Global Perspectives on Development Administration and Cultural Change

Gbenga Emmanuel Afolayan
Murdoch University, Australia

Akeem Ayofe Akinwale
University of Lagos, Nigeria

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This chapter explores the definitional and conceptual issues in the academic field of development administration and highlights the views about Western models within the grain of African traditional society. It identifies a major set of socio-cultural and economic parameters that strongly characterise or otherwise influence development administration in contemporary Africa. It finds that, in general, Western-oriented approaches remain incongruent with African traditional conventions. The chapter concludes that if a growing emphasis on the socio-cultural components within development administration discourse is a direct response to historical and environmental situations in contemporary Africa, then it is an essential consideration that must shape the field.

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Workplace diversity issues have now generated enormous activities in organizations. Diversity management practices are positively seen by the stakeholders, and also contribute to organizational value-stream. Worldwide through various government actions, discriminatory employment practices based on race, colour, religion, age, disability, gender, culture, and ethnicity have now been prohibited. With diverse workforces, culture of organization becomes complex. Hence organizations need to change to accommodate the principles of valuing diversity. Among others, this

Chapter 1

Development Administration in Contemporary Africa:

An Explorative Analysis

Gbenga Emmanuel Afolayan
Murdoch University, Australia

Olusegun Abayomi Ogunsanwo
The Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the definitional and conceptual issues in the academic field of development administration and highlights the views about Western models within the grain of African traditional society. It identifies a major set of socio-cultural and economic parameters that strongly characterise or otherwise influence development administration in contemporary Africa. It finds that, in general, Western-oriented approaches remain incongruent with African traditional conventions. The chapter concludes that if a growing emphasis on the socio-cultural components within development administration discourse is a direct response to historical and environmental situations in contemporary Africa, then it is an essential consideration that must shape the field.

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1. BACKGROUND

Since the emergence of development administration in the early 1960s, it has become a distinct enterprise of academic discipline and practice. It has become a field of study that pronounces the ideology and capacity of the government, non-governmental entities and political leaders of developing countries towards the achievement of social transformation. There was a consensus among academics and political leaders alike (Turner & Hulme, 1997; Luke, 1986) that development administration was created and promoted to play a crucial role in creating "stable and orderly change" (Dwivedi & Nef, 1982, p. 62).

The dominance of modernisation paradigm characterised the practice of development administration. It was a Western-oriented socio-economic mechanism, parallel to the fundamentals of Keynesian welfare economics (rational scientific principles). Radiating from the established technological advancement of the West, it was believed that with appropriate instruments—financial, technological and organisational—modernisation would automatically convey to developing countries the same levels of benefits, just as it happened in Europe and North America. In particular, foreign aid and transfer of eco-technical expertise through an overhauling administrative system were thought to be necessary to bring instant prosperity miracle (see Esman, 1988; Luke, 1986; Dwivedi & Nef, 1982). In addition, development administration was also meant to act as a veritable means for nation- building by transferring the eco-technical expertise (inputs) received into developmental outputs (Ibid.). Essentially, this was to provide balanced social, economic and political transformation of a nation through administrative development which became a necessity for institutional building and modernisation of the local bureaucratic machinery to achieve development outcomes. However, these developmental outcomes were modernisation-induced and predictably based on Western-induced prescriptions of social change without paying cognisant attention to socio-cultural context of each country in developing world.

As a leading light of modernisation, bureaucracy was used as a managerial-style of administration to plan, coordinate and control the process of national development. Development administrators were considered to act as useful links with modern world whose interests and policies were assumed to be in tandem with those of the developing world. The Marshal Plan was the source of inspiration for this developmental philosophy, as it was evident that their success at "reconstruction was taken to be a guarantee of success for development" (Dwivedi & Nef, 1982, p. 60). However, the idea of development administration as a means for managing economic aid or providing technical assistance to developing countries began to be questioned throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Indeed, one of the modern criticisms of development administration as an idea and a practice was that it represented a modern version of Western economic, administrative, organisational, cultural and ideological imperialism (Dwivedi, Khator & Nef, 2007; Jabbra & Dwivedi, 2005; Esman, 1988). As a result, intellectual crisis of purpose and confidence in idea and practice of development administration set in. There was a proliferation of disorder and fragmentation in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Middle East. With the emergence of the Cold War, the support of interests and Western generosity drastically reduced. In addition, there were issues of urban crises, energy crises, unemployment, breakdown of public institutions and service delivery. Added to the intellectual crisis, which confronted the idea and practice of development administration, was the dilemma of making, maintaining and strengthening the organizational capacity to facilitate efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness, accountability and equity.

The purpose of this present chapter is to survey some of the debatable themes and approaches in the understanding of development administration, as they characterise contemporary Africa. This chapter does not seek to provide a detailed archaeology of ideas or practices of development administration, as offered variously in the magisterial accounts by Luke (1986), Esman (1988), Dwivedi and Nef (1982), and Turner and Hulme (1997). Rather, it is hoped that this chapter will help to establish that there is a need to interrogate the cultural relevance of the dominant development administration ideals in order to gauge their suitability vis-à-vis African context.

2. DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION: DEFINITIONAL AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

Development administration emerged in the mid-1950s. To some extent, development administration has a matching part with ‘development economics’, which came into fresh usage with the growing impact of economic planning in newly independent developing countries after World War II (Gant, 2006). Although it was a term coined by an Indian scholar, Goswami, in 1955 or 1956, and applied to a group of nations formerly referred to as the ‘Third World’[1]. The underlying paradigm of development administration has been rooted in Western traditions. For example, the Western traditions rooted in scientific management, the experience of the Depression and World War II and the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Western Europe led to the way development administration was conceived (Dwivedi, Khator & Nef, 2007; Dwivedi & Nef, 1982). The rationale behind its conception was that if success could be recorded in a war with superior skills and resources, why not the war on underdevelopment? All these made the term to become a prescription for stability and orderly change.

