

## Political Patronage and Bureaucracy: Studies in Nigeria and Indonesia

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**Abstract:** The realization of effective governance in any nation hinges on the provision of ample services for its citizens. Responsible for the efficient delivery of these services is the executive arm of government, overseen by the civil service. The ideal functioning of the civil service necessitates the appointment of highly intelligent and qualified personnel recruited through a merit-based system. Regrettably, in both the Ebonyi state civil service and Indonesia, the actual experience deviates significantly from this esteemed ideal.

**Purpose:** The primary objective of this investigation is to evaluate the correlation between political patronage and inefficiency in the delivery of public services within Ebonyi State. Additionally, the study seeks to identify and analyze instances of bureaucratic patronage in Indonesia.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The research employed a survey research methodology to gather data. The study drew information from both primary sources, collected directly from the surveyed subjects, and secondary sources, which encompassed existing data and literature relevant to the research topic.

**Findings:** The findings of the study unveiled that the inefficiencies observed in the service delivery of the Ebonyi State Civil Service are directly linked to the practice of political patronage. Likewise, the investigation established that selective promotion and recruitment practices within the Ebonyi state civil service are directly influenced by political patrons. Additionally, the study identified that the influence of godfathers within the service framework

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contributes significantly to maintaining high discipline among civil servants in Ebonyi state. In the context of Indonesia, the research illuminated that patronage by bureaucrats is prevalent. Despite the expectation of bureaucratic neutrality in enforcing regulations, the study acknowledged that the relationship between politicians and bureaucrats is inseparable, leading to political exchanges aimed at securing benefits.

**Originality/value:** This research represents a unique contribution to the existing body of knowledge as it pioneers a comparative analysis of political patronage and bureaucracy in Nigeria and Indonesia. The novelty of this study lies in its exploration of similarities and differences in the manifestation and impact of political patronage within the bureaucratic frameworks of both nations, providing valuable insights into cross-cultural dynamics in public administration.

**Keywords:** Bureaucracy; Political Patronage; Nigeria; Indonesia

**Paper Type:** Research-Article

## Introduction

The problem of mediocrity in the Nigerian civil service as a result of political patronage and non-merit-based employment is a topical issue today. This is because of the civil service's decisive role in every stage of the policy cycle. Sodaro observes that the bureaucracy or the civil service is indispensable to the functioning of government in virtually every country in the world-Nigeria inclusive (Sodaro 2001). Similarly, Philip (Phillips 1988) avers that the performance of the civil service can be ignored only at the peril of the country and the government of the day and emphasizes that policy outcomes is a reflection of the effectiveness, efficiency, and sensitivity of its civil service in a country.

Conversely, to realize the goals of effectiveness, efficiency and sensitivity in service delivery and infrastructural development of government, capable employees with the requisite skills and technical competence are required, because it

is through this capable employee that the developmental objectives of the state can be achieved. Osakwe (2007) observed that it is important to have a good organizational structure, but it is more important to fill the job with the right staff. According to him, the recruitment pattern of any organization can determine the success or failure of that organization. Base on this, Onwe (Onwe, Abah, and Nwokuwu 2015) argued that the availability of the pool of qualified and competent personnel do not just happen; but through effective and efficient recruitment exercise .

The federal and state civil service commissions are constitutionally empowered to serve as employment agents for the service. The emphasis of the Nigerian civil service since independence has been on uniformity, standardization and transparency in the recruitment and selection processes. In spite of the foregoing, available evidence suggest that employment into Ebonyi state civil service has been politicized, with consequential and dysfunctional effects on the institution, employee productivity, and quality public service delivery (Ejumudo 2010). Politicization of the civil service in Nigeria is made manifest in the recruitment, staffing, development and promotion of individuals on the basis of favouritism, political party affiliation, ethnic consideration and interest group.

