

# Public Administration and Traditional Administrative System in Africa: An Interdependency Discourse

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## Abstract:

In the new States of Africa, contemporary public administration entails the imposition or super-imposition of the elements of western bureaucratic model on the existing traditional ties. Therefore, this paper is situated on the basis of the problem in the unsettled matters constituting the international question involving bureaucratization and traditional administration in Africa. With dependence on qualitative data supported by textual examination, the implications of the composite synthesis between public administration and traditional administrative system amongst African states were highlighted. The recommendations submitted which ranges from decentralization and restructuring of public administrative system, to enhancement of harmonization and efficiency of public administration in Africa with the traditional administrative structural ecology are capable of addressing the challenge of disagreement which has hampered qualitative public service delivery in Africa.

## Keywords:

Administration, Bureaucracy, Ecology, Government, Tradition

## 1. Introduction

Several researches have confirmed the buoyancy, authority and importance of African traditional structures in the politico-cultural and socio-economic operations of Africans. In contrast with this is the emerging State's empowerment to make and enforce laws. Therefore, it is noted in ECA project paper (2006: iii) that:

As Africa seeks to build and strengthen capable States, there is the need to recognize and address this "duality" fully. This is principally borne out by a growing recognition that capable democratic States must be grounded on indigenous social values and contexts, while adapting to changing realities. This will require among other actions, aligning and harmonizing traditional governance institutions with the modern State.

As far back as history extends, human beings have always grouped themselves together into communities with each having a person or a collection to govern it (Kay & Thomas, 1965:9). In Morocco –Africa, the governor might be a King and in Yoruba enclaves of Nigeria, there is a Chief or a Council of Elders at first, whose authority might extend only over one village or over large communities. This was necessary to enable the community defend itself and ensure that customary law and order were maintained and disputes settled without fighting. This is the basics of traditional administrative system before the emergence of public administration in Africa.

However, when decolonization was accepted in the world-over at the end of the World War II, the United Nations in 1961 advised that there should be public administration and public service which should in every real sense belong to the society it serves, sharing its culture, its values, its problems and its ambitions (Oshionebo, 2004:vi; UNDP, 1961). It is pertinent to emphasize on this note that:

...when an outsider comes into a new ecological system, even if he is more skilled he does not necessarily function as effectively as those who have familiarized themselves with the environment over centuries; and the newcomer is likely to look more ridiculous if he is too arrogant to realize that he has something to learn from the 'natives' (Rodney, 1972:46).

As Rodney (1972:32) posits, during the colonial period, the forms of political subordination and administrative decisions which the metropolises ensured in Africa were obvious. Therefore, Adamolekun (2004:3) submits that the governance context and environment of public administration in Africa continent has attracted considerable attention since the late 1980s which observers note, remain the problem responsible for its underdevelopment. Thus, amongst African states, colonialism has been a pivotal and determinant factor in the development of the contemporary public administration. This is due to the fact that it laid down the boundaries of the state, supplied it with governing instrumentalities such as the constitution, governance systems, bureaucratization and educational tools as well as the inter-connectivity of Africa continent with the international economy in a centre-periphery affiliation (Olowu, 1994:4).

As Colon (nd) referred ecology to be the relationships of administrative organizations, either external or internal environment, and the forces determining interdependent change, innovation, or adaptation, public administration in Africa is peculiarly different to others in the world. Basically, it takes cognizance of African traditional establishment as an important endogenous factor that manipulates the operations of bureaucracy in the continent. As Umeh (1990:1) conceives, bureaucracies do not function in emptiness but are operations of some ecological factors in which they are found. For instance, Chigwata (2015) puts forward that succeeding waves of governmental institutional reorganization that occurred during Zimbabwe's colonialism and post-colonial history have been incapable of displacing the power of traditional leaders, customs and norms. Several attempts to do this by successive governments in Africa have been the challenge facing the triumph of bureaucratic principles in Africa. Following this developments, Olowu (1994:4) portrayed that:

In spite of the efforts to distort, supplant and suppress it, the pre-colonial state formation remains the institution which serves the

needs of the majority of the African peoples especially in the rural areas, although elements of the pre-colonial state can be discerned even in Africa's largest metropolitan centres.

