
Economic Diversification in a Mono-Sector Economy: The Role of Public Administration

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Abstract

The focus of this paper is on diversification of Nigerian mono economy: the role of Public Administration. It investigates the issues and pitfalls that foisted on Nigeria the mono economy status. It harps that, the disarticulation and disorientation of the various past administration economic policies since Nigeria attained independence is grossly responsible for it. To diversify the economy, Public Administration provides the leeway. This is due to the fact that, policy and programmes that will diversify the mono economic miasma playing the nation will be carried out by officials in the central, states and local governments. Consequently the paper defines the concept of public administration. The paper is explicated with the aid of the political economy approach. It also discusses the nexus between Public Administration and the diversification of the Nigeria economy. Finally, the authors made some useful recommendations/policy prescriptions aimed at diversifying Nigeria mono-economy.

Introduction

The centrality of Public Administration as a pedestal for the diversification of Nigeria mono- economy has attracted discourse amongst academics, bureaucrats etc. The consequence is that various conferences, seminars have been organized to proffer solutions to this national malaise (Okosun, 2014).

A corollary on the above paragraph, is the rejuvenation of interest in Public Administration as the vehicle for moving Nigeria out of mono economy status. Nigeria found herself in the mono economy quagmire “because of the disarticulation, dependence of her economy. Disarticulation in turn reinforces dependence in a way that are readily apparent”. (Ake, 1983). In the 1970^s, Nigeria witnessed an unprecedented boom in the sale of crude oil, but the billions of dollars she made was wasted by the central government. The oil boom diverted the attention of Nigeria policy makers, political actors from other sector of the economy (Ake, 1983). Little was done by the central government to diversify the economy. This was further accentuated by the fact that Nigeria environment is characterised by poor governance (Adamolekun, 2002).

The above unsavoury situation of mono economy bedevilling the nation can be turned around through Public Administration. It holds the sway for the diversification of Nigerian economy. Through Public Administration, good leadership cum governance will emerge, policy and programmes targeted at diversifying the economy will be vigorously pursued, proper accountability and transparency will be entrenched in public and private sectors (Adamolekun 2002).

Given the above, the paper is divided into sections beginning with an introduction. The first section deal with the conceptual clarification. It also includes the theoretical framework. The paper is explicated with the aid of political economy approach. The second part discusses the factors that occasioned Nigeria mono economy status. The third part x-rays the nexus or interconnect between Public Administration and the diversification of Nigerian mono economy. This section end with conclusion.

Conceptual Clarification

The concept Public Administration has been defined by different scholars and academics. In other words, there is no one single definition of the concept. Various scholars define Public Administration from their perception of the concept.

According to George (1905), “Public Administration is the implementation of government policy and also an academic discipline that studies this implementation and prepare civil servants for working in the public service”.

An extrapolation of the above definition, will bring to limelight that Public Administration is mainly concerned with the day to day administration in central, states and local or country government. The essence being the implementation/execution, supervising and evaluation of government policy and programmes which are targeted at the increasing the standard of living of the citizenry of a country e.g. Nigeria. Secondly, Public Administration as a discipline, taught in tertiary institutions prepare the students in the art of implementation of policies as well as acquiring the relevant skills needed in the work place particularly the civil service (George 1905).

Jerome and Lawrence (1978) (2) *To translate policy statement (publicly determined into programs and projects, (3) To permit medium level manpower (discretion to translate action that (4) Ultimately enhances the lives of people. postulated that Public Administration can be “seen as the accomplishment of purpose through the organized effort of others, comprises of those activities required (1) To mobilize organisation and human resources (public and private*

A macroscopic view of the above definition will reveal that it is lucid, vivid and broader. When the definition is analyzed, the facts that emerges are that (Jerome and Lawrence 1975):

- a) Administration occurs through both public and organizational effort.
- b) Is the interaction of varying organizational norms and processes
- c) Essentially involves translating ideas into actions.
- d) Featuring middle level manpower exercising discretionary power
- e) Is based upon the presence of accountability
- f) Must be for the enhancement of the quality of life (Jerome and Lawrence 1975).

