



Research Paper

Benchmarking the Best Practices of Proactive Corporate Governance and Development Administration Practice: Solution to the Poor Performance in the Nigerian Public Enterprise

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the application of the best practices of proactive corporate, governance and the development administration in the effective of Nigerian public enterprises. The research design adopted was the survey method and the population for the study was fifty-five (55) federal government parastatals in the southwest zone of Nigeria. From this a sample of 48 enterprises was drawn using the Taro formula for random sampling (probability to proportionate to size public private partnership). Data collection instruments used were structured questionnaires, observation scheduled and interview schedule. The questionnaires were structured. in line With the Liked five-point scale and validated for consistency and reliability of items using pretest method. The findings indicate that the principles of proactive corporate governance and development administration are relevant in effective management of the Nigerian public enterprises which are due to unrealistic proactive (rather than reactive) corporate governance and The study revealed that the development. Administration practices. Performance and prospects of the Nigerian public enterprises will be enhanced by that realistic applications of proactive and development administration practices. It is recommended that the public enterprises should adopt corporate governance and development administration principles; and initiatives in all corporate affairs and transactions with all stakeholders for maximum impact and effectiveness.

Keyword; Corporate Governance, Public Enterprises, Parastatals, E-Government Development Administration.

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I. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Corporate failures and collapse of presumed well established and well regarded companies like Econet, Enron, Worldcom etc, in period of 1970s to 1980s best practices of proactive corporate governance and development administration will lead to effective corporate effectiveness (directing and controlling) survival and sustainability in the period of stable world economy, escalated the relief that the causes of failures were beyond economic meltdown. This thesis was further reinforced when records show that less spectacular corporations registered above average successes Leigh (2005: 32).

These observed anomalies promoted the international community to establish major corporate governance initiatives, guidelines and principles (preemptive and proactive measures) to track, anticipate and flow with corporate governance change and to advance the positive impact of proactive corporate governance on organizational performance and national economic growth and development. The world is awake to dangers of poor corporate governance and recommends better proactive corporate governance practices remedies, Leigh (2005: 32). Also Majekodunmi (2005: 24) warns that corporate governance has become a global affair and any country, institute or parastatals that fails to embrace its tenets, is doing so at its own peril According to Lemo (2004: 2) the collapse of the notable corporate giants, which was attributed to undesirable and unrealistic corporate governance practices, produced extreme nervousness in the financial markets across the countries.

The Nigerian economy (especially the public enterprises sector) recorded unprecedented corporate failures resulting from poor performance in the 1970s to 1990s. Perhaps the observed conflicts and crises in Nigerian public enterprises may have resulted from the fact that, they were government created and controlled but expected to operate as commercial entities. This contradiction and associated conflicts rather escalated the operational problems associated with the absence of a structured interface limiting the powers of ownership and the freedom of the 'managers (board and management). Molokwu (2004: 5) argues that the board and management of public enterprises are yet to imbibe high sense of responsibility in corporate governance. Also, Adebayo (1986: 30) adversely qualifies the decision making processes of the public enterprises as offensive against all the norms of rationality and the dictate of conscience and describes most government (states and local government inclusive) in Nigeria as bad managers because most times and policies analysis machinery is both irrational and unreasonable. The policies are often driven by political sentiments and antics.

Sulaiman (2004: 2), quotes CBN report (2004), on how some banks contributed to the woes of some public enterprises by not conforming to due process and sound corporate governance practices on the issues of the acceptance of commercial papers and bankers acceptance. However these intentional and grievous breaches boomeranged on such banks. Despite the huge investments (over N2 Trillion) in various industries, (some extinct or others operating below installed capacities) most authors like Obadan et al (1998: 12 & 109), Aromolaran (1998: 109) etc posit that these enterprises are bedeviled by operational inefficiencies, losses, avoidable wastages of vital national resources etc.

There are recorded evidences of mismanagement of these companies (Nigerian Airways Ltd, Nigerian Railway Corporation, Nigerian Coal Corporation, Ajaokuta Steel Complex etc) by both foreign and indigenous managers, thereby deepening and, widening the profiles of the corporate failures and poor performance indices. Adebayo (1986: 3-4) describes poor performance of the public utilities, in spite of impressive annual budgets, "as telephones, which stay dead for several months and ears, electricity which is erratic and uncertain, postal services, which are irregular and undependable, water taps that refuse to drop no matter how much you turn it". There are the prevalence of incompetence, corruption, squalor and poverty in the country, arising from the failure of public utilities and infrastructures to produce the desired goods and services. What is needed, in actual fact, is the assessment of the status of corporate governance and development administration (public policy and activities) in the Nigerian public enterprises juxtaposing the sound management practices that will lead to the realization of stakeholders' interests and objectives. Also this will champion the course towards the development of a private-sector driven political economy.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The scorecards of most of the public companies show continuous negative and poor performance both financial and physical indices, even under the management of public officers or foreign consultants. The choice of local and foreign consultants with no track records or pedigree of high performance resulted in more damages than solutions. The result had been 'loss of invested resources, associated benefits and expectation of stakeholders at the altar of incompetence and mismanagement these anomalies presumably are due to reactive corporate governance and development administration practices. Also the absence of structured interface, limiting the powers and extent of control and the freedom of management in exercising commercial functions, may be a contributing factor.

The bottom line is the continuous loss of benefits and potentials of good corporate governance and development administration regime which include, high investor confidence and increased foreign direct investments, growth and development of effective and efficient financial and capital markets, impeccable and sound management and administrative decisions, effective and efficient capacity planning and building, access to international capital facilities, growth and development of sound enterprises culture etc. Nigeria today can hardly compete comfortably in the global economy, due to the deficiency in all indices of global development. However these misfortunes can be possibly overturned to bountiful productivity with the conduct of the appropriate studies that will identify and expose the obstacles to proactive corporate governance and development administration in the public enterprises sector. Proactive corporate governance and development administration (sound public policy formulation and implementation) may be missing link between huge investments and the expected bountiful benefits.

