

ERRATIC POLICY MAKING, IMPLEMENTATION AND ADOPTION OF INCREMENTAL MODEL: NIGERIA EXPERIENCE

Yusuf Sulaimon Aremu (Corresponding Author)

Department of General Studies, Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta, Nigeria.
yusufsulaimonaremu@yahoo.com Tel: (234)7038065172

Salako M. A.

Department of Banking and Finance, Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta, Nigeria.

Adedina L. O.

Department of Business Administration, Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta, Nigeria.

Ogunbayo T. O.

Department of Business Administration, Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta, Nigeria.

Oni Kazeem Adebisi

Department of Business Administration, Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT: *The divergence in the policies articulated by the imminent government from the policies implemented by each successive government when they are at the helm of affairs has incited various criticisms in Nigeria. The paper seeks to determine the significance of incremental model in policy implementation in Nigeria. In its bid to achieve the objective, the study adapted and developed an incremental policy framework and brief qualitative desktop research analysis was carried out. The study finds out that continuous reversal of the existing policy and adoption of the new policy by new governments has been causing policy somersault and has not in any way beneficial to our Nation. Conclusively, arbitrary policy reversal without justification has a detrimental effect on the achievement of socio-economic policy goals set by the various governments. The study recommends that under no circumstance should any administration throw overboard the existing project or policy with the notion that the policy or the project is an initiative of the previous administration.*

KEYWORDS: Economic Policymaking, Policy Implementation, Incremental model, Policy Reversal

INTRODUCTION

Policy making and implementation is the essence, core and nitty-gritty of public oriented institution and government in any country of which Nigeria is not an exception. The articulation of the policy or 'plan of what the potential governments/parties want to do' determines to a

certain extent the success of the party or incoming government at any level. The divergence in the policies articulated by the imminent government from the policies implemented by each successive government when they are at the helm of affairs has incited various criticisms in Nigeria. The dearth of stability and connection in policy implementation is seriously manifesting at various level of government in Nigeria. Each government comes with her own set of agenda without improving the agenda enunciated by predecessor governments. These governments always throw overboard the program communicated and implemented by their predecessors which have led to the existence of many unaccomplished policy goals in Nigeria. The policies like NAPEP and NEEDS under Obasanjo Regime (1999- 2007); 7 Points agenda of President Yaradua (1997-2010); the so-called Transformation Agenda of President Jonathan (2010 - 2015) are all disjointed policies with no element of continuity which have made the development goal in Nigeria a mirage (Abdulrahman, Sule &Zuwaira, 2016). The abrupt policy change has conflicting effect on the existing policies and can be counterproductive to the goals communicated to be achieved by the sub-unit governments to a large extent. The adopted policy model in Nigeria has not been following a definite pattern that it cannot be described as being rational as the ultimate goal of these adopted policies which cannot be accomplished. The pattern of policy enunciation and implementation in Nigeria can be characterized as the combination of elite and the group model.

According to Sanchawa (2015), elite model sees elite group (usually government) as solely responsible for policy making and implementation and the policy enunciated by the elite do not arise from mass demand while group model is base on the self-interest of the interest groups. The erratic policy models that have been adopted by the governments have been increasing the cost of implementing policies in the country. The disjoint in the policy implementation by various successive governments in Nigeria resulting from egotistic attitude and the level of corruption within the government has made the Nigeria governments at every tier to lack credibility. This has continued to increase communication distrust among the citizens and the governments in the country. Against this backdrop, this study seeks to determine the relevance of incremental model in policy implementation in Nigeria. The objective of the study will also be achieved by brief assessment of what extent the erratic models of policy implementation being employed have achieved the policy goals that have been communicated by the governments.

This paper raises a question that will be answered by the study as follows;

Does new and erratic policy adopted by various successive governments achieve their socio-economic target?

Can incremental policy making be beneficial to the Nation?

The research work is justified on the ground that the incremental framework approach of its analysis makes it distinct from extant studies and makes the study as a complement and an improvement on the extant related.

In view of this, apart from this section that introduces the term paper, the second section reviews the relevant conceptual, theoretical and empirical review. Section three presents the methodology and the incremental model framework of the paper. Section four analyses the relevance and superiority of incremental models in Nigeria context. Section four presents the

brief qualitative analysis of policy reversal in Nigeria and benefit of the incremental policy model to Nigeria. Section five presents the concluding remarks and recommendations.