Consequent on the above, political patronage which is identified as political expediency instead of merit, now becomes the criterion for employment and promotion in Ebonyi state civil service. In the process of recruitment, merit and due process have often been supplanted in favour of political consideration, mediocrity, nepotism and predendalism in Ebonyi state civil service. The implication of this is that in the nearest future, acquisition of knowledge and requisite qualification may be inconsequential for employment and appointment provided one is connected to the politician. The reasons for this sharp practice in the state civil service and Nigeria in general can be deduce from

the fact that political leaders in Nigeria nay Ebonyi state sees governance position as the extension of their personal estate and secondly they are under intense pressure to reward their supporters and political loyalists, hence, every opportunity for employment is seen by them as an avenue to payback those who stood by and supported them during elections, even if it means degrading merit for mediocrity (Okafor 2005).

Politicization of employment according to Osakwe (2007) is employment that is based on political patronage or determined by the political class. To Omeje and Ndukwe (2009) politicization of employment is the unconventional practice of employing political interest by those in the public offices to fill existing and non existing vacancies in the public service without following due process (Ukeje et al. 2020). Ideally, Weber (1952) conceptualized his model bureaucracy to be politically neutral and autonomous, insulated from the vagaries and impact of politics (Obi 2008). Specifically, Weber argues that recruitment into the bureaucracy should be based strictly on merit and not be influenced by any other factor.

However, it is a known fact that many factors other than merit and technical competence' play a decisive role in the employment process of Ebonyi State civil service. Prominent among these anti-merit considerations in the employment process is the issue of political patronage, a situation in which the available job openings in Ebonyi State Civil Service are being distributed to the loyalists of influential politicians and administrators. If left unchecked, this awareness will worsen the already abysmal performance of Ebonyi state civil service.

Meanwhile, the form of patronage that occurs in Indonesia is very different. In Nigeria, there are patronage practices in the employee recruitment process, while in Indonesia, patronage practices occur when already a civil servant. For this reason,

researchers are interested in examining the form of patronage between Nigeria and Indonesia.

### **Methods**

This study adopts the survey design to enable the researcher to elicit information from a population subset. A survey refers to eliciting data from a target population through either the questionnaire or interview instruments or subjecting such data to statistical analysis to conclude (Obasi 2000). Surveys provide an important means of gathering information, especially when the necessary data cannot be found in statistical records. In survey method, a universe must be determined from which a sample is drawn. Questionnaire was used to gather primary data while secondary data was generated from textbook, journal articles, newspapers, internet sources etc.

This method was considered appropriate for the study because the research was aimed at eliciting responses from respondents on political patronage and employment in Ebonyi state civil service.

### **Discussion and Findings**

#### **The Nexus between Political Patronage and Godfatherism**

The term patronage appears with increased frequency in anthropological analysis. From Jeremy's position, however, there is considerable ambiguity in the meaning given to the term (Boissevain 1966). Patronage is found on the reciprocal relations between patrons and clients. By patrons it means a person who uses his client and in return provides certain services for his patron. Patronage is thus the complex of relations between those who use their influence, social positions or some other attribute to assist and protect, and those whom they seek to help and protect (Boissevain 1966). While political patronage refers to the dispensation of favours or rewards such as public office jobs, contract subsidies, prestige and other valued benefits by a patron (who controls their dispensation) to a client (the Canadian

encyclopedia, 2013) political godfatherism connotes the invasion of the political candidates by discarnate powerful sponsors, tending to complete possession for the purpose of selfish gratification (Mbamara 2004; Bassey and Enetak 2008). For some scholars, the godfather is the political slave merchant while the godson is the political slave boy or political article for sale.

The godson is purchased with big sum of money under a democratic oath. Their aims and objectives include appointment, stealing, robbery and looting of government treasury. This according to Joseph has left democracy in Nigeria assume the form of prebendalism (Joseph 1999).

#### **Recruitment and Selection in Nigerian Civil Service**

In the Nigerian federal civil service, recruitment and selection assumes these formats: the department of establishment under the office of the secretary to the government of the federation sends out call circular to each of the ministry, parastatals and departments under the management of the federal government. This is subject to the fact the there must exist vacancies and the need for filling such vacancies (Igbokwe-Ibeto and Agbodike 2015). there must also be adequate funds to pay those that may likely be recruited. Finally, there must be the authority to recruit. According to Igbokwe (Igbokwe-Ibeto and Agbodike 2015):

Once these conditions are met and by the provisions of the civil service (reorganization) Decree, No. 43 Section 9 (1)d of 1998, which states as follows 'each ministry will undertake the appointment, discipline and promotion of its staff under general and uniform guidelines to be provided by the federal civil service commission'.

