
PUBLIC POLICY MAKING PROCESS: TOURISM ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA (1960 TO DATE).

¹*Ofobruku Sylvester Abomeh*; ²*Obia Ernest* and ³*Amagbakhen O. Roland*

¹*Tourism and Hospitality Services, Nasarawa State, Nigeria*

²*NITHOUTOR, Abuja*

³*Bureau of Public Procurement, State House, Abuja*

E-mail: ufomaeliz@yahoo.co

ABSTRACT

The main aim of this paper is to highlight that successive Nigerian governments commit policy reversals in the public policy making process using the tourism sector development policies as focus. In addition, intended policy beneficiaries are not carried along at the policy conception/formulation stage, hence implementation/execution are fraught with avoidable problems. These have been the bane of development efforts in the tourism sector from independence to date. The paper concluded cautiously that notwithstanding the odds against incrementalism as a decision-making model, since it seeks to guarantee continuity in government policies and programmes, it can redress the phenomena of policy reversals which have become endemic in the Nigerian public policy making process. The paper recommended a collaborative approach with the critical section and stakeholders in the policy making process in order to stem the tide of disconnection between policy beneficiaries and the government. The paper also canvassed massive investment in training, research and development programmes through the strengthening of research centers/institutes.

Keywords: *Tourism. Administration, Public policy, Making process.*

INTRODUCTION

There are many contending views and or definition of tourism. This is so, because tourism is a complex activity that cut across different sectors and discipline. These definitions and explanations will have a congruent point. Tourism is all about the activities of persons away from their familiar environments of the home and work place for a while and the facilities and services provided to enable them meet their felt needs both in transit and at the destination area. According to Dantata (2005) Tourism is an amalgam of several service sectors. Tourism involves movement of people to places of interest away from their usual home or residence. To buttress these definitions, Tourism can be defined as the movement from home to unusual place for business, recreate, sightsee, visit or points of interest whether near or far. The place of interest can vary from person to person. A hotel, a night club, a restaurant a park can be a place of interest to a person and to another it may be historic sites, conservation sites and other outdoor places within a city or urban centre. Tourism is an activity highly dependent on environmental resources. According to UNWTO Tourism is the activities of a person's traveling to and staying in places aside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and any other purpose (UNWTO 1998). Government policy on tourism in each country determines the success of the tourism sector.

METHODOLOGY

The case study approach was used in this study to gain in-depth understanding of the subject; the case study approach is employed when the researcher has little control over events or when the focus is on phenomenon within a real life context (Osuala, 2005). Since this study sought to thorough investigation, rich in details about the public policy making process: tourism administration in Nigeria (1960 to date), a case study research design was considered the most appropriate. Therefore a case study research design was used for this study because as Omale (2012) suggests, a case study is an intensive study geared towards a thorough understanding of a given phenomenon, that provide a thorough, in-depth, comprehensive and well ordered information and this is what this study intended to achieve.

DISCUSSION AND RESULT

Policy has been defined as a "course setting involving decisions of the widest ramifications and longest time perspective in the life of an organization" (Adamolekun, 1983). The above views (by Adamolekun) seem to capture the essence of policy when it is not delineated into public or private. Public policy according to David Easton in Dye (1975:) means "the authoritative allocation of values for the whole society". A critical analysis of this definition reveals that government alone possesses such attributes of authority to act on behalf of the whole society. Does it mean that everything the government chooses to do or not to do results in the "allocation of values"? Ikelegbe in Obikeze and Obi (2004) responded to the above poser in his definition of public policy as "what government choose to do or not to do. It is the integrated courses and programmes of action that government has set and the frame work or guide it has designed to direct actions and practices in certain problem areas". Public policy is therefore a specific guide to governmental action and programmes of action in solving specific societal problems. It could be further inferred that such actions may transcend the stated intentions of government and its official to all actions of government. In view of the numerous omissions and gaps inherent in some of the above definitions, and the tendency to impute elasticity of meanings as highlighted in Egonmwan (2000), Jenkins in Egonmwan (2000) defined public policy as:

a set of interrelated decision by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where those decisions should, in principle be within the power of those actors to achieve.