The problem of public enterprises can be divided into research questions as follows:

- 1) What are the principles of proactive corporate governance and development administration (public policies and activities) and their relevance in the management of Nigerian public enterprises?
- 2) What are the major causes of poor performance in the Nigerian public enterprises?
- 3) What are the impact and prospects of realistic application of proactive corporate governance and development administration as a solution to poor performance of the Nigerian public enterprises?

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The Nigerian public enterprises sector has enormous symptoms of corporate crises, as well as recorded abysmal corporate failures at monumental costs to the economy, as a result of not doing the right things. This observation is at variance with the thesis of Tricker (1984) cited in Molokwu (2004:3) that if management is about running business, governance is about seeing that it is run properly. Therefore there are distinct differences in the ways things are done in the Nigerian public enterprises and how things should be done properly. This study encompasses the analyses of proactive governance and development administration (public policy and activities) in which the practices in Nigeria run counter to the global principles and practices of business practices. Once these pitfalls are identified and replaced with global best practices, we may hopefully expect better corporate governance and development administration practices in the future, that will cause the corporate survival and sustenance of the public enterprises. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. Identify the principles of proactive corporate' governance and their relevance in the management of the public enterprises.
- ii. Identify the 'of proactive development practices and in the management of enterprises.
- iii. Investigate the major causes of poor performances the public enterprises.
- iv. Identify the impact and prospects of realistic application of proactive corporate governance and development administration practices as a solution to poor performance of the Nigerian public enterprises.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

To ensure the realization of the objectives of this study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- i. Principles of proactive corporate governance are not relevant in the management of Nigerian public enterprise.
- ii. Principles of proactive development administration practices are not relevant in the management of Nigerian public enterprises.
- iii. Poor performances in the Nigerian public enterprises due unrealistic proactive corporate governance and development administration practices.
- iv. Proactive corporate governance and development: administration practices will not check the incidence of poor performance in the Nigerian public enterprises sector.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Concept of Proactive Corporate Governance and Development Administration

It is strongly believed that corporate governance and development administration must be both proactive and reactive to survive, No doubt when significant events happen, it is necessary to react to them, through careful planning and deep rational thinking. The best corporate governance and development administration, are primarily proactive rather than reactive but must be proactive first and foremost, and reactive subsequently. Proactive corporate governance and development administration strategies, involves short and long term plans, research and development of new opportunities, encouragement of creativity and innovation, markets research and taking calculated risk etc. The reasons advanced for most corporate failures or poor performances, are traced to reactive management rather than proactive management strategies, therefore lacking in the applications of proactive strategies in the intrinsic force driving the success of the organisation.

The proactive approach, converts into reality based on foresights and the desire to attain the future shared by the entire organisation. This reaffirms the fact that, any strategic leadership that is success oriented and focused must be creative, pre-emptive and proactive in all transactions (Argungu, 2004: 13). The proactive spirit drives the leadership and entrepreneurial nerves to fruition, by liberating the subtle forces (mindfulness, vision etc) that fact tract the change and transformation processes of an organisation.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE THEORETICAL ISSUES

Corporate governance is the exercise of power over corporate entities in all transactions, showing how companies are directed and controlled, when ownership is separated from management. It encompasses the surface system (corporate management) and deep system (corporate governance). Whereas management is about running businesses, governance is seeing that it is run properly. CACG (1993:3) describe corporate governance in the perspective of leadership for efficiency, probity, responsibility, transparency and accountability. Also it sees corporate governance as a system by which corporations are directed and controlled using global acceptable corporate governance structures. The corporate governance structure specifies the distribution of rights and responsibilities among different participants in the corporate affairs, such as, the governing board, managers, shareholders and other stakeholders, and spells out the rules and procedures for making decision on corporate affairs. It establishes the structures which facilitate the setting of corporate objectives, their realization and the evaluation and monitoring of performances (Okorie, 2005: 18-20).

PRINCIPLES, RULES AND RELEVANCE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The principles of governance include but not limited to the following:

- 1) Effective corporate structures (achievable mission and vision statements, sound corporate culture and strategic leadership);
- 2) Proactive boardroom management (effective fiduciary and directorial duties);
- 3) Stakeholders participation (and alignment with international best practices);
- 4) Transparency and accountability in all operations and reliable corporate reporting;
- 5) Minimal government interferences and positive mind set and attitude in the polity;
- 6) Effective management control systems and information communication technology; and
- 7) Adoption of corporate improvement and reform strategies (OECD, 2004:1).

RELEVANCE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The relevance of corporate governance assumed global concern due to the escalations of corporate scandals and crises resulting in unprecedented corporate failure across countries. These anomalies are manifestations of a number of structural reasons, why corporate governance has become more important in economic development and policy issues. The objective of good corporate governance is to promote strong, viable and competitive enterprises economies where best practices are accorded high priority and attract high profile direct foreign investments (IFC, 2004:3-5). The relevance of good corporate governance, include:

- (i). Improvement of corporate Performance, (though the sanitization of the corporate management practices) enhancing of the quality and integrity of management and governance structures and processes, for better decision-making, and the improvement of corporate capacity for growth and survival;
- (ii). Improvement of economic performance (through the stimulation, mobilization and allocation of resources within the economy);
- (iii). Improvement of access to international capital markets and attraction of foreign direct investments;
- (iv). Empowers and strengthens the enterprise culture, competitor efficiency and effectiveness, quality practices and innovation, etc (IFC, 2004:3-5).

