

## DE-BLOATING NIGERIAN PUBLIC SERVICE: RETHINKING THE QUANDRY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ORONSSYE 'S REPORT

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### ***Abstract***

*Public reforms are undertaken by governments to address policy deficits in a system. In Nigeria, the major problem with reform attempts is Government's quandary in implementation. For example, it was curious that over eight years after the release of the "White Paper on the Report of the Presidential Committee on Restructuring and Rationalisation of Federal Government Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies" in 2014 (Oronsaye Committee)", with the core objective to review the mandates of all Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies, with a view to recommending scraping, merger or restructuring as appropriate, in order to remove duplicity", the implementation of the accepted recommendations has remained in abeyance. This study was therefore, instituted to examine the causation in Government's quandary and inertia. The study adopted expository survey method, anchored on documentary and primary survey analysis; while the Systems Approach underpinned the theoretical framework. Salient among the findings were: (i) lack of political will, and (ii) entrenched interest of the political class, as the, major causes of Government's quandary; while the anticipated major deterioration in performance of the key macroeconomic variables, emanating from escalation in unsustainable diminution in good governance would exact debilitating effects on the wellbeing of the citizens. It was therefore, recommended that the Federal Government should abandon all entrenched interests; and musters the political guts and indeed urgently implement the accepted recommendations, given the sliding revenue profile of Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Public Reforms, Oronsaye Report, Parastatals, Quandary, Implementation

### **Introduction**

Public administration has been variously defined by diverse authors. Of particular interest and relevance to this study however, is at which, in sum, views public administration as "the body of persons in charge of affairs who perform the activities undertaken to implement public policy, or to produce some services or goods" (Sharma, Sadana & Kaur, 2012, p.5). Mc Queen in Sharma, et. al, (p.5) defined public administration as the "administration related to the operation of government whether central or local".

Among the myriad of the problems of public administration, complexity, efficiency, immeasurability and accountability are critical. The problem of efficiency is more complex because government and public organisations have multiple objectives. This is because the pursuit of societal welfare is confronted with the "problem of resource allocation, co-ordination of goals and resources all pose problems of efficiency and effectiveness. (Adebayo, 2011, p.6). In this regard, Woodrow Wilson, 1887 in Sharma, et al (2012, p.6) wrote that the task of public administration was "to straighten the paths of government, to make its business less unbusiness-like and purify its organisation, and to crown it's duties with dutifulness. When juxtaposed, with the views of Adebayo and Wilson, it may be surmised that the cost of inefficiency, particularly in public administration, is enormous, both in qualitative terms and quantitative terms. Care must therefore be taken to strengthen the paths of administration, in order to drastically reduce the cost of inefficiency (conclusion is mine).

Against this background, and worried by the escalation in the cost of public service delivery, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) on August 18, 2011, set up a committee on the Restructuring and Rationalisation of Federal Government Parastatals, Commissions, agencies otherwise referred to as Oronsaye Committee, named after Steven Oronsaye, Chairman. Interestingly, FGN released the White Paper on the Committee's Report in March 2014. Unfortunately however, the implementation of the accepted recommendations of the Report as contained in the White Paper, had remained stalled, eight years after. Goaded by the quandary, this study was initiated, to add fillip to the advocacy for the implementation of the recommendations, against the backdrop of the inexorable growth in recurrent expenditure of FGN's Annual Budgets and the cause and effect implications.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The imperative to streamline or rationalise the gamut of public organisations: Parastatals, Commissions and Agents, cannot be overstressed, given the increasing cost of governance, vis-a-vis, the declining fortunes in public revenue. Literature (Adebayo 2011; Anyanwu, Oyefusi, Oaikheman & Dimowo, 1997; Adamolekun, 2011) is replete with observations on the growing need to prune the Nigerian public service, in order to reduce the level of redundancy and the bloated cost of governance, which intention is in consonance with the key mandate of Oronsaye Committee. Unfortunately however, the much needed intellectual advocacy, required to propel governmental policy-makers from the state of inertia, has remained in deficit. In the circumstance, government has continued in a dilemma by foot dragging and avoiding responsibility to act as need. The central problem of this study therefore, is the deficit in the afforested intellectual advocacy, and the concomitant huge cost of the delay in implementing the policy.