Egonmwan (2000) emphasized that the word "Selection" in the definition recognizes both decision and actions deliberately taken by government to solve a social problem are essential elements of public policy. Inherent in the definition are: that decision-makers were fully aware of choice of goals and the means to achieving them; decision-makers also gave consideration to one or more other proposals. Implied in Jenkins' definition above is the recognition of the need for availability of means to achieve given ends, the competence of specific persons to take decision on behalf of others and that a policy is not intended to provide an approach for handling all of society's problems but to offer solutions to limited

situations. It is to this extent that Jenkins posited that public policy is "aggregative decision making" (Egonmwan 2000).

Other characteristics of Public policy include:

- (a) Public policy making is an exercise in power, in the manipulation of dependence relationship, and to the extent of its societal problem solving for limited situations, it inevitably involves political conflict.
- (b) It is not merely a continuous process of decisions and activities; it takes place principally but not exclusively within formal/legal organizational structure and agencies of the state (public bureaucracy).
- (c) It involves a variety of decision making, but could exclude the main line of action or detailed instruction to be followed, such as not permitting the use of personal discretion.
- (d) It is directed at the future, which implies that it is constantly concerned with probabilities and economic conditions that are subject to change. It therefore calls for rationality and not just exercise of power.
- (e) Public policies are expected to articulate and consolidate the aims that will satisfy public interests as justified by the government, sectional or self-seeking motives could be revealed on thorough analysis.
- (f) Public policy usually involves interaction with a wide spectrum of the critical mass of external interest group such as civil society organisations, advocacy groups, traders, farmers, professionals, industrialists and other development associations.
- (g) Policies involve exchange of information and resources. It entails discussion and bargaining between and within agencies of the state.
- (h) Not all decisions are of "policy status", except those of a strategic or guideline nature.
- (i) The state institutions that claim responsibility for public policies invariably legitimize their activities by asserting that their actions are in the general interest of the public and not for a sectional few.

PUBLIC POLICY MAKING PROCESS

There is agreement among a group of writers and scholars that the public Policy making process comprises the following: Policy formulation; Implementation; Feedback and Evaluation (Egonmwan, 2000; Uchendu, 2001; Obikeze and Obi, 2004). The next section therefore will attempt brief explanations on the three phases of the public policy making process.

POLICY FORMULATION AND DECISION MAKING THEORIES

It is the stage where government takes decisions on what should be done and how to achieve them. Okoli and Onah (2002) were quite specific by positing that "the formulation of policy proposal is usually the duty of the executive arm of government". According to Egonmwan (2000), the policy formulation process involves (i) Goal formulation in which multiple groups operate with varying and often conflicting objectives; (ii) Problem identification and definition as a result of partial ignorance problem; (iii) Agenda setting involving attempts by individuals and groups to influence policy decisions (iv) Identifying

policy alternatives and evaluating such policy alternatives (analysis of policy option) (v) Policy choice. Egonmwan (2000) noted that the output of the above process are usually expressed in government official documents in the form of legislative acts, decrees, policy statements, directives, laws and guidelines. There are a number of models/ theories used in policy formulation namely: Rational Comprehensive; Satisficing; Incrementalism; Mixed Scanning; Facet design and Choice theory of planning. The choice theory of planning formulated by Thomas Reiner and Paul Davidoff and the facet design theory on planning by Yehezkel Dror are not particularly popular in the Nigerian environment. Adebayo (2000) and Okoli (2004) observed that even the rational comprehensive model which successive Nigerian governments frequently lay claim to in policy formulation does not hold in view of the very high intelligence activity and the enormity of time required in arriving at the best course of action or alternative. Dibia (2000) adduced other reasons bedeviling its pure application in most developing nations, especially in Nigeria. The rational comprehensive approach can be seen in phases ranging from problem identification; goal setting; information gathering, a search for alternatives and thorough investigation into each course of alternative to choosing the best course of action which is referred to as "rational". On the basis of the limitation and constraints involved in rational decision making, H. A. Simon (1976) in Obikeze and Obi (2004) propounded a modified version of decision making known as satisficing model in which the administrative man makes satisfactory decisions to solve the problem at hand. The Administrator "makes his choices using a simple picture of the situation that takes into account... a few of the factors that he regards as most relevant and crucial". The Administrator rather than being the economic man that maximizes, he satisfies-interested only in solutions that satisfy his problems. This is also referred to as "bounded rationality" because the administrator is bounded (limited) by the extent of his knowledge, information gathering at any one time, his values, skills, perception and time available for decision making.

