members are concerned, the reins of the organisation's 'Government' are in the hands of the administration department. The task of co-ordinating the activities of the line staff lie with this department. It oversees the payment of salaries, approves or disapproves applications for annual leave and for residential quarters, and interprets financial and other regulations. Letters conveying good news on appointments and promotions come from, and are most likely to be signed by, officers in the administration department. When an employee transgresses the rules of the organisation, the bad news is conveyed by this department in the form of a 'query', a stern disciplinary action, or an outright dismissal. The facts and figures used in supporting previous decisions are stored in files classified as 'open' or 'secret' by the administration department and looked after by officers serving in this department. Administration can therefore, be seen as the operational arm of Government. It is Government in Action. It is the executive, the operative, the most visible side of Government.

As a concept and as a process, administration exists in Government, in business, in churches, mosques, in families and in other group interactions. Thus we talk of public administration. Management cannot be separated from administration. In view of the increasing concern for efficiency and productivity in the allocation of scarce resources, the public sector is now required more than ever before to exhibit managerial traits; that is, to be innovative, entrepreneurial and result- and achievement-oriented. In other words, administration in today's public sector also means management, especially at the top

levels where strategic, catalytic decisions are to be taken. By and large, public administration in common usage refers to the activities of the executive branches of national, State and Local Governments, independent boards and commissions set up by congress and state legislatures, Government corporations and certain agencies of a specialized character.

The period of forty-five years in the life of the Public Administration system in independent Nigeria, is generally considered a sufficient span of time to take stock of its growth and development. With the attainment of national independence in 1960 the obvious concern was how best to adapt the inherited colonial administrative machinery to suit the peculiar needs of the new Nation-State. Then, in 1966, this exercise was complicated by the advent of the military on the political scene. At the exit of the military in September 1979, the country embarked upon a new constitutional experiment, the Presidential system of Government, which is significantly different from the Parliamentary system that was adopted at independence and maintained, with minor modifications, throughout the period of military rule. A brief review of the course and progress of Nigerian Public Administration against the background of these momentous events is pertinent.

Nigeria's Independence and Republican Constitutions set out relatively straightforward structures for public administration and methods for staffing it. The political executives of Prime Minister, Council of Ministers and Ministers were complemented by a structure comprising departments of Government under the supervision of Permanent Secretaries. The offices in these departments were manned by officials of the public service for whose appointments, promotions, transfers and disciplinary control a Public Service Commission was the executive authority, save for the office of Permanent Secretary where appointment was on the advice of the Prime Minister acting after consulting the Public Service Commission. Specific provisions gave expression to the doctrines of the sovereignty of Parliament within the limits of the Constitution, the rule of law, ministerial responsibility and a non-political impartial public service. Both in the preparation and execution of policy and in the conduct of routine administration, officials were working subject to the general direction and control of Ministers. Within the executive and Governmental administration, the primary lines of authority and responsibility ran from the Minister through the permanent secretary and hierarchical structure of a department. This was supplemented, however, by a line of communication which ran from departments through Permanent Secretaries to the Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Furthermore, the Constitution prescribed, with a significant degree of clarity, a framework within which the Governmental administration could operate. Much attention was given during the period of Constitution-making to developing the structure of jobs and staffing in a way that brought these into accord with the constitutional framework. Relations with Local Governments were also clarified with latter established as agencies with powers devolved from Regional Governments.

The Presidential Constitution incorporates changes of far-reaching importance. The Constitution prescribes that there shall be a President and Vice-President, certain commissions and councils and ministers. The constitution assumes that there will be an office (in the sense of department) of the President and Vice-President and that there will be ministries and departments of Government, and within these that there will be Permanent Secretaries or otherwise designated chief executives. It also assumes there will be other specialised bodies (educational institutions, State companies, Police) and it envisages that other commissions, authorities and statutory corporations may be established by Act. The Constitution also uses two general categories, those of parastatals and agencies, to include some of the more specific categories of administrative bodies. A series of different terms are used for describing the structure: office, ministry, department of Government, commission, authority, statutory corporation, agency, parastatal.

As regards the distribution of authority, executive power is vested in the President and can be exercised directly or using a line of authority running through the Vice-President or Ministers or through officers of the public service. Commissions established under the Constitution have an independent executive authority, and it is presumed that authorities and other institutions staffed by officers of the public service will be established by Act, and they will be responsible in law to the courts for the execution of those Acts. It is prescribed that the President, besides nominating Ministers, appoints Permanent Secretaries or other chief executives in any ministry or department. The Civil Service Commission (directly or by delegation) appoints, dismisses and exercises disciplinary control over the civil service which is defined as staffing in a civil capacity the offices of President, Vice-President, ministry or department of Government assigned with the responsibility for any business of the Government of the Federation. The commissions or authorities established by the Constitution or by Act are staffed by members of the public service (but implicitly not by members of the civil service).