REVIEW OF ISSUES

Conceptual Issues

Conceptually, policy comprises general guidelines for making decisions. The policy comes from a political authority though influenced and sometimes determined by other actors, but resulting programmes and activities can be implemented through non-governmental agencies. Public policy refers to government decisions designed to deal with various social problems like unemployment, crime, environmental protection foreign policy etc. (Ijeoma, 2004). According to Martha and Abdulahi (A Public Policy Course Guide), a policy is actions taken and to be taken by the government or private organization (Ikelegbe, 1996). And, can also be referred to as a proposal, of a programme, major decision or the refusal to make a certain decision (Sharkansv, 1978). A Policy is a deliberate system of principles to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. It is a statement of intent and it is implemented as a procedure or protocol (Smith, 2002). A policy is a definite course or method of action selected from alternatives and in the light of given conditions to guide and usually determine present and future decisions. A Policy is a course setting action which provides the direction, guide and means to the achievement of predetermined goal (Ikelegbe, 1996). Policy implementation involves series of activities that are directed towards putting programmes to the necessary personnel, logistic support and funds, which will enhance the actualization of the policy objectives. Policy implementation is the fourth phase of the policy cycle in which adopted policy are put into the reality. It is the process of making the achievement of the policy objective become a reality (Boundless, 2016).

According to Boundless successful implementation of a policy depends on the following: 1) A policy must be effectively communicated e.g. from the government to the relevant body that has the power to enact and implement it. 2) The policy must be clearly communicated and easy to interpret if it is to be implemented effectively. Too much ambiguity can truncate the implementation of the policy. 3) Finally, the resources applied to implementation must be integrated into the existing processes and agencies. This is the point where the adopted policy model plays significant roles in the successful implementation of the policy. Public Policy is very critical since it is the springboard to development. In Nigeria context, policy making is easily made but the issue of proper implementation to achieve the developmental objectives is the problem that needs attention (Dahida and Maidoki, 2013). Dahida and Maidoki (2013) conclude that the problem in Nigeria is not policy formulation but that of implementation. The challenges that arise in policy implementation process make it less likely that policy objectives will be achieved (Weaver, 2010). In view of this, the policy model should be meticulously selected considering the peculiarity of the policy field.

Theoretical Issues

Theories abound on the public policy formulation and implementation. For the purpose of this term paper, the prominent ones will be delved into.

Institutional Theory is centre on the traditional organization of government. A Policy is seen as the product of Constitutional provisions, common law and judicial decisions. The government

functionaries give legitimacy to policy. Public policy is authoritatively determined, implemented by the government agencies.

Rational Comprehensive theory believes in the maximum social benefits. The policy that will bring more gain to the society than cost will be adopted. In view of this, the policy makers have a full range of policy options to choose from. The ratio of benefit inherent in a policy to the cost of the policy to the society is the yardstick of adopting a policy.

Group Theory is the one whereby the interaction of forces and pressures among the different groups in the society. Different groups with different interests agitate for their needs which become the focus of the policy makers. At this point, the policy formulators and implementers may find it difficult to distinguish the policy that will benefit the larger group.

System theory is about input, output and process in the environment. The environment comprises many factors like economic, political, social, natural, legal factors and so forth which have influence. The needs and influence from these factors that surround the environment are the input into the system that becomes the basis of formulating the policy. Policy formulation exercise itself is a 'Process'. The implementation of the policy formulated becomes the output or the feedback to the society.

Elite Theory relies on the assumption a few group of people governs and formulate policy for the ill-informed large populace. The policy is seen as the preference of governing elites. The policies formulated are not arising from the demand of the majority.

Incremental Theory is a method that relies on the incremental or gradual decision making. It is the theoretical policy of rationality developed by Lindblom in 1959. It is a conservative in manner. New policies are only slightly different from old policies. Past policies are accepted as having some legitimacy. Policy makers are too short on time and resources to make totally new policies. The policy is more politically expedient because they don't necessitate any radical redistribution of values (CSULB, 2002).

Empirical Issue

Asogwa S. O (2012) examined the impact of public policy implementation in Enugu State: A case Study of Enugu state Agricultural development (ENADEP) from 1995 – 2005. The study inquires into issues that are responsible for policy implementation failure. The study adopted the documentary study approach to achieve the objectives of the study. The study unraveled that frequent executive interference in the internal affairs of and management of Enugu State Agricultural Development Programme. There is a clear lack of prudent management of available projects funds occasioned by the high rate of corruption and diversion of projects funds by the state government.

Ayuba A. M. et al (2012) investigated public policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria. The study sought to analyse the importance, problems and factors influencing public policy formulation and implementation. The study reveals that there is no standard guideline for the policy formulation and implementation in the management of government affairs in Nigeria.