Olowu further notes that what was regular in colonialism which transformed into modern-day public administration in Africa was the application of authority to institute, review and infer rules and regulations in a configuration that is entirely distanced from the local, popular mechanisms of control. He added that even where this authority was 'shared' because of operating realities with a local traditional figure, input was usually not increased by this.

Nevertheless, in this paper, attempt will be made at analyzing the convergence of public and traditional administrative system in Africa in administrative science discussion. This will be achieved through consideration of the practice, synthesis and challenges of public administration and traditional administrative system in the continent.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

In comparison with the process of bureaucratization in the western countries that of new states of Africa was premature. It was premature in the sense that the abrupt switch over attempted an impossible task of establishing a permanent and clear-cut demarcation between traditional and modern orientations by not paying heed to the socio-cultural, politico-economic conditions, and the time constraints of colonial societies. It was like decreeing "now you are no longer African but European" (Okoli, 2004:51-52).

According to ECA project (2006:1), "African countries are characterized by fragmentation of various aspects of their political economy, including their institutions of governance. Large segments of the rural populations, the overwhelming majority in most African countries, continue to adhere principally to traditional institutions. The post-colonial State, on the other hand, essentially emulates western institutions of governance, which are often at odds with traditional African cultural values and the region's contemporary socio-economic realities. Fragmentation of the institutions of governance, along with economic and social fragmentation, has contributed to Africa's crisis of state-building, governance, and economic development".

The British like other colonizers elsewhere in Africa had little idea of whom they had conquered or of the administrative complexity of those societies. Therefore, people, all over are increasingly getting dissatisfied with institutions in the public sector and a lot of people believe that their services are a means to benefit colonial masters and the member of the elite class (Sharma, Sadana & Kaur, (2011:78); Alih, Orokpo & PAUL (2012); Olaopa, (2012:13)). Basically, there is flaw in the delivery of essential services such as health care, quality of environmental management, security of life and property among African States (PAUL, Audu & Alih, 2015:33). There have been critical challenges facing the success of bureaucratization in many developing countries of the world among which Africa as a continent is involved. This is consequent upon the absolute abandonment of an organized form of administration that was African-centred and built upon values, norms which Abioye (2011: x) also adds traditions and belief systems, before the advent of colonialism. This governance system was not conventional with the western belief of

constitutionalism, which involved an independent structure of control where the necessity for a managed, formal, governmental power, as witnessed in western societies, is articulated. For example, Oke (2017:22) rationally states that it is tragic to perceived how new states of Africa was deceived to accept and practice hereditary political platforms within an illiberal political setting whereas developed countries like United Kingdom and Spain possessed constitutional monarchies within a democratic situation. As part of the deception, colonization which supposed to be a nursery for qualitative administrative institutional set up became more concerned with exploitation than development (Wright, 1993:583).

Generally speaking, types of pre-colonial African governance vary from the western-portrayed composition of authority because it was pluralistic. Africa on her own is made up of severally related forms of governance system as a result of its multi-ethnic differences at various cultural, economic and socio-political developments level. This made Okoli (2004:61) to contend that the development of public administration in Nigeria for instance can be seen as a story of half-hearted, uneven, and opportunistic (often referred to as “pragmatic”) imposition of British administration over the unrelated ethnic groups. These dissimilarities are represented in the beliefs, norms and laws that govern the people.

Therefore, there is a problem facing the ability of public administration to rise to the challenge of lifting out these nations from the squalor of underdevelopment to developed status. Following this development, Oshionebo (2004: vii) argues that the “socio-economic development and public satisfaction essentially depends on its continuing capacity to implement changing development policy agenda” in consultation with traditional institutions in Africa. The various findings of Oshionebo (2004: vii); Okoli (2004:62); Adamolekun (2011); Sharma, Sadana & Kaur (2011:78); Idakwoji, (2012:24) collectively contains an unfortunate fact that all efforts to make African countries in post-independence produce a public administrative system that will be virile, effective, efficient, and responsive machinery for pushing the frontiers of the continent’s socio-economic, cultural and political developments have not yielded desired results.

From the foregoing therefore, this paper shall respond to the following questions:

I. What characterised public and traditional administrative systems’ practice in Africa?

II. How synthesised is public and traditional administration in public service and development management in Africa? and

III. What should be done to properly empower and fuse traditional administration with public administration for effective public service delivery in Africa?