PROACTIVE DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (THEORETICAL ISSUES)

Development administration is an integral of public administration, encompasses the establishment of machinery for planning, economic growth, mobilization and allocating of resources to expand nation income. It enables and empowers rapid socio-economic changes in every economy. The key factors affecting development administration include; quality leadership, alliance between leadership and technocrats; degree of political interventions in the public enterprises management, stable polity and adequate funding .Also it includes the advancement of good developmental efforts, the propagation of effective management and administrative strategies, effective bureaucratic leadership and sound political governance etc that will result in sustained economic growth and development. These attributes must focus the change that impact government investments in the public enterprises, such that they operate according to the dictates of modern business principles and global best practices (Okorie, 2006: 10- 11).

DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION INSTITUTIONS

Proactive development administration as a catalyst of change embodies productive institutions that facilitate the change process. These institutions (organised structures and procedures) must be well established and operated, for effective goals and objective realisation. The administrative institution embody the right caliber of staff, proactive administrative leadership, focused objectives and functions, adequate funding, effective organizational institutional capacity building etc (Leigh, 2005: 32).

CIVIL SERVICE AS THE MACHINE OF DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

The civil service remains the engine room of the executive arm of government, charged with responsibility of formulating and implementing of policies, advise on general policy issues, management of all machineries of governance (except the legislature and judiciary). Other functions (Include provision of vital data to policy makers, proffers alternative policy strategies, maintains apolitical positions in all issues, ensure continuity of policy in all forms of government etc (Okorie, 2006: 10 -11).

The importance of civil service include that it ensures the SUCCESS end effectiveness of any governance system, and assists the legislature in drafting proposals, appropriation bills etc. Interfaces between the citizenry and government, transacts all government businesses, educates and ministers and other political appointees, about existing policies and procedures, and acts as data bank of knowledge and experience in governance processes (Okorie, 2006: 10 - 11).

NIGERIAN CIVIL AND PUBLIC SERVICE SYSTEM

The colonial inherited public service culture is responsible to the high degree of uncertainty concerning the roles between the minister / commissioner and the permanent secretary, leading to copious problems and conflicts in the departments, ministers and agencies (public enterprises inclusive) (Adebayo, 1986: 92). This has remained the bane of the Nigerian civil service. The conflicts of interests and the rigidity of the career public servant had spread to the management of the public enterprises, which they superintend. The result is the undue interferences and manipulations that had adversely impact the performance of the public corporations.

The several reforms measures to refocus the public system for better performance had only produced a civil service that is yet to adequately address the problems of this vital machinery of governance. Adebayo (2004: 220-222), argues that the reforms had rather widened and deepened the problems of the civil service. The reforms must rather go beyond downsizing and monetary savings to addressing the issues of competence, commitment, corruption and conflict of interests etc. If these issues are adequately addressed it will result in a very effective civil service (Utomi, 2005:48 and 2005: 45).

PROBLEMS OF INEFFECTIVENESS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

Some of the identified problems of the Nigerian civil service system can be grouped as follows:

(1) Administrative factors include; faulty recruitments and posing of employees, low capacity planning and building, reactive administrative practices, conflict between administrator's political appointees and professional technocrats etc.

(2) Political factors include; undue advancement, colonial mentality and lack of practical political directives, unnecessary costly reforms etc.

These problems complicate development administration problems in Nigeria.

Some suggested solutions include; clear definition of objectives, and capacity building of staffers, evaluation and monitoring of policies, programmes and projects, effective human capital development and management strategies, applications of sound management and administrative practices in all operations (Okorie, 2006: 10 — 11).

CIVIL SERVICE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

The role of civil service in the management of public enterprises derives from the placement of each public enterprise under a supervising ministry or department. The supervising ministry or department therefore treats the public enterprises as extra departments of the civil service, and as such are bound by the civil service rules and regulations. This remains the source the interferences and manipulations that derail the effective and efficiency operations of the public enterprises. Some of the negative consequences of the interferences and manipulations of government in the public enterprises management include; use of public enterprises for political patronages) selfish manipulations of the principles and processes in the operations of public enterprises, instability of contracts and appointments and lack of strategic leadership, disconnection between board and management and insider dealings, infighting amongst board members, inconsistency in policy effective and implementation procedures, supervising ministries and departments interferences and manipulations etc (Iheme, 1997: 39 — 46)-

The disadvantages of civil servants managing public enterprises include; training as administrators and not as entrepreneurs, not equipped to effectively manage transformational changes and the paradigm shifts,, The highly regulated and guarded civil service structure and mentality do not permit the flexibilities associated with business practices (Narain, '1980: 98-99).

Okorie (2005: 85) argues that government (using development administration) alone cannot profitably manage the public enterprises and the private sector finds it difficult to function without the full compliments of government support in the production of public goods and services. No doubt a blend of the best of public and private sectors practices will midwife the desired solutions.

SOME CRITICAL BEST PRACTICES ISSUES

Transparency and Accountability

Transparency refers to the public access to knowledge of the policies and strategies of the corporation. It also includes making available for public scrutiny, accurate and timely information on financial and corporate affairs,

Transparency contributes to procurement stability as it prevents the secret build up of crisis, bringing about smaller adjustments (sooner), to scrutiny and in conformity with acceptable principles. Corporate accountability on the other hand is a prerequisite for effective corporate affairs and the factual rendition of stewardship to all stakeholders. Accountability is holding responsible

Elected or appointed individuals charged with a public mandate, to specific actions, activities of decisions to, the public from which they derive their authority (Narain, 2003: 147). It includes ability to account for the allocation; the use and control of public spending of resources in accordance with legally accepted standards. It is concerned with the establishment and enforcement of rules and regulations of effective management control system.

E-Government

E-government is the application of information and communication technology (ICT) within and by the public sector. It provides government, the citizen and business with a set of tools that can potentially transform the way in which interactions take place, services are delivered, and public administration reform and good governance goals are met. The strategic use of ICT in government results in a more coordinated, inclusive, effective, efficient, transparent and accountable public administration, which key to improve economic development and competitiveness. Moreover, in enhancing the quality and delivery of public services through ICT, government may be better positioned to reduce poverty, redress inequality and promote sustainable development. As a part of a broader focus on e-governance, it offers new channels for participation and engagement by citizens, and can enhance the prospects for deepening democracy.