### **Objectives of the Study**

As a corollary of the research problem, the major objective of the study is to examine the imperative of implementing the recommendations of the Oronsaye Committee's Report. However, the specific objectives are, to:

- i. provide a prognosis of the impact of the continued multiplicity or duplicity in government agencies on public expenditure and the implication for efficiency and service failure;
- ii. add intellectual fillip to the advocacy for the implementation of the White Paper; and
- iii. proffer a policy panacea for early resolution of the inertia arising from government's unexplained quandary.

### **Review of Literature**

A review of the key concepts employed in this study was done for clarity and focus. The concepts include public policy, inefficiency, restructuring and rationalisation.

## **Public Policy**

Because of the diverse connotations, public policy as a concept is amorphous. To rest the controversy however, the short but practical definition provided by Thomas Dye appears to have gained a wide appeal among scholars and policy practitioners: "anything a government chooses to do or not to do" Dye, (2014). As to the question of who makes public policy, the answer is that several institutions: the Legislature, Executive, Judiciary, administrative agencies, political parties, pressure groups and individual citizens, all play diverse roles. Public policy-making process requires credible data or information which can be obtained from internal reports, records and statistics, un-official sources, special investigations conducted by committees or commissions of enquiry and research studies (Sharma, et al, 2012). Notwithstanding the intendment of a policy, the process can be largely influenced by various factors, salient of which include the internal environment of the political system, external environment, ideology, political leadership, personal ability of the leadership and influence by political parties and pressure groups (Mahashwari, 1987). The Oronsaye Committee was established by the Executive and obtained information and data from various sources, particularly the internal records of agencies and parastatals; submitted the Report, which, due to the quandary of government, may remain in abeyance due to 'environmental influence'

## **Inefficiency in Public Service**

Adebayo (2011) adopted the definition provided by the Encyclopedia of the Sociences in defining the concept of efficiency: "efficiency is the ratio between input and output, effort and result, expenditure and income, cost and resulting pleasure" (p.168). From the view point of Oxford English Dictionary in Adebayo (p.169), efficiency is defined in terms of effectiveness. "While effectiveness is concerned more with the achievement of a policy goal possible at the least cost successfully, efficiency focuses on input-output relationships which seek to achieve maximum work for a minimum input of resources". Unfortunately, due to the problem of immeasurability, the value of public services can hardly be quantified. Regardless of the limitation, some measure of efficiency must be devised and applied to guide 'performance'. For this reason, Simon (1976) posited that the function of the public administrator is not to establish utopian performance criteria; instead, the function is to maximize the achievement of the key developmental objectives by effectively employing available, but limited resources. From the foregoing, it may be discernable that the cardinal purpose of seeking to rationalise public agencies and parastatals in Nigeria, is the intractable multi-faceted problems and the attendant huge governance cost.

Adamolekun (2011, p.436) write that "four main areas of continuing weakness in the public sector are: poor service delivery; weak accountability; poor inter-governmental relation and high turn-over of Heads of Service of the Federation. Of particular note is weak accountability manifest in corruption, perpetrated through over invoicing, ghost workers syndrome, contract inflation, budget padding, etc. The situation is compounded by the duplicity of parastatals and agencies, most of which operate at cross purposes. Under such regime of maladministration, much input had been misinvested, while output and remained disproportionately low: the fundamental motivation for the desire to rationalize and restructure the existing agencies, for efficiency. Sapru (2013) agree with such decision when the author (p.2011) posited that "the fundamental criterion of administrative decisions must be a criterion of efficiency rather than a criterion of adequacy".

## **Restructuring and Rationalisation**

Woodrow Wilson (1887) in Sapru(2013) noted that since public administration is government in action, administration, at any rate, was 'old' and required reforms which are capable of ameliorating confusion and costly practices that are discernable from practical experience. Such reforms will reposition administrative institutions in solid principle, with the objective of redesigning administratively the conduct of public affairs more efficiently (Sapru, 2013). Restructuring entails the various decisions taken, as part of administrative reform, to improve the efficiency in the conduct of public affairs and public officers, by changing the extant or existing structure of the institutions. The policy may involve pruning the size of the agencies and the work force (rationalisation) or mergers, etc.

