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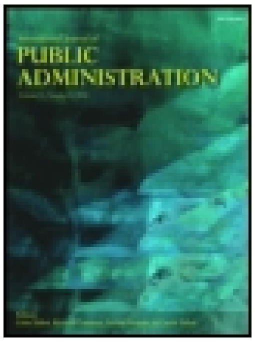

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ABSTRACT
This study examines the Nigerian attempts to implement the New Public Management (NPM) reform. The paper aims at identifying the strand, the extent of progress made and the reason(s) for success/failure recorded. The author finds that the poor success story of the reform is as a result of the preference of the more attractive cost-saving neoliberal economic aspect to the more involving and demanding bureaucratic aspect, the inconsistencies in program implementation, and lack of strong political will common to adopting reform in developing countries. The article recommends that reforms require dealing with the critical challenges of institutionalization, inconsistency and legitimization.

KEYWORDS
Institutionalized reform patterns; legitimized reform programme; New Public Management Reform; Nigeria

Introduction

The New Public Management (NPM) was a set of reform paradigm introduced by many Anglo-Saxon countries starting from the late 1970s. At some point, its principles rather became a benchmark for gauging administrative economy, efficiency, and effectiveness that it also became attractive to most developing countries since the 1980s. Archer (1994) remarked that NPM ideas were so widely taken up by countries of the world that they now have the status of an international orthodoxy. Most developing countries, Nigeria inclusive, have embraced the movement and its principles in the usual manner of imitating policies from more advanced countries. However, adoption and adaptation of policies usually found to be successful in developed countries to suit the environment of developing countries remain critical in public administration. Chittoo, Ramphul, and Nowbutsing (2009) posited that the NPM type of reforms implemented by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries is finding new "buyers" in developing countries, if not as a matter of choice, but surely as a matter of necessity to ensure international competitiveness of their economies in an era of globalization. But, the question is whether the developing countries and Nigeria, in particular, have made sufficient progress in taking up elements of the NPM in their public administration processes and if not why?

Polidano (1999) has argued that while many developing countries have taken up elements of the NPM agenda, they have not adopted anything remotely near the entire package. Manning (2001) similarly observed that NPM has in practice not been applied extensively outside of its native OECD/Commonwealth habitat. It has certainly been applied less often than the frequency with which the label has been used. Indeed, he categorically asserts that "the direct application of NPM has been limited and has achieved little in the developing world" (Manning, 2001, p. 298). Rosta (2011, p. 1) also averred that "while in the case of the developed countries the literature reports numerous successes, for the countries of the periphery the introduction of the NPM instruments in most cases ended with failure." Claims like these provide strong reasons for continued evaluation of the implementation of the neoliberal reform path and NPM in particular in developing countries and how these reforms have impacted on the public administration system.

Usually, NPM reforms are part of the multi-sector socioeconomic reforms that aim at shrinking the public sector and increasing private sector participation in providing public services and economic liberalization generally. It is not impossible that reform emphasis of countries tilt toward the liberalization of public services and the privatization of public utilities without strong moves toward adoption of NPM techniques and practices and reform of the public organizations themselves. In the midst of such preference and misconception, it is necessary to identify in each case of public service reform the nature, and, how the reform has actually brought about changes/innovation in administrative

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structure and processes. While many developing countries including Nigeria, which is examined in this study, have pushed neoliberal reforms of reorganization of public sector to make it smaller and ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery, how much of these reforms have actually brought about bureaucratic changes in the manner advocated by NPM?

The Nigerian government had embarked on public service reforms in the kind of NPM since the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) began in 1986. These set of reforms were intensified since the country returned to democratic governance in 1999 especially with the introduction of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) socio-economic reforms in 2003. Prior to the introduction of NEEDS, the Olusegun Obasanjo Administration had initiated elaborate study of the Nigerian public service from 1999 to 2001 which revealed the following major problems of the Service:

- Massive expansion in the size of the Service which has risen from 350% between 1960 and 1999;
- Decline in institutional capacity, efficiency, effectiveness and commitment
- Poor ethical and moral character of the public servants especially in issues of corruption;
- Outdated and varied civil service rules and regulations.
- made up of an ageing workforce, with 60% of serving officers above 40 years of age;
- Existence of a preponderance of unskilled staff; over 70% of the workforce were in the unskilled category of grade levels 01–06. Only 1.7% of the workforce were made up of the critical manpower in the service, that is, those in the Directorate Cadre or grade levels 15–17;
- Existence of poor records and payroll control system. About 60% of government spending were deployed in servicing the federal bureaucracy;
- A flawed procurement system;
- Lack of mission and vision statements of ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) or clear corporate and individual schedules of duties;
- Highly centralized, hierarchical, and rule-driven system which stifled individual initiative and muffled corporate accountability;
- Low morale resulting from non-professional human resource management practice, etc. (Federal Ministry of Information and Communication, n.d., p. 15).

The above peculiar ailments were in addition to the usual dysfunctional features of the Weberian bureaucratic organization which global reforms in the tradition of NPM aimed at. Thus, the Federal Ministry of Information and Communication (n.d.) adds the following to the above issues requiring reforms:

> perception of the Public Service as being (i) lethargic and slow, (ii) insensitive and unreliable, (iii) unhelpful and wasteful, (iv) slow to change, (v) unresponsive and discourteous to the public, (vi) corrupt, (vii) over-bloated, (viii) insensitive, (ix) parochial and often ethnically-biased processes such as staff-recruitment, performance-assessment, promotion, contract award, etc. (FMIC, n.d., pp. 15–16)

This article examines this reform path. The objectives of the study are to determine the nature of this reform path, its relationship to NPM, and to underscore some of the key reasons for its success/failure in the Nigerian context and to add to issues of driving administrative reform more particularly in developing countries.. The article applies the methodology of the extensive review of government documents and other secondary materials drawn from the literature.

Notion and features of the NPM approach

The term NPM is believed by Androniceanu (2007) to have first been used by Christopher Hood. Hood (1991) remarked that the concept is loose, but is conceptually useful as a shorthand name for the set of broadly similar administrative doctrines which dominated the bureaucratic reform agenda in many of the OECD group of countries from the late 1970s. Osborne and Gaebler (1992) used the phrase “steer not row” to describe the expected role of government under the NPM regime. This entails the use of other sectors (profit and not-for-profit) for the actual rowing of the boat (provision of services) while the government steers (regulates and coordinates).