Adebayo (2000) contend that “Public Administration mean the practice of administration in a particular segment of society of public sector. Public Administration is therefore governmental administration and operates in a public sphere of government. It is the machinery for implementing government policy and programs”.

Flowing from the above definition, it can be seen that from Adebayo perspectives, Public Administration are the activities that takes place in the public sector or government. It

is the main hub for implementing actions or policy and programmes aimed at improving the quality of lives of the citizenry (Jerome and Lawrence 1975).

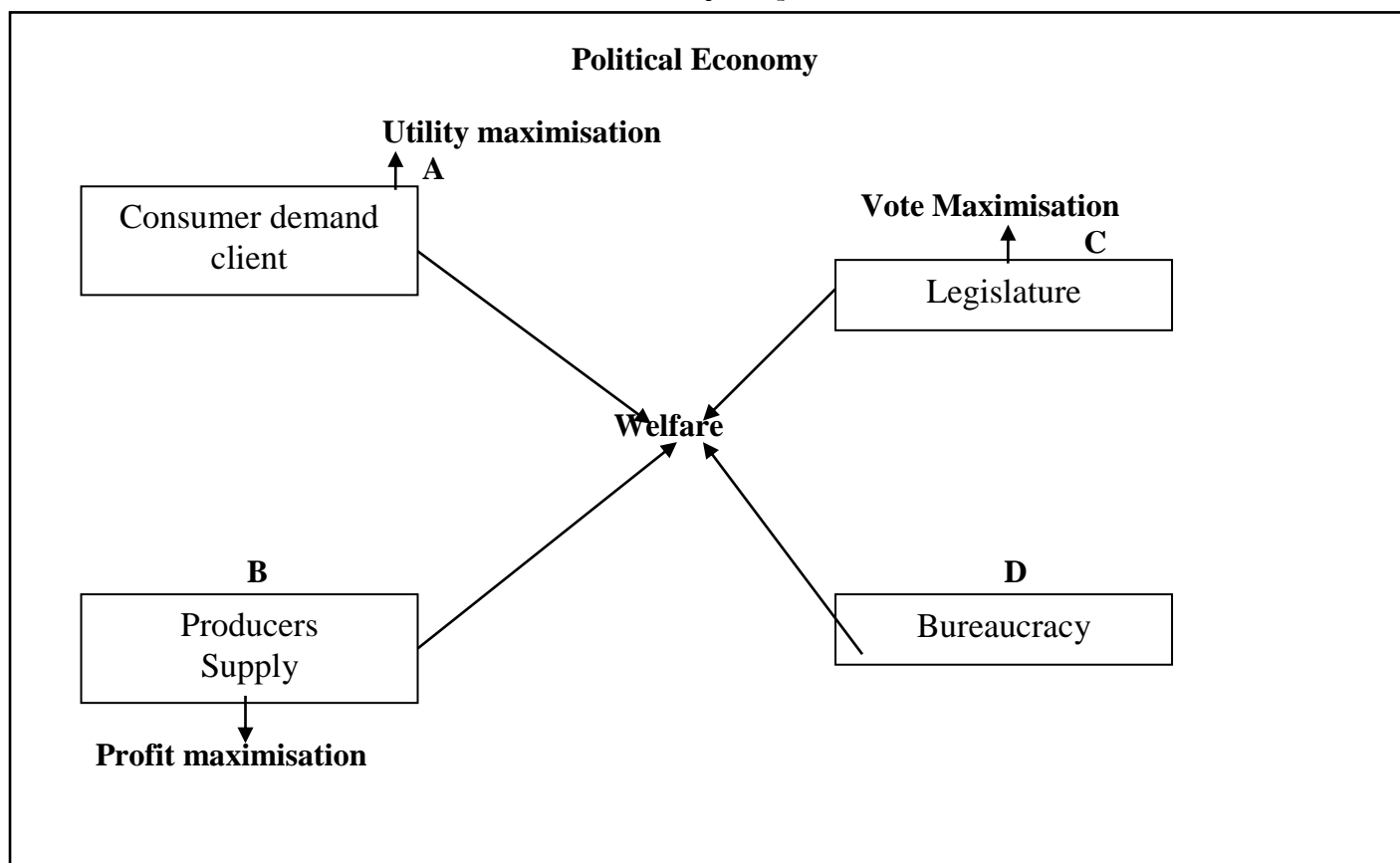
Theoretical Framework

In all ramifications, this paper will be explicated with the aid of political economy approach. Various scholars have written extensively on political economy approach to Public Administration, such scholars include Jerome and Lawrence (1975), Iyoha (1989), etc