For each ministry or department to function in this capacity, it is expected to have its own personnel management board to be supported by different committees. However, while the civil service appoint senior personnel on salary grade level 08-10 to

reflect the federal character, the various ministries appoint junior officers on GL 01-07 under the supervision of the civil service commission Decree No. 43 (1998) according to Collins and Druiten (2003) the Nigerian civil service places a lot of premium on the interview method for selection (Collins and Druiten 2003). He identified that Decree No. 43 of 1998 states that “all eligible candidates for appointment shall be interviewed by the appropriate personnel management board or committee”. Whatever the case may be, the principle of merit, that of quota system and federal character are always enforced to determine who to recruit and whom to select. This to a large extent and in the view of Nze (Nze 2006) downplays the inevitability of bureaucrat to efficiently and effectively ‘deliver the good as advocated for by Weber. Competence and job specialization cannot thrive where sentiments are brought to play. In any case, successful candidates are notified through letters of appointment duly signed by an officer designated to do so by the ministry concerned or by the civil service commission.

Ikvesi (2010) identifies that a number of factors tend to inhibit effective recruitment exercise in Nigeria public services. The key factors include:

a. Weak recruitment policies and practices:

The caliber of people recruited into an organization no doubt, determines to a large extent their contribution to the organization and the success or failure of the organization. Wrong recruitment and selection practices such as ethnic, religious, political and other considerations have created a situation where we have “garbage in and garbage out” or putting of square pegs in round holes. The Nigerian public service is not an exception. What we have virtually in every segment of the public service in Nigeria is a situation where the chairman of a board or commission or commissioner of a ministry compiles the names of his relations,

friends and party members and offers them employment without recourse to rules and regulations. This leads to low productivity.

b. Nepotism:

One of the banes of the Nigerian public service is the recruitment of mediocres or totally unsuitable candidates in preference to candidates of high merit. The reason for this ugly situation can be traced directly to favouritism by those in high positions.

c. Corruption:

This factor plays its own part and is mostly prevalent in the recruitment of very junior employees like massagers and clerks. In this category of recruitment, the recruiting agents or officials who are usually management officials see the exercise as an opportunity to make money and hereby resorting to collecting bribes from the applicants hence “no bribe no employment”.

d. Undue emphasis on paper Qualifications:

One fact which is selection realized today, is that mere paper qualification is not a true test of the merit which the qualification proclaimed in the certificate is supposed to carry. It is not unusual today to find two young graduates holding the same degree qualification, but while one can write down his thoughts and ideas in logical sequence and in correct grammar, the other hardly writes one sentence correctly without elementary errors of spelling, grammar and totally unintelligible prose. Let both hold the same degree qualification. This is why it is important that the process of recruitment or appointment should be an instrument for the promotion of efficiency in the public service.

e. Federal Character Principle and Quota System:

The Federal character principle democratizes appointment in the public service, at the three tiers of government. This means that all zones or states as the case may be, must be represented in all public institutions. This leads to the appointment of mediocre in the service. This practice obviously negates one of the important principles of Weberian ideal bureaucracy that of appointment



based on merit and qualification. Lastly, other factors identified which inhibit effective recruitment exercise in the Nigeria public service include stateism, tribalism/ethnicity, son of the soil syndrome, gender discrimination and religious bias (Oganna 1999).

### **Clientelism, Favouritism, Nepotism as Factors in Nigeria Recruitment Trend**

Clientelism, broadly speaking, including various forms of favouritism (of which nepotism is a particular type), is representing a particular form of interest. Clientelism represents a situation in which a person (an elected official or an employed public servant) uses his or her public power to obtain a favour for a member of his or her family, for his or her ethnic or religious group, political party, friends or other interest to which he/she has adherence (Otu 2013). Favouritism or cronyism is a mechanism of power abuse implying “privatization” of and a biased distribution of state resources. Favouritism is to grant offices or benefits to friends and relatives, regardless of merit. Favouritism is quite simply the normal human proclivity to favour friends, family and anybody close and trusted.

