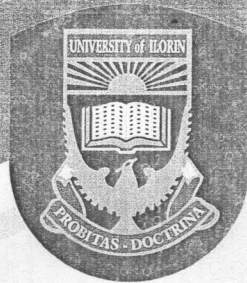


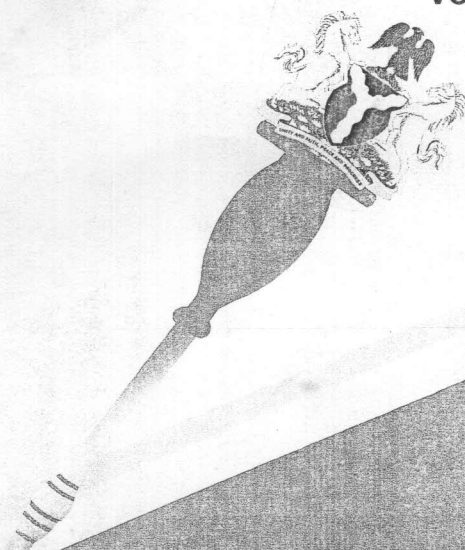
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Editorial Comment

Political Science Review (PSR) is a peer reviewed journal published by the Department of Political Science, University of Ilorin. The journal publishes insightful articles about political processes in Nigeria, Africa and the entire globe. Through the articles that appear in this Journal, we are able to expand the frontiers of knowledge and foster intellectual interaction among academics as well as policy makers. This edition includes a range of articles focusing on governance related issues, and it ends with advice for the government of the day on how to systematically tackle Nigeria's multifarious challenges. It is, therefore, an interesting intellectual package.

Abdulrasheed Alada MUHAMMAD, Ph.D.

Editor

Notes on Contributors

Johnson Oladele Olaniyi, Ph.D. teaches in the Department of Political Science, University of Ilorin.

Samuel Olanrewaju Oyedele, Ph.D. is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Public Administration, University of Ilorin.

Taiye Adewale Awotunde lectures in the Department of Political Science, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Bolaji, Ibrahim Akanbi is with Kwara State College of Education, Oro, Nigeria.

Adio, Saliu Wahab, Ph.D. teaches at the Kwara State College of Education, Oro, Nigeria.

Khadijat Olubukola Soliu (Mrs.) teaches in the Department of Mass Communication, College of Arabic and Islamic Legal Studies (CAILS), Ilorin.

Samuel Oyewole lectures in the Department of Political Science, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Rasak Bamidele, Ph.D. is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology, College of Business and Social Sciences, Landmark University, Omu-Aran, Kwara State.

Rasheed Obasekore Garuba teaches in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, College of Management and Social Sciences, Fountain University Osogbo, Osun State.

Oye Adeniyi Joseph is with the Department of Sociology, College of Business and Social Sciences, Landmark University, Omu-Aran, Kwara State.

Raji Adesina Abdulfattah Ph.D. lectures in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, College of Management and Social Sciences, Fountain University Osogbo, Osun State.

Modupe Bosede Ake Ph.D. teaches in the Department of Political Science, College of Business and Social Sciences, Landmark University, Omu-Aran, Kwara State.

Hassan A. Saliu, Ph.D. is a Professor of International Relations in the Department of Political Science, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NIGERIAN AND INDIAN ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS

¹Johnson Oladele Olaniyi, Ph.D.

²Samuel Olanrewaju Oyedele, Ph.D.

³Taiye Adewale Awotunde

^{1 and 3} Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences,
University of Ilorin, Nigeria

² Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences,
University of Ilorin, Nigeria

Abstract

The role of an administrative system in the overall development of a country cannot be overemphasized. Apart from implementing policies and laws for the collective functioning of society, bureaucracy assists in policy formulation, sometimes through technical advice. The objective of this paper is to discuss the features of the administrative systems of developing countries of the world from a comparative perspective of Nigeria and India. System theory served as the theoretical framework of the paper. The research methodology adopted was qualitative, entailing the use of secondary data like textbooks, journals, articles and magazines. The findings of the paper are that, the Weberian model influenced significantly the administrative systems of developing countries, and also that there exist remarkable similarities and differences between the Nigerian and Indian administrative systems. Also, a lot of policies, like the quota and federal character systems had influenced administrative system in developing countries. The paper recommends that developing countries should rebuild their bureaucracies (Civil Service) so that they will be able to contribute to national development.