According to Jerome and Lawrence (1975), political economy is a veritable tool of “looking at the impact of the environment of public organization”. He dichotomized political economy into two parts. These are political and economy. To him, political refers to the power that public organization exercise in obtaining citizens compliance with community objectives. It indicates how power is distributed and who has the right to exercise it, while economy refers to the rational management of public researches. Through the power of the state, administrators are charged with the responsibility of collecting taxes burrowing in order to educate the populace, construct road etc (Jerome and Lawrence 1975)

The hallmark of political economy theory is that, it seek to apply political and economic tools to decisions made by political actors, bureaucrats” who are clothed with offices (Wright 1982). This will synergize efficient management of Nigeria economy.

Jerome and Lawrence constructed schematic diagram of the political economy approach and its correlates see fig. 1 below.



Source: Jerome, B. M. & Lawrence, C. H. (1979) *Public Administration, Balancing Power and Accountability*, United States of America: Moore Publishing Inc.

From the above diagram, it can be explained that citizens of a country or nation craves for utility maximisation through various demands they make and the producers in reaction respond to the demands by supplying various goods and services they have produced (Jerome and Lawrence 1979). It must be stated that the objectives of the producers is profit maximisation. Where the market is functioning well, both the interests of the private and public welfare are greatly enhanced (Jerome and Lawrence, 1979).

Although, in a perfect market, the forces of demand and supply or price mechanism determines the prices of goods and services. The government do intervene to regulate the prices of goods and services. The purpose is for the consumer and the producer not to feel cheated (Jerome and Lawrence, 1979).

Applying the political economy approach to the economic diversification of the Nigeria mono-economy, Public Administration hold sway. This is because an underdeveloped nation, such as Nigeria or any other nation in sub-Saharan Africa is located in a particular geographical area or political entity with territorial boundaries. The interplay of both the centripetal and centrifugal forces in Nigeria converges to make their demands on the federal government.

These demands leads to authoritative allocation of values, which metamorphosed to the generation of policy of policy and programme by the bureaucrats, political actors etc to address the demands made by the citizenry (Ikelegbe, 2206). Moreover, what are the factors that brought Nigeria to the nadir of her reputation as a mono-economy nation? Are they political, social etc? If they are? It therefore means that the factors are political economy laddened. It is this factors that help us to understand the dynamics not only as it relates to rapid change, but to the slow economic growth retrogression of a nation (Lawrence and Howard 1979). The slow economic growth and retrogression in the latter sentence is

manifested in Nigeria, in all facets of her economy. Manifestation is glaring in the fact that despite the trillions of dollars Nigeria has earned from the sale of crude oil in the international market. The country economy is comatose. This is because the trillions of petro dollars she made was not invested in the diversification of the mono economy. When the money was invested, corruption, mismanagement, amongst public officials and their political collaborators looted the money to foreign banks (World Bank, 2014). A classical example was the federal government established Ajaokuta Steel Complex constructed by the Russians. The company would have ushered Nigeria into steel age through the production of various kinds of steel for both local and African market, but the company is in a state of decay (Obasanjo, 2002).

Moreover, the above named factor can be fingered for the limbo state of infrastructure in the nation, the near collapse of the manufacturing sector to the extent that strategic industries have relocated from Nigeria to Ghana (Man 2012), the soaring high rate of unemployment to the extent that Nigeria has been delisted as a developing nation, because her growth rate is less than 3.2% by World Bank (Wond Bank 2016).

Epitomising, it can be seen that, from the above context and discourse, the paper has been fully explicated from political economy strand.