In Nigeria, numerous reforms had been undertaken to reposition the Public Service for efficiency. The effort dated back to the colonial era and traversed various indigenous administrations. Among the array of reforms are: Harragin Commission, 1946; Gorsuch Commission, 1954; Mbanefo Commission, 1959; Newns Commission, 1959; Morgan Commission, 1963; Elliot Commission, 1966; Adebo Commission, 1970; Udoji Commission, 1972; Dotun Phillips Commission, 1985; Koshoni Panel (Decree No.43), 1988; Ayida Review Panel, 1994; Orosaye Committee, 2011 (Adebayo, 2011). In effect, administrative reform of the public service of Nigeria has remained a continuum, as it has been globally, but irrespective of the mandate or reform tool, the goal is to achieve greater efficiency.

## **Review of Empirical Studies**

The volume of empirical literature in public service reforms in Nigeria is huge. Given space constraint, only little has been done in this review. In 2005, Abubakar conducted a study on financial reforms in public administration in Nigeria, to implicate the effect of the integrated payroll and personnel information system (IPPIS) on government's wage bill. The study employed an expository approach and found that the adoption of the system reduced wage bill, by blocking leakages in public financial management. The study therefore, recommends the institutionalisation of the system, in order to instill financial discipline among public officers.

Samson (2015)'s study investigated the potency of IPPIS in reducing or eliminating the ghost workers syndrome in Nigerian Public Service, which had caused considerable rise in government wage bill inexorably. Simple percentage analysis of the data: primary and secondary, was performed; while statistical test of significance was conducted with the aid of correlational technique. It was found that deployment of IPPIS was effective in curtailing the syndrome of ghost workers. Accordingly, the study recommends continuous adoption of the system.

A similar study conducted by Shehu (2019) attempted to examine the panacea for the ghost workers scam in the Nigerian public sector, using IPPIS tool. A mix of primary and secondary data were analysed with correlational method. The study established evidence of the prevalence of ghost workers in the public sector; and therefore, recommended the employment of IPPIS. Similar studies in financial management reforms in the public sector in Nigeria were conducted by Enofe(2017) on Edo State, Nigeria and Balis(2011) on the challenge in implementing IPPIS in Nigeria respectively. Michael (2005) researched on the effectiveness of public sector reforms in resolving the traditional weaknesses in the financial sector in Nigeria. The study found some relevance in the reforms in addressing some of the weak corporate governance issues in the banking industry; and recommended that the reforms should be fine-tuned and sustained, to enhance the advancement of the core mandate of providing financial services to the citizens.

Overseas, in Uganda, Motavu(2006) in Aina (2012) conducted a research on the state of Uganda's management information system (MIS) in the public service, with the aim to discern the need for establishing a robust MIS for the public sector. Ministries of Health and Finance and Economic Development were selected for a case-study. The study found that with the introduction of the concept of New Public Management, it became imperative to adopt MIS, to facilitate decision making, for improved governance. Rapid adoption of MIS tool was therefore, recommended.

In Tanzania, Lufunyo(2015)'s study in Aina (2012) examined the impact of public service reforms on streamlining and merging government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) for effective policy implementation and service delivery. Extensive review of extant and current documents and records available in MDAs was undertaken. The major documentary sources included institutional records, books, public sector reform reports, newspapers and articles. Primary analysis of data collected with a questionnaire complemented the secondary review. Research findings revealed that the merger and streamlining of MDAs significantly and positively impacted the cost of governance in the public sector. The policy was therefore recommended, particularly because it was in tandem with literature's position that reform are instrumental in effective policy implementation in public sector establishments. This study is very similar in background objective and goal to the Nigerian situation with regard to Orosaye Committee's.

In 2005, Nyadezigborin Aina (2012) examined the effect of payroll fraud and ghost workers on government's wage bill in Ghana. Using correlational analysis, the study analysed the relationship between the opportunities for ghost workers and number of government agencies. Findings reported a significant relationship. It was recommended that the Financial Administration Act should be amended, to introduce additional control measures in the payroll, in order to reduce or eliminate the amount of ghost workers.

### **Theoretical Framework**

David Easton (1957)'s conception of Systems Theory is adopted in this study. Generally, a system is an assemblage of parts, but viewed in totality as a whole (Surpru, 2013). Easton's systems approach holds that a policy-making process is the black box in any system; and that the box converts the demands of a society into policies. A government organisation, as an open system, interacts with the environment, receives input which it transforms, and thereafter exports as output to the environment, as policies.