2. Coverage, Scope, Uses and Users of Public Administration and Security Statistics

The public administration is made up of the civil servants, the administration of the parastatals and its agencies and the entire organ that constitute the bureaucracy with powers to formulate policies, enact laws, interpret and implement them as deemed necessary in the interest of the people. It is to be noted that higher institutions and other agencies that enjoy Federal and State Government grants fall come under this umbrella.

Public administration is an amalgam of civil service-white collar [non- professional], the professional, the unionised and the political appointees. The first three bodies have tenure of service while the political appointees' tenure of service is always at the pleasure of the Government that appoints them. Political appointees are mostly policy makers found only at Federal and State levels but rarely at Local Government levels. Due to the distinctive roles played by the different cadres, their levels of remuneration vary. The civil service with long tenure of service has three distinctive cadres. The bottom cadre is GL 01-06 with steps within each grade. These are mostly college and secondary school graduates. The middle level manpower are those on GL 07-13. These are those who are either products of the tertiary institutions or those who go through the mill by passing the prescribed examinations and interviews. Engineers, lawyers, economists and medical graduates are often taken on within these grade levels their points of entry depending on the degree they hold. The upper cadre regarded as the Management class are those on GL 14-17. On very few occasions are officers recruited to this level without having acquired necessary exposure or training. The directors-general are the super grade who have their salaries determined by the Presidency. This position had wavered between political and non- political. Above this level, are political appointees whose levels of pay are functions of what their counterparts in any similar organisations get. Most parastatals whose functions are technical and which require greater expertise have boards to decide their salary structure.

Security, as part and parcel of the administration, is made up of the army, the navy and the air force, usually referred to as the armed forces. Recruitment, training, promotion and remuneration are the responsibilities of the armed forces council. The police, like the armed forces, has the Police Affairs Commission to oversee its day-to-day operations and well-being. Each of the three bodies has police wings with responsibility to enforce discipline within the rank and file.

The salary structure of the armed forces was not different from that of the civil service with steps within each grade level but with recent technological changes in their modes of operation, different salary structure was fashioned out for the four to reflect the risks involved. As in the civil service, three distinctive cadres are noticed, ranging from junior to intermediate and general cadres. The police force has equally restructured its line of command, its salary structure as well as its operational strategy.

The users of administrative and security data are the Federal and State Ministries, National Planning Commission, researchers, international agencies, among others.

These data are used for planning. In almost every country the public service, the armed forces and the police form a substantial number of workers and its growth connotes the development of the economy, of the rule of law and order and of course of its social well being, its ability to defend the territorial integrity of the nation and to assist in keeping world peace outside its borders.

3. Sources and Methods of Compiling Public Administration and Security Statistics

The central source of Public Administration statistics in Nigeria is the Office of Establishment and Service Matters, while different agencies such as the PHCN, Nigerian Ports Authority, NRC and the NUC are other sources of data usually made available to their line ministries or commissions.

Data from most parastatals are compiled by the Department of Planning Research and Statistics and these are sent to the line ministry for onward transmission to the Office of Establishments and sometimes to Budget Office of the Federal Ministry of Finance. Copies of these are sometimes sent to the NBS, the only body with statutory responsibility to collect, analyse and disseminate data. The Office of Establishments and the Department of Planning, Research & Statistics in each ministry and parastatal made administrative data easy to collect. Most of these ministries and parastatals have computerised their systems and can make available information on diskettes.

The armed forces, the police and the other para-military organs have their data compiled by the different bodies such as armed forces council under the Ministry of Defence, the Police Service Commission, Ministry of Police Affairs, the customs and immigration services under the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs. These are often not made available for public consumption for security reasons. However,

information in respect of their staff strength is compiled by the relevant Departments of Planning, Research & Statistics.

Surveys and Censuses

Surveys are conducted occasionally only to confirm the authenticity of staff strength, to set in motion recruitment and redeployment procedures when necessary, in addition to identifying ghost workers, particularly when data are not updated to reflect the prevailing status.

The design of questionnaires in most cases include, among others, name, sex, age grade level, title, location (ministry, State or Local Government Area and time of entry. These are compiled manually and sent to the Department of Planning, Research & Statistics [DPRS] for entry into the computer. The frequency of compilation of these data is annual.