Factors that Foisted Mono-Economy Status on Nigeria

Various factors can be adduced for foisted mono economy status on Nigeria. These factors are interwoven or intertwined. These factors include the following.

- a) Dependence
- b) Corruption
- c) Poor leadership/governance
- d) Low investment in agriculture
- e) Negative technological transfer
- f) Improper linkages between Tertiary Institution and Society

For the sake of brevity and proper understanding of the above listed factors, we shall pause to explain each of factors.

1) Dependence

One of the fundamental factors which can be adduced for the mono-economic status of Nigeria is dependent. According to Ake (1983), dependences was grossly responsible for the inability of Nigeria and other third world nations to diversify their economies. The reason can be found in the fact that the metropolitan nation such as Britain, America deployed all their economic arsenals to ensure that peripheral nations do not developed. Rigidity of the international division of labor has not allowed African economies such as Nigeria to break out of the role of primary producers for reasons.comparative advantage of the industrialised nations in manufacturing etc (Ake, 1983). It is this singular fact that is responsible for Nigeria backwardness and economic woods.

2) Corruption

A potent factor that is responsible for Nigeria's mono economic status is corruption. Corruption remains on albatross, a cog in the wheel of the nation developmental aspiration (Okosun and Amadasun 2013). Since Nigeria attained self determination from her erstwhile colonial master, government officials in the central, states and local government have participated actively to plundered the nation treasury. According to Oke, Nosa and Paul (2915), corruption which has become endemic in Nigeria is traceable largely to this moral and societal decadent to the extent that it has become official life style and officials have become corrupt. The money looted by government officials is siphoned to foreign banks in

Switzerland, United Arab Emirates etc. This money looted from the nation treasury through dubious means would have been channelled toward the diversification of the economy. However this is not to be. This is the crux of the matter. Put simply, corruption is an evil that breeds unemployment, battered economy and exploitation of its victims (Oku, Emeka and Onakalu, 2015).

3) Poor Leadership/Governance

A major impediment to Nigeria developmental stride, which has impeded the diversification of Nigeria mono economy is the question of poor leadership/governance. Poor leadership has remained and will continue to be a major obstacle to the nation quest for development. This is due to the fact that since independence in 1960. The leaders who held to the reign of power except few such as Chief Obafemi Awolowo, etc lacked the vision and candour to lead the nation to greater height. This tally with the contention of the World Bank (1983) that in the developing countries, with particular reference to sub Saharan African countries. The question of weak leadership and poor governance is rampant. This kind of ecology or environment does not support a dynamic economy (Adamolekun 2002). Most of the leaders are selfish, and corrupt. Some of the leaders that hijacked the political process through the barrel of the gun or coup de tat were not skilled in the art of governance.

In the democratic dispensation, 1999 till date, this syndrome of poor leadership/governance amongst elected ex-president, governors, local government chairman etc. Poor leadership/governance is expressed in lack of proper accountability, rule of law, corruption and decadent judiciary etc (Adamolekun, 2002). All this stifled the diversification of Nigeria economy.

4) Low Investment in Agriculture

A major factor that is responsible for the mono economy of Nigeria is the central government, state and local government etc low investment in agriculture. Before the massive exploration and exportation of crude oil, agriculture was the traditional mainstay of Nigeria economy. I can remember vividly the days of groundnut pyramid in the north, rubber in the west and oil palm in the east. (Anyanwu, 2016). All these has disappeared due to the downplaying of agriculture by the federal government (Anyanwu, 2016). The reasons can be located in the fact that, federal government laid more emphasis on crude oil exportation/exploration. We have made a tremble mistake by becoming a mono-product economy hinged on oil and now we are in a volatile situation, due to the crash in oil prices (Buhari, 2016).

The aftermath of the foregoing is that the country has spent billions of dollars in the importation of all classes of food (Olayide 1974). A nation that cannot feed itself stand the risk of loosing its sovereignty (Anyiwe, 2008). Food import bill which was N48, million in 1960 increased to ₦57.7 in 19970. This plummeted to ₦173.002.2 million in 2005. (Anyiwe 2008). The billions of dollars that accrued from crude oil sale was not invested in agriculture. This would have boosted the diversification of economy as in the case of Iran (Buhari 2016) and Asian Tiger, nations, such as Malaysia, Indonesia etc (Abolul, Rahman, Embong 2012).