### **3. Objectives of the Study**

The essential goal of this study is to undertake an exposition and prospective discourse of the major challenges facing public administration—synthesization of African traditional administrative system with bureaucratization in the emerged new states of Africa. The purpose is to stress that such efforts and the attendant will structure public administrative machinery as instrument of development management in the continent. Specifically, the objectives are to:

I. Consider the practice of public and traditional administrative system in Africa;

- II. Review the synthesis of public and traditional administration in Africa; and
- III. Recommend the appropriate synthetizations and blending of traditional with public administration for service delivery in Africa.

#### 4. Theoretical framework

The paper is anchored on structural-functional theory whose proponents are Herbert Spencer and Robert Merton (Turner, 1985; Barnard, 2000; Holmwood, 2005). The fundamental impetus in the model consists of social, structure, functions, manifestations, and underlying functions. It is shaped under the construction of structural-functionalism which according to DeRosso (2003); Lenski (2005); examined the world as a complex and composite system. The theory as Parsons (1975); Macionis (2011:97); Gerber & Macionis(2011:13) noted has certain principles that:

- I. Identifies the structures of a system;
- II. Defines the part played by such structures;
- III. Examines the consequences of social phenomena for the systems of which they are a part; and
- IV. Examines how new structures emerge.

The model attempts at functionalisms which in itself concentrate on society with regards to the function of its essential factors such as traditions, customs, norms, and institutions (Ritzer, 1983). In drawing a simple correlation from Spencer's postulation presented these parts of society as "organs" that work in actualization of the accurate performance of the "body" in its entirety. It underlines "the effort to impute, as rigorously as possible, to each feature, custom, or practice, on its effect on the functioning of a supposedly stable, cohesive system" (Parsons, 1975).

##### 4.1 Application of the Theory

According to Nigro & Nigro (1973:18), public administration covers all the three organs of government –the executive, legislative, executive, interrelationship and their ecology not exempted. As the structural-functional theorists posits, ensuring that rules and regulations make the stability of the society and there is certainty that a disorder in a part automatically disturb the other. Oloapa (2009:11) says bureaucracy in Africa has its own special interests, values and power basis. Its challenges lie in the capacity to interpret national interests free from biases.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, integral scholars started to explore the social world more methodically. Socio-cultural and politico-administrative structures began to be thought of due to the multifaceted developments that were not directly noticeable from informal study. In the findings of Kay & Thomas (1965:120), one of the aims of the British government in the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast and Nigeria was to rule as far as possible through the chiefs and their councils. They cited Lugard (1922) as saying that the government structurally employs and functions through

...the native chiefs and avails itself of their intelligence and powers of governing, of the Fulani caste in particular, but insists upon their observance of the fundamental laws of humanity and justice identified.

The adoption of this theory is premised on the fact that the integration of the common traits of the traditional, social and politico-administrative systems of ethnic groups in Africa should be put into consideration with new bureaucratic ideals. Okoli (2004:60) contends that the social constraints and moral obligations which engulfed a representative of a corporate group could have reinforced the body of rules and regulations of the new bureaucratic structures to ensure effectiveness. Africa's development challenges "seems to have an inverse relationship with the repeated 'sharpening' of the administrative machinery" not aligned with Africanism (Oshionebo, 2004:7).

As a result, Okoli (2004:61) discovers that vertically, the colonial government was characterized by two hierarchies: the British superstructure with the colonial governor at the apex and the local (native) administration with the traditional rulers at the head. He adds that the superstructure through residents and district officers who passed on instructions to the local leaders and this organisation stretched out from the governor to the inhabitants and district officers who interacted with the local people. Therefore, studies have shown that administration is not regular with contemporary public administration nor does it follow one defined model (Umeh, 1990:4).

According to Holmwood (2005), functionalists assert that society should be understood as a system of co-dependent parts. They believe that there are specific requirements – functional prerequisites – that must be met in all social systems and that these can provide the basis for the comparative analysis of social institutions. Public administration is a wide-ranging and amorphous combination of theory and practice; its purpose as argues by Henry (2004:1) is to encourage a better-quality understanding of government of its relationship with the society it governs, as well as to promote public policies more responsive to public needs and to establish administrative course of actions attuned to effectiveness, efficiency, and deeper human requisites of the citizenry. Then, there is inevitability of public administration and traditional administrative system to be well interdependently fused like United Kingdom and Spain so as to ensure effective and efficient structural-functioning of public institutions in Africa.