The role of board of directors is critical to the operation and survival of the corporate governance. Any attempts to manipulate or compromise the quality and composition of board appointments or cause it to deviate from the transparency and accountability course may certainly result in weak corporate governance and development administration resulting in corporate failures and ineffectiveness (theme, 1997: 39 — 46).

Fiduciary and Directorial Duties of the Board

Board of directors fiduciary and directorial responsibilities, are usually carried out through board committees, which includes audit committee, executive committee, establishment committee, general management committee etc. According to Solomon et al (1994: 311 — 317), fiduciary duties arise from the obligations and duties of trust and confidence owed by those who control the corporate governance and development administration machineries to the constituents known as the enterprises. The separation of ownership and control create inevitable "agency costs (where investors- owners entrust management functions to a system of central governance in which they retain residual control rights). The assumption always is that the costs of inefficient management are outweighed by the benefits of increased efficiency by specialized managers (agents). Corporate fiduciary rules always attempt to balance the two competing concepts of management discretion and management accountability. Fiduciary duties of corporate managers boarders on two fronts: care and loyalty in the enterprises interests.

Strategic Leadership and Governance

Leadership and governance are strongly linked, such that a sound strategic leadership is most likely to usher in good corporate governance development perspectives, the reverse is true. The influence potential (the resources that enables a leader to induce or gain compliance or commitment from others) is driven by power. For leadership to be effective and result oriented, the leader should understand, the impact of power on behaviours and apply the right leadership styles. The top management (board of directors and executive directors) represents the leadership of the organisation and management at each level represents the leadership at that level (Davi& west, 2005: 63).

According to David-West (2005:63) in an article "Operculum Head of the Fish" the Nigeria's problem rests squarely on leadership and not on followership. This thesis is expanded thus, "if the gills are red and the fish is presumed good bad". A leader is the head of his organisation and is subject to the above analogy. A bad leadership renders or makes the polity putrid (rotten) for any meaningful progress or development. In fact it destroys or kills the system, the country etc. What Nigeria needs is not a godfather with the big stick, but rather an understanding, responsible and patriotic: leadership and followership, each playing its role effectively with both, determined to work together for the public good. This perhaps, will commence the solution to the leadership problems.

SOME IDENTIFIED IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Proactive Organizational Mindset and Thinking

The success of all improvement strategies starts with a perfect blend of the corporate vision, mission statement and culture in order to realize the objectives of all stakeholders. Management must be committed to the creation and maintenance of effective organisation thinking capacity, assignment of explicit thinking responsibilities, and clear definition of thinking efforts required for the assigned responsibility (Heirs and Pehrson, 1982: 43 — 46).

Every organisation needs both brain and mind to think effectively. The thinking process initiates future thinking and the contingency responses to the assumptions about the future. The primary responsibility of the organisation's mind is to guide the organisation successfully through the near, medium and long-term future. To think about the future organizations, must note that the future is the past repeated, that there would be change in the future, incorporate the future in organisational plans and integrate a planning capability that will operate and guide it, The proactive mindset and thinking of the managers of organisation are keys to the establishment of a proactive corporate governance and development administration, benchmarking of global best' practices, the right intellectual capacities, operation of effective reform strategies etc.

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT

Positive economic performance is the primary goal of any business organisation. It is the measure of how efficiently and effectively managers use resources to meet all stakeholders goals. Performance increases proportionally with increases in effectiveness and efficiency. This fit is achievable through the adoption of the right building blocks of competitive advantage; -superior efficiency, quality innovation and quality responsiveness to customer, change and competition. There are five control tests of an organisation's performance, market share in the industry, innovative performance status, executive control as the measure of productivity, liquidity and cash flows status, profitability, adequate reward system, return on investment etc., The critical factors in corporate performance enhancement are customers, innovation change, people and proactive leadership. It focuses change and adapts to it through constant interactions with the employees, technology updates, capacity building and applications of effective improvement strategies. The corporate improvement process is not a time-limited programme, but a group of activities that complement each other and provide an environment conducive to improving performance. It provides a focus on an aspect of the business that is normally addressed only when things are out of control or when customers are dissatisfied (Harrinton, 1987: 3-18). The process fast tracks the acceptance of change and continuous improvement as a necessary step for high standards of products and services. Enterprises that produced continuously high quality products all the time benefit in three ways; lower manufacturing costs, higher profit margins and larger market shares. There is a direct relationship between return on investment (ROI) and product quality. The improvement process is the road map, which assists manager's to lead their organisations down the quality road and keep them from running into dead ends. It must focus the change of the corporate attitude; top management commitment, total management participation, employee participation, individual involvement, system improvement, etc.

Notable corporate reforms and improvement strategies include; reengineering management, total quality management, benchmarking of best practices, partnering, re-branding corporate products and services, corporate intrapreneurship management (research and development), robust human resources management, corporate transformation and resource leverage% mergers, acquisitions, takeover and consolidation, licensing, strategic alliance(s), franchise, sharing of services, out sourcing etc (Okorie, 2005: 77).

CORPORATE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Inefficiency measures the gap between actual performance and expected performance. It encompasses technical (or objective) inefficiency and perceived (or subjective) inefficiency. The destructive elements of inefficiency result in the corporate ineffectiveness, non-performance or under performance, and can be resolved using the "efficiency drive" mode/ or the "3H Grand Strategy". The model advocates improvements on workers knowledge (H1), attitude and morale (H2) and tools of work (H3) for all levels of management. Effectiveness application of the model may result incorporate effectiveness and efficiency (Ejiofor, 1981: 49-60).