The implication of a political system being open is that it should be able to respond to the changing environment in the form of new policies, in order to maintain a steady state. In Nigeria, government's administrative responses to changes in the environment has been expressed in the various reform attempts, with the ultimate objective to process the emerging public demands into new policy output that would address the environmental changes. The process requires a cooperative action as posited by Barnard (1951). The relevance and utility of the theory lies in the suitability in understanding the cooperative process, through which a political or governmental system works, to shape public policy, in response to environmental changes, as in contemporary Nigeria, that necessitated reforms in extant public policy agencies. The advantage of Easton's view over Bertalanffy (1951)'s conception of systems theory derives from its applicability in a political system, in contradistinction to the pure science, as envisioned by Bertalanffy.

**Methodology**

As a documentary survey, the study is largely descriptive. The survey sourced the major input from the “White Paper” on the Report of the Presidential Committee on Restructuring of Federal Government Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies, also known as White Paper on Oronsaye Committee. Other sources of information included journals, textbooks, and relevant reports on extant Federal Government Committees. A critical analysis of the probable cause of government's quandary or inertia, with respect to the implementations of the accepted Orosanye Committee reform recommendations, and the implication for, or consequences of, the burgeoning governance cost in Nigeria, was conducted in the primary survey method involving a select sample of top 450 serving and retired public officers in Abuja. Responses were presented in a frequency distribution table and analysed with the per centage statistical tool. This procedure is widely employed in social and management sciences, and was adopted by Akinsanya& Mahmud (2018).

**Analysis and Discussions**

**Oronsaye's Committee Report**

For ease of reference and comprehension, a brief on the White Paper onOronsaye Committee's Report is reproduced:

**PREAMBLE**

1. The Federal government runs its business through the efficient and effective operations of the Public Service. In 1970, the Federal Government expanded the scope of the operations of the Public Service from core policy implementation to active participation in all sectors of the economy through the establishment of Agencies, Parastatals, and Commissions. The additional Bodies were to be the drivers of the socio-economic objectives of the Federal Government. Some of them were set up on ad hoc basis to address specific challenges.
2. Over the years, the Bodies transmuted into permanent institutions with overlapping functions in some cases, and successive Administrations had further created more Bodies without regard to their efficacy in the attainment of the socio-economic Agenda of the Federal Government leading to escalation in cost of governance.
3. To redress this situation, His Excellency, the President and Commander-in Chief of the Armed Forces, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR, inaugurated, on the 18th August, 2011, a Seven-Member Presidential Committee to advise on the Restructuring and Rationalization of the Federal Government's Agencies, Parastatals and Commissions.
4. The Presidential Committee comprised of the following members
  - a. Stephen Oronsaye, CFR -----Chairman
  - b. Japh CTNwosu ----- Member
  - c. Rabiu D. Abubakar-----Member
  - d. N. Salman Mann, mni----- Member



- e. Hamza A. Tahir, mni-----Member
- f. AdetunjiAdesunkanmi-----Member
- g. Umar A. Mohammed-----Member/Secretary

The Terms of Reference of the Presidential Committee were as follows:

- a. study and review all previous reports and records on the restructuring of Federal Parastatals and advise on whether they were still relevant;
- b. examine the enabling Acts of all Federal Agencies, Parastatals and Commissions and classify them into various sectors;
- c. examine critically, the mandate of the existing Federal agencies, Parastatals and Commissions and determine areas of overlap or duplication of functions and make appropriate recommendations to either restructure, merge or scrap some to eliminate such overlaps , duplications or redundancies; and
- d. advise on any other matter incidental to the foregoing which might be relevant to the desire of Government to prune down the cost of governance.

## SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

In carrying out its mandate, the Presidential Committee:

- (a) had interactive sections with Federal Government Ministries, Agencies, Parastatals and Commissions, reviewed their submissions and their mandates;
- (b) referred to previous Reports on Government White Paper on Review, Harmonization and Rationalization of Federal Parastatals, Institutions and Agencies;
- (c) involved major stakeholders within the Public Service;
- (d) sent out templates to Ministries and Offices for comprehensive list of Agencies, Parastatals and Commissions, enabling Acts and Mandates;
- (e) invited memoranda from members of the public through advertisements in four national dailies;
- (f) obtained copies of Appropriation Acts from 2009-2011, to ascertain Government financial involvement; and
- (g) dialogued with the Ministries, Agencies, Parastatals and Commissions and leaders of past Administrations and the National Assembly.

