

Supervision and Public Service Productivity in Nigeria: A Theoretical Discourse

Mustapha, Adesoye Isiaka PhD

Department of Public Administration, University of Benin, Benin-City, Nigeria

Edegware, Jesuhovie Gideon

Department of Public Administration, University of Benin, Benin-City, Nigeria

Reason Onya PhD

Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Igbinedion University, Okada, Edo State, Nigeria

Abstract

One of the major challenges confronting the public sector in Nigeria is the daunting criticism that it is neither efficient nor productive. This criticism has placed the public sector at the front burner of various reforms more prominent in this millennium. Despite that, there has been little or no improvement in the public perception of the service as ineptitude and incapable of administering development. This paper therefore did an expose of the Nigerian public sector productivity especially focusing on strategic supervision as a major variable that could birth productivity and efficiency in the sector. The work relied mainly on secondary sources of data and desk analysis of same was done. It concludes that public sector productivity rests squarely on the synergy between the political and bureaucratic supervisors in the various MDAs and more importantly attitudinal re-orientation among both the supervisors and the followership in the task of public service provision. In order to bring about attitudinal re-orientation, the supervisors must combine both transactional and transformational characteristics.

Keywords: supervision, productivity, public service, bureaucracy, accountability

INTRODUCTION

Strategic control (supervision) is designed as a means of achieving desired organizational goals and objectives. Due to the vast rate of technological advancement, supervision has become crucial to attaining objectives. In looking at strategy on its own, Hofer & Schendel (1979:54) defined strategy as the mediating force between the organization and the environment. When linked to the process of management, it is viewed as organized development of the resources of the functional areas in pursuit of its objectives.

Pierce (2012:54) defined supervision as a developmental process designed to support and enhance an individual's acquisition of the motivation, autonomy, self - awareness, and skills necessary to effectively accomplish the job at hand. An effective supervisor according to Johnson (2012:23) must have the skills in time management, controlling the work environment, delegating tasks and motivational skill. There is need for experience and knowledge before being a supervisor. Effective and strategic supervision according to Hinkle et al (2012:57) affects organisational results and the overall work environment.

It is important that staff performance especially when it pertains to the organization's core mandate and its performance and development are constantly monitored and reviewed for them to be abreast with changes and challenges in the organization and the external environment. In contemporary times, the Hawthorns study has become very relevant in explaining the social relation which exists between employee working conditions and the system of leadership or supervision in workplace. Taking a clue as regard the implication of supervision from the Hawthorns studies carried out under Elton Mayo in his studies of Western Electric Company near Chicago in the United State of America (USA) between 1927 and 1932, it was found out that guide working condition and the social relationships that exist between employees and supervisors go a long way in attaining high level of productivity. As a matter of fact, good rapport should be developed between supervisors and workers to overcome isolation as regards decision policies and other relevant issues that are of interest to the entire management in the organization. In the Hawthorns studies, the researchers were interested in the impact of physical conditions – lighting, work layout, workplace, and so forth – on output and productivity. The manipulation of physical working conditions was expected to have some kind of linear effect on the level of output; for example, the greater the illumination, the greater the expected output. As it turned out, however, productivity and output seemed to rise regardless of the direction in which the physical conditions were manipulated.

According to the standard accounts, the enhanced output during the various experiments was attributed to the interaction between supervisors and workers. The communication and interaction during the course of the study, along with the interest shown by supervisors in the workers performance and productivity, presumably produced extra effort and commitment by the workers, who wanted to satisfy the researchers and demonstrate their ability. The Hawthorns effect – the socio psychological process whereby behaviour is altered and adjusted

owing to the presence of and relationship with others – has implications for both methodological research and practical management (Brown, 1954:54).

According to Brown (1954:56), methodologically, the Hawthorne studies showed how the simple act of observation can influence the behaviour of research subjects. And for management, the Hawthorne studies demonstrated how communication and interaction of supervisors and top management with workers can result in heightened levels of commitment and output.

The effect of the wider focus is to give room to measures that indicate the organization strategies, implementation and execution that enhance goals and yield improvement and societal development. Interaction between each of these critical organization functions can be result oriented under a framework of controls (supervision) that are instituted to serve as guide for every action and also as a means of attaining checks and balances. The supervisory function emanates from top to bottom that is horizontal and in between each functional staff, that is vertical. In the public service, the line of authority is from top to bottom and as such top-down supervision subsists for organization functions. Internal control, according to Hassan (2001:78) is defined as the whole system of controls, financial or otherwise, established by management in an orderly manner to safeguard its assets, and secure as far as possible the accuracy and reliability of its records.