NPM is conceptually loose because it is a movement with country-specific adaptation. Sahlin-Andersson (2000) explained that part of the reason for this looseness arises from the fact that it is a global trend that has appeared through independent initiatives of countries, international mimicry of countries by others, and transnational construction and circulation of prototypes and templates usually masterminded by International Financial Institutions. NPM is better described as a shopping centre where governments and experts of countries can select management instruments closest to their taste (Van Thiel & Pollitt, 2007; Rosta, 2011). Based on divergence in the programs initiated by countries to institutionalize NPM, Rosta (2011) thought that the major reason for believing that NPM has failed in developing or countries of the periphery as he prefers to call them arises from the bias that NPM is a well-defined system of objectives, and that there are normatively described paths and instruments helping to obtain these objectives. He believes that this is not the case.

However, it is important to remark that NPM reforms display great similarities—to the extent that we can talk about a trend, or a reform path (Sahlin-Ansersson, 2000). This reform path or approach fundamentally comprises of two strands, (1) a move away from traditional bureaucratic ideas of "good administration" with their emphasis on orderly hierarchies and elimination of duplication or overlap (Hood, 1991) and (2) an introduction of a set of successive waves of business-type "managerialism" in the public sector. NPM reforms are specifically meant to improve administrative efficiency and economy through some management doctrines or precepts. Hood underscores seven of these doctrines which are observable from OECD countries that have propelled the reforms:

- "Hands-on professional management" in the public sector which makes for active, visible, discretionary control of organizations from named persons at the top, "free to manage";
- Explicit standards and measures of performance, that is, proper definition of goals. targets, indicators of success, preferably expressed in quantitative terms, especially for professional services;
- Greater emphasis on output controls: resource allocation and rewards linked to measured performance; breakup of centralized bureaucracy-wide personnel management;
- Shift to disaggregation of units in the public sector or what is also known as unbundling or breaking up of formally monolithic units into corporatized units around products or services;
- Stress on private sector styles of management practice to achieve flexibility and greater efficiency; and
- Stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource use.

Thus, a clear notion of NPM seems to lie in the concern to pay less attention to control-driven traditional bureaucratic administrative norms, reduce the unwieldy hierarchical bureaucratization, and, attempt to integrate market (profit) principles in the public sector. It is also a reform path that aims at replacing formal bureaucracy by markets and contracts as far as possible, and reducing the size of the public sector. It consists of deliberate changes to the structures and processes of public sector organizations with the objective of getting them (in some sense) to run better (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004). Kernaghan, Marson, and Borin (2005) provided a broad contrast between the Weberian bureaucratic administrative model and the NPM-based public administration principles that seek to replace it (see Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of Weberian Bureaucratic and NPM Features.

Weberian Bureaucracy	New Public Management
1. Emphasis is place on the need of the organization, thus making it an end in itself;	1. The primary focus is on efficient service delivery to the citizens or the clients of the organization;
2. Hierarchical, with emphasis on control and compliance;	2. Stresses participatory leadership, driven by shared values;
3. Authority and control are centralized;	3. Authority and control are decentralized;
4. Emphasizes continuity and stability;	4. Change-oriented; hence emphasis is placed on innovation and continuous improvement;
5. Programs are budget-driven, that is, financed largely by appropriation;	5. Programs are revenue-driven, that is, on cost-recovery basis;
6. Based on the idea that government has monopoly on service delivery	6. Based on the idea of competition with the private sector on service delivery

Adapted from Kernaghan et al. (2005, p. 3).

From the above, we can deduce that NPM incorporates varied features that seek to reduce rigidity of the public sector, and to pay attention to satisfaction of service beneficiaries rather than compliance to organizational processes, decentralize authority and control by encouraging flatter rather than hierarchical organizational structure, and realize more revenue-driven strategies to at least recover the cost of service delivery instead of free or subsidized services. The flexibility of taking decisions, performance measurement and profit motive are part of what are considered private sector managerialism of the NPM.

The private sector managerialism of the NPM is in most instances introduced as part of the more extensive socio-economic reforms of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is understood as an ideology that encompasses various forms of free-market fundamentalism (Barnett, 2010). Neoliberal reforms as relating to public administration, therefore, is a two-sided coin—the economic liberalization aspect in form of deregulation, commercialization or privatization of previously government-controlled entities, outsourcing of service provisions to private organizations on one hand, and the consequential implication of the economic aspect of the reform in repositioning the public bureaucracy for the new roles deserving of government in economic affairs. This aspect has to do with administrative reform or restructuring the public sector agencies away from the traditional Max Weberian bureaucracy.

In developing countries, this two-pronged reform has dominated the policy stage since 1980s. Van de Walle (1989, p. 601) remarked that "just as the 1960s and 1970s were characterized by the rapid expansion of the public sector in the developing world, the 1980s have seen widespread attempts by policy makers to curtail the state's economic role." On the administrative front, Ali Farazmand (2002, p. ix) similarly posited that administrative reform has been a widespread challenge to almost all national and sub-national governments around the globe. He observed that "unlike the reform movements of the earlier decades of the twentieth century, which emphasized institution building, bureaucratization, nationalization, and a wide variety of organizational and administrative capacity building for national and economic development, the recent global phenomenon of administrative reform has been in the opposite direction: reversing the traditional role of government, the state, and public administration institutions into one that promotes a private, corporate-driven marketplace dominated by business elites."

Despite extensive imitation and adoption of this reform path by developing countries, most scholars aver that it has failed and is rather unsuitable for them. Oehler-Sincai (2008), remarked that it has suffered failure because there is no stable macroeconomic environment, transparent and accountable policy process, clear separation of powers between executive, legislature, and judiciary, appropriate financial and human resources, and rules based system. Da Cunha Rezende (2008, p. 52) observed that in the comparative literature, recurrent themes of failure are marked by "lines of organized resistance", by erratic processes, by the increased difficulty of organizing interest groups around the program objectives desired by the reforms, and, principally, of obtaining the cooperation of the actors for the wider purposes of fiscal adjustment and institutional change. We recognize the importance of these and many other challenges including cultural and prismatic features of developing countries (Haque, 2010). But, it should also be added that when administrative reforms focus on extensive economic aspect at the expense of commensurate changes in the internal government and bureaucratic processes, then we can better picture why many developing countries may not have adopted anything near the NPM agenda as submitted by Polidano (1999). Farazmand (1999) saw this as a problem of confusion and selective interpretation of the meaning attached to administrative reform itself, which for most developing countries often refers to modernization and change in society to effect social and economic transformation rather than a process of changes in the administrative structures or procedures within the public services because they have become out of line with the expectations of the social and political environment. This often holistic and comprehensive approach to reform has the effect of undermining the critical issue of healer heal yourself, thus making most administrative reform in developing countries usually cosmetic.