Development administration and 'modernisation' paradigm is inseparable. Simply put, modernisation paradigm assumed that while the problems remained with the periphery, the 'solution' was always in the centre (Jabbra & Dwivedi, 2005). From modernisation perspective, the West would produce the external inducements thought necessary to promote stability and orderly change in developing world. The implicit goal was to modernise but not to displace the existing structures and processes, thereby keeping the developing nations locked into a cycle of dependence and underdevelopment (Dwivedi & Nef, 1982). In addition, the West claimed to *have* and to *be* the solution. In this context, it is possible to find a linkage between military assistance on the one hand, and economic development and technical assistance on the other (Dwivedi et.al., 1982). Countries such as Iran, Malaysia, Korea, Vietnam, Libya and Syria are a few examples of where defence and development considerations went hand in hand.

Administrative modernisation was also an effort to building the security capacities of the security forces. Aid programmes across countries in Africa, Asia and South America were implemented through a platform that allowed the foreign security forces to expand their repressive capabilities of client states. All these are often part of a single 'development package', whose main concern was stability (Chomsky and Herman, 1979). In some cases, native cadres formed during colonial days were given the administrative responsibilities for the sake of European interests. Personnel, procedure, habits, structure and values of the Western world were technically wrapped in the garments of nationhood (Kooperman & Rosenberg, 1977). Succinctly stated, the modernisation idea suggested that in order to attain development, there must be transformation of the existing traditional apparatuses into the new (Western) entity. This was to be achieved by: the modernisation of the public service, technological transfer and training by foreign experts.

Modernisation approach to development administration includes the following generalisations:

- Based on the idea of big government "as the beneficent instrument of an expanding economy and increasingly just society" (Esman, 1988, p. 125)
- There was an elitist bias. That is, politicians, planners and administrators would show commitment towards transforming their societies in Western-oriented ways. Seen as a veritable instrumentality, bureaucracy would be used by them to spread the benefits to the local areas (Turner & Hulme, 1997)
- Seen as a mechanism to address "the lack of administrative capability for implementing development plans and programmes through the transfer of administrative techniques to improve the central machinery of national government" (Stone, 1965, p. 53).

- Considered to be a means through which foreign aid could be used for the sake of the Western nations.
- Recognised culture as an obstacle to the smooth functioning of dominant bureaucratic ideologies.

To support the modernization idea, the scientific management approach (Taylor, 1911) was adopted. The approach added a distinctively technocratic flavour to the 'principles' of administration (hierarchy, unity of command, neutrality, among others) (Fayol, 1949). All these assumptions outlined the 'idea-oriented' bureaucratic form of organisation (Weber, 1952). The dominant empirical studies in that time indicated that there was a causal link between bureaucracy and development. From a development perspective, the requirements for a successful bureaucratisation revolve around socio-economic, cultural and political conditions. Added to these are a tax base, a robust economic base, trained manpower, political legitimacy, open society, cultural universalism and strong governance structure. This approach was retained in developing countries and was perceived as a tool for organising public services. Newer Western theories emerged and they seemed to supplementing these approaches. For instance, between 1960s and 1970s there was revitalisation of the Human Relations School which emphasized the needs for motivation, leadership and non-hierarchical forms. The revitalisation of Human Relations School had little effect on the bureaucratic approach in developing countries (Bennis, 1966). Overall, efficiency and effectiveness were seen as a function of entrenching bureaucratic ideals.

The bureaucratic ideals became entrenched in developing countries but did not have much effect on the social structure. In many African countries, as elsewhere in developing world, a bureaucratic bourgeoisie (a new class) swiftly "acquired social and political paramountcy" (Dwivedi & Nef, 1982, p. 65). The new class derived the power from their access to state power. The power was used for the regulation and control of the scarce resources of the country. Bureaucracy became the backbone of the social and political order in these countries and was heavily influenced by the external constituencies and local elites. These aforementioned principles and practices of development administration were legitimised by academic discussions, pushed by multilateral agencies and were accepted at face value by the local elites. But the administrative machineries were incapable of effecting developmental goals, especially in dealing with poverty and stability in the developing world (Dwivedi, Khator & Nef, 2007). Globally, poverty is a difficult problem which affects the lives and incomes of people. In many countries, there were some successful development programs that tend to provide financial resources (assistance payments and income supports) and capabilities (jobs, training) to stabilise lives until poverty-stricken people can secure job (Stern, Dethier & Rogers, 2005). Nevertheless, some development programs failed (in terms of design and implementation) (see Adamolekun, 1990; Olowu, 2002).

Even though there are contestations regarding the potency of Western models of administration in developing-country context, it becomes imperative to say here that the Western-type principles and practices of administration were not adequate to explain the nature of society and administration in the postcolonial developing countries. Riggs (1964, 1970) pleaded for the recognition of 'context' and 'culture' but they were somewhat ignored and the universality of the Western models was considered as an article of faith (Subramaniam, 2000; Jreisat, 2005). We shall continue the conceptual trajectory of development administration in the next session by exploring the paradoxical debate surrounding the market-oriented approach.