Furthermore, this paper is designed to theoretically to an insight to the pattern of leadership and supervision that is measured to enhance public service productivity in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Supervision

Supervision has been defined in several ways by different authors to suit their specific purposes, (Bernard and Goodyear; 2004:43) defined supervision as a relationship between senior and junior members of a profession that (a) is evaluative (b) extend over time, (c) monitors the quality of services offered by the junior person and (e) act as gate keeping to the profession in effect it is managing others through leadership and personal influence. Loganbil et al (1982:31) perceive supervision as an intense interpersonal relationship in which one individual is responsible for facilitating the development of another individual.

Furthermore, Mills (1997:76) showed that supervision has direct effect on employee's performance. Supervisions assign tasks and clear responsibilities for performing those tasks and further, they expect from the assigned accuracy and punctuality. From their point of view, managers have the ability to motivate their employees, for this reason they spend considerable amount of time, looking for information about subordinate work. Effective managers regularly find out what and how employees are doing.

Kadushin (1992:51) identifies three elements to effective human service supervision: Administrative, Education, and Support. Administrative supervision is primarily concerned with effective implementation of agency procedures and policies. This includes the responsibility of the supervisor to assist employees to work to their best abilities as well as insuring agency requirements are implemented. The Educational function of supervision is related to the development of knowledge, skill, and ability to serve clients. The historic process includes reflection, exploration, and discussion of client interaction (Kadushin, 1992:53). Lastly, the third element of supervision according to Kadushin (1992:54) includes Support. Workers are recognized to have job-related stressors which require support. This support is required as part of supervision in order to maintain quality services under duress.

Austin (2008) defined supervision as a process with designated functions involving relationships to produce the best possible services. Garfat (1992:34) speaks of a "S.E.T" format, using the functions of support, education, and training to define supervision as a learning process within the overall framework of enhancing the quality of services delivered to the organization and the general public. In using supervision as an administrative tool, Ireland (1994:75) suggests supervision is a process in which the goals of individuals are met and meshed to ultimately meet the goals of the organization. It is primarily an administrative tool concerned with quality assurance and quality control in the delivery of organizational services.

Public Service

This generally means the activities of government employees and institutions aimed at formulating and implementing governmental policies and programmes for the interests of the masses (public). According to Adebayo (2000), civil service or public service is responsible for the management of the machinery of government and carrying out the day-to-day duties that public administrations demand. For Ezeani (2006), public service is much broader than the term civil service as the former (public service) refers to the totality of services that are organized under public (that is, government) authority.

Reduced to practical terms, public service comprises of civil service, local government, the military and other security forces, the judiciary, public agencies and other government or quasi-governmental agencies. As change agent and mechanism for rapid socio-economic transformation of any country, it becomes inevitable to have established ethical codes to guide the actions of civil servants, public servants and politicians.

Productivity

Productivity is a measurement or calculation of input and output ratio. Inputs are the amount of resources such as human resources, money, time, physical, technology and effort spent working in the organization, while output are the result. If the inputs are equivalent to the outputs, the worker is considered productive (Ikeanyibe, 2009:54).

Furthermore, according to Onah (2010:172), productivity is the relationship between output of goods and services and input of resources, and human, used in the production process. In other words, productivity is the ratio of output to input. The higher the numerical value of this ratio, the greater the productivity.

The least controversial definition of productivity is that it is a quantitative relationship between output and input (Antle and Capalbo, 1988:71). This definition enjoys general acceptability because of two related considerations. One, the definition suggests what productivity is thought to be in the context of an enterprise, an industry or an economy as a whole. Two, regardless of the type of production, economic or political system, this definition of productivity remains the same as long as the basic concept is the relationship between the quantity and quality of goods and services produced and the quantity of resources used to produce them (Prokopenko, 1987:45).

Eatwell and Newman (1991:44) defined productivity as a ratio of some measure of output to some index of input used. Put differently, productivity is nothing more than the arithmetic ratio between the amount produced and the amount of any resources used in the course of production. This conception of productivity goes to imply that it can indeed be perceived as the output per unit input or the efficiency with which resources are utilized (Samuelson and Nordhaus, 1995:78).