The NPM specifically relates to reforming the public sector organizations and not just in merely introducing market principles or privatizing. Introducing market principles without ensuring performance measurement, quick decisions and empowerment of organizational managers to ensure client satisfaction with services may just be neoliberalism without the people in mind. Hemerijck, Huiskamp, and de Boer (2002, p. 15) averred that, originally, the NPM/"Reinventing Government" approach was associated with ideological notions of "rolling back the state" but that this business-like approach to government these days does not necessarily lead to a preference for markets over governments or private goods over public goods. It might lead to a preference of government regulation and oversight over government production and provision. Invariably, the essence remains to make public sector more effective in providing efficient services. In most developing countries, public service reforms seem to be misconceived with the socio-economic neoliberal reforms of free-markets propelled by such policies as privatization, commercialization, deregulation and other aspects of liberalization which are clearly different from NPM objectives and often lead to opposite result for the much touted public service reforms. While both reforms are interdependent and often go hand in hand, the socio-economic neoliberal/liberalization reforms cannot rightly substitute the NPM in terms of inculcating administrative and bureaucratic innovation intended by the NPM approach. Incidentally, it seems to have received more attention in many developing countries.

Background information on the NPM regime in Nigeria

Initial impetus to adopt NPM principles in Nigerian public administration became pronounced with the introduction of the SAP in 1986. The introduction of SAP was triggered off by obvious need to withstand the intense economic crisis faced by the country following the collapse of the world market price of oil that began in 1981 and the suffocating external debts burden there from. SAP was a socio-economic adjustment policy designed by International Financial Institutions of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund for benefiting countries of their loans, especially in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and former socialist countries of Europe, to tackle the effects of economic recession and globalization. The conditionality given by these international financiers were mainly in terms of adjustments to shrink the public sector, privatize publicly-owned enterprises, reduce regulation of foreign trades, end consumer subsidies (including subsidies on food and basic needs), and promote the production of goods for export (Archer, 1994). SAP emphasized lessening the unwieldiness of government by privatizing many of the public enterprises found in some productive sectors where government should not ordinarily have strong participation in a capitalist system. It was in the main an economic adjustment and stabilization policy but contained an important administrative aspect of rationalizing and restructuring of public sector enterprises and overhauling of the public sector administrative structure.

The 1988 Civil Service reform of the Ibrahim Babangida administration was meant to address the administrative aspect of this reform in addition to the privatization and other economic stabilization programs of the SAP reform. This administrative reform was quite ambitious on the objectives it wanted to achieve in the Service. The main provisions are shown in Table 2.

The key issues of decentralization, professionalization, abolition of the Office of the Head of Service and the post of permanent secretary, break-up of unwieldy ministries into smaller units were geared toward increasing the managerial responsiveness of the civil service that is very central to NPM. Sequel to this, there was increased decentralization of personnel functions to line ministries and attempt at professionalizing the service by abandoning the practice of pooling officers and deploying them centrally. Each ministry was then to take up the responsibility for employing, promoting and disciplining its staff in accordance with uniform guidelines provided, and supervised by the Public Service Commission. Public officers were then expected to spend their career in specific ministries in order to acquire life-long expertise in the business of the ministry (Olaopa, 2008). These actions are seen as efforts to de-bureaucratize the civil service and improve professionalism. Larbi (1999) averred that decentralizing management, disaggregating, and downsizing of public organizations are strands of NPM derived from managerialism.

Table 2. Selected Provisions of the Civil Service Reform Decree 43 of 1988.

1. The abolition of the Office of the Head of Service and a new administrative dispensation whereby Ministers rather than Permanent Secretaries would serve as Chief Executives and Accounting Officers of Ministries.
2. The abolition of the post of permanent secretary; in its place a new post of Director General was created which was to be held at the pleasure of the president and be vacated after the expiration of the tenure of the appointing administration unless such officers were reappointed by the new government.
3. The civil Service was professionalized in order to stimulate professionalization and experience. In this regard, an officer was expected to make a career in a particular ministry or Department.
4. Each Ministry was restructured along departmental lines to reflect the basic functions and areas of concern of the Ministry.
5. Each Department was subdivided into Divisions, each Division was subdivided into Branches, and Branches were subdivided into sections;
6. Each Ministry was empowered to undertake the appointment, promotion and discipline of its staff under the general and uniform guidelines provided by the Federal Civil Service Commission;
7. Each Ministry or Extra-Ministerial Department was allowed to have three common service departments, viz.: Department of Personnel Management, Department of Finance and Supplies and Department of Planning, Research and Statistics, and not more than five operations departments.

Source: Excerpted from Federal Ministry of Information and Communications (n.d., 6).

The 1988 reform did not achieve much in the aspects of decentralization, empowerment of units and professionalization especially as other aspects of the reform such as politicization of the higher echelon of the service received more attention than the NPM-related issues of decentralization, empowerment of units and managers, and professionalization. Scholars perceived the reform as a liberal package which offered superficial solutions to fundamental problems of public administration. For instance, professionalization had the limited meaning of restricting officers' career to specific ministries as against movement from one ministry to another; by politicizing the position of the permanent secretary, there was high turnover among the high echelon of the service as the position became open to political appointees; the newly created Presidency, was perceived as a parallel department that competed with agencies in policy formulation and implementation. Omitola (2012, p. 8) averred that:

> The reforms of 1988 were introduced in an atmosphere of controversy, doubt and suspicion as they gave the Ministers total control over the staff and the finances of their ministries or departments. The civil servants were no longer considered part of the system during the formulation and execution of public policy. A new and parallel organ was established to implement every new policy announced by the government. This destroyed the healthy relationship between the civil servants and Ministers built over the years and also truncated the notion of shared responsibility between the Permanent Secretary and the Minister in the conduct of government business.