CAPACITY BUILDING AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Capacity building involves human capital development, knowledge management and diffusion, training and manpower development programmes, network and management development programmes, which grows and updates skills and competences to execute assigned functions. The overall objectives include capacity building of practical skills that douse potential conflict situations, deployment of conflict prevention and management tools and the institution of conflict management structures in governance. Capacity building in proactive corporate governance development administration aims at reversing the cycles of conflict by strengthening the governance competencies of the range of stakeholders involved. To date both government policy makers, development practitioners and administrators encounter constant confusion, conflicts in the management of networks of interdependence or interactions involved in the public sector management. The need to channel conflicting interests and manage diversity in society -is the key to moving forward and transforming the social economic and political affairs of a nation. Sound conflict management skills will assist government ;policy makers and development practitioner's network effectively and manage negotiations between government and other stakeholders. This includes but not limited to strengthening the technical skills and capacities in conflict prevention, resolution and management (Ejiofor, 1981: 49-60).

REVIEW NIGERIAN PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

Development of Nigerian Public Enterprises

The growth and development of the Nigerian public enterprises sector date back to the colonial era when the tasks of providing the necessary infrastructural facilities fell on the colonial government. The absence of indigenous companies with requisite capital and the unwillingness of the foreign trading companies, to embark on capital intensive projects, gave impetus to the massive government interventions. Moreover these vital public utilities such as railways, waterways, electricity etc were provided as the necessary facilitators of the philosophy and mission of colonialism. These include the advancement of the interests of Britain; secure sustainable sources of raw materials for their home industries, market for the finished products and the enhancement of the strategic interests of Britain in international political economy (Uzor, 2004: 121). There was no conscious plan to modernize the Nigerian people, rather to extract as much resources as possible, for the benefit of the colonial government. Generally the growth and development of the public enterprises was driven from the objectives of the development plans over the period.

Role of Development Planning in Public Enterprises Development

Development plan is a guide for the decisions and implementations of government policies, such as; to create conditions within its domain for the more fulfilled life of its subjects. Based on socio-economic concepts) development plans capture and define the fundamental objectives and policy direction of the government, in terms of set goals, and strategies for their realization. The basic concepts define the role of government in development planning and as the pathfinder in the development process. In the attempt 'to achieve the purpose of development planning and implementation, various organs of government are established, to drive the development plan process from start to appreciable finish. Like other governmental activities, development planning, has the following attributes: objectives} policies, organization ,finances, work methods, Incentive systems etc. The establishment of the public enterprises was part of the Nigeria government's decentralization policy and process, to satisfy the social demands of the people (Akinbade, 2004:2).

Colonial Welfare Development Plan Perspective (1900 -1960)

The Nigeria's first attempt at development planning; started in 1946, with the ten-year colonial administration plan under the colonial development and welfare fund and driven by the Central Development Board. The plan provided impetus for emerging Nigerian leadership, to imbibe the culture of development planning as the official Instrument of government intervention in the nation's political economy. The objectives include the provision of public utilities and social services for the entire country. The task of providing the necessary infrastructural facilities fell on the colonial government, due to the absence of indigenous companies with the necessary capital and the unwillingness of the foreign trading companies to embark on capital-intensive projects. Industrial departments were established within the civil service, to build and run utilities such as railway department, public works department, marine department, colliery of department, post and telegraph department etc. Subsequent plans built-on the bold steps, resulting in the numerous enterprises in existence today.

Rationale for Public Enterprises in Nigeria

Apart from the reasons of ideology, social, economic and political factors influenced government investments in the public enterprises. These factors translate into the provision of essential services, which the public wants, and which the private sector cannot produce at lower costs (Laleye, Among the rationale for public enterprises development includes; to promote state policy on socio-political factors, exploration and exploitation of raw materials (mineral and agricultural etc) development of infrastructures (roads, railway, telecommunication etc), the will to facilitate economic growth and development, employment creation, acquisition of technology, to supplement economic activities of the private sector, to stimulate, mobilize and allocate public finance, to control the strategic sectors of the economy etc.

PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN NIGERIA

The problems of development planning policy and implementation include; dearth of machinery to co-ordinate operations and competent professional planners, mal-administration, corruption, lack of political will and mass commitment, lack of reliable statistical data, political instability, financial constraint and poor conceptual approach etc. The introduction of development plan has tremendously benefited Nigeria, in spite of the visible setbacks. The development plan approach, accounts for the massive government investments in the public enterprises sector. Nigeria had an estimated 50 public enterprises by 1960 and about 200 (1970) When the country embarked on economic reform in 1987, the number had risen tremendously to 1500. T CPC (1993) reported about 1500 enterprises (600 federal government large enterprises and 900 small states and local government enterprises). Public enterprises spread to ail sectors of the economy, confirming the strong role of government in the economy, in terms of direct investment in economic activities; macro economic management; planning and regulatory role and as an entrepreneur.

ISSUES IN PUBLIC ENTERPRISES MANAGEMENT BN NIGERIA

The growth and development of public enterprises over the years could be attributed to the oil boom that provided enormous resources and successive government's commitment in using public enterprises as the -instruments of economic interventions from 1960 to date. Consequently, greater percentage of government capital expenditures (over 80%), were invested in the development of socio-economic infrastructures such as education, health, information, housing transportation, power, communication, water and irrigation, mining, manufacturing, commerce and. finance etc: These tremendous government interventions not only resulted in the government dominating the economy but also shaped both the ownership structure and administration of the public enterprises. This explains public enterprises in terms of three essential features of the concept of puniness , public purpose, public ownership and public control. The most crucial is that the concept of publicans defines and determines the pungent political influences, administrative and governance systems as well as the operational mechanism of the public enterprises (T CPC, 1993).