## RATIONALE

The rationale for restructuring and rationalization of Agencies, Parastatals and Commissions is to meet the global socio-economic challenges which have rendered it inevitable for the Government to cut the cost of governance while ensuring accountability.

## PRINCIPLES

In carrying out the assignment the Presidential Committee was guided by the following principles:

- a) the economic challenges and the need for government to make more efficient use of its resources to achieve its development objectives and goals;
- (b) the fact that Nigeria had undertaken reforms in the past;
- (c) it was imperative to reform to meet challenges of a better socio-political and economic society;
- (d) there was no need to create another body to perform the functions of an already existing statutory entity. The fact that an institution was inefficient and ineffective should not warrant the creation of a new one; and
- (e) the reform would ensure efficient and effective management of Government structures and functionaries to guarantee better service delivery and good governance.

The Presidential Committee observed that the rationalization of Agencies, Parastatals and Commissions would help the Government to reposition the Ministries to supervise the mandates of the Parastatals. It recognized that the Reform would have human dimensions and cost implications and recommended that Government should focus on empowering the MDAs *"to do more for less"*.

The Drafting Committee was given the following Terms of Reference:

- (a) to study and analyse the findings and recommendations contained in the Report of the Presidential Committee on the Restructuring and Rationalization of Government Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies; and
- (b) to produce and submit a draft White Paper on the Report for the consideration of Government.

## The Lethargy or Inertia of Implementation

FGN considered the Report of the Oronsaye Committee and released the White Paper thereon in March 2014. The recommendations on most of the burning or intriguing issues were avoided through their outright rejection; nevertheless even the accepted recommendations have been out in abeyance over 8 years after release of the White Paper. At various fora, remarks or comments were made by speakers and presenters on the need to revisit the stalemate, in order to initiate the process of realising the cardinal objectives of cost reduction and service efficiency, for which the reform was instituted. For sure, the focus of this paper is not to critique the recommendations and outcome of the Report contained in the White Paper; but on the probable cause of the lethargy and the effect on the aforementioned objective.

## Analysis of the Questionnaire Responses

Table 1: present a summary of the status of the questionnaire administration.



Table 1: Status of Questionnaire Administration

Copies of the Questionnaire Distributed	Copies of the Questionnaire well completed and retrieved	Success or retrieval rate (%)
570	450	78.93

Source: Field Survey, 2022

It may be discernable from table 1 that 450 out of the 570 sampled public officers (78.73%) duly completed the questionnaire. At 78.93 per cent, the retrieval success rate was considered high and adequate for the purpose. Analysis of the responses to the questions on the causal factors in the Inertia Association with the implementation of the approved White Paper Recommendations.

Table 2 presents summary of the responses to the prolonged delay or quandary in the implementation of the approved recommendations in the White Paper, in the review of respondents.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Responses to the Questionnaire

S/N	Causal Factor	“Yes “ Frequency	%	“No” Frequency	%
1.	Lack of political will	450	100.00	0	0.00
2.	Entrenched interest of the political class	418	92.89	32	7.11
3.	Lack or inadequate administrative machinery for implementation	45	10.10	405	90.00
4.	Socio-economic implications of policy implementation (unemployment, poverty, rise in unemployment, moral decadence, crime, etc.).	311	69.11	139	30.89
5.	Political backlash unpopular government and implications for electoral success	422	93.78	28	6.22

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

It may be discernable from Table 2 that all respondents were of the view that Government might have been overwhelmed by lack of the political will to implement the recommendations that were acceptable and willingly accepted. Lack of political will is not new in the characteristic behaviour of Government at all tiers in Nigeria. Numerous Reports and White Papers on very critical issues, particularly involving inquiries into alleged financial crimes, have been stalled: 'Opota Panel', 'End SARS', various Constitutional Conferences and investigative panels on disturbances, etc, have remained unimplemented.