The inconsistencies in implementing some of the provisions brought significant adverse consequences that led to later discontinuation of the reform by the military regime of Sani Abacha in 1993 who returned the service to the status quo ante.

The introduction of NPM reform in Nigeria was renewed with some vigor in 2003 through the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy, NEEDS. NEEDS is a 4 year medium term development plan, which articulated multi-sector interconnected socio-economic reforms of the country. The reforms rest on four major planks of (i) economic management, (ii) governance, (iii) public service, and (iv) transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption reforms. In relation to the public service aspects of the reforms, the National Planning Commission (2005, p. 8) explains that:

> NEEDS aims to restructure the government to make it smaller, stronger, better skilled, and more efficient at delivering essential services.… The number of government jobs will decline, and the cost of running the government will fall dramatically, as in-kind benefits for civil servants, such as subsidized housing, transport, and utilities, are monetized. Reforms and regulations will be implemented to ensure greater accountability, and corrupt practices will be outlawed. Government activities and budgeting will be informed by a framework that connects policy with government income and expenditure.

Though other aspects of the entire NEEDS socio-economic reforms deal with related issues of public administration, the public service reform in particular focus on efficiency, economy, responsiveness and service delivery, decentralization, and performance management. It underscores five broad areas thus:

(i) Budget and financial management: procurement system review, institutionalization of fiscal responsibility, accounting and audit reforms.
(ii) Accountability: installation of due process, transparency and accountability in government transactions, establishment of service charters and institutionalization of quality service delivery.
(iii) Human resources management: personnel records and payroll cleaning, staff cadre review, remodeling of recruitment and promotion procedures, installation of new performance management scheme, massive capacity development and training, pay reform and injection of competent personnel, including relevant professionals with rare skills and young bright graduates.
(iv) Operations and systems: organizational restructuring and right-sizing, work process re-design and information systems/technology applications.
(v) Value re-orientation and ethics, efforts are geared toward the rebranding project, training and fighting unethical practices (Matankari, 2009).

At the end of NEEDS plan period in 2007, the second phase of NEEDS was introduced under President Yar'Adua. His reform package encapsulated in his medium term plan document Seven Point Agenda, adopted a four-pillar strategy for the continuation of the socio-economic reforms in 2008. These are: Pillar One: Creating an enabling institutional and governance environment; Pillar Two: An enabling socio-economic environment; Pillar Three: Public Financial Management Reform; and Pillar Four: Civil Service Administration Reform (Matankari, 2009). The civil service reform is renamed National Strategy for Public Service Reform (NSPSR). Program features include but not limited to reversing the public service rules and financial regulations, rolling out Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS), a centralized pay system meant to eliminate ghost workers and other fraud committed through the salary administration system, to cover all MDAs of government; developing and introducing a new performance management system; undertaking a functional review and organizational restructuring of MDAs; providing basic Information and Computer Technology (ICT) training for all civil servants from grade level 07–17 (senior staff); and providing relevant equipment for officials as appropriate and codifying and enforcing a code of ethics for the Civil Service. The NSPSR proposed a three-stage reform program. These stages are: (1) a rebuilding phase (2009–2011); (2) a transformation phase (2012–2015); and (3) world-class public status phase (2016–2020).

The Goodluck Jonathan's administration also accepted public service reform as key program in its Transformation Agenda. The Transformation Agenda is a blueprint on key policies, programs and projects to be implemented during the period 2011–2015 and also a medium term development strategy to speed up Nigeria's march toward becoming one of the twenty largest economies by year 2020. The plan realizes the need for a public service that is "manned by public officers of impeccable character and integrity, with the right skills-mix, sufficiently challenged and motivated to be efficient managers of resources and talents" (National Planning Commission 2011, p. 56). Hence, the key strategies adopted in the Transformation Agenda for public service reforms in the period 2011–2015 are to:

- Rationalize, re-structure and strengthen MDAs;
- Development of performance management tools;
- Accelerate adoption of e-governance especially in the dissemination of information, procurement and financial transactions;
- Extend public service reform to sub-national level;
- Compulsory continuing education and training for the Public Service; and
- Implementation of the Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) Act, 2007 to reduce corruption and loss of national revenue in the extractive industries sector (Transformation Agenda, 2011, p. 57).

From the above contents of plan documents and reform proposals, one can observe that since the introduction of SAP in 1986, most of the various regimes in Nigeria have proposed public service reforms considered akin to the world trend of NPM. Key recurrent features in the reform policies and programs of these administrations include issues of restructuring and repositioning public organizations (including reducing the size of personnel to achieve the objective of small organizations), redesigning and improving service delivery, reframing systems of performance and accountability; and revitalizing human resource capacity and organizational performance. Larbi (1999) saw these as key features of the NPM reform path. The question remains how these have been pursued de facto, and the extent they have been achieved in the Nigerian public administration.