Hence, bureaucrats have their ways of constituting the obstacles and frustrations in the way of policies formulated by political officials. The study concludes that since independent the nation has not been successful its policy formulation and implementation due to the different styles of governance in the implementation of various aspects of public policy.

Braimah A. I. et al (2014) appraised the politics of public policy and problems of implementation in Africa with a case study of Ghana's National Health Insurance Scheme in Ga East District. The study used an integrated approach by analysis both primary and secondary data in its effort to explore the politicization and problems of policy implementation in GNHIS. The study reveals that there is a delay in the policy implementation of the scheme and the discrimination practices are banes that militate against the success of the scheme.

Chalse C. N. and Chukwugozie D.N. () studied Nigeria nation-building and public policy implementation: The Habermas Discourse Ethics perspective. The study argued that the principles embedded in Habermas's discourse ethics serve as veritable ideas that can serve as genuine nation building through public policy implementation. The study concludes that until Nigerians resolve to dialogically in Habermas' sense, genuine quality control and public policy implementation will continue to elude Nigerians.

Chris I. N. and Harrison C. A. (2012) analysed globalisation and public policy decision-making in Nigeria: the challenges in the privatization of Nigerian Telecommunication (NITEL). The paper attempted to critically investigate the implications of globalization trajectory on public policy decision making in Nigeria with the privatization of NITEL as a point of reference. The work used a descriptive analytical framework as its methodology. The study shows that globalization as a social, political, cultural and economic phenomenon affects the decision-making process of all nation state, Nigeria inclusive.

Dahida D. P. and Maidoki B. P. (2013) worked on public policy making and implementation in Nigeria: connecting the Nexus. The study adopted elite theory as the framework of the analysis. Secondary data was employed in the study. The study reveals that there is a missing link between the government and the public and also the governments and its agencies when it comes to policy formulation and its implementation which explain why policy grossly fails in Nigeria. the study further reveals that Nigeria problem is not policy formulation but that of implementation.

Ekhaton V. E. and Chima P. (2015) carried out an investigation on budget and implementation of public policy in Nigeria. The study seeks to address issues thwarting effective budget formulation and implementation in Nigeria and the implications for realizing public policy goals. Content analysis was used as the approach to achieve the objective of the study. The study confirmed that the goals of most policies were not accomplished in Nigeria due to incessant budget failure at formulation and implementation stage. Among other factors discovered to cause failure is corruption. Obo U. B, Felix O. E. and Coker M. A (2014) studied public opinion and public policy making process in Nigeria: A critical assessment. The study used elite and class analytic model and reveals that the opinion of the Nigerian masses hardly impinges on the process of policy-making. It was concluded by the study that extreme poverty and illiteracy

which pervade the society has disempowered majority of Nigerians and rendered them inconsequential observers in the policy making in Nigeria.

Ozumba L. N. (2014) carried out a multi-sectorial assessment of policy Implementation in the Nigerian socio-political system. The study identified factors that have hampered effective implementation of public policy in Nigeria. The study also looked into several case studies of some policies that have failed in Nigeria in different sectors. It is concluded that the problem with Nigeria implementation is the structure among which is the absence of a central coordinating member.

Makinde T. (2005) studied the problems of policy implementation in developing nations: the Nigeria Experience. The studied sought to identify and proffer possible solutions to the various problems facing developing nations on the issue of policy implementation. The Better Life Programme, Family support programme, Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternatives (WRAPA) and Child Care Trust (CCT) were analysed in the context of Nigeria. The implementation problems identified by the study are lack of continuity in government policies, corruption and inadequate resources.

Ugwuanyi B. I. and Emma E. O. C (2013) analysed the obstacles to effective policy implementation by the public bureaucrat in Developing Nations: Nigeria Case. the research work explored the importance of public policy in governance, the key obstacles inhibiting the public bureaucracy in Nigeria from effectively implementing policy. The study used content analysis in its approach, secondary data sources were employed. The study reveals that ineffective and corrupt political leadership under which public bureaucracy in Nigeria thrives have a negative effect on implementation activities and processes.