In the political sphere, favouritism is the penchant of state officials and politicians, who have access to state resources and the power to decide upon the distribution of these, to give preferential treatment to certain people when distributing resources. The purpose is to sustain and prolong one’s power, position and wealth.

Clientelism is the rather common proclivity to favour one’s kinship members (family, clan and tribe, ethnic, religious or regional group). In most non-democratic systems, the president has for instance the constitutional right to appoint all high ranking positions. This easily adds up to several hundred position within the ministries, the military and security apparatus, in parastatals and public companies and agencies, in the diplomatic corps and

in the ruling party. This legal or customary right, of course extends the possibilities for (and intensifies) all kinds of favouritism.

Nepotism is a special form of favouring family members (wife, brother and sisters, children, nephews, cousins, in-law etc). It is a special form of favouritism, in which an office holder (ruler) with the right to make appointments prefers to nominate to prominent positions his proper kinsfolk family. Many unrestricted presidents have tried to secure their (precarious) power position by nominating family members to key political, economic and military/security positions in the state apparatus. When “successful” deeply nepotistic system are getting closer to a “mafia because of the shared family “values” and loyalties.

Favouritism is not only a legal and procedural problem, but also a problem of flawed qualifications, lacking skills and inefficiency. Furthermore, where public position is strongly correlated to possibilities of corrupt and extractive practices, favouritism can secure substantial prerogatives and profits for certain families, clans and social sub-groups. Nepotism can cause conflict of loyalties within organization. These trends in the recruitment process of civil servant in the Nigerian state is often express in form of patronage, where the patrons being in elitist position in all sphere of the nation structure seek to reward family members, friends, associate and cronies first before any other person or any other criteria such as merit is considered in the offering of employment and position in the country.

#### **Political Patronage and Employment in Ebonyi State Civil Service**

The bureaucratic model as advanced by Webber (1952) suggests that a systematic set of laid down rules guide the action of employees in a bureaucracy (Obi 2008). This follows that recruitment and thus employment process into Nigerian civil service in general, and Ebonyi state civil service in particular should be similarly guided by laid down rules. Hence, Adebimpe

(Adebimpe and Fadoju 2017) in his submission observed that whom to recruit into the civil service should be a factor of a rational process carried out according to laid down rules, because when personal bias and other forms of sentiment influence the recruitment process, it could have a negative consequence on the organisation.

In view of the need for the civil service to be impartially selected, administratively competent, politically neutral and imbued with the spirit of service to the community, section 153(1) of the 1999 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria vested in the federal / state civil service commission with the powers to appoint persons to offices in the federal/state civil services and to dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding such offices. To avoid delays in the performance of the duties of the commission, section 170 of the 1999 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria empowers the commission to delegate any of its powers and functions as a regulatory authority of the federal/state civil service to line ministries and extra ministerial departments. Hence, in his submission, Babaru (2003) observed that the powers to recruit junior officers on post graded GL 01-06 are delegated to ministries and extra ministerial departments.

However, it is unfortunate that in spite of the constitutional provisions to guard against fraud and other related vices in the conduct of employment in the Nigerian (Ebonyi State) civil service, and the strategic position of the civil service as dominant instrument to drive socio-economic and political development in Ebonyi State, the exercise has been highly undermined by politics, thereby constraining its efficiency, utility and public service delivery (Adebimpe and Fadoju 2017). Political patronage, argues Adebimpe (2017) has encroached and permeated the recruitment and selection process in Ebonyi State civil service (Adebimpe and Fadoju 2017). The political heavy-weights more often than not take advantages of their privilege positions to reward their political

thugs who worked strenuously to see them emerge victorious during the election process with appointment into Ebonyi state civil service. Similarly, Nwanegbo (Nwanegbo 2018) identified that there are empirical cases where recruitment and selection into the state civil service are based on the concept of godfatherism or clientelism, which throws merit to the wind. In this case, the political heads in various ministries and extra ministerial departments give express orders to the civil service commission to employ their preferred candidates without recourse to laid down recruitment procedures. Onwe (Onwe, Abah, and Nwokuwu 2015), further observed that the top citizens of the state such as members of the state house of assembly, commissioners and special advisers to the governor are given the privilege to present their candidates which gives them the opportunity to reward party loyalists. According to him, "The list of the political bigwigs in Ebonyi State usually outweighs the result derived from the recruitment and selection exercise conducted by the recruiting bodies. This throws merit to the wind. It is noteworthy that in some cases, just like the recruitment exercise of 2008, the formal procedure for recruitment as enshrined in the constitution are religiously followed, but the outcome of the exercise does not determine those who would emerge successful. The lists of the political bigwigs always hold away all through the process (Onwe, Abah, and Nwokuwu 2015).