Evaluation of the implementation of NPM reforms in Nigeria

As we have shown in the last section, public service reform in the light of NPM in Nigeria underscores key programs of restructuring and repositioning public organizations (including reducing the size of personnel to achieve the objective of small organizations), redesigning and improving service delivery, reframing systems of performance and accountability; and revitalizing human resource capacity and organizational performance. Restructuring and repositioning public organizations have mainly been pursued through privatization, commercialization, merger, and scrapping of some public organizations. Public-owned enterprises increased from about fifty (50) at independence in 1960 to about one thousand five hundred (1500) at its zenith in 1991 when privatization formally started (Obikeze & Obi, 2004). A large number of these have been privatized by the federal government and other levels of government. However, privatization apparently has not contributed to the objective of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector. A key objective of embarking on the program was to reduce the size of the public sector, apart from making those enterprises more efficient. It is observed that while enterprises are privatized, many others are established to cope with new challenges. For instance, there was "the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in 1986; a SAP relief package introduced in 1989; the establishment of the Urban Mass Transit Programme in 1988; establishment of the Peoples and Community banks in 1989/90; the establishment of the Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) in 1986; a reflationary budget package in 1988; the Better Life for Rural Dwellers' Programme in 1989" (NCEMA, n.d., p. 8). In the NEEDS era and subsequent reform, some of the newly established public organizations since the return to democratic rule in 1999 include: National Emergency Management Agency (1999), National Examinations Council NECO (1999), Debt Management Office (2000), Niger Delta Development Commission (2000), National Space Research and Development Agency (2001), Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (2003), Small Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria SMEDAN (2003), Bureau of Public Service Reforms (2003), National Pension Commission (2004), Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission, NERC (2005), Nigerian Communications Satellite (2006), National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (2006), National Identity Management Commission (2007), National Environmental Standard and Regulation Enforcement Agency (2007) Bureau of Public Procurement (2007), Fiscal Responsibility Commission (2007), National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Bureau of Public Service Reforms and many specialized research bodies, nine federal universities (2012) to mention a few. While some of these organizations were established in pursuit of some targeted objectives and the program autonomous agencies, they apparently were established to solve the inefficiency challenge of the already existing MDAs. Those of the new agencies that are supposed to operate as autonomous commercial units are still financed through the government budget. Operational and financial autonomy is non-existent as they continue to be tied to the control of supervising ministries, thus raising not only the cost of governance but the time and speed of actions. The aviation sector provides a ready example. Three autonomous agencies were created in the reform period within the sector, namely, the Nigerian Airspace Management (NAMA), the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) and the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NMA), in addition to Ministry of Aviation. The essence was to decentralize operational autonomy and improve agency capacity. However, the mandate of these agencies conflict with each other and that of the supervising Federal Ministry of Aviation. For instance, the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) is established as the apex regulatory body, overseeing the activities of all airlines and their pilots, engineers and cabin staff, airports, airstrips and heliports, navigation aids, all service providers including the airport authority and the air traffic service provider, aviation training institutions, etc. NCAA watches over the entire industry (NCAA, n.d.). The Nigerian Federal Ministry of Aviation also regulates air travel and aviation services in Nigeria. The ministry is responsible for formulation and management of the government's aviation policies in Nigeria. It is directly responsible for overseeing air transportation, airport development, maintenance, provision of aviation infrastructural services and other needs (Federal

Ministry of Aviation, n.d.). The new agencies are still subjugated under the hierarchical weight of the ministry leading to operations delays, inefficiency, and lack of autonomy. This scenario pervades the entire Nigerian administrative system despite efforts to establish and empower autonomous agencies in a number of sectors. Indeed, the issue of ministerial control was among the key challenges identified by the Oronsanye report, which rather recommended the scrapping or merging of agencies with such conflicting mandates. In the aviation sector for instance, the committee recommended the merger of the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency NAMA, the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority and the Nigerian Meteorological Agency into a new agency to be known as the Federal Civil Aviation Authority FCAA (iReports-NG.com, 2012).

The Oronsanye Committee, a Presidential Committee on the Rationalization and Restructuring of Federal Government Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies set up in 2011, and indeed a previous panel—the Ahmed Joda Panel in 2000—acknowledge in their different reports that many agencies have overlapping mandates. Both Committees have recommended the scrapping and merger of many public agencies. The Oronsanye Committee found that there are 541 Federal Government Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies (statutory and non-statutory), and proposed a reduction of the statutory agencies from the current 263 to 161, arising from duplication and overlaps in mandates and functions. Specifically, it recommended the abolition of 38 agencies, merger of 52, and reversion of 14 agencies to departments in the relevant ministries to reduce cost of governance and ensure efficiency. Some examples of the large bureaucracies recommended for outright scrapping are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Excerpts from Presidential Committee on the Rationalization and Restructuring of Federal Government Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies, August 2011.

The setting up of the Federal Road Safety Commission to take over partially the functions already apportioned by law to the Federal Ministry of Works (FRSC) and the Nigeria Police Force as a result of seeming poor performance and/or to satisfy political and individual interests is a typical example of misadventure in the Public Sector at a great cost to government. Meanwhile, on the one hand, other bodies have their mandates intact as the relevant provisions of their enabling laws have not been repealed. On the other hand, the same provisions have been imported into the FRSC Act, making it appear as if the intention of Government is to make the FRSC have the same mandate as the bodies referred to. Similarly… the functions of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) are the traditional functions of the Nigeria Police…. the two Commissions were established separately to address corruption, which the Police appeared to have failed to do, successive administrations have ironically continued to appoint the Chairman of the EFCC from the Police Force, while the methodology adopted by the ICPC in conducting investigations as well as the training of its personnel in investigation procedure are carried out by the Police. One wonders if it was really expedient to dismember the Nigeria Police rather than allow it to evolve as a vibrant and effective agency…. In a related situation…the case where the Nigerian Communications Satellite (NigComSat) Limited, which was established as the commercial arm of the Nigerian Space Research Development Agency (NASRDA), with a sunset clause, has now expanded its scope and is in rivalry with its parent body. Indeed, only recently, the Nigerian Communications Satellite Corporation Bill was passed by the House of Representatives. Besides duplicating the satellite development functions of NASRDA, the Bill has created further needless duplications as it veers into the statutory functions of the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC) in the area of frequency allocation.

Source: (IReport-NG.com: p. 3).

Invariably, reorganization and restructuring have not led to de-bureaucratization and creation of autonomous agencies that could operate away from hierarchical control of ministerial and other large bureaucratic structure. The Nigerian government has thus pursued a reform path of solving the problem of ineffective public organizations by establishing other ones rather than aiming to make the existing one structurally and operationally effective. The Oronsanye Report describes this as “reaction to symptoms rather than the diagnosis of the problem”, which “has contributed significantly to the proliferation of parastatals and agencies” (iReports-NG.com, 2012). Yet, nothing clearly shows that the newly created agencies are better than the existing ones in terms of personnel and operational capacity.

The Nigerian government has apparently not shown open admittance that the NPM reform is not feasible in the face of current socio-economic challenges facing the country. While still proclaiming to pursue these ideals in her templates and plan documents, in practice the country pursues programs that are direct opposite to the principles of NPM. The program of reorganization and downsizing, which the government keeps holding onto is antithetical to the challenge of addressing high level unemployment in the country. Clearly, the government in practice does not pursue programs that could worsen her already crisis unemployment situation. In the process of privatization, conflict with labor unions has often delayed progress and led to great loss of resources. The government has therefore, shied away from retrenchment as an option in its plan to make government smaller.