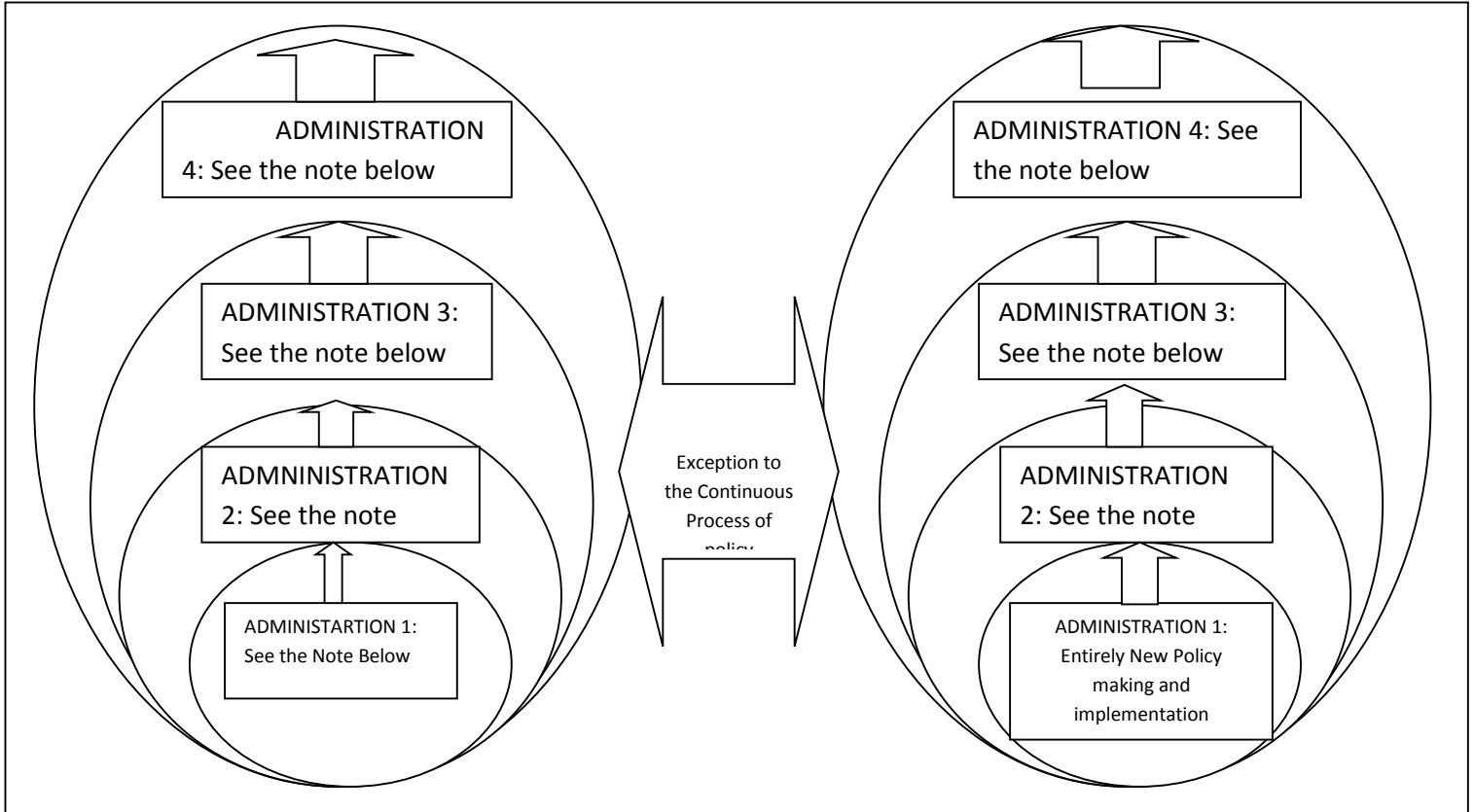
METHODOLOGY

The work adopts desktop research/analysis approach by examining the consequences of various reported economic policy reversal qualitatively. The underpinning model of the work was designed by adopting the incremental policy model of Lindblom, 1959 on which the study is anchored.

Incremental Model Framework

This study adopts the incremental life cycle model. The policy goal to be achieved (requirement) is divided into different achievable objectives. Each objective passes through the requirements, planning, implementation and testing phases. Each subsequent policy objective release improves on the previous achievement or attained goals. This process continues by each successful administration till the society gets to the desirable point.

Figure 1. Incremental Policy Framework



Source: The authors.

NOTES ON FIGURE 1:

- Administration 1 accomplished /unaccomplished policy goals of the current administration.
- Administration 2 Formulation and implementation of policy to accomplish or improve the achievement of the previous administration.
- Administration 3: formulate and implement the policy to upgrade the existing project or policy in conformity to the new development.
- Administration 4: Review and maintain the policy and the projects previously implemented by the preceding administration.
- Exception to the continuous process of existing policy or project improvement is:
 1. When an existing policies or projects become detrimental to the society or become undesirable.
 2. When there is a new course of action that the value of its social gain is greater than the value of its social cost.