In a small interview session with some Ebonyi State civil servants, a top ranking personnel who disclosed to me in condition of anonymity identified that:

Employment into Ebonyi State Civil Service is not all about merit. Just like we have the VC list and dean's list in the university system during admission, so also we have the governors list, the commissioners list, the permanent secretary's list, and more like that when recruitments is conducted (male, senior cadre, GL 12).

Another respondent appears to agree with the position above when she observed that in the course of recruitment into Ebonyi State Civil service, merit is said to be the major consideration, but there are other ways for those who know their way" (female, Senior Cader, GL 09). Nwanigbo (Nwanegbo 2018) submitted that the Ebonyi state civil service is experiencing a high degree of inefficiency and low productivity, owing to the high rate of prebendal politics within the states civil service structure. This assertion was validated by chief Ude Nkamah, a onetime chairman of Ebonyi state civil service commission, who identified that during recruitment, names of both qualified and unqualified personnel were forwarded to his office for recruitment by the top ranking politicians, and some other prominent members of the state, mostly against his wish. According to him:

In the typical Nigerian society, there is no place that such things don't happen. The commission tries her best to be impartial; but it is faced with strong pressures from of political godfathers and personal pressure from family and friends. These things happen in an informal way, but we try our best to curtail it.

The resultant effect of such recruitment practice would be a civil service that is bereft of capable manpower to execute the policies of government most efficiently and effectively. In a similar vein, Kenneth (Kenneth 2016) while lending his voice to this line of argument forcefully articulated that in most departments and ministries in Ebonyi State Civil Service, we have secretaries that couldn't raise memos, and accountants that cant balance account records; a situation that made the heads of such departments and ministries to take charge of those duties by themselves especially in conditions where the mediocre personnel are so politically connected that any attempt to dismiss them by the said heads would tantamount to setting fire upon ones self and career. The prevalence of political patronage in employment in Ebonyi State

civil service has become so heightened that most personnel's of the service now sees it as a normal practice. A senior personnel in Ebonyi State civil service tends to justify the practice in the following identification:

...and what is this one you are calling godfatherism and nepotism, how can you have an uncle or aunt in the top position that can help you get what you need and you will say no? In this economy that people are looking for jobs? Even those who are qualified are still on the streets not to talk of those who are really not qualified. Yes, it happens in the civil service, but it really not so bad, considering the state of this country (male, senior Cadre, GL 12).

A significant area where political patronage manifest in the recruitment process is in the appointment of chairman and other commissioners to the state (Ebonyi State) civil services commission. Although the constitution empowers the governor/president as the case may be to discharge such duties, they usually base the appointment of such principal officers of the commission on political grounds (Adebimpe and Fadoju 2017) some of the appointees lack initiative, imagination, skills, techniques, expertise and qualification in human resource management in an attempt to secure their position as well as gain undue favour from the governor and members of his cabinet, they deliberately abate the incursion of politics into the recruitment and selection exercise in Ebonyi State Civil service. Sequel to the above, prospective candidates seeking employment in the civil service of Ebonyi State more often than not submit the duplicate copies of their credentials to political heavy-weights with full assurance to secure employment opportunities for them in the civil service of the state (Ujo 2001).

It should be noted that there are certain rules that conditions the behaviour of civil servants across the globe, including Nigeria, and Ebonyi state in particular. However, it appears as though

political patronage is fighting the major pillars upon which administrators operate on. One of such pillars is identified as Discipline. Uchendu argued that indiscipline has taken over the character of Ebonyi state civil service (Uchendu and Amah 2002). He identified that absenteeism, lateness to duty and the use of foul language have become the order of the day. Adebimpe was in agreement with this when he argued with great eloquence that (Adebimpe and Fadoju 2017):

When a line manager (head of department) has no stake in the appointment of staff, the manager should not expect total respect for laid down rules from such staff. This politically favoured staff in appointment will visibly show their unalloyed loyalty to their political heavyweights while at the same time flouting with impunity conspicuous laid down civil service rules.