On the contrary, the economist's view of productivity according to Mustapha and Omorede, (2017) faces serious challenges in the public sector worldwide because of the nature of public service. In the public service just like the private sector as opined by Mustapha and Omorede, (2017), it is easy to determine the input as the cost made up of three major elements of labour, procurement of goods and services, and capital consumption (Atkinson, 2005). While the outputs are priced in the private sector and so, according to Mustapha and Omorede, (2017) it is easy to determine or calculate productivity or efficiency ratio, the contrary is the case in the public sector because outputs are not often priced and most public services are consumed collectively (Hatry, 1978).

Productivity according to Ogunna (1996) is the capacity of an organization to produce maximum results with available human, financial and material resources such that organizational goals and objectives are attained. In effect, efficiency and effectiveness of public values are indices of public organization's productivity while profitability in terms of input and output ratio are indices of efficiency and effectiveness in private sector organizations.

The multi-faceted nature of the public sector also constitutes a serious hindrance to developing holistic productivity strategies and consequently, a single definition of public sector productivity is a near impossibility (Afonso, Schuknecht & Tanzi, 2003; Mustapha and Omorede, 2017). These constraints to determining productivity in the public sector have been a serious concern to scholars of public administration and public sector governance (Mustapha and Omorede, 2017). Their concern stems from the criticisms by those who opine that most of the services being provided by the public sector are better provided by the private sector that is productivity and efficiency driven. In order to wriggle out of the seeming deficiency of productivity definition that is economically "rational", many countries have assumed productivity in the public sector to be the output as a measure of value equal to the value of inputs (Boyle, 2006; Mustapha and Omorede, 2017).

Public Service Productivity: The Accountability Component

Accountability simply refers to answerability for one's actions or behaviour. It involves the evaluation of the performance of duties by units and individuals within the organisation against the objectives and established standards in the organisation (Olowu, 2002; Mustapha and Omorede, 2017). According to Mustapha and Omorede, (2017), accountability has to do with the core mandate (Organisational goals), clear definition of responsibility backed with commensurate authority, reporting mechanisms and a system of review, rewards and sanctions as its crucial components. While the assignment of responsibility flows downward between superiors and their subordinates, accountability flows upward from subordinates to their superiors and laterally among professional peers or coordinates (Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert, 2008).

There has been considerable debate as to whether the state, as a sovereign, should be accountable to anyone since it was the sole guarantor of social peace, or whether the state should be treated as a moral and responsible agent. By extension, whether the institutions that constitute agents of the state should be held accountable for their actions. The preponderant view is that while state must be self-accounting on the basis of the constitution and the law of the land, the individuals who exercise state authority and render services to the citizens can be held accountable for the actions of the state they represent (Olowu, 2002). This position could perhaps have been responsible for why the holders of office under the immediate past government in Nigeria and their cronies are being called to account for their roles in the corrupt enrichment of themselves and misappropriation of public

funds particularly the \$2.1 billion arms procurement funds alleged to have been misappropriated by the immediate past chief security adviser to President Goodluck Jonathan, Colonel Sambo Dasuki (Mustapha and Omorede, 2017).

Accountability in the public sector is premised on certain principles if it must be effective. The first is clear performance expectations. The objectives to be pursued, the accomplishments expected which are encapsulated in the core mandate of the organisation must be understood and agreed upon as the basis upon which performance assessment would be done at a specified time. The second deals with the assignment of roles and clearly designed and specifically assigned responsibilities to the parties in the accountability relationship (Stoner, Freeman & Gilbert, 2008). The third is balanced expectations and capacities which are demonstrated in the authority, skills and resources at the disposal of persons concerned upon which his or her performance can be assessed after delivery. The fourth is credible reporting system put in place to get timely information about what has been achieved at particularly determined, specified and agreed intervals that would give room to the formative evaluation of the process; and lastly is the fair and informed review and feedback on performance. This should be carried out by parties. Here the achievements and difficulties are recognised, appropriate corrections made, and appropriate consequences are carried out (Edwards, 2011).

Supervision and Leadership: Establishing a Productivity Nexus

There have been intellectual debates, according to Okafor (2013), over which of the supervisory - leadership styles can lead to increase productivity in an organisation. These debates have been between the advocates of autocratic and job-centered style and those of democratic and employee-centered style. The pro-automatic and job-centered style contends that;

- (a) An autocratic style, especially benevolent autocracy, is inherently more efficient because it reinforces the leader's unilateral power and thereby increases his ability to influence subordinates to work towards objectives;
- (b) A job-centered focus yields maximum productivity because, although, a manager cannot change human nature, he can do a great deal to make workers work more efficiently;
- (c) Its position is also reinforced by the contents and essence of the Public Service Rules (PSR), financial regulations, extant circulars etc that regulate the conduct of public servants in terms of understanding their rights, privileges, limitations and consequences attendant to infringement of the rules.