3. VIEWS ABOUT NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (NPM)

By the mid-1980s and 1990s, the New Public Management (NPM) had become part of the market-driven ideas, principles and models of administration (Osborne & Gaebler, 1993; Pollitt, 2001). NPM emerged in the wake of the global recession, which was complicated with the debt and energy crises in some countries. But as it seems, the fall of the Soviet Union lent credence and indeed, a layer of legitimacy to the agenda of NPM-led reforms. NPM is characterised by various types of decentralising management mechanisms within public services (e.g., the establishment of independent agencies and decentralisation of budgets and financial control), market-oriented ideas and competition in the provision of public services (e.g., contracting out and other market-inspired mechanisms), performance, outputs and customer value. NPM-inspired reforms are majorly driven by a combination of socio-economic, political and technological elements. Common characteristics of most countries that embarked on the NPM route has been the experience of economic and financial upheavals, which prompted the quest for efficient and effective ways to cut the cost of delivering public services (Larbi, 1999). International agencies see NPM as a model that redefined the norms of public administration:

> *The new model requires a smaller state equipped with a professional, accountable bureaucracy that can provide an enabling environment for private sector-led growth, to discharge effectively core functions, such as economic management, and to pursue sustained poverty reduction. With respect to civil service reform, work has focused not only on retrenchment and cost containment, but also on performance improvement and human resource management. (World Bank, 1994, p. xvi)*

Some critics believed that NPM influenced the direction of development assistance and the 'Structural Adjustment Programs' (SAPs) of the 1980s and 1990s (Dwivedi, Khator & Nef, 2007). They argued that NPM betrayed a firm belief that management is a technique and thus applicable in the same form in spite of the different contextual and circumstantial realities in the postcolonial world (for detailed critiques, see Jabbra & Dwivedi, 2005; Umeh, Andranovich & Sun, 2005). To some extent, it is a model that supports one-size-fits-all-solutions, with little or no regard to the ecological and cultural dimension of public administration. What Riggs (1964) referred to as the ecology of public administration seemed to lose all meaning. According to the NPM tenets, development administration was viewed in terms of convergence; and issues relating to socio-cultural norms were ignored or critiqued and were assumed to be corrected with the progress of modernisation and globalisation (Pollitt, 2001). Such line of thought (emphasis on global convergence) tends to promote a variety of 'best practices' which are transferred to the developing world in disregard of the fact that what works well in Canberra, Copenhagen or London might not produce results in Dakar, Lagos, Lusaka or Nairobi.

The fairy tale of global convergence had both theoretical and practical implications for development administration. It forcibly legitimised policy transfers (often used as 'conditionalities' to get development assistance) which eventually characterised SAPs in the developing countries. The outcomes of such convergence have seldom proved beneficial (Marsh & Sharman, 2009; Mkandawire, 2001; Mosley, 2000). On the theoretical level, NPM and global convergence have accounted for a large signal loss of momentum in the comparative study of development administration in the last three decades. Emphasis on techniques, tools, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and tools have obscured locally-relevant approaches to development problems. Even the term 'development administration' itself went out of style yielding to the much fashionable 'development management'.

The dilemma was also compounded by the new development issues that began to emerge. An uprising of sorts was underway, leading to a concern with leadership tussle (political) (Leftwich, 2000; Adamolekun, 1988), methodological flaws (Jabbra & Dwivedi, 2005; Umeh et.al., 2005), corruption (Morris, 2003; Adamolekun, 1988), prescriptions by international organisations (Herbst, 2012), the incorporation and increased participation of women in the development process (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004), social exclusion and insecurity. The pressures upon the government to ameliorate these problems are generally weighty. In terms of administration the application of solutions to these problems is usually the most challenging aspect of the situation in Africa. Other concepts such as civil society, gender, workplace diversity, peace, empowerment and globalisation also entered the lexicon of development administration. As a result, NPM became one of the crucial components of neoliberal mechanism, shaping the public interest and replacing public interest with privileged, greed, private interests and a hollowed-out idea of civil and public service. Critics have dwelt so much on these characterisations which eventually result in the confused mapping of development administration in a generally accepted way. Similarly, one might argue that the clamorous attacks on the state, romancing with the private sector as an ideal for the future, and the paradoxes of global convergence appeared to hinder the generally acceptable definition of the development administration.

Contrary to these characterisations, it may even be argued that the New Public Management emerged as a practical reaction to what had previously failed in state reforms. It appeared that the state needed to serve the national interest through different reform efforts for many years but it was opined that it should not be a problem to growth and socio-economic development (for example: wasting funds on inefficient public enterprises; showcasing political projects; bloating cadres of poorly paid civil servants and ignoring citizen needs; approving difficult procedures that create major corruption opportunities in issuing out permits and licences and so on). To make the state effective, civil service reforms in Sub-Saharan African (most of them with support from the donor communities) sought to arrest economic decline through the heels of tighter fiscal measures (Adamolekun, 2002; 1993). In the process, many expensive, narrow-minded and highly politicised ‘civil services’ were reformed and reduced in size, while unnecessary debt-ridden public enterprises such as telephone companies were privatised. However, it was recognised that market-oriented reforms work in some cases and not others. For example, the public sector reforms under the World Bank’s Public Sector Management Reform Programme (PSMRP)[2], which was run from 1998 to 2002 in Ghana, hardly achieved satisfactory results overall (Amoah, 2012).

Moreover, it was believed that adaptation can occur in the administrative systems and most of the damaged and weak cultural practices found in African countries, as elsewhere in developing world, can be transformed to the benefit of both systems and users. Following due process, having freedom of individual and political expression and security of property and contracts are universal values and less of Western-imposed values. In Sub-Saharan Africa, many local cultural practices, such as the social exclusion of women and violence against women work against growth and socio-economic development (Afolayan, 2015; 2011). Even though NPM was a collection of Western-inspired ideas and values, it was seemingly more of a practical response to what had previously failed in state reforms in developing world.