Keywords: Nigeria, India, Administration, System, Federalism.

Introduction

Administrative systems of both developed and developing countries of the world are often regarded as engines of development. This is because of the role they are expected to play in policy formulation and implementation. This makes the Civil Service an indispensable part of the executive arm of any government.

A sizeable number of developing countries inherit their administrative systems from colonialists. Nigeria serves as a good example. Ilallah (2016) noted that the Nigerian Civil Service is an indispensable

component of the federal arrangement. He further submitted that, "as a *sine qua non* for modern independent state, it must be efficient for the provision of continued technological and social development for the enhancement of the government in the society" Ilallah (2016:1). The Nigerian Civil Service has been subjected to three political influences; colonial, civilian, and military (Otobo, 2005). Initially, the role of the Civil Service in developing countries was been largely regulatory, that is dealing with the maintenance of law and order. This situation changed over time as the countries' bureaucrats complemented the efforts of the political office holders in public policy making and implementation.

Most developing countries have the institutional mechanisms like the Civil Service that serve as the means of carrying on the functions of the state. That is to say, the administration of the state ensures the establishment of institutional processes and machinery through which the functions of the state or an enterprise is carried out from day to day (Adebayo 1984). The Civil Service thus ensure continuity of the state even in times of crisis. As a means of overhauling the service, countries often embark on one form of reform or the other. However, while most developed countries benefit from such reforms, it has been discovered that some countries do not benefit from the reforms. This may be due to lack of proper implementation. The objective of this study is a critical overview of administrative systems in developing countries from a comparative perspective with particular focus on Nigeria and India. The research methodology for the paper is qualitative. That means the research is descriptive. According to Daramola and Daramola (2011), descriptive research is concerned with describing the present. It involves describing, recording, analyzing and interpreting conditions that exist.

Conceptual Clarification

The two concepts that have to be clarified are developing nations and the Civil Service. Developing countries or nations are those that Western scholars often refer to as Third World or under developed nations, or even poor nations. The World Bank used the term developing countries, dividing them into low income and middle income countries (Jhingan 2005)

As Jhingan (2005) opined further, the features of developing or under developed countries are general poverty, technological backwardness, foreign trade orientation and exporting primary products and importing

consumer goods and machinery. Furthermore, agriculture is the main occupation, and unemployment and underemployment are in existence. Suffice to say that most developing or third world countries are former colonies. This no doubt position developing countries to be exporters of primary products and importers of consumer goods. Third world countries that are not former colonies are Thailand, Ethiopia, Liberia, Iran and Afghanistan, Smith (2003).

The term bureaucracy or civil service in the social sciences is usually understood as a mode of organization. Modern political analysis defines it as the administrative machinery of the state; Bureaucrats, being non-elected state officials or civil servants may or may not be subject to political control. (Eneanya 2010)

Alonge (2006:227) aptly describes the Civil Service as "the administrative aspect of the executive organ of government. It is primarily responsible for the initiation, formulation, execution and implementation of government policies". The civil service is thus an important part of the executive arm of government.

Theoretical Framework

The theory that would serve as basis of analysis in this paper is the system theory. The systems approach denotes any set of inter-related elements (Mahajh 2011). This approach posits that every aspect of a system is important to the extent that anything that happens to one part affects the other parts. The approach was borrowed from Biology through the writings of Ludwig Von Bertallanty (Olaniyi 2001; Agarwal 2014)

In David Easton application of the general system theory to the study of political system, he opined that, "Political systems may be identified as those institutions through which values are authoritatively allocated for society" (Agarwal 2014:414). Political system covers the legislature, executive and judiciary, and institutions like the civil service.