Charles Lindblom's Incrementalist approach believes that decisions are not made as described above, instead there is step-by-step approach to administrative decision making which he referred to as "Successive-Limited-Comparison". This approach only widens or builds on earlier decisions made. A summary of the incremental theory was quoted in Obikeze and Obi (2004) thus: "A policy is directed at a problem: it is tried, altered, tried in its altered form, altered again and so forth. In short, incremental policies follow one upon the other in the solution to a given problem". The implication of this is that incrementalism amounts to improvements and modifications of existing policies. The model does not support radical changes in government policies and programmes. This explains why Dror (1968) in Obikeze and Obi (2004) posited that the model "meets the needs of a stable society, where evolution leads to institutions that embody the wisdom of generations and that should not be carelessly endangered". Incrementalism emphasizes caution in discarding government policies (especially by new regimes); it entrenches continuity in government policies; the incremental nature of government policies also makes it easy for the governed to be carried along. However, this approach to policy making has been criticized for being too conservative and maintaining status quo. It is also plausible to argue that the model is not

suitable for the developmental aspirations of the developing economies that require some radical transformation. Incrementalism as an explanatory tool has failed to adduce reasons behind sudden changes in government policies and to that extent, offer limited uses. The dynamism of contemporary world occasioned by rapid technological changes and advancement may not require incremental approach to decision making. Amitai Etzioni's mixed scanning is a mixture of the rational comprehensive and incremental models, and that is why it is not considered to be an original theory of decision making. To explain this model, Etzioni used an illustration of worldwide weather observation using two cameras: a broad angle camera that will cover all parts of the sky but not in detail and a second camera which will zero-in those areas revealed by the first camera to require a more indepth examination. The rational approach could be too detailed, while the incrementalist will merely focus on those areas in which similar patterns developed in recent past and perhaps on a few trouble spots. Etzioni posited that mixed scanning could be divided into two levels with varied degrees of detail and coverage, and the decision on how scanning should be done in each level depends on cost and time. He also canvassed that in utilizing mixed scanning, it is essential to differentiate between fundamental decisions (requiring the rational approach) and incremental decisions. The onus of evaluating the nature of decision to be taken rests on the decision maker who should be able to identify/choose the model that suits the situation. As a decision making model, it attempts to rise to the inability of incrementalism in explaining radical changes in government policies. It also strives to accommodate the divergent capacities of decision makers as rationalists and incrementalists. However, as a model, it is too conciliatory and compromising to the extent that it could not reconcile the different aspects o the two models. It has also been criticized for the arduous task placed on the decision maker in evaluating which model to apply in making fundamental and incremental decisions.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

This is the stage where policy goals and objectives are translated into concrete achievements through various programmes. Scholars contend that this is the most difficult phase of the policy process, in view of several assumptions can take the form of faithful implementation, changes contemplated are technically feasible and that resources like money, materials and men (knowledge) are adequate and available to implement the policy. To this extent, distortions arise in the course of implementation. The above therefore suggests that the socio-political context of the policy process, institutional performance/capabilities and identification of the target group should be carefully done and built into policy implementation. The need for proper consultation and considerations through effective communication network cannot be over emphasized, especially in handling those who will resist change that the policy may contemplate.