Administrative Structure (Ownership and Control Issues)

The central issue in the management of the public enterprises in Nigeria is ,the problem of striking a balance between control and autonomy, The relationship between public enterprises and the government that established them has remained the critical issue and : the sources of the problems militating against their effective performance. The statutory boards of enterprises are seen as government departments in structure and extern organization, which creates the phenomenon of difference without

distinction. They are not usually bound by civil service rules and regulations, in their mode of operation, because they are expected to perform certain special social services; to serve the community" as well as make profit. However due to the special & overbearing influence of the supervising ministry, this all important difference M 41-1 is totally ignored or set aside, for reasons that are anti business (Adebayo, super01986: 125-127). The enterprises that are established to operate like any other' board commercial organization in the private sector are rather operated as avenues; Most for political patronages and self-enrichment, nepotism, tribalism etc.

The public ownership structure of public enterprises is a critical factor in the public control phenomenon, and it is counterproductive to commercial activities of public enterprises such as reduction (or limited freedom) for the interplay of economic forces, poor funding and provision of necessary inputs; for effectiveness, poor relationship between public enterprises and the legislature, etc. Due to public ownership, various forms of public control had emerged, such as, legislative control, (through its public accounts committee and the committee on the particular ministry/parastatal, in their oversight functions), and ministerial control (statutory powers and non statutory powers) (Akinbade, 2004: 140-18). These control measures are presumed to of protection the public interest and ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the enterprises evidence show that they are more of destructive measures. The most critical is the conflict of reconciling ministerial responsibility and control with public enterprises managerial autonomy (best business practices).

Administrative Control and Performance Issue

The administrative structure shows heavy government (executive and legislative) domination of the organization to the extent that; only government drives the operations of the public enterprises, from conception to affect which implementation and operation. This makes it possible for unabated government intervention, manipulations and interferences. These avoidable external intrusions have adverse effects on the performance of the public enterprises. The corporate structure of organization undertaking has a great relevance and influence on it's efficiency, because it deals with the essential elements in organization, power relationship, responsibility, authority, specialization and interdependence of the parts of the system (Uzor, 2004: 141-142). Therefore the placement of the public enterprises under, the supervisory jurisdiction of a particular ministry and government appointed boards of directors forecloses all opportunities for growth and development. Most importantly the overall productivity of the public enterprise is adversely affected.

The ministerial supervision of public enterprises escalates the jostles to secure benefits for themselves and their cornices. The management of public enterprises is enmeshed in a battery of political and bureaucratic processes, which impair effective and commercial oriented operations. Also they create the phenomenon of bulk passing between government and management of the enterprises. While government blamed the poor physical and financial performances of the public enterprises in Nigeria on managerial inefficiency and incompetence, the management, explained their lapses on intrusive government policies, obstructive ministerial controls and stifling government directives. These are easily linked to government's intervention policy (âheme, 41997:33-66). The criticisms of public enterprises performance in Nigeria are damaging, and point to an ever-increasing cancer in the Nigerian system, (Aromolaran, 1998: 109).

Boards of Public Enterprises

The governing board plays a key role in the management of public enterprises worldwide, as a policy maker for the public enterprises within the framework of broad government policies and priorities. The extensive functions of the board of directors (except executive ones), include approval of budgets monitoring of performance, protection of management and. communication of the needs and achievements of management to the org stakeholders (Laleye, 2002:38-40).

There are two types of board in this scenario: the policy board(responsible for management of enterprise made of non executive members to the with only the chief executive as a board member) and executive board under (comprising heads of major units with the chief executive officer as chairman). This type of board arrangement ensures that the body responsible for policy is not separated from management and the independent non-executive directors ensure the incorporation of other views as a form of control measures. The size of boards varies with circumstance and functions, usually from a minimum of five to a maximum of twenty-five. Generally the size of an enterprise governing board depends on its scope and strategic importance of the enterprises in the economy. Usually government appoints the members of: the board and solely determines their tenure and their modus operandi. Most policies handed down to the management of these enterprises from such boards, are often never supportive of best business practices. Usually the government appoints interferes in the day-to-day administration of the enterprises and most crucial decisions are often made at levels above the corporate boards and management. The appointments of civil servants into

public enterprises governing boards undermine the quality of management practices, due to the introduction of civil service culture into the corporate affairs of the enterprises. Evidences show that most the decisions are political and outside best practices (Laleye, 2002:38-40).

Civil servants are the least equipped to efficiently transform the public enterprises, because of their parochial training as conservative and pessimistic administrators, lacking in the pragmatism required for business organizations (Narain, 1980:98-99),

Powers of the Governing Boards and Associated Problems

The powers of any governing board are derived from the laws establishing the public corporations (or company) and are usually to manage the organizations. The board is to supervise (or oversee) the action of top management, not manage the organization. However, the board is completely responsible to government (or the owner), but delegate functions to the chief executive officer. The degree of delegation of powers (either as under delegation or marginal) has often caused problems of communication between the board and acceptance of the board's and management harmonious relationship. That both the, governing board and chief executive officer are direct government appointees make hierarchical loyalty difficult. It is more difficult, where the chief executive officer is bound to see the minister, as his right boss and not the board. There is often the tendency for such chief executive officer, to treat all enquiries of the board as undue interference, snob board 'directive' and decisions. Furthermore always be conscious of the prominence of civil service rule over sound business decisions and even assume hostile postures to the board (Laleye, 2002:38-40).

The civil service administrative guidelines issues by government are specific about functions of chief executive officers and reporting relationship with the permanent secretaries. There is nothing on the need for such chief executive officer, to seek regular advice, opinion or consent of the governing board on matters concerning the public enterprises (Tokunboh, 1990:61-64). It therefore becomes impossible for the board to effectively perform the functions of monitoring operations and ensuring that all activities are aligned with corporate objectives and global best practices. Also it can not effectively attend to observed lapses and deviations, or even sanction any defaulting chief executive officer or director general as the case may be.