On the other hand, those scholars favouring democratic and employee-centered style content that:

- (i) if not recognized and tapped, the power of the followers is great enough to undermine the leaders' influence and cause organization problems and set-backs;
- (ii) Artificially enforced efficiency, instituted by managers from above, is often resisted so hard that gains are lost. Therefore, an employee-centred style will yield maximum productivity because those managers closer to the workers are most capable of redesigning work for greater efficiency. Moreover, an employee-centered style increases employee satisfaction.

Thus, in the view of Okafor (2013), the scholars of the persuasion of democratic or employee-centered style believed that there is causal relation between leadership and productivity a position they feel is antithetical to the authoritarian style. The basic argument here is that a democratic style, when implemented appropriately, improves satisfaction, and the increased satisfaction will lead to increased productivity. From the foregoing, it is evident that these two positions regarding the relationship between leadership and productivity have obvious benefits and shortcomings. However, it will be intellectually deficient to, without empirical evidence, conclude that democratic leadership style will always produce a more effective result than authoritarian leadership style when followers/subordinates operate at a high need level (Okafor, 2013).

As a matter of fact, there are quite a number of well-documented cases in which a benevolent autocratic style proved extremely effective in certain situations. For instance, Thomas Watson Jr. had a reputation for being a tyrannical manager, yet he made IBM, the world's leading high-technology Corporation – a record that tends to refute the assumption that a basically authoritarian style is less effective with mature, highly educated subordinates (Mescon, 1988). The basic argument here is that the autocratic leadership style cannot be dismissed as ineffective in all situations. On the other hand, as opined by Okafor (2013), since warm human relations and freedom to act are more pleasant than rigid job structuring, it is no surprise that the employee-centered style of leadership has won the sympathy of many people. Without doubt, many organisational problems will be solved if improved human relations and participation can lead to higher productivity. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. There are quite a number of studies which have shown that the employee-centered style has led to high satisfaction but low productivity (Mescon, 1988). For instance, employees might receive satisfaction from the friendly atmosphere of the workplace and spend so much time socialising that they may become complacent and unproductive.

Therefore, determining the true relationship between leadership style and productivity is not once and for

all affair but requires continuous extensive empirical research. However, whatever the case may be some factors should be taken into consideration when examining the relationship between supervisory - leadership style and productivity in the Nigerian context (Okafor, 2013). According to Okafor and Bode-Okunade (2005) these factors are; personality factors, cultural factors, nature and structure of task, attitude of members regarding the task, personality of supervisors, nature of organizational goals, wider social context of leader-employee relationship, situational factors (i.e. in a crisis situation, an authoritarian leader may be most expedient). On the whole, Isaacs (1973) in Okafor (2013) has suggested that irrespective of the leadership style and nature of organization, an effective leadership should imbibe the following techniques to spur their followers or subordinates to greater productivity. These are;

- (i) Effective leader should confer with employees when the situation permits. He needs to confer on assignment, plans and how a job might be done.
- (ii) He should encourage employees to come to him with questions and clarifications. Weak leaders have a tendency to hide from problems.
- (iii) He should encourage communicate, using group meetings and provide for two-way communication (i.e. input and feedback) in the process. This is especially important when he plans to introduce changes.
- (iv) He should show concern for the employees and avoid showing concern for how well he may be liked by the subordinates.
- (v) He should use every opportunity to stress the importance of work and the importance of employee to operations.
- (vi) He should commend good work publicly, and criticize only in private.
- (vii) He should set an example for the employee in terms of responsible attitude and behaviour.
- (viii) He should show respect and courtesy to all employees.

Much as the foregoing characteristics are suppose to be demonstrated by supervisors in organizations, the public sector organizations especially the core civil service parades two seemingly different kinds of supervisors, the political and the bureaucratic, who individually and collectively run their respective MDAs with the sole purpose of delivering public goods. Their interaction attracts our further attention in this work.