FEEDBACK AND POLICY EVALUATION

Feedback entails the gathering of information on the basis of comparison made between intended policy outcomes/results and actual achievements derived from experience gained during implementation. Egonmwan (2000) asserted that "when there is so much discrepancy

between expected and actual effects of policy, these could lead to a reformulation based on evaluation or assessment of the situation". The main activity in policy evaluation is therefore a review of policy goals/objectives (intentions) and the policy outcomes (results). However, based on experience and technical expertise, a lot of these reviews are carried out at the implementation stage in order to check discrepancies. In effect, there could be a blurring of the implementation and evaluation stages, when things are properly done at the policy formulation and implementation stages. Put differently, the separation between the implementation and evaluation stages is done more for analytical reasons. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the public policy making process in Nigeria is fraught with its difficulties and problems which Okoli and Onah (2002) articulated as follows: Inadequate definition of goals; Over-ambitious policy goals; Lack of well-defined programme for attainment of goals; Choice of inappropriate organizational structure for implementation of policies; lack of continuity in commitment to policy; lack of clear definition or responsibility; political opposition during implementation; compromises during implementation capable of defeating policy purposes; political insensitivity to policy demands; (wrong) timing in implementation; corruption; lack of adequate data for decision making. The role of public bureaucracy as civil and public servants in the public policy making process (with respect to policy (input) formulation and as implementers) is not in dispute. Detailed discussions of these are contained in Adebayo (2000); Adamolekun (2000) and Adamolekun (2006). In the next section, attempts will be made to highlight the various tourism administration and development programmes/policies in Nigeria from Independence to date.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN NIGERIA

The history of tourism in Nigeria is traceable to the days of the Trans Atlantic travels which otherwise be referred to as international tourism. Similarly the various annual cultural and religious events in the ancient empires, kingdoms, emirates and city states confirm some degree of domestic tourism activities in what is today, Nigeria. The coming of the colonialist generally facilitated the growth of international tourism in the country although without conscious effort. Naturally, Nigeria famous festival as Durbar, Osun Osogbo Festival, Argugu fishing festival as well as natural attractions such as the Beaches of Lagos, Yankari Game Reserve e .t. c. took root. However there is no evidence of any tourism policy, tourism master plan or viable tourism industry bequeathed to the country at independence. After independence the gradual emergence of a vibrant oil industry affected the progress of Nigeria tourism. The idea of modern day leisure travel and organized effort at developing a viable tourism industry in Nigeria commenced in 1962 when the Nigeria Tourism Association (NTA) was formed with membership drawn from Nigeria Airways, some foreign Airline operating in Nigeria, Shell Petroleum Company, private Hotels operators and Nigeria Tobacco Company. The NTA was admitted as a full member of International Union Travel Organizations (IUOTO) in 1964. It was IUOTO that was later renamed UNWTO. Owing to non performance of NTA and the realization of enormous tourism potentials abound in Nigeria, the Federal Government in 1976 established the Nigeria Tourism Board (NTB) that took over the functions o NTA. Again owing to the less impact of NTB the Federal Government in 1990 promulgated the Trade and Tourism Policy of Nigeria to meet the

challenges of the time and for the first time upgraded tourism to the status of a ministry under Federal Ministry of Trade and Tourism. As a corollary in 1992 the tourism decree was amended, and Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) was created as a replacement for NTB as the apex government agency in charge of tourism.

Institutional Framework of Tourism Administration in Nigeria

Extract from National Tourism Policy of Nigeria (2005). The presidential council on Tourism, Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism, State and Local Governments shall constitute the Institutional frame for the implementation of tourism development process. The presidential council on Tourism shall be responsible for the finalization of formulation of tourism policy, setting targets for development from time to time as shall be initiated, developed and presented by the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism; it shall also discharge such leadership role that shall propel and galvanized sustainable development of the industry. It shall always give final approval on the usage and disbursement of the Tourism Development Fund (Nigeria Tourism Policy). The policy recognizes Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) as a Technical organ of government; therefore (NTDC) shall assume a technical posture of professionalism and effectiveness.