A political system has the following characteristics among others. In the first place, it allows the existing legal authority the use of legal force. It also allows interaction between it and other systems (Agarwal 2014). A political system performs input, and output functions like any other system.

The system theory has been criticized on the ground that it is too abstract and that it tries to force all phenomena into the framework of a system (Olaniyi 2001). That is, it is not simple to understand and it believes

every situation can be analyzed by seeing it as a system. Its relevance to administrative systems lie in the fact that administrative systems (i.e. bureaucracies) have inter-related parts just like a political system. An administrative system also accept inputs which it processes into outputs. It also functions within a milieu which influences policies formulated, coming as inputs that are processed as policy outcomes (outputs).

A Comparison of Nigerian and Indian Administrative Systems

In comparing the Nigerian and Indian administrative systems, it would be seen that as developing countries, there exist similarities and differences between the two. It is also important to note that the Weberian model influence significantly the features of administrative systems in both countries.

In considering the similarities, there is the need to realize that historically, Nigeria and India are former colonies of the British. India gained her independence on August 15, 1947 (<https://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/india/ics.htm>), while Nigeria secured her independence on 1st October 1960 (Akintoye 1980).

The Indian Administrative System as it exists today emerged from two different sets of influences which are, the British colonial administrative tradition and the ideals of a democratic welfare state, which was constitutionally adopted in India after independence (Basu 2006). The civil service is the most well developed institution among Britain's colonial legacies to India (Basu 2006). The Civil Service in Nigeria just like that of Ghana, Sierra-Leone and the Gambia is a carbon copy of the British model as it set up set up the civil service in each of these countries during the colonial era (Alonge 2005).

In terms of structure of the administrative systems, the Indian civil service is hierarchically organized just like Nigeria's. A typical ministry in India "is an organizational set up under the charge of a minister and consisting of one or more departments of the government, while a department is an organizational unit within the country" (Basu 2006:402). The pyramidal shape of the structure of Nigeria's Civil Service which depicts its powers and functions is also noticeable in India's Civil Service. "In both India and Nigeria, the minister lays down the broad policy of the department and decides all major policy issues arising in the department" (Eneanya

2010:168). The minister makes policies with the help of permanent civil servants who provide essential materials for policy formulation. (Eneanya 2010).

As part of its features, the India civil service provides for the merit principle. "The recruitment to all India services is by competitive examinations organized by the Union Public Service Commission in India" (Basu 2006:404). The principle or feature of meritocracy is also an important aspect of the Nigerian civil service. "This entails the appointment of the best person for any given job made through recruitment or promotion based on explicit merit and rules that can be properly understood and can be challenged if a breach is suspected" (NOUN Course Guide 2009:191). And as noted further, is a way of improving bureaucratic capability. The merit system is thus being used to secure entrance into the service and also in the promotion of civil servants.

Both India and Nigeria provide for the principle of political neutrality. Civil servants are expected to be politically neutral or impartial while dealing with political office holders. They are to carry out their duties without bias or favoritism towards a political party (Alonge 2005). This is in line with the tradition of the British Civil Service.

In addition, the 1999 constitution stipulates that the responsibility for the recruitment of employees at the federal level rests with the federal civil service commission. It is this commission that also handles all matters of promotion, transfer, and discipline of civil servants at the federal level.

The principle of anonymity is also an important feature of both Indian and Nigerian Civil Services. This principle implies that civil servants cannot disclose their identity but work under the control and supervision of the political head (Alonge 2005).

A structural characteristic of the Indian System of public administration is the rapid increase in its size and its increasing structural diversification by the recruitment of more specialists and technocrats in the public service (Basu 2006). The increase in the number of central government employees can be seen in the sense that by 1980 the number of workers rose to 3.6 million as against 1.4million in 1948 (Basu 2006). In Nigeria, the size of the federal civil service has grown considerably over the years. The number of civil servants in 1990 grew above 273,392 (Otobo 2005). With the numerous Ministries, Departments and Agencies currently in existence in Nigeria, the number has far exceeded what is given above. This

situation is common among developing countries of the world. This is based on the premise that government is the main employer of labour in these countries.