There was also a considerable antagonism to development assistance rendered by the international development organisations (Dwivedi et.al, 2007; Turner & Hulme, 1997). Aid agencies that give or lend money for projects are often criticised for projects that bring partial benefits to target populations. There are cases where improvements have proved untenable due to excessive reliance on foreign experts and obsession with the reputation of the organisation rather than with solid but understated gains. A number of programmes have failed due to poor management, inappropriate planning or lack of enthusiasm to involve the beneficiaries in the organisation of changes that will affect their lives. These criticisms of development and its administration are not uncommon. For example, Dwivedi, Khator and Nef (2007) criticize international development institutions such as the U.S. Agency for International Development and the World Bank, for imposing solutions, advisors and schedules on “indigenous administrative cultures” (p. 169). Failure to consider locally developed alternatives often lead to the failure of the initiatives based on history and culture. Often the complexity goes higher into the internal constraints within international development organisations to design and implement effective public sector reform projects.

The negative views of NPM have become more common and they are paralleled with the growing sense of discomfort with the ‘one-size-fits-all’ approaches that have long characterised development administration prescriptions in Africa. This perhaps is the major paradox of development administration in Africa (Wade, 2009; Kelsall, 2008; Turner & Hulme, 1997). The ideas of development administration can drift and fall out of favour, and moments of socio-economic and political crises might induce calls for substantive transformation, but in so far there is emphasis on using Western-oriented style and procedures without aligning them with the context of a particular environment, it will be unfeasible to settle on development administration ideals that cannot be presumed to fit ‘most’, if not ‘all’, in such landscape. For example, the action of international development organisations takes place in political contexts. Power and authority filter through relationships between many local actors and external actors. Technical rationality will recurrently be a poor guide to planning decisions, policy choices and behaviour. If we wish to know why a particular developmental approach has often failed we need to understand, for example, the political landscape in which such approach is employed. Society, state and organisations are entangled in political relationships. These relationships often revolve around competition over resource and allocation which tend to result in manipulation of affairs of the state for financial (corruption) and political advantage (see Afolayan, 2014; Patey, 2010; Leftwich, 2000). As we shall see in the next section, mapping power and authority is an important aid, more useful than the postmodern scientific planning mechanism.

4. PRE-COLONIAL AFRICA: POLITICS, ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIETY

The key characterisations that describe modern Africa flow from her history. Before the advent of colonialists Africa was a place with a rich diversity of political configurations, out of which, an extensive evolutionary pattern of complex administrative mechanisms can be recognized. As a place being inhabited by a collection of related ethnic groups (known as '*Bantu*'), "the trend is [sic] from small bands of hunter-gatherers, to village-based agriculturalists, to more or less militarised chiefdoms and kingdoms, to empires based on production, slave-trading, and trade" (Cited in Kelsall, 2011, p. 225)[3]. Consequently, there was gradual sense of ethnic identity which eventually led to the emergence of new administrative ideologies and technologies in an attempt to pursue agendas such as population expansion, competition and conquest (Turnbull, 1987). This effort cemented more centralised administrative and political formations, for example, in the Kongo kingdom (Kelsall, 2011).

While evidence suggests that Bantu and other early hunter-gathering societies were cooperative and relatively egalitarian, the emergence of houses and villages entailed increased authority for senior 'big men' (Wanasika, Howel, Littrell & Dorfman, 2011). As time passed, these groups settled into hierarchically organised societies presided over by kings and stratified by age, gender and wealth. In these societies, a hereditary chieftaincy emerged, laying the foundations for the emergence of how power could be passed on through patrilineal inheritance (in particular, royal dynasties—see Vansina, 1990). In some kingdoms where the resource base was a decisive factor and the leadership was dexterous enough, several chiefdoms subsequently emerged (Schraeder, 2000; Vansina, 1990). In a kingdom, there could be some kind of a bureaucratic staff but in an empire there was high level of political complexity with several staff exercising increasingly specialised functions (Kelsall, 2011). Overall, age was considered to be associated with seniority and accumulated skilfulness.

Generally, in Africa, the foregoing administrative and political pattern was inconsistent or too linear. Kingdoms, chiefdoms and empires rose and fell (Lonsdale, 1981). Their rising and falling depended on their success in securing subsistence, possessions (wealth) and security for the members of their societies through hunting, production, warfare and trade (Vansina, 1990; Lonsdale, 1981). Added to this is the fact that political institutions and functions, including ritual functions, differed from society to society, and the universal proclivity towards power concentration and hierarchy was occasionally stalled by the existence of cross-cutting and counterbalancing traditional institutions—just like the relationshop between the Alaafin, Oyo Mesi and Ogboni in the Oyo Empire, or between lineage and age-based political associations in some areas in Tanzania (see Spear, 1997). In the forest part of Gabon, communities bucked the centralising trend of polities to their southern counterpart by combining matrilinearity with strong decentralisation (Vansina, 1990).

More importantly, pre-colonial leaders and administrators in Africa derived their power and authority from their control over land and reproductive affairs. This is one of the key components of what has come to be called ‘a lineage mode of production’ in Africa today (Godelier, 1972; Kitching, 1980; Spear, 1997; Boone, 2003). In the ancestral tradition, for example, women were important agents of the production, reproduction and administration of the political community (Awe, 1973; Vansina, 1990). African big men married as many wives as they could, who were then used to attract young men to the household as consorts (Kelsall, 2008). As it seems, this is still being practised in some West African states—in particular, for instance, Sierra Leone and Liberia (Richards, 2005). On the other hand, if a young man wanted to get married, acquire land or have a family of his own, it was an obligation for him to get the consent of the big man. In patrilineal African societies, men are required to obtain land from their fathers, or obtain permission from a lineage elder or family head to clear new land; and in the course of his lifetime a man will have to transfer his wealth in the form of labour and livestock to his wife’s father.[4]

Likewise, big men derived their authority from ‘public goods.’ For instance, big men might come together to coordinate collective development action for bush clearing, harvesting, terracing, maintenance of irrigation furrows, among others (Kelsall, 2008). In larger societies, some of these functions were put under the authority of the Chiefs (Giblin, 1990; Koponen, 1988). For example, in the Shambaa kingdom of north-eastern Tanzania, the chief provide the decisive refuge for marginalised families that needed basic needs for survival (Feierman, 1990). Also, where a particular chief owns a large portion of livestock, clients who are loyal to him could be assigned to take charge of the livestock. In pre-colonial Burundi and Rwanda, for instance, cattle clientage was a potential basis of Tutsi political domination (Newbury, 1988).