CRITICISM AND COMMENTS

The methods of appointments into governing boards of public corporations and the behaviour of the appointees, when once appointed, all combined to produce a negation of the rationale for the establishment of statutory boards (Adebayo, 1986:131). The GUARDIAN Newspaper Editorial (2005: '16) criticizes the 2005 and 2008 federal government composition of the governing boards of public enterprises, as the planned failure of the 'con enterprises. The lack of transparency in the imposition and the appointments of unqualified person, based on political patronage, family or business relationship, political party affiliation will certainly cause the failure of the exercise, at the expense of the public enterprises and the Nigerian people. Evidences of the abuse of office and corrupt practices include; the failure of public enterprises is as a result of incompetence, government interference and manipulations, conversion of the public enterprises into avenues for personal wealth acquisitions. These factors amongst others ruined the potentials of the public enterprises as viable policy instruments for the attainment of national economic growth and development (Obadan et al, 1998: 12 and 109).

1. For example, the massive abuse of office integrity and trust exhibited by the board and management of university of Nigeria teaching hospital (1999-2003) leaving behind a debt of over N600m owed to banks and pro contractors is a case in point (Agbo et al, 2006:20-26).

2. The Special Committee on The Review and Verification of Contracts Awarded by Nigerian Ports Authority (2001-2003), established that the governing board and management perpetrated large scale fraud and in financial recklessness, flagrant violation of government rules and regulations of contracts, disregard for due process guidelines, gross and massive inflation of contract prices and excessive contract splitting, The outstanding contract bills during the period were N9.2bn, \$1 .6m, D2.9m, EO.9m, DmO,04m Ribadu cited in Lohor (2006: 1 and 4).

SUGGESTED SOLUTION

The rate of the growth and development of any nation is the syllogistic sum of the effectiveness and efficiency of the totality of the managers of its Outstations, which in turn is a multiplicative function of managerial motivation, ability, and integrity. The right step towards the improvement of the integrity profile of Nigerian public sector managers must start with the list of "codes of conduct" resonating with the corporate rules and regulation of the employer. Hopefully when the demand of the codes of conduct gets "too much" the laws of decibel in management will force the hands of management into compliance (Ejiofor, 1980:24).

II. METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was that of a survey. The data collection instruments used were structured (Likert five-point scale) questionnaire observation and interview schedule. The questionnaire was validated using the pretest technique and the Pearson product moment correlation was used for the test of reliability items in the questionnaire. The result was a reliable coefficient of correlation of 0.94 indicating a high degree of items consistency, From a population of 55 enterprises in the area, a sample size of 48 enterprises was obtained using Taro Yamane formula. The study used the probability to proportionate to size public private partnership sampling method. Based on the seven critical elements (five (5) divisional heads oil department and two (2) leadership of the staff association (senior and junior staff) for each enterprise the sample size of the employees was 343 A total of 343 copies of the questionnaires were distributed to the two categories of staff -in the enterprises with 81.35% response. Data conation was done using sample percentages, mean, frequencies and standard deviation. The test of hypothesis was computed using the z-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance for sampling distribution (Laleye, 2002:38-40).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study concerns the benchmarking the best practices of proactive corporate governance and development administration practices; as solution to the poor performance in the Nigeria public enterprises in the southwest states of Nigeria. The results and discussion are based on the data analysis% and results of the field Survey obtained. The findings are discussed in line with the objectives of the study and linked to the formulated hypotheses.

1. To ascertain of the principles of proactive corporate governance and development administration practices that are relevant in the management of the Nigerian public enterprises, two perspectives are designed and data shown on Tables 1.1 and 1.2. See Appendix I & II.

i. The analysis of data in Table 1.1 (proactive corporate governance issues), shows that the alternate was upheld. This implies that the principles of proactive corporate governance are relevant in the effective management of the Nigerian public enterprises. To investigate this claim, some questions highlighting the principles of proactive corporate governance were incorporated in the questionnaire and used to collect responses. See Table 1.1. The data analysis showed the average response frequencies as follows: SA (238 or 88.69%), A (73.5 or 2.14%) CJD (8.5 or 2.41%), D (4.1 or 1.19) and SD (18.9 or 5.51 %). The aggregate cumulative percentage showed: A (90.83%), D (6.62%) and UD (2.41%). This high positive figure indicates the relevance of proactive corporate governance in the management of Nigeria public enterprises, The solution to the problems of the poor performance in the Nigerian public enterprises is the adoption of the principles of proactive corporate governance. This finding confirms. Majekodunmi (2005:24) who warns that the failure to embrace the tents of proactive corporate governance will result in negative consequences. It aligns with Lemo (2004:2), who canvassed that the collapse of notable corporate giants was due to undesirable and unrealistic corporate governance practices that produced corporate overheating and nervousness in the global finances and capital markets. Tricker (1984) argues that corporate governance goes beyond management of business by doing the right things that will result in corporate effective and sustainability (adoption of corporate practices).

ii. After analysis of data in table 1.2 (proactive development administration issues) the test of hypothesis shows that the alternate was upheld. This implies that the principles to proactive development administration practices are relevant in the effective management of the Nigeria public enterprises.

To investigate this claims some questions highlighting the principles of proactive development administration were incorporated in the questionnaire and used to collect responses. See table 1.2. The data analysis showed the average response frequencies as follows: SA (249.7 or 72.79%), A (655' 0T 19.15%) UD (13.9 or 4.05%), D (5.6 or 1.63%) and SD (8.1 or aggregate percentages showed A (91.94%) D (3.99%) and UD (4.05%), The high positive response indicates that the principles of proactive development administration are relevant in the effective management of the Nigerian public enterprises (Laleye, 2002:38-40).

This result aligns with Utomi (2005:48 and 4.5) who advocates that in addition address proactive development service reforms must administration issues such as competence, commitment, corruption, conflict of interests, government interferences etc. Also Narain (1980:98-99) preaches changes from reactive to proactive development administration issues such as training as both administrators

and entrepreneurs, change of attitude and parochial civil service mentality, deregulation of certain aspects of civil service structure to accommodation business culture and flexibilities,, The inversion of theme (1997:39-46) that shifts from the negative consequences of interferences and manipulations to proactive development administration, will change the perception and ways of doing things the public enterprises.