Just like any other administrative system, the Indian system seeks to enhance its manpower development. The training of new recruits to all-India and central services is carried out by the Central Secretariat Training School (Bhagwan & Bhushar 2011). In Nigeria, the Public Service Review Institute, Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), and Federal Training Centres are mandated by the federal government to provide manpower training for management, middle level, and low-level officers respectively.

In both India and Nigeria, there is an inbuilt system of laws by which the conduct of civil servants are regulated. For instance, there is the public service rules and the handbook on financial regulations in Nigeria. These help regulate the conduct of federal civil servants in Nigeria. Senior officials within both the administrative and professional classes help to ensure adherence to the laid down rules and regulations by the junior ones.

The reforms of the Civil Service which was carried out at different times in order to have an efficient service is also another salient feature of the Civil Service in Nigeria. The Udoji Review Commission, the 1988 Civil Service Reforms, and the 1994 Review Panel on Civil Service Reform are examples of the reforms, Ootobo (2005).

In terms of differences, it would be seen that though India like Nigeria operates the federal system of government that has provided for a three-tier structure, the "local government in India operates a 3 tier system known as Panchayat Raj" (NOUN Course Guide on PAD 831). The essence of a three-tier local government system is to bring government closer to the rural dwellers and make their administrators accountable to them.

The constitution of India provides for the post of the President who is the head of the state as well as the executive head of the union administration (Basu 2006). The President's activities are carried out based on the advice of the Prime Minister and is at best the nominal Head of the Executive. In Nigeria on the other hand, the 1999 constitution vests the executive powers on the President. He functions as an executive president exercising the powers of the head of state and government.

In terms of structure, the Indian civil service differ in some ways. As Basu (2006:402) clarified, a typical ministry in India is a three-tier structure consisting of:

- I. A minister who is assisted by one or more ministers of state, deputy ministers or parliamentary secretaries.
- II. A secretariat headed by a secretary.
- III. The executive organization of a department, headed by a director-general or inspector-general.

Criticism of the Features of the Administrative Systems

In attempting a critique of the administrative systems of developing countries, it is noteworthy to mention that as a result of ethnic, historical, language and even cultural diversities among the people of some developing countries, they often introduce the principle of federal character or quota system. This is especially true of countries practicing the federal system of government.

The quest for the quota system in India, otherwise known as 'reservation system' dates back to the 19th century with the appointment of Hunter Commission in 1882 (<http://knowledgeofindia.com/quota-or-reservation-system-in-india/>). The demand for free and compulsory education as well as a proportionate representation in government jobs was made by a social reformer; Phule. His demand was met in 1901 when reservations were introduced in the state of Maharashtra (<http://knowledgeofindia.com/quota-or-reservation-system-in-india/>).

The reservation system generated a lot of debates and controversies in India. This is because Article 14, 15(1), 16(1), and 16(2) of the constitution guarantees equality to all. The same constitution on the other hand in 16(4) says "Nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the state, is not adequately represented in the services under the state" (<http://knowledgeofindia.com/quota-or-reservation-system-in-india/>).

As Basu (2006) posited, children from business backgrounds, lower income groups, and rural farming, etc., are grossly unrepresented in the Indian services. Though in recent years, the social base of the services had widened due to the following reasons.

1. There is the steady expansion of educational facilities and an increase in the number of scholarship needs persons.
2. Reservation quota for scheduled castes and tribes, and
3. Lowering of marks for the interview to these services

In spite of the above reasons, Indian bureaucracy remains as unrepresentative as ever, the higher civil services being drawn from only 10 percent of the community (Basu 2006). The implication of these statements is that if the reservation policy is pursued to the letter, it would end up promoting mediocrity in the India services.

In Nigeria, while the doctrine or principle of federal character was formulated and put into use by the government to address and hopefully mitigate the problem of acrimonious existence among the diverse groups and interests in the federation of Nigeria, its application has brought with it some problems. Its undue application in the civil and public services of the federation has compromised and endangered standard and professionalism (Agbodike 2004).