In all intents and purposes, different succeeding administrations since 1999 have attempted to downsize or right size (a euphemism often employed to avoid the moral condemnation of using retrenchment) the public service. But, as agencies are privatized, more are established with large bureaucracies and in some good measure increasing unproductive investment in the public sector. The more worrisome as already noted is that these new agencies often have overlapping mandates as the Oronsanye and Ahmed Joda Reports observed (iReports, 2012). Despite the recommendations of these reports on scrapping and merging agencies, the government White Paper overlooked consideration of functional duplication and overlapping mandates by rejecting mergers and scrapping of most of the agencies recommended by its various study committees. For instance, the white paper on the Oronsanye report rejected scrapping or merging the various agencies established to fight corruption, which was found by the committee to have overlapping mandates. These include the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent and Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Due Process Commission, Code of Conduct Commission. The responsibility of these can be achieved with efficient and effective Nigerian Police. While all these exist to fight corruption, corruption among public officials continue to impede development (Agba, Ikoh, Ushie, & Agba, 2008; Ibrahim & Gundi, 2005; Ogunlana, 2008). Nigeria has consistently been rated among the most corrupt country in the world by the Transparency International. Thus, duplication of agencies has not helped to achieve objective and thus, there is no justification for establishing new agencies without commensurate effort to make them or the existing ones to work better.

In the same vein, restructuring and rightsizing has not reduced the personnel to make government leaner. The personnel absorbed into the public service to man the newly established agencies make nonsense of the objective of pruning down and reducing the unproductive investment in the public sector. Available statistics still show that total employment in the public sector has continued to rise from 4,900,000 (2003), 5,052,427 (2004), 5,067,423 (2005), 5,210,831 (2006), to 5,358,298 (2007) (National Bureau of Statistics, 2008, p. 257). The existing data on the personnel composition of the federal government's Ministerial/Extra Ministerial Departments (core civil service organizations) are still burdened with the existence of a preponderance of unskilled staff. Out of the total staff of 145,195 in these core policy advisory and implementation agencies, staff in grade levels 15, 16, and 17 (which constitute the policy advisory corps and the managers of the Service) were 2270, 364, and 87, respectively (National Bureau of Statistics, 2008, pp. 258–259). This gives a total of 2721 or 1.8% of staff in the directorate cadre which could be regarded as the cream of the service. Employees in the junior job category (levels 01–06) constitute 60, 185 of the entire workforce (41%). For the 158 Federal Parastatals, the consolidated staff statistics stands at 162,371. Staff in the directorate category was 3501 (2%); the figure for levels 01–06 was 76,822 (47%) (NBS, 2008, pp. 260–261). This is despite the implementation of monetization and other pay reforms meant to reduce the work force especially in the lower category and increase motivation through consolidated emoluments. Monetization is the payment in monetary terms of some of the fringe benefits previously made available in kind or provided by lower cadre employees, such as gardeners, cook, drivers, and other domestic servants to public officers. The policy is aimed at reducing the cost of governance and increasing the motivation of public servants. The implementation of monetization would have seen a drastic reduction in government cost and personnel in the categories of drivers and domestic servants as government would no longer provide utilities like official cars, residential houses etc. However, it has been observed that:

> Since 2003 when this policy came into effect, there has been no formal directive from the government to disengage drivers. The vehicles have not been pooled. In fact, government is still approving funds for the purchase of official vehicles.... Domestic servants are still being paid, while similar payments are also being made to their bosses. (Etim, 2008, p. 31)

The wage bill of the Service can only increase at this pay duplication or at best remain stagnant rather than showing a reduction in the cost of governance. Thus, while there is no clear direction in the federal government recurrent expenditure from 2003 to 2013 as shown in Table 4 below (the fluctuation can be

Table 4. Expenditure Patterns of the Federal Government of Nigeria, 2003–2013 (N' Billion).

Year	Total Expenditure (TE)	Recurrent Expenditure (RE)	% of RE to total Expenditure	Capital Expenditure (CE)	% CE to TE	General Administration (GE)	% of GE to RE
2003	1226	984.3	80.3	241.7	19.7	166.1	16.9
2004	1426.2	1032.7	72.4	351.3	27.6	101.3	9.8
2005	1822.1	1223.7	67.2	519.5	32.8	248.7	20.3
2006	1938.0	1290.2	66.6	552.4	33.4	284.6	22.0
2007	2450.9	1589.3	64.8	759.3	35.2	310.1	19.5
2008	3240.8	2117.4	75.6	960.9	24.4	369.5	17.5
2009	3453.0	2128.0	61.6	1152.8	38.1	437.9	20.6
2010	4194.6	3109.4	74.1	883.9	25.9	694.5	22.3
2011	4712.1	3314.	70.3	918.5	29.7	699.2	21.1
2012	4605.4	3325.2	72.2	874.8	27.8	500.1	15.0
2013	5185.3	3689.1	88.8	1108.4	11.2	546.8	14.8

Source: Culled from the Central Bank of Nigeria (2014) 2013 Statistical Bulletin: Public Finance Statistics, pp. 4–7. Available at: http://www.cenbank.org/documents/annualreports.asp explained as a result of privatizing some agencies and replacing them with the establishment of others as we have seen above. There is also salary increases within the period for various labor groups), the recurrent expenditure has averaged 72.2% within the period, which leaves a marginal percentage of the budget for capital projects in a country that is in serious need of infrastructural development. The worst scenario is portrayed by the fact that on the average, about one fifth (18.2%) of the recurrent expenditure was spent on general administration head, which can be regarded as the cost of governance including personnel, leaving the remaining balance to be shared by numerous other over heads like defense, education, health, community service, economic services, transfers and so on.