The framework, upon which Nigeria tourism policy is based on, is the federal system of government. Thus as stipulated in decree 81 of 1992, the tourism administration is in three tier format namely federal, state and local government.

The institution framework put in the successful implementation of the policy at all level includes Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC); State Ministries of Tourism, State Tourism Boards, Local Government Tourism Committees.

- i. Federal ministry of culture and tourism:
This ministry is responsible for policy matters, funding nationally oriented tourism project and maintenance of direct links with the state governments on tourism matters. It also represents the nation's interest in international tourism organs such as UNWTO.
- ii. National council for arts and culture
This is the National Advisory Body charged with responsibility of coordinating tourism planning and development activities at the national level. It is the highest tourism policy discussion forum in the country with the public discussion forum in the country with the public and private sector tourism organizations in attendance. The Hon. Minister of Tourism chairs the forum. All state commissioners responsible for tourism matters are ex-officio member of the council.
- iii. Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC)
The policy also made provision for the establishment of the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) which replaced Nigeria Tourist Board (NTB). The main responsibility of the corporation is marketing and promotion of tourism. It's also charged with the execution of tourism programmers, regulation, marketing and dissemination of information to the industry.

- iv. State Ministries of Tourism. It is their duty to implement policies and directives from the federal ministry of culture, initiate projects, control land allocation and development of tourism in the states as well as liaise with NTDC to regulate the operation of hotels, restaurant and other institutions in line with the Federal Government Policies.
- v. State Tourism Boards: the Policy made provision for the conversion of state tourism committees into state Tourism Committees into state Tourism Boards. They are to identify, preserve, protect and develop tourism assets and resources within the state as well as coordinate the activities of tourism agencies in the state.
- vi. Local Government Tourism Committee- in view of the fact that tourism attractions are located at the grassroots, the local governments are at vantage position to administer tourism development at the local government level.

CONCLUSION

This paper attempted a discussion on the public policy making process using the Nigerian tourism sector as reference. Concepts and decision making models were critically examined in relation to their impact on the policy making process. It was observed through a review of relevant literature that notwithstanding the odds against instrumentalism as decision making model, it helps to maintain continuity in government policies and programmes. The inference to be drawn from the above is that such a model can actually redress the phenomena of policy reversals that is typical of successive Nigerian governments in the policy making process. Tourism, being a very broad and complex activity, it is required that all hands must be on deck to achieve success in the development and promotion of tourism in Nigeria. Local authorities as well as state and Federal Government, the private sectors and non- governmental organizations all have responsibilities in realizing the goals of the Nigeria tourism policy through the institutional frameworks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) This paper recommends that there should be a change of emphasis in the public policy making process, such that a close collaboration should be fashioned out. This has the potency of permanently addressing the disconnection between government and the anticipated beneficiaries, especially in policy formulation and implementation.
- (b) Closely linked to the above, the organizational structure of the policy process should feature tourism operators.
- (c) Tourism operators committees should be initiated at the community level, headed by well respected member who is versed in the activities of the community to champion the collective aspirations of the operators
- (d) There should be a permanent strategy for development that is devoid of Crash programmes. One major characteristic of policy is that it must have short and long term objectives which can be subdivided into phases. This is to enhance policy execution and evaluation.
- (e) Training and development programmes should be instituted on a continuous basis to groom personnel. This gesture will arm supervisory agency with requisite skills and best

practices. The supervisory workers will in turn disseminate the relevant knowledge to the "active" tourism operators.

(f) As a corollary to the above, research in tourism and development initiatives should be seen and pursued as "work in progress and ongoing" all the time. It is to this extent that our research centers/institutes deserved adequate and continuous funding, as well as the right caliber of personnel.

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