The common tactics other employed involves sitting on recommendations, with the belief that effusion of time would cause events to overtake the issues at stake. Very tritely, this strategy has worked in favour of government and public officers involved in heinous crimes against the State. After over twenty years, for

example, the enquiries into the murder of Dele Giwa and Bola Ige are on-going. The same is true for the murder of Alfred Rewane; and cases involving the crass mismanagement of several public enterprises. Thus, 418 out of the 450 respondents (92.89%) were of the view that well entrenched interest of powerful citizens accounted for Government's inertia experienced in the implementation of certain public policy decisions, Oronsaye Report inclusive.

As to whether the requisite administrative machinery was available to facilitate policy implementation, the views of 405 respondents (90.00%) was that no challenges relating to such deficit were known. For one reason, the Bureaucracy, with the formal mandate to carry out public policy implementation, existed, regardless of the associated weakness or inefficiency. Any alibi of institutional deficit was therefore, only to the extent of inefficiency, but not non-existence.

The argument against the socio- economic implications of restructuring and rationalization is understandable. The key issue however, is the more devastating consequences on Nigeria's economic capacity which the over-burdening Public Service's unsustainable huge financial expenditure will exact on the economic viability of the country. The Director General of Budget Office of the Federation, in response to a question on the impact of the huge personnel cost proposed in the 2022 Appropriation Bill, was of the view that a cut in the estimates would release many public employees into the labour market; and that the decision would compound the burgeoning population of the unemployed Nigerians. During a subsequent interview on the same Bill however, the Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and Planning was of the view that FGN should implement the Oronsaye Report, for Government to survive the pressure on the lean revenues, given the huge personnel cost amounting to over N4.3trillion in 2022.

For sure, some temporary disequilibrium would be triggered, when the White Paper is implemented. Such turbulence would be localized and inconsequential, when compared to the more pervasive impact, if Government remained tardy, or failed to halt the trend, in the light of the worsening financial resources. True, poverty, unemployment, social decadence and crime rates will grow; but equilibrium can be restored through provision of palliatives, since the number of the victims of the reform will be low. The foregoing argument is reflected, in sum, by the statistics on the responses to the question on whether the socio economic implications were key factors debarring Government's action. Of the 450 respondents, 311 (69.11%) were affirmative; while 139 (30.89%) responded in the negative.

With regard to the political backlash as a major consideration in the observed Government's lethargic posture, 422 (93.78%) of the 450 respondents were positive in their views; while only 28 (6.22%) were negative. Respondents believed that the major fear in implementing the report is the attendant unpopularity into which such action would plunge the Government and the political party. Such reactions would be expected for any decision by an elected government in a democratic dispensation; in contradistinction to the guts of a military regime. Analogously, the quandary in proposals for the creation of new state and local governments in Nigeria has been ascribable to similar fear of the political backlash. To be sure, no government or political party will risk defeat at elections, irrespective of the sagacity of a decision. Flowing from the foregoing, the major causes of, or factors, in the "unwillingness" of FGN to implement Oronsaye Report include lack of political will, entrenched interest, socio-economic implications and political backlash. The implications of the 'refusal' by FGN are examined in the subsequent section.

## **Prognosis of the Implications of the Quandary**

The effects of Governments continuing delay or failure to implement the approved White Paper recommendations are many. However, for brevity, the effects have been summarized into economic, social and political groupings.

### **Economic Implications**

Doubtless, a copious effect of the existing state of affairs is the enormous pressure which the duplicity of MDAs has exacted on public recurrent expenditure, a substantial proportion attributable to the burgeoning personnel cost. The situation has been exacerbated by declining revenues and escalating cost due to the malfunctioning economy, evident in the suboptimal or unfavourable performance of the key macro-economic variables: inflation, unemployment, foreign exchange, trade balance, huge deficit budgeting, huge public debt burden and declining crude volume (due to pipeline vandalism and theft), among others. For example, some unfavorable indices which included the worrisome public debt in excess of N41 trillion as at July, 2022 and borrowing from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) by 'ways and means' method or 'printing of money', were reported by the Debt Management Office. In the 2022 Annual Budget, about N4.6 trillion was earmarked for personnel cost alone. When the huge provision for external debt service is factored, Nigeria expends over 60 percent of Annual Budgets on recurrent expenditure (Federal Ministry of Finance, 2022). As a domino effect, the worrisome depreciation of Nigerian currency is partly ascribable to the hyperinflation. When the CBN 'prints' money to fund government operations, the option results in inflation, unless the economy had developed the capacity to counter the antigen, by way of substantial growth in output by the real sector. Cherunilam (2006) and Jhingan (2013) cited Gustav Cassel (1920)'s theory of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) which stated that "the exchange between two currencies must stand essentially on the quotient of internal purchasing parity of these currencies": Cassel (1920) in Cherunilam (2006, p.406). Similarly, Jhingan (2013, p.300) quoted Cassel as propounding PPP which stated that "the equilibrium exchange rate between two inconvertible currencies is determined by the relative price levels in the two countries". The foregoing analysis highlights the transmission mechanism through which dysfunctional macro-economic variables can unleash poverty on the citizens in a debilitating manner, as the case has been in Nigeria.