5) Transfer of Technology

A fundamental factor that foisted mono economy status on Nigeria, is the issue of transfer of technology. It is quite germane, that nations all over the world either advanced or less developed nation, such as Nigeria require technological transfer for the rapid development and growth of their economy. However, the technological transfer in Nigeria has dependence colouration.

Ake (1983) opined that as long as Nigeria depend wholly on foreign technology. It cannot make significant progress towards the diversification and economic independence. Most of the machines for our manufacturing and agro allied industries are produced in overseas by companies located in metropolitan nations without taking into cognizance the climatic and cultural condition of Sub-Saharan Countries. Nigerians are sent to overseas nations for technical knowhow on the repairs of these machines because they lack the expertise and technical know. The resultant effect is that when these machines go bad. The experts are flown from metropolitan countries by manufacturing companies at exorbitant cost to repair them. The tractors, bulldozers etc acquired by constructing giants such as Julius Bergers Plc etc are repaired by foreign expatriates employed by these companies. Again, in the petroleum industry, technology is wholly dependent on western nations, equipment utilised in the upstream and downstream sector are produced by foreign nations. If the technology is withheld then Nigeria oil wealth for all practical purposes, ceases to exist (Ake, 1985). Despite the hullabaloo about the much talked Petroleum Industry Bill before the National Assembly, one thing is crystal clear that international market for technology is high monopolistic and the cost of turning away from the old source of technology to a new one is virtually prohibitive (Ake, 1983). This is the dellima that Nigeria faces.

6) Improper Linkages between Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria and Society

A potent factor responsible for Nigeria mono-economy of Nigeria is improper linkages between Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria and the society. Education and the society are coterminous (Unweme and Ugbor, 1994). It is in this breath, that Universities of Technologies, Universities of Agriculture and other Universities located in the thirty six states of the federation are important. In other climes such as United States of America, Universities are the pivot which development hinges, example the Harvard University, Institute of Technology, Massachusetts, etc. The researches conducted by these universities are patented and made available to private sector and the government. Thus synergizing and efflorescing development because government officials make use of the researches.

However in Nigeria, there is improper linkages between Tertiary Institutions and Nigeria society. Most of the Universities breakthrough researchers are not adopted by the Federal Government in addressing the diversification of the Nigeria economy. If the researchers conducted by experts located in these Universities were adopted by the various arms of government. Perhaps, the economy would have not have sunk to current abyss (Amadasun, 2016).

Furthermore, the issue of the corruption has also reached its ugly head in our ivory towers. The Universities administrators have been fingered by the federal and states government as corrupt. This is partly responsible for the improper linkages in the education sector and society (Buhari, 2016)

THE NEXUS BETWEEN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION OF NIGERIAN MONO ECONOMY

There is a nexus between Public Administration and the economic diversification of the Nigerian mono-economy. The interconnect can be explained in the following ways:

Public Administration is the pivot to which the economic diversification and development of any nation be it the less developed nations (LDCs), such as Nigeria, Ghana etc hinges. This is because the “full structures of government administration, the agencies and bodies that existed in the central administration, field administration, local administration, sometimes refers to as guanos (Adamolekun 2002) are the main hub for the initiation and implementation of economic policy, agricultural policy and programs etc targeted at the diversification of the mono-economy of Nigeria. Although, emphasis is been laid on the role

of private sector in the wake of privatisation and commercialization of Nigerian economy. Public Administration holds the sway. This is because the various reforms (whether economic reforms, public sector reforms etc) are often implemented by government top bureaucrats (Adamolekun 2002).

Moreover, corruption, a major cankerworm bedevilling the nation and other social vices with the attendant upheavals can be simmered down, if the nation has a virile Public Administration. This can be seen in the fact that, when there is an enthronement of accountability and transparency in the Public Administration sector either through internal or external control mechanism. The nation imbibes the ethics of accountability. (Olowu, 2002) elucidates that public accountability underscores the superiority of the public will over private interest for those engaged in the provision and delivery of goods and services to the general public. The wake corruption is reduced (Olowu, 2002). The money saved through blocking of leakages can be channelled to non oil sector for the diversification of the nation. This approach has been adopted by the Asian Tiger countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia etc. Today, these economies have improved their gross domestic products geometrically (Abdul, Rahman Embong 2005).