Furthermore, the public service reform in the path of NPM in Nigeria has also tended toward centralization of operations rather than the planned decentralization, and little or no empowerment of the rank and file has been witnessed Even when many commissions, executive and regulatory agencies are created, the ministries have continued to play strong executive and supervisory roles that tend to retain the large bureaucratic operational structure. Rather than do away with excessive administrative rules, more rules and standard operating procedures are added thus increasing the compliance demands of officials to rules rather than performance-targeted approach encouraged by NPM. Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) have continued to be enlarged and multiplied in the bid to fight corruption and unethical practices. For instance, the Bureau for Public Procurement popularly known as the Due Process Department has been established to regulate contract approval and perform other fiduciary assignments. There is also the Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU) located in the Presidency, which also addresses the development and operation of procurement services for Federal Government and its agencies. These centralizations have come with additional bureaucratic rules and compliance requirements. While the Country Procurement Assessment Report of the World Bank in 2000 (World Bank, 2000) revealed that the financial systems and general procurement-related activities in the country, which is mainly based on the outdated Finance (Control and Management) Act, 1958, is deficient and lacking modern law on public procurement and permanent oversight and monitoring purchasing entities, pursing the reform by establishing new agencies without affecting the old procedures of multi-level tender boards with limited mandates, outdated procedural rules, and performance targets smacks of centralization and control-driven approach to reform. The fundamental problem of decentralization without authority remains unaddressed and the real powers to decide contracts *de facto* remained with few top officials, in most instances resting with the permanent Secretary and the Minister/Commissioner (Ekpendhio, 2003). The important reform part recommended by the World Bank Report for instance that the tenders' boards "need to be streamlined and have the power to approve formally delegated" (World Bank, 2000, p. 11) remains sidelined in the whole reform process. The establishment of the Due Process Department and the BMPIU to address the problem of accountability and transparency in public procurement has only transferred the problem from one unit of government to another. The reform objective of decentralization of authority and control remains unaddressed. The World Bank report shows that "currently, high level politicians such as Governors, Ministers and Commissioners are operationally involved in the procurement process" (World Bank, 2000, p. 11). The politicians and few high level administrators remain engulfed in monopolizing important administrative duties of government for the obvious benefits or rents rather than focusing on managerial oversight responsibilities while leaving administrative and operational matters (including procurement) to the civil servants. Thus, the benefits inherent in the arrangement, which clearly delineates responsibility for administrative decisions and actions and puts these in the hands of the professional civil service and makes the professional civil servants accountable for their actions under the general responsibilities and oversight of politicians (World Bank, 2000) is not targeted by reform. Indeed, it can be argued that the establishment of the BMPIU is to centralize every contractual operations of the government in the Presidency. This is certainly not in line with NPM's aim of empowerment and decentralization and rather compounds bureaucratization.

Similarly, human resource revitalization reforms have been directed toward continued training of public servants and developing an integrated personnel and payroll management system (IPPIS). The objective of this aspect of the reform is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency in transactional services, enhance the confidence in payroll costs and budgeting, and greatly improve management reporting and information. This reform is said by the Federal Government to have eliminated about 46,000 ghost workers and saved the country N119 billion (about $722 million at the exchange rate of N165 to the dollar) even when only employees of 215 MDAs have been captured under IPPIS while those of the remaining 321 MDAs are yet to be captured (Federal Government of Nigeria, n.d.). The cost saved in personnel and money is not reflected yet in the public service as shown above. Moreover, even if cost is saved, one is at a loss how this can be sustained in the long term as it is not obvious that fighting ghost workers can be better achieved from a more removed organizational setting—the centralized IPPIS—than at each organization. The reform has also not affected the roles and personnel needs of the finance departments of various organizations.

Productivity and customer satisfaction invariably remain at very low levels in Nigerian public administration. Provision of services to the masses has continued to suffer and the country's rating of Human Development Index (HDI) by UNDP consistently low, with diverse levels of poverty, food insecurity, poor nutrition and sanitation, low literacy, health crisis, high mortality, dearth infrastructure etc. (Agba, Ushie, Ushie, Bassey, & Agba, 2009). The Human Development Index (HDI) for the country remains abysmally low despite the huge oil resources accruing to the country. Though there has been some increase in the country's HDI since 2005 (increasing from 0.434 to 0.471 in 2012), the country remains in the low human development category at 153 out of 187 countries and territories (UNDP, 2013). Without significant improvement in the lives of the people, the objective of focusing on achieving results rather than structure and processes, and providing quality service and related satisfactory performances by the government, has not been achieved. Thus, the hullabaloo about the use of market-like competition in the provision of public goods and services and use of *New Service Attitude* of Customer orientation or what is popularly known as SERVICOM (FMIC, n.d.) has no utility in the public service reforms as yet. Deregulation and commercialization, which are geared toward recovering costs of service provision, have graphically increased the cost of previously provided services by government, but the services provided have not been commensurate to the increased charges. Examples can be cited with the consistent attempt to remove subsidy enjoyed by citizens in petroleum products supplied by the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and increasing the cost of electricity supplied by the recently privatized Power Holding Company of Nigeria. The effect of these on the lives of citizens as well as the performance of these privatized or commercialized enterprises has not shown any positive trend. Prices of refined petroleum products have increased since the issue of subsidy removal came up in the era of SAP, yet the key problem of availability of products and price drop through market forces have not been realized. Despite the liberalization, refining of petroleum products remains a monopoly of the government as no new refineries have been built especially by the private sector to engender the anticipated competition. Worse still, the performance of these agencies in terms of accountability is still a far cry. NNPC moves from one financial scandal to another and electricity supply remains very low despite the huge resources spent in reforming the sector. Efforts to reform the NNPC and the entire oil and gas sector in Nigeria since 2001 has finally got stuck with the Petroleum Industry Bill introduced to the National Assembly since 2009.

The only clear perspective in Nigeria's socio-economic reforms that has the reform of the public administration system as its major plank since 1986 has been to remove subsidy and unlock more funds for the government without commensurate service delivery and equity consideration. For instance, just between 1999 and 2007, a total of 122 enterprises have been privatized by government which is believed to have earned the sum of N251.5 billion ($1.53 billion) only as gross proceeds for the Federal Government (Alohan, 2014). These privatized entities have been replaced with a reasonable number of unproductive agencies. Their removal from the government chest of organizations as we have seen has not so much affected the size of government or its processes. Political opposition, weak enforcement mechanism and lack of clear cut reform policy have been key constraints to the various bureaucratic reforms pursued. A major inadequacy of organizational restructuring in Nigeria is that the relationship between autonomous agencies and ministries has not been properly addressed. Even where regulatory or operative agencies are created as autonomous, the respective ministries still assume most of the supervisory, regulatory and policy formulation and implementation responsibilities. In most cases, created autonomous agencies compete for relevance with the parent organization or ministry and also grow into large bureaucracies themselves. The public service reform clearly moved away from the recurrent themes of decentralization, personnel empowerment, and organizational restructuring to emphasize cost saving reforms that have not also gone beyond rhetoric.