According to him, since these category of civil servants are highly connected, no amount of acts of indiscipline such as lateness to work, truancy, abscondment, laxity, outright absenteeism etc can attract punitive measures against them. Uchendu argued that the major disadvantage to recruiting people on other bases rather than merit is that some of them will know what to do and how to go about their work, yet they would not discharge their duties well or at the right time because they feel that their godfather will always be there for them (Uchendu and Amah 2002). So, who can hold them to ransom? Or who dares to punish them? And the way civil service is structured is such that the dereliction of duty by one person can affect the work of others; this will affect the performance of such department.

A level 10 civil servant in Ebonyi State who spoke on condition of anonymity observed that "you stand a very good chance of losing your job if you try to report some of these workers here to the appropriate authorities." According to him, a lady in

the same office with him does nothing all through the day than fiddling with her iPhone. "Try to report her naa, and your own in this job is done". Such issues if left to continue can affect the total productivity of Ebonyi State civil service.

On a general note, promotion in the Civil Service connotes advancement to a more senior job or a higher rank, grade or position in a workplace. Accordingly, section 7 subsections 020701 of the Public Service Rules (2008) provides as follows:

- i. Except where powers of appointment or promotion have been delegated, no promotion shall be affective until they have been approved by the commission.
- ii. All officers who fall within the field of selection for any promotion exercise shall be considered except those who are under disciplinary actions. The minimum number of years that an officer must spend in a post before being considered eligible for promotion shall be as follows:

Officers on grade level 06 and below minimum of 2 years, officers on grade level 07-14 minimum of 3 years, officers on GL 15-17 minimum of 4 years

- iii. Promotion shall be made strictly on the basis of competitive merit from among all eligible candidates.
  - (a) In assessing the merit of officers, a clear distinction shall be made between their record of performance or efficiency in lower grade, and their potential for promotion.
  - (b) Seniority and previous records of performance will be taken into account in choosing between candidates with equal potential for promotion.
  - (c) In all cases, however, a general satisfactory record of conduct shall be considered.
- iv. The responsibility for the promotion of officers shall be as follows:
  - a. GL 06 and below-by the ministry/extra ministerial office.



- b. GL 07–14 by the ministry/extra-ministerial office or the relevant staff pool subject to confirmation by the service commission.
- c. GL 15–17 by the service commission recommendation from ministry/extra ministerial office or the relevant pool routed through the Head of Civil Service.

Subsection 020702 states that “Before each promotion exercise, the appropriate officer shall compile a list of eligible candidates to be considered, the first being prepared on the basis of the job requirement or set of criteria established for the post by the office of the head of service, e.g Qualification/experience, age, training, performance etc, as contained in the scheme of service. Furthermore, subsection (b) provides that “Officer shall qualify for promotion to higher grade after acquiring this skill and competence as provided in the scheme of service for the particular cadre” With respect to promotion from junior to senior post, subsection 020703 states as follows “the committee shall meet to interview and consider officers holding junior appointment in the ministry/extra ministerial office who may be recommended to the commission which shall examine the suitability of the officers so recommended and their promotion to existing vacancies. From the foregoing, it becomes clear to see that the Nigerian Civil Service in general and Ebonyi Civil Service in particular have rules for the promotion of Civil Servants, as enshrined in the Public Service Rules (2008). Regrettably, despite the clear provisions of this law, promotion in Ebonyi State Civil Service is still determined by other factors than those which are contained in the Public Service Rule of 2008.

The incumbent governor of Ebonyi State governor, David Umahi, on 14th December 2020, ordered the state and local civil service commission to immediately assess all existing vacancies due for promotion. He equally ordered that the promotion of civil servants be completed within the first week of January 2021. When

a GL 14 civil servant of Ebonyi state was interviewed as to whether the last promotion was based on merit, he observed that:

I am not happy that this is happening to me, seeing my fellow colleague being promoted to new ranks while we sat for the same exam. The promotion as far as am concerned is biased. If it is based on merit, as they claimed, I will not still be wearing this rank for five years now.