Political and the Bureaucratic Supervision in the Public Sector: The Inevitable Interface

In public administration, emphasis is usually placed on two categories of leaders i.e. the *political leaders* and *bureaucratic leaders*. The political leaders are largely responsible for policy initiation and formulation of programmes and projects to implement the policies, while the bureaucratic leaders made of up of the bureaucratic officials (in the civil service) are saddled with the functions of execution and implementation. On the broader scale, leaders are found in every segment of the society in the various areas of jurisdiction. The main objective of each leader in his/her own sphere of influence is to ensure growth and development, and when these are done well and put together, the organization will achieve its objective and the country will develop faster (Okafor, 2013).

In the view of Ademolekun (2004), the plea of a dichotomy between politics and administration is, without question, one of the key paradigms in the study of public administration. In its classic formulation, the paradigm is characterized by two contradictory propositions. The first proposition, which is commonly traced to Woodrow Wilson's seminal article of 1887, stated that politics and administration are two distinct spheres and that each has its own group of functionaries.

The second proposition states that a rigid distinction cannot be maintained between public administration and policy making or politics. As Appleby has put it, "public administration is policy making while public administration is one of a number of basic political processes by which people achieve and control governance (Agboola, 2016).

But by the closing years of the third decades of the 20th century, according to Adamolekun, (2004), the issue of the dichotomy between politics and administration had been finally laid to rest. Thus, in 1937, Marshal Dimock, after examining a fresh concept of government in relation to politics and administration, observed that the two processes of administration and politics are coordinate rather than exclusive and by 1940, Carl Friedrich finally concluded that the idea of a dichotomy between politics and administration is a "misleading distinction" which had become a fetish, a stereotype in the minds of theorists and practitioners alike. However, it is one thing for practitioners and academics alike to recognize that politics and administration are coordinate rather than exclusive; it is another for the functionaries in government and governmental agencies to be able to relate this recognition to the actual day-to-day operation of administrative supervision and policy implementation. Up to the present time, there is evidence in various public organizations of constant bickering and friction between officials on the one hand and elected members or politicians on the other.

Furthermore, according to Pepple (2012) it has been established universally that good governance and leadership in the public sector begins with the establishment of quality relationship between the political and bureaucratic leaders. As stated by Richard Rose, "the metaphorical ship of state has one tiller but two pairs of

hands that give it direction: one belonging to party politicians in elective positions or appointed political leaders and the other to higher civil servants, led by Permanent Secretaries". The combined efforts of these two parties is a compelling force for progress as exemplified in the first republic when the political masters and the bureaucratic leaders worked collaboratively to record the milestones in the West, East, North and later Mid - West Regions. This era has often been mentioned as the golden era in our history.

Accordingly, the collaboration and partnership of political leaders (ministers) and the bureaucratic leaders (permanent secretaries) is very essential for the proper administration of the State and the achievement of strategic national priorities for advancing the cause of national development (Pepple, 2012). To this end, it is vital for them to maintain cordial relations to enable them to continue to render service to the people for the effectuation and sustenance of the social contract that binds the governed and the governors together.

Also, in term of the inevitable interface in the supervisory process to achieving government policies, ministers must ensure that they have good working relationship with their higher civil servants, personified in the permanent secretary, and that they secure their trust and confidence in the performance of their duties at all times with a view to harnessing their collective strengths and capacities for the delivery of public goods and thus increasing the chances of the ruling party to secure the trust and votes of the people in subsequent elections; and on the other hand for the bureaucracy to acquire positive connotation as agency of government that deserves continuous existence because of its relevant to development administration rather than the negative understanding of bureaucracy as inept, consumptive of public lean resources without rendering commensurate service to the people. The interface however must as a matter of necessity produce both transactional and transformational supervisors in the duo of the political and the bureaucratic leaders in any MDA that they superintend over.

Transactional and Transformational Supervisors: Implication for Public Service Productivity

According to Schimmoeller (2010) transformational supervision and transactional supervision theory is one of the most researched and influential frameworks for understanding leadership in any situation. The theory has been found to be valid in both public and private sectors.