Military domination was another way of deriving authority and political power. Skilful hunters and brave warriors were able to protect their communities from wild animals, human attack, external aggression and even to raid other communities for young women, men, and livestock (Kelsall, 2011). Due to the shortage of labour force and famine in Africa then, many of the political formations were linked to slavery, both before and after their encounter with the Islamic and European worlds (Lonsdale, 1986). In the Shambaa Kingdom, for instance, taking refuge with the chief signified “personal dependency on the chief, one which in some cases carried the threat the dependent would be sold to slave traders" (Feierman, 1990, p. 53). In this way, confraternal lineage groups put together funds of livestock to pay for compensations and also to prevent the 'pawning[5]' of their members to the chief. Also, some key officials of Oyo Empire (in present South-Western Nigeria) were non-Yoruba slaves (Lonsdale, 1981): "Kings could use slave labour to compete with the efforts of their followers and their sons" (Lonsdale, 1986, p. 149). In Liberia and Sierra Leone, forced labour and sexual slavery were used as one of the major components in the political economy of war, and slave-raiding phenomenon still continues to thrive in some areas in Sudan (Kelsall, 2011).

All these economic sources of power rested on the ideological structures of family and religion (for more details, see Kelsall, 2008; Vansina, 1990; McCaskie, 1995). Patrilineal inheritance was used as a formal template for political governance and age was noticeably linked with seniority, accumulated knowledge and access to other-worldly power. For instance, Vansina (1990) noted that "Smaller houses in a village were perceived as descendants from younger brothers" (p. 109). He further noted that some equal villages became "a formal structure where every village retained its autonomy, yet occupied a precise position in a hierarchy as expressed by a common genealogy, where cognitive distinctions between senior and junior at each step corresponded to physical superiority or inferiority" (p. 109).

Likewise, African leaders served as the mediators between nature and culture and kings were seen as traditional leaders who protect not only the political but also the spiritual aspects of production[6]. In pre-colonial era, Africans believed in an invisible world of ancestors, warrior-heroes, spirits, and witches, with whom elders claimed the mysterious and ritual knowledge to intercede, on behalf of their followers, for prosperity, security, good health and protection from death. With the help of cosmologies and professional ritual specialists, African rulers often appropriated some of these claims to knowledge. While Vansina (1990) observes that "big men were successful because they had extraordinary supernatural powers, identical with and often superior to those of witches" (p. 97), Iliffe (2005) reminds us that rulers' warfare was legitimated ideologically by means of an honour ethic.

However, rulers' authority could be restricted in some cases. Where lineage elders did not have power of coercion, power could be exercised only by way of a consultative tradition. Any leaders who failed to comply with this norm might likely be brought back into line by face-to-face community pressure. Also, where authority was more centralised, the leader's power tends to depend on his wealth, influence and ability to use the personal authority to mobilise collective action. Otherwise, as Kelsall (2011) observes, commoners could withhold tribute from such ruler or refuse to follow his lead, "thereby eroding the material foundation of his authority" (p. 228). In more hierarchical systems, kings could use force to extract tribute for some time. Nevertheless, in most parts of pre-colonial Africa populations were sparse, strangers were welcomed, and the locus of a leader's power did not stretch too far. As Lonsdale notes, "it was easier to repudiate a king's responsibility by turning one's back than to face him and hold him to account. And the economics of emigration were not too daunting" (1986, p. 146). Therefore, dissatisfied subjects could easily leave chiefdom, set up their own uninhabited land or join the community of a neighbouring chief. Identity, administration approach and political obligation were virtually mobile and fluid. All these were incentives for a leader to administer proficiently and rule wisely.

All these imperatives were reflected in African ideological traditions. For instance, oaths of investiture reflected a chief's responsibilities to his followers. However, chiefs could be removed if they failed to wield their accumulated knowledge and power for the entire society (see Puritt, 1970; Feierman, 1990; Mamdani, 1996). Although pre-colonial African leaders tend to claim power based on their privileged access to mystical and cosmological realm, they were never guaranteed an absolute monopoly. It was in the interplay between locally-relevant societal change (based on provision of economic, organisational, socio-cultural and ideological benefits through the utilisation and mobilisation of skills, accumulated knowledge and collective action) and accountability (based on the possibility of dissent, abandonment or attack) that pre-colonial development administration could be found.

5. DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICA

Our synopsis of pre-colonial Africa in the previous section provides the basis for development ideas about political power, economy, culture, accountability, morality and society that remain crucial in Africa today. The focus of this section is to map-out the major components that characterise development administration in contemporary Africa. Development administration as a theory or an instrument of development process has become an important article of faith in Africa. It is a discipline that revolves around every development plan, administrative reform agenda, government action plan, aid, political party manifesto, development interventions and major socio-economic policies—either implicitly or explicitly. As a general model of societal change or theory it is also appealing to developed countries—however it tends to be different from the way it is emphasized in African countries.

A common ideology in most developing nations is that they use the state-led mechanism in conjunction with some kind of mobilised system, socio-cultural, political and private sector initiatives to fortify their development efforts (Olowu, 1989; Haque, 2001; Dwivedi et.al., 2007). But developed countries oriented their development administration processes through private sector initiatives with little state intervention to facilitate efficiency, responsiveness and accountability. The initial preoccupation of development administration with reforms moved to a practical concern with the implementation of development policy (Luke, 1986). In effect, contemporary preoccupation with the notion and practice of development administration brought about the machinery of technical advice, foreign aid, administrative and political reforms. Issues such as privatisation, efficiency, rationality, bureaucracy, non-governmental organisation, gender equality, diversity management, peace administration and development projects forced their way into contemporary development administration.