2. Sequel to an objective of the study to determine whether corporate failures and poor performance in the-Nigerian public enterprises result At mainly from the unrealistic applications of proactive corporate governance and development administration practices, the associated (hypothesis to the above objective was tested, using the averages response frequencies in table 1.3. To investigate the stated claim some questions highlighting unrealistic applications and practices were. Incorporated in the questionnaires and used to collect responses.

The data analysis showed the average response frequencies as follow: SA (2404 or 70.09%), A (50.65 or 14.77%) UD (21.4 or 6.23%), o (14.5 4.23%) and SD (16.05 or 4.68%) the aggregate percentage showed A (8486%), D (8.91%), UD (6.23%).

The high positive response indicates that the corporate failures and poor performance in the Nigeria public enterprises. a result mainly from the unrealistic application of proactive corporate governance and development administration practices, The finding further confirms the conclusions that the extensively, use of the public corporations for enormous political gratifications without any regards for experience and ability to deliver, entrench parasitism and corrupt practices. The bottom line therefore becomes loss of huge investments; poor service delivers and zero performance in both financial and physical indices. Adebayo (1986:92) argues that the fusion of British and America system, of bureaucracy created uncertainty as to the relative roles between minister/commissioner and the permanent secretary, leading to problems and conflicts in the departments ore ministries. Narain disapproves of civil servants managing public enterprises, because their conservative and practical training do not allow for the flexibilities required to effectively manage transformational changes. Obikeze et al (2004: 148-159) argues that the civil service reform were targeted at eliminating the observed anomalies like, corruption, nepotismetc in the bureaucracy. Ribadu (2006:2) agues that corruption has been pervasive in the public and private sectors without any distinction e.g. bribery, tax evasion, breach of contract terms or non performance, procurement, diversion of public funds and mismanagement of public resources,, Foreign businesses are guilty of the same offence(s), they known to have bribe

government officials, in order to win contracts or renew their licenses,, Ejiofor (1980:3 & 11-16) in a seminar paper "The Integrity Factor in the Management of National Development" argues that the questionable integrity of pubic sector managers is a serious drag on optimum national development. The integrity profile of most managers of Nigerian public institutions, fall for below the effectiveness threshold. The story is the same in all establishments7d nepotism, graft, bribery, corruption, embezzlement of public, funds etc, The most disappointing is that there seems to be no end to the abysmal performance. Nigeria is blessed with rich mineral resources, abundant supply of manpower, but suffers from inefficiency and poor management of the endowed resources.

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Osiyemi (2005:24), insists that corruption is the bane of economic growth and development, that zero tolerance of corrupt practices will enhance

the -impact of huge budgets on the welfare of the people% turn the economy around, provide enable environment and increase foreign direct investment and high rates of return. There is an inverse relationship between corruption and economic development.

Ribadu (2006:2) discloses that corruption had deprived the continent of investment opportunities and pushed up the cost of doing business Nigeria and most African countries. On the aggregate the Africa Union estimate that as much as \$148BN (dollars) yearly or 25 percent of Africa's official gross national product is lost "to corrupt activities in Africa.

Authors like Adebayo (1986:3-4), Obikeze et al Utonni (2005:48 & 2005), Egonmwan et al (2001:99) etc argue in favour of a "mix" of cooperation between the public and private sectors innovative and performance enhancing bureaucracy and institutional reforms that impact on the performance of the Nigerian public enterprises.

Shirly et al in favour of reforming the policy framework, decentralized management, reforming the relationship between government and it's enterprises, striking a balance between autonomy and accountability, maintaining on that necessary control and allowing management freedom achieve those goals and privatization programme.

IV. CONCLUSION

Benchmarking the best practices of proactive corporate governance and development administration remains one of the viable corporate reform and improvement strategies that will turn around the reactive management practices of the Nigeria public enterprise into a proactive corporate governance and development administration regime. This approach combines well with other highlighted reform strategies to retool and re-position the public enterprises better corporate effectiveness and sustainability. The study revealed that proactive strategies are relevant in the effective management of Nigeria public enterprises; that the main causes of poor performances were due to the applications of unrealistic management practices and that the applications of proactive of and development administration will enhance the performance and prospects of the Nigeria public enterprises. This study believes that the transformation of the internal*management strategies from reactive to proactive practices will turn around the fortunes of the public enterprises to the level of high productivity;- improved performances will physical and financial indices, and the realization of the intended benefits of the public enterprises to all stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following remedies are recommended for the improvement of the corporate management from the unproductive reactive practices to a more and product proactive corporate governance and development administration practices.

- i. A principle centered leadership paradigm (of the right attitude, mindset and total quality and focus) must be instituted at all levels of governance, this to halt the decline and further decay in the polity.
- ii. Frontal attack on all forms of corrupts practices; rent seeking and tollgate mentality, with the view to sanitizing the corporate environment,
- iii. Policy consistency and reduction of conflicts in policy implementations will retool the corporate environment.
- iv. A proactive boardroom management to drive the conscience of the organization, corporate governance and development administrative strategies, fiduciary duties and public enterprises management. This will check the problems of political rent-seeking, toll-gate mentality, commission agent, etc.
- v. Government should restrict equity holdings in any public enterprises to a maximum of ten percent (10%), and hold "golden share" in all strategy corporation that have security implications.
- vi. To elevate and add value to the state of public enterprises management, 'integrity, effective ethical standards and the fight competences, should be invited as non-executive directors on the board of public enterprises.
- vii. Conflict of interests, which are known to jeopardize the effectiveness and efficiency of board fiduciary and, directorial duties, must be effectively addressed if not stamped out.

viii. Benchmarking the best practices of public and private sectors as a new public sector management technique to replace the current ineffective and 'costly method, which has proven to be inadequate and less productive?

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