Nigeria as a nation has been governed more by public leaders exhibiting more of *transactional* characteristics than the *transformational*. In other words, they can be said to be less visionary. In relation to work organization, the former starts with the idea that team members agree to obey their leader totally when they take on a job: the *transaction* is (usually) that the organization pays the team members in return for their efforts and compliance. The supervisor in the view of Okafor (2013) has a right to *punish* the team members if their work does not meet the pre-determined standard in the present. The team members can do little to improve their job satisfaction under transactional supervisors because there are extant rules and circulars that limit the workers ability to use their initiatives and be innovative. The leader could give team members some control of their income/reward by using incentives that encourage even higher standards or greater productivity. The key components of transactional leadership include contingent reward, passive management-by-exception, and active management-by-exception (Voon, Lo, Ngui, & Ayob, 2011). Contingent reward behavior is based on the use of incentives to motivate followers. Passive management-by-exception "behaviors involve the use of corrective actions in response to subordinate mistakes" while active management-by-exception "look[s] for subordinates' mistakes and enforcing rules to avoid future mistakes" (Michel, Lyons, & Cho, 2011). It has serious limitations for knowledge- based or creative work, but remains a common style in many organizations (Okafor, 2013).

The latter (i.e. transformational leadership) is a leader who inspires his or her team constantly with a shared vision of the future. Transformational leaders are highly visible, and spend a lot of time communicating. They do not necessarily lead from the front, as they tend to delegate responsibility amongst their team. While their enthusiasm is often infectious, they generally need to be supported by *detailed people*. In many work organisations, both transactional leaders (managers) ensure that routine work is done reliably, while the transformational leaders look after initiatives that add value. The latter are dynamic, innovate and visionary in their orientation. As Drucker (1954) points out, this type of managers, are the basic and scarcest resources of any business enterprise. Transformational supervisors provide ethical conduct and a clear sense of purpose (Babcock, Roberson & Strickland, 2010). Transformational supervisors exercise influence rather than power or authority over followers and motivate followers to achieve beyond what they could have done by themselves without the influence and motivation of the leader (Boga & Ensari, 2009).

In the context of Nigeria and her public sector as a whole, poor leadership has been the bane and a hindrance to the sector ability to administer development. The nation over the years has been bedeviled by a prolonged ineffective or inept autocratic leadership and self seeking and corrupt politicians (Keshi, 2008). This has, consequently, adversely affected productivity level in most public-sector work organizations so much that government companies in which over N100 billion was invested over the period of fifty years have been privatized and sold at a give-away rate of N35 million (Ikejiani-Clark, 2006). In fact, the cases of Nigerian Telecommunications, (NITEL), National Electric Power Authority (later Power Holding Company of Nigeria),

the Nigeria Airways and a host of other privatized, concessioned or liquidated public enterprises attest to this ineffective leadership both at the national and organizational levels (Amaefule, 2006).

Indeed, in looking at the implication of the transactional and transformational leadership (supervisory) style in tackling the pathology of inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the Nigerian public service, the two-forementioned supervisory styles are needed, depending on the circumstances, in the process of implementing public policies by public servants. While supervisors at the unit and section levels in the MDAs need to be largely transactional in their supervisory roles because of their closeness to the workers in day to day functioning of the service, the top management mainly at the directorate cadre as major custodians of the vision and mission of the MDAs must as a matter of necessity be transformational in their leadership style. The efficiency level of the both combined would eventually translate into the much desired organizational efficiency of the public service.

CONCLUSION

Effective supervision is perhaps one of the most important factors in the work situation especially as it relates to increase in productivity. The implication here is that those who are entrusted with the task of supervising have the responsibility to motivate employees. No matter how well thought out the plan or efficient the organization is, nothing happens until the people who make up the organization are stimulated to perform through effective leadership via strategic supervision. In this case, therefore, the basic physiological, psychological, security and social needs of the employees must be substantially met.

In Okafor (2013) opinion, because productivity in the public service is largely affected by workers' attitude, and that it is workers' perception of authority and control that effect their productivity level, government and other employers of labour should put in efforts aimed at improving productivity through effective and responsible leadership via effective supervision both at the micro (individual work organizations) and macro (nation at large) levels. By so doing, various work organizations and the nation at large would have overcome low productivity which has remained the bane of the country for several decades. In effect, attitudinal change among the public sector workers is important if the tide of low productivity must be reversed.

It is also important to note that if the image of the public service in Nigeria is to improve, the accountability component of the service must match the responsibility component as the former is in most cases downplayed; and there must be a consistent interface between the political and the bureaucratic supervisors so as to give effect to the accountability component with the two bearing in mind that the reputation of the political party he or she represents at the MDA is at stake particularly delivering on their election promises and the bureaucratic supervisor being conscious of the fact that the bureaucracy needs to prove that contrary to the belief of the general public they are performance and value efficiency driven organization.

Finally, unless there is effective and focused political and organisational leadership and focused followership in the public sector, the vision of improved productivity in the public sector and national development will remain a mirage.

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