In addition, the New Public Management (NPM) emphasises a series of market-oriented mechanisms such as choice, value, responsibility, participation and equity. Caught between the horns of this incongruity, the developing nations became dependent on developed nations. Seemingly, there is no ambiguity about the desired goals of development administration. But the problem is how to achieve the desired goals of development administration by fulfilling the societal change that fits developing-country context. Generally, environmental and cultural factors are very important to those who attempt to bring about major change in any society. Within any society, political, economic and socio-cultural development interact with the administrative system, as all social and administrative systems transact with such environment[7]. As a result, the dependence of developing nations on the western nations for foreign assistance, technical know-how, information, aid and development projects brought them face to face with international development institutions[8]. Now, given the claims that have been made in respect of the tenets of development administration, it has become necessary to analyse its processes in African context. The caveat here is that this chapter raises several issues rather than suggesting ways to deal with them. It is believed that the issues raised here can inform further research on possible solutions. Let us now examine three core factors that characterise or otherwise influence the practice of development in contemporary Africa. They are as follow:

A. Politics

By means of close interpretive reading of popular literature, policy statements, philosophy, speeches and interviews and informal discussions in the field of development administration, there is a need to take indigenous understandings of concepts and categories more seriously. Otherwise we shall continue to overlook important and living elements of development administration in specific context. The starting point to this discourse is the recognition of the frequency with which familial and paternal metaphors are projected onto African politics. Africans reflect on the relation between citizens and the state through the image of an idealised extended family (Schatzberg, 2002). Familial images, as Schatzberg claims, stem from an implicit cultural and cognitive template which characterise African political ideas and actions. For example, the popularity of 'eating metaphors' in politics, spirituality, spheres of church, mosque and state, and the role of the occult in beliefs about political causality deserves much attention. Schatzberg explains the ideas that African leaders should be 'Father-Chiefs'. "The President ...is expected to be a loving father and a disciplinarian chief; he is entitled to 'eat' well, but not when his children are suffering" (quoted in Kelshall, 2011, p. 230). This connotes a moral discourse on corruption which is incompatible with bureaucratic accountability (based on public representation and liberal democratic tenets) in the West. Another defining characterisation of the morality template is that elders are entitled to power but the younger ones must be given their chance once they are matured.

This common cultural idea informs political experiences in diverse countries like Nigeria and Tanzania; however, there are strong communal ideologies and differences that rigidly defined them (see Vaughan, 2003; Kelsall et.al, 2005). Unlike Nigeria, the national political discourse in Tanzania is not so polarised with paternity or eating metaphors (see Vaughan, 2003, Schatzberg, 2002; Olowu, 1989)—even if Julius Nyerere was seen as 'teacher' (*Mwalimu*) and 'Father of the Nation (*Taifa*). These tropes filter through political discussion at a local level just like as it is in Nigeria. The same view has been echoed by observers of African development administration. For example, Kelsall et al. (2005) revealed that 'eating and father-figure metaphors' is part of the local political discourse in Tanzania: "Do you want him [the MP] to eat that money only with his children?" a constituent responded when asked what he thought about the MP's habit of gaudily handing out cash. "We are also his children" (p. 91).

Legitimated by neo-traditional and modern development ideas that were integrated into the colonial project, South-Western Nigeria's indigenous political structures were distorted by the Lugardian system of indirect rule. Under indirect rule, kings (obas), chiefs and Yoruba elites reconstructed contending versions of traditional authorities to strengthen and increase their power (Post & Jenkins, 1973; Pearce, 2005). Despite local opposition, British policies elevated the *Alaafin* of Oyo town to the status of the King of Oyo Province (Vaughan, 2003). The interpretation, however, distorted the prevailing political arrangements of that time, and failed to achieve the hierarchal model of traditional political order that the architects of indirect rule had anticipated. For this reason, *obas*, chiefs and Yoruba elites in other provincial towns, in particular—Ibadan, worked together in appropriating communal doctrines and conflicting historical interpretations, as well as discourses of modern development administration, to justify and give voice to an array of competing identities and political claims in the early modern Nigeria[9]. The two cases above reflect the inherited incompatibility between hierarchical Western-style model and political institutions of these societies. More importantly, the 'Father-Family-Food' metaphor provides the ideological practices of clientelism and neo-patrimonialism that is so prevalent in contemporary Africa (Kelsall, 2011). For Africa, a good leader is a patriarch, and he is obliged to provide for his family and followers. Patronage raises a number of [contested] definitions that many Africans often recognise and understand. It is quite problematic to condemn a leader who nurtures his clients in this manner.

Furthermore, when independence was declared, African leaders took over an administrative structure which had become highly institutionalised without developing a capacity to subordinate itself fully to elected politicians. Within a decade after gaining independence, many African countries came under varied forms of military rule (either with a puppet civilian regime or between civil and military bureaucrats or military rule with a tendency to seek legitimacy) (Haque, 1994). The military emphasized strong state apparatus, order, professionalism and discipline but weakened political mobilisation, and pluralism, disbanded political parties, suspended civil societies, and discouraged freedom of press, among others. Thus military intervention reinforced the incongruity between development administration and modern African politics. In addition, weak political institution and political instability undermined political neutrality of state bureaucracy in Africa. In opposition with Western model of political neutrality, the line between politics and development administration in most African countries were distorted. For example, Adamolekun (1986, p. 170) observes that "there is no country where the civil service norms of anonymity, impartiality and political neutrality are wholly respected" [sic]. In Nigeria, most regimes often emphasize the civil service norms (impartiality and neutrality) but in reality such norms are always violated. While Gitonga and Oyugi (1987) noted that liberal theory of anonymity of the civil service is a myth in East Africa, Pieterse (1991) observes that the universality of Western political ideas is increasingly proven invalid in Africa—as well as Asia. From the above discussion, it is possible conclude that there is incongruence between Western-oriented development administration and political reality in most African countries. Of course, such distortion perhaps is largely due to colonial and postcolonial development administration ideas and practices, as well as competing identities and political claims in each period in Africa.