### **Social Effects**

The cliché that other problems emanate from economic problems roundly explains the social expectations when the economy is bad. On the social plane therefore, the continued procrastination in the implementation of Oronsaye Report would result in general social discontent of citizenry, in reaction to the growing pauperization by the debilitating effects of hyperinflation and other economic conditions aforementioned. Labour union strikes, social disobedience, immoral misconduct among the youths and escalation in the level of organized crime might capitalize on the evil opportunities, to rein terror on Nigerian citizens across board.

### **Political Implications**

Since the sole interest of politicians is to win elections, contestants might deploy unwholesome tactics and antics, many of which would offend the established rules or electoral procedures. Opposition's

resistance and counter offensive will naturally trigger violent skirmishes which, more often, degenerate into widespread political violence. In the defunct Western Region of Nigeria, the 'wild-wild-West'; the 'operation wetie' typified electoral brigandage, reminiscent of violent political misconduct during Nigeria's First Republic.

## Conclusion

In sum, the implications and effects of the procrastination, or failure to implement the accepted recommendations as contained in the White Paper on Oronsaye's Committee Report, are many and diverse. It is surmised that unless prompt effect is given to the implementation, the domino effects will progress to exacerbate the already volatile economic condition of Nigeria. The devastating economic conditions would pass the baton to the waiting incendiary social and political situations, to compete the race. When this process is actualized, Nigeria would be a pariah country. Accordingly, a suite of policy panacea is offered, to halt the tide.

## Recommendations

Arising from the foregoing analysis and conclusion, the following policy antidotes are proffered

- I. Federal Government of Nigeria should muster the necessary confidence, stamina, political guts and social responsibility to implement, without further delay, the accepted recommendations as contained in the White Paper, released since 2014. Tanzanian Government implemented similar reforms when it faced the same problems, as reported in a study by Lufunyo in Aina (2012).
- ii. Without prejudice to the need to observe the doctrine of Structural Functionalism in public administration, the Legislature (National Assembly) should design and institutionalize stringent criteria to be strictly followed when the establishment of new MDAs is proposed, in order to stem the tide of unbridled growth. Otherwise, the anticipated gains of Oronsaye's proposed reforms would relapse to status quo. The implication of this recommendation is that the new function to be performed by proposed agency should be assigned to an existing related agency with the requisite capacity. Where however, the function is so specialized that a separate structure is required, the new structure to be so created should be domiciled in the related MDA as a department. Thus, the huge personnel and overhead cost associated with the full complements of a separate agency would be avoided, since a department will normally be serviced from the shared resources available to all units and departments in the agency. Analogously, it may be cost-effective to domicile a faculty of medicine or engineering in a university vis-à-vis, establishing separate universities of medicine and engineering.
- iii. Notwithstanding the social service nature of the public sector, Government at all tiers should promote the philosophy and orientation of self-funding as a fundamental criterion for establishing MDAs. Government should establish some minimum rates of service charges to be borne by all clients, with the exception of children and old persons. Thus, hospitals, courts, schools, roads, police, immigration, public utilities, aviation, etc, should institutionalise service charges at minimal rates adequate to recoup at least 3- per cent of the cost of service, even if the huge investment cost cannot be amortised by passing it directly to the public users. A classical example is the case of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), which remained a 'social service agency', in spite of

the huge resources the agency generated from examination fees. When, however, the administration of Isa'aqOloyede was inaugurated, the agency not only translated to self-funding, but it paid 'dividend' in excess of N7billion to FGN within the first two years of operation. The experience smacks of the pervasive corruption in public service and among public officers who hide under the excuse in the outmoded and now irrelevant cliché that public agencies are non-profit oriented.

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