Abia supported this view when he submitted that a number of factors determine how far a civil servant or politician can go (Abia 2006). In most cases, his network of friends that has the needed political influence and rich enough to negotiate when necessary and be courageous to impose their candidates even forcefully are strong determinants when some category of staff are unjustifiably promoted without due civil service process, those that are left behind in the entire process will show less commitment to duty.

### **Consequences of Politicization of Recruitment in Nigerian Civil Service**

Obi after an extensive research on political patronage on the employment process of Nigerian civil service identified the following as a consequence of politicization of recruitment (Obi 2008):

#### **a. Corruption**

One of the major effects of politicization of recruitment is corruption. Corruption is any act by a public official which violets the accepted standard of behaviour in order to serve selfish ends. As a result of politicization of recruitment in Nigeria, merit ceases to be a major factor in the recruitment process. Recruitment that is based on political consideration – patronage at the expense of strict merit system based on tested and proven administration and executive competence and qualification is fraught with corruption.

#### **b. Cult of Mediocrity**

Over politicization of the recruitment procedures lead to the recruitment of unqualified staff. Unqualified staff here means that it is not the best of the candidates for a post that are finally selected.

c. Low productivity

The recruitment of unqualified staff ensures low productivity. Productivity in the civil service can be evaluated from the magnitude of resources (personnel, money and materials) applied to accomplish a task; resourcefulness, creativity and conservation of money and materials, dexterity and the speed with which assigned duties are executed.

d. Inefficiency

The inefficiency of the Nigerian civil service manifests in procrastination, red-tapism, insensitivity and indifference. The recruitment of qualified staff ensures high productivity and efficiency. Consequently, unqualified staff performs inefficiently. Examples and instances of inefficiency abound in the civil service.

e. Indiscipline

Indiscipline in the civil service borders on acts and attitudes of the civil servants which abysmally deviate from the standards and norms ideal for morality, good behavior and vibrant service. Such as lateness, lousiness, sleeping on duty, truancy witch-hunting, gossip, arrogance to workers and the public and habitual absenteeism. Indiscipline massively persist in the service, even as dedication to duty is very low in the civil service. Overstaffing also identified that one of the major consequences of politicization is over staffing. Since standard rules are set aside for the politicians, they hardly appreciate the need for systematic manpower planning. They perceive the civil service as an avenue to compensate those that contributed to their party or personal political success to woo more support or loyalty.

**Politics and Bureaucracy in Indonesia**

The contemporary discourse around political-bureaucratic ties in Indonesia is intriguing and worthy of observation. The phenomenon of political-bureaucratic interactions, often called the "love-hate" relationship, has sparked intense debate among specialists. Politics and bureaucracy are closely intertwined,

functioning in a manner comparable to a romantic relationship. Similar to individuals in a romantic relationship, two emotions invariably emerge sequentially: sentiments of 'affection' and 'aversion.' While simultaneously desiring proximity and collaboration, they prefer independence and distance. According to Yudiatmaja, the political-bureaucratic connection can be likened to two sides of a coin that are inseparable yet integrated (Yudiatmaja 2018).

The extent of society's reliance on bureaucracy remains significant, but the effectiveness of bureaucracy in Indonesia fluctuates over different administration periods (Diana 2020). Ideally, the bureaucracy should operate autonomously from political interference. However, the bureaucracy appears to be strongly intertwined with political influence. The Indonesian bureaucracy is subject to the whims of politics and government, with each leader bringing their unique style to the system. Bureaucracy cannot rely on past successes but must align with the vision and approach of the top leadership, as they have the most influence on the bureaucratic process. Employing new personnel is not the remedy for enhancing bureaucracy; rather, it will result in an organization becoming bloated with numerous employees but less work, ultimately leading to inefficiency and ineffectiveness. This, in turn, will cause a growing backlog of activities, particularly in government public services.