BRIEF QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF POLICY REVERSAL IN NIGERIA

Having reviewed the relevant concepts in Nigeria context, it is incontrovertible that successive administration in Nigeria except Jonathan administration that mildly improves on the policy goals left behind by Obasanjo Administration, other administrations failed to improve on the existing policy and socio-economic policy goals pursued by their predecessors. However, the Obasanjo administration which was the democratic transition government also jettisoned the socio-economic and political policy goals set by the predecessor administration. The adoption of self-seeking policy models is not peculiar to the central government alone it is also a recurrent issue at the State levels which have led to the jettison of many pro-poor and developmental socio-economic policies. The recent Federal Government policy reversal of previous administration's power privatization policy undermines the benefit derivable from incremental policy model, the resultant effect of this is perceived to hike electricity tariff. An indiscriminate raising of the interest rate by CBN is another policy reversal that undermines the incremental policy model and has its harsh effect in increasing the inflation rate (Daivd, 2016). "President Buhari says his administration will gladly reverse or abandon some inherited economic policies, if doing so will improve employment" (Daily Post, August, 2015); presently, the level of unemployment is worst than previous administrations. The recent proliferation of schools (unity schools) in Ogun-State by the present administration without any recourse to improve the status of the existing school and maintain the policy of previous administration has not in any way brought improvement to secondary school education in the state. The reversal of admission policy into Nigeria university system whereby the JAMB policy of reassigning the applicants in universities with the unmanageable number of applicants to other universities with the lower number of applicants than their capacity (Opeyemi, 2015), has not in any way recorded a success story.

"Nigeria predicament was born out of endless policy summersaults. Many of the wrong economic decisions taken by those who believed that they had the acumen to perform wonders had abysmally ruined the economic potential of the nation at the expense of national interest, regretting that there was a glaring systemic failure in the way economic policies were being implemented" – Charles Soludo and Sanusi Lamido, 2013 in Nigeria NewsPapers.

E-wallet fertilizer scheme of Jonathan administration was introduced to enhance growth support by eliminating the problem faced by the farmers in dealing with middlemen in fertilizer supply chain. The suspension of this policy by Buhari Administration is a huge cost to job, business and investment of many farmers which could have been averted if the cost and benefit analysis of the programme had been properly carried out. The Naira-US Dollar rate peg reversal by the current administration which was later readopted by the same administration shows a great inconsistency of the administration in the matter of policy making and implementation and this has made many investors pull out or suspend their operation in Nigeria for fear of erosion in the value of their investment. Amnesty programme which was instituted by Yar'aAdua administration in order to engage the Niger Delta militants and prevent them from the continuous attack of the pipeline to ensure the continuous supply of oil was considered inconsequential and was reversed by the Buhari's administration (Nwakalor M., 2016). This action of government led to ever low supply of crude oil as a result of insurgency actions by the militants from the

region, readopting this policy by the same government on the same reason of its original adoption signifies that policy making and implementation in this part of the world is erratic and undesirable for the development of the nation. Conclusively, arbitrary policy reversal without justification has a detrimental effect on the achievement of socio-economic policy goals set by the various governments.

BENEFIT OF THE INCREMENTAL POLICY MODEL TO NIGERIA

The following are the benefits derivable from Incremental policy Model:

It is very simple to understand compared to some of the other models adopted. It is easy to put in practice and does not require complex experience. It allows for gradual change within the society or the system. The new or complex policy may intimidate the policy implementers, but the incremental policy will not cause such problem. It is flexible, continuing on the existing policy and project will allow one to see the change very quickly. Incremental policy model avoids conflicts in its implementation among different sectors.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The desktop research carried on the effects of continuous reversing of policies without improving the existing policies reveals that it is always counterproductive on the achievement of the policy goal set by the government. The reason for this is not farfetched, the policy and its implementation become complex, cumbersome and more costly hence the achievement of the set policy goals will remain in the paper. At times when the existing policy is discarded there will be a need to overhaul the existing resource, process and the machinery required to implement the new policy. And, this may require huge spending or investment in the face of limited available financial, human and material resources. The reason why the authorities or governments in Nigeria refused to adopt incremental policy model is due to the self-centeredness and the corruption tendency of their administration. Finally, the study recommends that under no circumstance should any administration throw overboard the existing project or policy believing that the policy or the project is an initiative of the previous administration. The incremental policy model should be vigorously adopted at various government levels unless contrary is proven.

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