Concluding remarks

From the above exposition, we submit that Nigeria has been inconsistent in pursuing purposeful public service reforms to restructure public organizations to make them smaller, stronger, better skilled, and more efficient at delivering essential services. The number of government jobs has not declined, and the cost of running the government apparently has not reduced and quality of services of government agencies has not significantly improved. Emphasis has been more on introducing external controls and pushing the economic aspects of the reform to realize the goals of small government and reduced costs rather than changing the internal structural and operational processes. More agencies are created without few being scrapped or merged despite clear cases of mandates and functional duplications. Thus, like in other instances of some developing countries, NPM reform has not been able to achieve the objectives of the model in Nigeria.

The Nigerian case once more reaffirms the inability of many developing countries to take up elements of NPM. While the public sector reforms in Nigeria that began with the introduction of SAP in 1986 draws on NPM ideas that are internationally fashionable and trendy, we agree with Polidano (1999) that the implementation of the new paradigm has not gone beyond rhetoric. This however does not translate to the popular conclusion that NPM reform is not implementable in developing countries. Rather, it underscores the fact that attention has not been devoted to the very needful. In the Nigerian case, some of the newly created institutions should not have been established as the way to solve the problem of the administrative organizations or reacting to symptoms rather than proper diagnosis as Oronsanye investigation reveals (IReports, 2012). NPM reforms have not had the same result in all the countries including developed ones. Some developing countries including Mauritius, a Sub Saharan African, have made some progress in implementing NPM reform. Mauritian administrators are said to develop and deliver probably the best quality public services in the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa as evidenced by Mauritian Public Sector having won the second prize for pan-African Public Service Excellence Awards in 2007. It is a country where every month salaries are paid two clear days before the end of the month, where passports could be obtained within 24 hours, health sector services are continuously being improved, pensions are paid as per pre-determined dates, and investors can obtain their permits to invest within 3 days if all required documents are in order and are available on time (Chittoo et al., 2009). These scholars also make it clear that the success of the Mauritian reform, which they describe as a 180 degrees turn in what seemed to be the statusquo for decades was as a result of the “bold government action to push forward major reform unthinkable a decade ago”(Chittoo et al., 2009, p. 32). This of course points to the importance of leadership and political will in driving administrative reform. Usually, bureaucratic politics overrides the political will to implement reforms. Hence, reforms end up mainly being selective, inconsistent and pursuing externalities rather than focusing on deliberate changes to the structures and processes of public sector organizations with the objective of getting them (in some sense) to run better (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004).

The NPM public service reform implementation in Nigeria has been directed toward externalities such as privatization, deregulation, commercialization, and the likes to lessen the dominance of unproductive investments in the public sector inspired by the belief that government can do more with more funds. While privatization and marketization reforms could be relevant in repositioning the public sector, they cannot replace internal bureaucratic reform considered central in administrative reform and for the efficient and effective management of resources. The objective of introducing market mechanisms at the expense of the bureaucratic aspect of the reform equally affected the economic aspect of the reform since it is envisaged that the loss of the public sector would be the gain of the private sector. Because the public sector was not moved toward assuming new roles, it stuck to the old. Assuming the roles of regulation and rowing of the boat in a private sector driven economy continues to be a mirage.

In all, it appears that there is no consistent direction in the pursuit of any clear objectives in government reorganization and restructuring programs. The reform policy itself has changed from one administration to another, from Obasanjo’s NEEDS to Yar’adua’s Seven Point Agenda and to Goodluck Jonathan’s Transformation Agenda. Though some common strands of the NPM reform have reflected in all the medium term plans of each of the administrations, there is no guarantee that these have received equal attention and commitment over the years. It is difficult to sustain political support for reform with frequent changes of government (Chittoo et al., 2009). Even when there is some stability in government through the rule of one party such as has been the case in Nigeria since 1999, individual political leaders will likely have their priority programs especially where ideological and programmatic parties are nonexistent.

Evidently, it is crass shift of the buck to assert that NPM reform is unsuitable for developing countries than to blame the inconsistency, lack of commitment and misconception of priorities in reform implementation. Though the NPM reform path cannot be seen as a magic bullet that should eradicate all administrative lapses, it is more realistic to concede that most developing countries have not adopted anything remotely near the package (Polidano, 1999), and some of the programs implemented had opposite effects. The selfish pursuit of political leaders and their tendency to compromise administrative transparency is a stronger inhibition than inappropriate cultural, social, economic and other environmental arguments. Upholding these environmental or the prismatic argument (Haque, 2010; Riggs, 1964) can only end up in a social equilibrium theory that admits little or no change for such administrative systems. Administrative reform entails adaptability and institutionalization of values and cultures obtained from environment on the one hand, and the institutionalization of the environment by organizational values and cultures on the other (Farazmand, 2002).

On this note, it is vital to reiterate that driving administrative reform is a change project. Like every other change, it attracts resistance from those who benefit from the statusquo. It therefore requires both the leadership and the political will to drive changes as well as institutionalized medium to sustain consistent action over years because institutions outlive those that establish them. Driving administrative reforms requires a relatively permanent pattern of reform with some level of legitimacy and acceptability and an institutional medium of coordination. This calls to relevance the institutional theory of administrative reform. Aspects of this theory as described by experts posit that rather than viewing organizational changes as emanating from individual organizational/political leaders under purposive models or responding to the environmental dictates, the institutional models focus on the need to modify collective values, culture, and structure to make the organization adaptive and dynamic (Farazmand, 2002). In this case some institutionalized patterns of reform are pre-eminent. While Nigeria tried to fulfill this necessity by establishing the Bureau of Public Service Reforms in 2004 as a coordinating agency of public services reform, there was no clear definition and legitimization of roles and power of this agency. There was also no consistent reform policy with some force of law. Each administration relied on introducing a personal development and reform plan that provided room for inconsistencies and the opportunity for career administrators to resist changes that would affect them.

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