The quota system had lowered standard in education and enthroned mediocrity. The federal character principle had become a source of disaffection and disunity among the people (Agbodike 2004). The inadequacies experienced in the process of applying the Weberian bureaucratic model in developing countries led to the emergence of Prismatic Sala model (Eneanya 2010).

Fred Riggs in his writing on prismatic society observed that in developing countries like Nigeria and India where the people are heterogeneous, the "bureaucrats enjoy enormous influence, power and prestige, and make money" (quoted in Sapru 2011:258). He also asserted that "the problem becomes much more complicated in poly-communal society where different communities strive to pull the society in different directions in promoting their own sectional interest" (quoted in Sapru 2011:258). Riggs thus realized that corruption and nepotism are some of the problems affecting the efficient functioning of the bureaucracies in developing countries. This in essence means most of the developing nation's administrative systems lack accountability. Accountability in the civil service can be perceived as "involvement in faithful discharge of one's duty so that one is not found wanting" (NOUN Course Guide 2009:193). The lack of accountability is demonstrated by unethical behaviours of civil servants, especially various forms of corruption going on in most developing countries. Corruption in the civil services in Nigeria, India and Cote d'Ivoire are typical examples. The civil servants can catch on illiteracy, ignorance, and poverty of the people so as to exploit them. The citizenry of a country can be divided by the political elites and the technocrats in order to achieve their selfish aims.

In his writing, Riggs also opined that, formalism exists as part of characteristics of developing countries. Formalism according to him means that "the laws, principles and regulations laid down in the constitution of a prismatic society are not adhered to in practice" (Supra 2011:288). This means that civil servants in developing countries don't adhere to laid down rules and regulations in their conduct. There are regulations in both countries (Nigeria and India), such as general orders and financial regulations that helps to ensure financial probity, good conduct and transparency, yet cases of corruption, nepotism and favoritism abound. This leads to increase in "redtapism" and decay in administrative functioning (Eneanya 2010). The rules exist as formalities when they are not properly implemented.

There is also overlapping of functions in administrative systems of developing countries as Riggs observed. For example, a government established schools to improve the literacy level of the people. At the same time, churches, families, other religious groups, establish their own schools which they run (Eneanya 2010).

However, most developing countries like Cote d'Ivoire, India and Nigeria are confronted by large costs of over bloated and inefficient Civil Service (Yahaya 2005). This constituted a drain on the country's resources and further compounded by the low level of industrialization, due to corruption, dearth of infrastructures, and government insensitivity.

Lastly, all the civil service reforms undertaken in developing countries like Nigeria have not really impacted on development and efficiency in the service. This can be attributed to lack of political will to implement the reforms, systems of political patronage which often leads to vested interest, weak institutions, un-sustainability of the reform and lack of analytical framework (Repucci 2013).

Conclusion

From the foregoing it would be seen that administrative systems in developing countries of the world have general features based on the Weberian model. These features are better situated within the framework of analysis by discussing what obtains in some developing countries like Nigeria and India while also acknowledging differences existing among them. Suffice it to say that the administrative systems concerned have their shortcomings. Some of these shortcomings are over bloated bureaucracy.

corruption, and duplication of government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies.

Recommendations

In order for the developing countries to improve on their administrative systems, the following suggestions are hereby made.

In this era of globalization, developing countries should make sure that their bureaucracies adopt new management style by being flexible and also less hierarchical. This would allow for the use of initiative on the part of civil servants.

The issue of corruption and negative attitude to work should be dealt with by the government. This is in order to enhance the overall development of the country concerned.

There is need to rebuild the civil services so that they would be result-oriented and cope effectively with the challenges of the 21st century. In line with this recommendation, the New Public Management should be put in use in administrative systems of developing countries as this will help to enhance cost reduction through effective and efficient use of resources.

Lastly, countries that adopted the federal character and or quota system should use it with caution so as to reduce disaffection among the major ethnic groups. This is also in order to enhance merit. As could be seen for effective policy formulation and implementation by administrative units, merit should be given a prime place. This would no doubt enhance political and socio-economic development of the state.

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