B. Religion

To a large extent, religion tends to characterise everyday political life and events—especially in contemporary Africa. Schatzberg (2002) discusses the prevalence of witchcraft ideas in everyday political life. For Schatzberg, political events are often thought to have other-worldly causes. The same view has been supported by Ellis and ter Haar (2004, 2007) through their comparison between Europe and Africa. Ellis and ter Haar argue that Europe has experienced a lengthy historical development of secularization in which religion was first of all separated from the state and confined to a sphere of private belief, and in which occult forces became further removed from direct personal manipulation. In contrast, many Africans continue to believe that earthly power has its ultimate source in an invisible world, which can be privately influenced by means of spells, charms, rituals and prayers. In particular, Ellis and ter Haar (2006) observe that:

In such a holistic perception of the world, it follows that people's social relations extend into the invisible sphere. In the same way as they try and maintain good relations with their relatives, neighbours and friends for their own benefit, individuals and communities invest in their relations with spiritual entities so as to enhance the quality of their lives. (p. 253-254).

Furthermore, while most African nations consider a formal division between religion and state, informally that division is not considered as legitimate. Consequent upon this, analyses of power are often expressed in a religious idiom, and African politicians often maintain cordial relationship with religious leaders and even make use of ritual specialists to support their political ambition or their rule. It is in this sense one could posit that the entrenchment of development administration and the ideas, values and norms that characterise it will have to emerge not from mere rational or academic blueprint but from practical experience. Nevertheless, there is no practical experience that is needed to restore developmentalism and order into African political landscape that will involve a wholesale rejection or abandonment of religious and cultural issues. The contemporary picture of African development administration in general invites the presence of cultural and religious order. The importance of practical administration of development in everyday life events and services, especially in Africa seems to justify the need for a web of connection between religion and development administration.

The example of Ogboni group in Nigeria is relevant in this discourse. The Ogboni group is a very powerful traditional institution in the entire South-West Nigeria

(Yoruba land). The activities and influence of this group in the whole sphere of Yoruba life symbolise the traditional attitude and the natural responses of Yoruba communal life to the social, moral, religious, legal and political life of existence (Idowu, 2005). It is believed that interrogating the traditional administration of the Yoruba people as conceived in the conceptual worldview of this institution will go a long way in assisting us to map-out the idea of relation the Yoruba people believe exist between religion and politicians. This is also applicable to other African countries but some differences may play out in the way they are connected. Moreover, this kind of contemporary views reveal strong continuities with the pre-colonial period, where the big man—a household leader, chief, or king—used the spiritual realm to bring health and prosperity to his dependants. This pattern of "political accountability" (Kelsall, 2011) may not necessarily hinder economic or human development. But the major hindrance is the way it has been institutionalised in most parts of contemporary Africa.

C. Economy

The economic context of public sector in Western nations is predominantly characterised by strong market forces, New Public Management (NPM) for public service delivery, free economic competition, choices, equity and limited state intervention (Stiglitz, 2003). In most African states, however, the economic contexts are quite different: market forces are weak, free competition is limited and state intervention is expansive (Leftwich 2000; Afolayan, 2014). Such economic circumstances bring about the incompatibility between the administrative and economic realms in most African countries. Even though most African countries adopted a Western model of development administration, their economic contexts are quite different from Western economies. To understand this incompatibility, we must turn to the process of colonialism.

Colonialism curtailed the self-ruling development of African states based on free economic competition, imitation and conquest and diffusion. As Kelsall (2011) notes, colonialism also tied local accountability to the economic and administrative imperatives of external rule. Colonialism frequently used forces of cash cropping and extraction of resources which resulted in pressure on land and increased claims on local labour. Administratively, colonialism made use of local big men as headmen and chiefs. They still presided over their old clientelist networks but they were regarded as clients of colonial masters who patronised them with salaries, advice on cash cropping and an increased capacity to levy fines and in many cases they were exposed to the processes of extortion and corruption (Berman, 1998; IIiffe, 1978; Ranger, 1983). On the eve of independence, the colonial masters introduced competitive elections. Big men with political ambitions therefore had the opportunity to compete for votes along ethnic and moral grounds. To fulfil some of the moral and ethnic expectations of their local clients and also to succeed in the political struggles of lineage and clan, African leaders tried to draw on national pool of economic resources and political patronage (Kelsall, 2011; Osaghae, 1999). At national level, big men in a particular ethnic group found themselves in competition for state resources with the big men of other ethnic groups (ethnic politics), which for administrative intentions had become more rigidly defined. Consequently, they competed sometimes in violent and criminal ways for votes and resources. In this way, local expectations and electoral politics made the big men to steal common resources without due regard to national development.

In addition, lack of transparency also encourages the diversion of collective natural resources into avenues of greed-driven mantra, by allowing those at the helms of power to use asymmetries of information for their own private benefit (Kelsall, 2011). The reproduction of the big men (ruling class) has diminished the scope of market competition, restricted the opportunity for private investment and constrained the formation and expansion of indigenous capital (Afolayan, 2014; Leftwich, 2000). For instance, lack of transparency in Nigerian state has been traceable to several factors: the emergence of petroleum as the fiscal basis, the status of petroleum as a critical component in the reproduction of the ruling class and collaboration between state bureaucracy and foreign interests (Obi, 2009; Olukoshi, 1997).