4. Current Methods of Data Storage and Dissemination

At the primary level, these data are compiled manually before they are sent to the DPRS of the line ministry which in turn sends them to the Office of Establishments for necessary action. Copies of these diskettes are sometimes transferred to the NBS for retrieval prior to producing them on hard copies for public consumption.

5. NBS Coding System for Public Administration and Security Statistics

The Division Code

Attempts have been made to follow the coding system used in the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC), revision 3 released in 1988. Thus, the division code or the first two digits of the code are assigned a six-code variable which identifies the division to which the dataset belongs is taken from the ISIC. The ISIC division code is allocated on the basis of exact correspondence in respect of most sectors, except in some sectors where proximity to the nearest closely-related ISIC code and existence of unused codes is the basis for the allocation of codes.

Going by this system, the NBS division code for Public Administration and Security dataset does not coincide with the UN's ISIC code. This division is given the code 94 since the exact ISIC code of 75 has been allocated to Public Finance.

The Items and Details Codes

While efforts have been made to ensure that the division code or the first two digits of the code assigned to each variable conform as much as possible with the ISIC, the items and details codes which form the last four digits of the code assigned to each variable are arbitrarily

determined. The Division-Item -Detail [DID] coding system is the basis for coding NBS's datasets. The item under each dataset is the elementary entity or group of elementary entities [multiple-item cases] about which statistical data are gathered. For example, in the Public Administration and Security division, "Employment in Federal Civil Service" coded 9401 is an item with 117 details. Generally, the National Bureau of Statistics [NBS] is using a six-digit-code for attributes [variables]. The first two digits are used to identify a particular division, while the first four are used for a particular item under the division.

In coding the details, six digits are used to identify a particular attribute [variable] as follows: the first two digits for the division, the next two for the item under that division and the last two [the 5th and the 6th digits] for the detail [variable of interest] under the division and the item. However, some detail codes under Public Administration and Security use seven digits instead of six in view of the strength of the public service. In this respect, the first two digits are for the division, the next two for the item and the last three for the details. In all, there are 8 items with 869 details in Public Administration and Security Statistics.

The following is the data base coding system for Public Administration and Security dataset.

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- 9401 Employment in Federal Civil Service, Number [as at 31st December]
- 9402 Discharges from Federal Civil Service, Number [as at 31st Dec.]
- 9403 Distribution of Staff by Ministry & Sex [Number as at 31st Dec.]
- 9404 Distribution of Staff by Parastatals/Depts. and Sex, Number [as at 31st December]
- 9405 Distribution of Staff [Federal Civil Servants] by Salary Grade Level and Sex
- 9406 Vacancies in Federal Civil Service by Cadre and Ministry
- 9407 Vacancies in Federal Civil Service by Cadre and Parastatal/Dept
- 9408 Employment in Selected Government Agencies By Gender, Cadre [Number as at 31st December]

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The intrinsic contribution of timely and reliable public administration and security data of any nation can only be adequately

measured by the rate of its economic and welfare impact on its citizenry as well as the degree of relative security which reigns within and outside its borders. Thus, information on security strength, particularly the armed forces, needs not be regarded as secret in a world where technology and scientific breakthroughs have rendered numerical strength a non-issue.

The quarterly bulletins of the Federal Establishment does not include most Government Parastatals like NNPC, CBN, PHCN, NPA, NITEL, NIPOST, Reinsurance and many others which depend partly or wholly on Federal Government subventions/grants to survive. It is, however, necessary to include these agencies until when they are privatised.

There is also need for information about the State personnel to be part of the quarterly returns to give adequate coverage of the Federation. It is with this that the Government can plan for the unemployed and take cognisance of the available human resources under-utilised in the States/Local Government Areas and within its own structure. The quarterly review will require some further analysis: E.g.s. Retirement may need a breakdown of voluntary, mandatory/compulsory, while withdrawal may include transfer to the State/Local Government or any other service such as international organisation, etc. There is also need to include super grade officers (such as the D-Gs) since they fall within the career civil service with tenure of service. Political appointees should also be included because their tenure is at the pleasure of the Government.

In general, there is a need to change the nomenclature from civil service to public service as long as parastatals are included. Data on armed forces and other similar agents of the Government like the police, customs and immigration services should be included. The term 'personnel officers' in its publication should be given the title 'administrative officers'.

The system of data collection, collation and analysis of public administration would require a detailed study that will not only take cognisance of the data flow within the Federal system but also that of the States/Local Governments. The role of the NBS in this regard will entail analysis of who does what, how and when, for the data to be of use to planners, researchers and other interested primary and secondary users.