The inherent connection between bureaucracy and politics is an undeniable reason for the enduring interaction between the two (Fakhruddin 2012). As mentioned before, bureaucracy and politics are inherently intertwined and inseparable. Bureaucracy and politics are distinct institutions with contrasting characteristics, yet they are mutually dependent and must harmonize with one another. Bureaucracy refers to the authority and power of government agencies and their branches as they vie for resources or advantages, either for their gain or for the benefit

of fellow people. Bureaucracy is characterized by its hierarchical structure, recruitment based on specialized knowledge, and lack of personalization. Conversely, politics establishes agreeable regulations for certain individuals to steer society toward a cohesive communal existence.

The bureaucracy needs ongoing political backing to execute the public policies it establishes effectively. However, politics also relies on the assistance of the bureaucracy, which operates at the practical level as the agent responsible for carrying out or executing governmental policies. Nevertheless, the bureaucratic and political spheres necessitate a symbiotic relationship wherein they provide reciprocal assistance and uphold their responsibilities and roles. The goal is to establish a network of relationships that mutually reinforce each other, ultimately resulting in improved accommodation of public interests.

#### **Bureaucratic Patronage in Indonesia**

As previously said, when politics and bureaucracy are closely intertwined, it results in a situation where several bureaucrats in Indonesia effectively work under the authority of political appointments, such as Regional Heads. The patronage connection pattern in the government bureaucracy is theoretically challenging to accept due to its inconsistency with the bureaucratic nature, which is characterized by a bureaucratic relationship pattern. Patronage relationship patterns exhibit personal, informal, emotional, and procedural characteristics, whereas bureaucratic relationship patterns display impersonal, formal, rational, and procedural traits. Hence, patronage relationship patterns are regarded as a potential hindrance to the attainment of government performance, particularly in the realm of public services.

Certain manifestations of bureaucratic patronage can be elusive. Still, there are discernible indicators, such as the Regional Head's conspicuous favoritism for specific State Civil Apparatus

(ASN) through promotions or strategic reassignments. This patronage arises when ASN engages in political transactions, offering support to the Regional Head in exchange for a position. According to Law Number 20 of 2023 regarding the State Civil Apparatus, ASN (State Civil Apparatus) is required to maintain a neutral stance throughout all general elections. However, in reality, a significant number of ASNs aligned themselves with one of the candidates in order to benefit personally.

The relationship between politics, administration, and policy is interconnected. Politics has the potential to promote bureaucratic reform, if feasible. Additionally, politics can compel the establishment of trustworthy policy agendas. The bureaucracy can promote feasible policy implementation. This pattern affirms that political authority, in the context of bureaucracy and policy, should be restricted to controlling reforms and priorities that are feasible and deemed credible for implementation. Political interference in technological implementation that caters to personal or group interests is strictly discouraged.

The case of bureaucratic politics in Indonesia reveals a significant and unrestricted intervention by political authorities at both the local and central government levels. This intervention extends beyond policies and bureaucracy, particularly regarding the power to decide the appointment, transfer, and dismissal of civil servants (ASN) and to shape the management of ASNs in government agencies. Political influences have indeed infiltrated the bureaucracy. The co-optation is caused by various circumstances (Hidayat 2021):

- Attitude of politicians/regional heads who are not statesmen
- The patron-client political culture that still exists within the bureaucracy
- Excessive personal fanaticism
- Unstrict attitude of superiors

- Weak law enforcement processes.

### **Conclusion**

The Civil Service in Ebonyi State is markedly susceptible to substantial political influence. Political elites and high-ranking officials engage in pronounced political manipulation and interference when appointing and selecting personnel within the service. These practices exploit kinship ties, favoritism, as well as institutional and governmental connections to achieve their objectives. This pervasive influence has adverse effects on human resource competencies, capabilities, the quality of decision-making, and overall service delivery. Consequently, the consequences of such practices manifest in dysfunction and inconsequential outcomes. Similarly, in Indonesia, the realms of politics and bureaucracy are inherently interwoven. This intertwining leads to a dynamic political interaction between politicians and the state civil bureaucracy, ultimately resulting in the establishment of a patronage relationship. This connection underscores the intricate nature of the political landscape and its impact on the functioning of the civil bureaucracy in Indonesia.

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