Numerous initiatives are currently emanating from different quarters to make African government transparent but lack of fit between local culture and imported institutions tend to create incentives for rule-breaking and opportunities for self-enrichment. Also, the state agencies, politicians and other big men are even working against the development of the local communities. In some parts of Africa, the state agencies have served the interest of various ruling elites but for the underclass and rural populations, these public agencies remain unreachable and inaccessible. This is another dilemma that could channel politics, development and administration into murkiness and volatility and make trust unfeasible to attain.

On the other hand, some might argue that this misfit is common in Africa. Without doubt, the ‘instrumentalization of disorder’ (Chabal & Daloz, 1999), the ‘trickery’ (Bayart, 2000), the ‘generalized informal function of the state’ (Olivier de Sardan et al., 2006), and the greediness to which this lead to have been clearly discussed. Also, it is true that the misfit is enormous; that it favours certain African groups and ruling class, and that it is virtually seen with a mixture of trepidation, admiration and delight, even by those who are directly affected.

6. CAVEATS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

We have shown that development administration is a tool of Western countries and it does not align with the socio-historical and political trajectories of African nations. Exploring pre-colonial and modern elements suggests that such discrepancies have led to the perpetuation of administrative, political, economic and socio-cultural dilemma which represents an overall condition of practising development in Africa. However, it is important to enter caveats against under-estimation of significant issues that also characterise African societies but which could not be addressed in detail in this chapter. For example, a careful analysis of African institutions at local levels will reveal the inconsistencies of past policies and may open the way to improved participation in carrying out national development policies and projects. A relevant theme that might contribute to a better understanding of the problems of development administration in Africa is political decentralization (Adamolekun, 1986; 1988). In considering political decentralization, it might be necessary to remind ourselves the extent and the nature of the powers which are given to local authorities by the national legislatures.

Another caution is that modernity and demographic transformations are remaking some aspects of social-cultural practices gradually and some of them are even disappearing (Gidden, 1990; Afolayan, 2015). In contemporary Africa, young men and women are no longer relying so much on older men to give them a start economically, and the old men's authority is weakening as a result of globalization forces and greediness of old men in the position of authority. To some extent, the relevance of traditional religion alongside the growth of Islam and Christianity is now facing competition from modern waves of less tolerant charismatic mosques and churches in Sub-Saharan Africa. For example, even though Ogboni institution in South-Western Nigeria is still being practised in these modern times, undoubtedly its overall importance as it existed in the traditional Yoruba legal structure has reduced significantly due to foreign cultural influences, introduction of cash economies, modern technology, and changing patterns of population as a result of rural-urban migration. This is because Africa is becoming increasingly urbanised and this tends to weaken the existing traditions before modernity (see Afolayan, 2015; Hyden, 2008). Modernity has also brought about new ideas in the areas of human rights, women empowerment, women's and child's rights, good governance, e-governance, and so on (Afolayan, 2015; Afolayan, 2013; Kelsall, 2011). All these tell us that the place of African cultural values is evolving as a result of variety of influences and may even undergo the kind of demographic transformation that occurred in early modern Europe.

The analyses so far have pointed out that before the advent of colonial rule, traditional African societies had their own procedural ways of administering development. That a system of development ideas and administration in totality was not as scientific and technical as the structure in Western countries is not a basis for the denial of the socio-cultural characteristics which the peoples of such societies believe them to possess. For, there is a world of truth in the statement that, no matter how simple a belief or culture is, from which their customs, taboos, laws, and administration originate, the fact of their survival as a people, with a distinct sense of culture, is enough evidence of their ability to engage in critical examination of their own beliefs and importantly, of the worth of their development administration approaches in guiding and regulating their survival and destinies.

This chapter raises some core challenging themes in development administration rather than suggesting on how to deal with them. But what, then, are the implications for development administration in contemporary Africa? Much will still remain unclear until we better understand how Western-oriented approaches of development can work alongside with the grain of African traditional society in post-colonial politics. Development is multidimensional—that is, it has international, national, temporal, spatial, administrative, social, cultural, economic, religious, and political dimensions. Development is not all about modernization or industrialization, although it permeates through both. It is a dialectical process because it involves divergent views and it involves ethical, cultural and normative considerations. Empirically, development is freedom not only from colonialism and political domination but also freedom from poverty, disease, illiteracy, gender violence, unemployment, hunger and lack of water. Therefore, there is a need to know whether there is anything of value to the idea that the practice of development in Africa will be better by aligning it with the grain of socio-cultural beliefs and value system, or, more specifically, what forms of alignment should be encouraged.

Taken together, if a growing emphasis on the socio-cultural component within development administration is a direct response to historical and environmental situations in Africa, then it is an essential consideration which must shape definitional and conceptual issues in development administration. For any development programmes, projects and policies to be successful, as current situations in Africa indicate, an administrative style must be responsive to its ecology. The first priority then, is to find out more about African administrative behaviour rather than imposing imported administrative behaviour. Only then will theories suggesting administrative reforms to promote development in Africa be worth considering. It is hoped that this exploration will yield further insights into the difficulties of practising development in Africa.

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ENDNOTES

[1] Third World here connotes ‘developing world.’

[2] This reform programme is basically meant to strengthen public sector management and promote transparency and accountability for economic and financial performance.

[3] Also see Wanasika, Howel, Littrell and Dorfman (2011); Vansina (1990) Londsdale (1981).

[4] For further analysis on women and cattle, see Kitching (1980).

[5] Pawn became associated with ‘prisoner-of-war’, and with prisoners one could see the beginning of slavery (Vansina, 1990).

[6] For further details, see Iliffe (1978) and Lonsdale (1986).

[7] Environment influences these imported systems and it is also influenced by them (see Riggs, 1970).

[8] For more details, see Dwivedi et.al.(2007); Dwivedi et.al (1982).

[9] For more details, see Vaughan (2003).