STRATEGIES FOR THE DIVERSIFICATION OF NIGERIA MONO-ECONOMY

The following strategies must be adopted by the federal government as a road map for the diversification of Nigerian mono-economy.

- a) Federal government initiation and execution of commercial agricultural policy. If Nigeria is to get out of the mono sector economy debacle, then the central government, must have a sound agricultural policy. Emphasis must be laid on non government involvement in plantation or commercial agriculture. According to Obasanjo, 2016). Government involvement in agriculture is because of corruption. The central government must encourage agro allied companies to go into commercial agriculture. The companies should be given incentive and tax holiday. This policy will boost agricultural production and the cash crop will be exported to overseas countries. This will bring in the much desired foreign exchange to boost our economy (Buhari, 2016).
- b) The federal government initiation and execution of solid mineral policy. The Federal Government must as matter of necessity embrace sound policy with regard to non oil sector, such as the extraction and mining of solid minerals. These mineral are abound in Nigeria e.g. bitumen in Ondo state, coal in Enugu state etc Allah has indeed blessed Nigeria with solid minerals. The problem is how to tap these resources (Buhari 2016). The solid minerals has not been fully harnessed. To the end, the central government must encourage private sector participation. This is through granting interested companies access to loans through the Nigeria Industrial and Development Bank etc (Atagana 2016).
- c) Initiation and execution of aggressive infrastructural development policy. The above named policy must be aggressively pursued. This policy must be embraced by both the states and local government. All the tiers of government must invest heavily in the provision of both institutional, social and physical infrastructures (Idachaba 1985). These infrastructure include roads, piped-borne water, health centre, electricity etc. These infrastructures has a multiplier effect on the economy (World Bank 1997). In South Korea, the provision of infrastructures gave impetus to the diversification of South Korea economy (Sung and Dwight 1980)
- d) Corruption must be reduced to the barest minimum. Government must be ready to reduced corruption that has made Nigeria a pariah state amongst comity of nation. The relevant agency, such as the Independent and Corrupt Practices, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission must wake up to their responsibility of restoring confidence of the

international community, when the rate of corruption is reduced to the lowest level as in United States of America, Foreign investors will be willing to come to Nigeria to invest. Thereby, bringing into the country the desired foreign exchange and setting of industries. This industries will employ Nigerians. Thereby reducing the rate of employment in the nation.

By and large, the aforementioned strategies aimed at diversifying the mono-economy of Nigeria must be warped, encapsulated and executed by bureaucrats who are “cloth with offices (Deil Wright 1975). This is where Public Administration comes in to ensure the delivery of services to the clientele, who are the entire citizenry of Nigeria (Oronsaye, 1997).

Conclusion

The paper has in all ramification discuss the economic diversification of the Nigeria mono-economy. It posit that Nigeria found herself in this mono-economy miasma not only because of the disarticulation of the nation micro and macroeconomic policy and programmes, but it was also due to the fretting away of our billions of petrol dollars earned from the sales of crude oil in international market and the inability of the past administration at the central government to diversify the nation economy by channelling our earned resources to non-oil sector of the economy etc. Other factors such as corruption, etc was also fingered. To reverse this ugly scenario of mono-economy plaguing the nation, the role of Public Administration cannot be over orchestrated. It hold the ace for the diversification of the Nigerian economy because economic policy initiated by the central government aimed at diversifying the nation economy is implemented by Public Administration and bureaucrats. The bureaucrats and public servants working in regulatory agency or institutions such as Central Bank, any service must ensure that the economic policy framework is moving on the path to diversification of the economy. Thus, Public Administration is sin qua non to the economic diversification of Nigeria mono-economy. It is the orifice through which the Nigeria economy shall be lifted to higher pedestal and the overall growth and development of the nation.

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