## **5. Research Methodology**

In carrying out this research, there is utilization of textbooks, journals, magazines, newspapers, internet materials and unpublished works. As a non-experimental research, there is an employment of the use of qualitative data analysis.

## **6. The Practice of Public and Traditional Administration**

The impact of theory and practice of public administration and traditional administrative system are often felt, but very difficult to characterize in Africa. This is because the delineation of their boundaries and scope has never been precise. According to Olaopa (2009:71), the history of modern public administration in Nigeria and by extension other African countries is relatively short and is full of events, shaped by different actors, and characterized by multifarious problems.

Particularly in recent years, public administration become increasingly indeterminate and lacks a significant common theoretical or applied meaning as both practitioners and scholars have considerably broadened their concepts of what public administration covers (Nigro & Nigro, 1973:3, in Olaopa, 2009:2; Gaus, 1950). In the

view of Bhagwan & Bhushan (1963:1), public administration in developing states has grown to an immense importance since the emergence of administrative state. Its functions in both capitalist and the socialist states have become manifold. It is a mechanism not only for protecting and restraining but also advancing the course of world's development. In developing bureaucracies like Brazil, China, India, etc. which are striving utmost to ameliorate the lot of the teeming millions, public administration has been converted into an instrument of change and development and powerful agency for effecting national integration. With the ushering in of an era of welfarism, the administration is accepted as a "moral act" and "administrator a moral agent" (Bhagwan & Bhushan, 1963:1). Public administration in any continent of the world has become the machinery for formulating policies and programmes and implementing them out.

It is pertinent to describe the 20<sup>th</sup> century public administration as portrayed on a theory of bureaucracy –the thoughts of Max Weber, founded on the double beliefs of chain of command and meritocracy. It was originally launched as part of all-embracing bureaucratizational change in the United Kingdom and Russia in the late 19th century to overcome patrimonialism –a situation where patronage and favouritism dictates major public policies and appointments into government offices (Osborne, 2006; UNDP, 2015:5). Also, in the 21st century, public administration is experiencing dramatic transformation, especially in advanced economies, but also in many parts of the developing world (UNDP, 2015:4).

In the same vein, Ngu (2001:12) says public administration in the pre-19<sup>th</sup> century and up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was still at rudimentary stage in the sense that it lacked universal principles to back up its practices in many nations or empires which succeeded the ancient ones. Supportively, rural and local governance in South Africa remains little changed from its 19<sup>th</sup> century antecedents and are caught in a time of distortion with patterns of control defined in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In same development, due to their home-grown and natural legitimacy, various traditional authorities and system continue to play ever-present role in the lives of people in rural areas. They are involved in political and policy administration on the one hand, and resource mobilization administration on the other. For example, Botswana stands at the harmonious end of the spectrum, Sierra Leone is at the conflictual end, and countries like Ghana, Namibia, Nigeria, and South Africa are dispersed in between. Succinctly:

The good practice example in Botswana is the pragmatic accommodation of traditional chiefs in modern governance: They are members of a House of Chiefs, established in the constitution and with a formal advisory role in respect of both executive and legislative functions, and they participate in land administration and the administration of justice (Adamolekun, 2005:60).

Before the British contact and relationship, there were institutions and governments in Africa (Casely-Hayford, 1922, in Rodney, 1972:32). But, as it is the case throughout most of African nations, the powers of traditional leaders have mostly been uncodified under modern law and these power relations tend to be rather informal and culturally inaccessible to most outsiders. In Nigerian Yoruba land, the *Oba* wielded considerable power and influence because, he was a divine king who could do nothing wrong, no one had temerity to query him; he was above the law

(Oyero, 2013:131). In the same vein, each community was usually autonomous of the other, but all villages were under the sovereignty of their various traditional administrators who ensures security and safety against external aggression.

Nevertheless, Oyero (2013:132) asserts that the colonial government had to establish warrant chiefs as the ruling elites in Ibo communities of the eastern part of Nigeria. This is because administrative failure in Uganda during the 1970s and 1980s was more than technical incompetence and appropriate administrative structures (Kisubi, 2004:350). Drawing an analogy from the failure of indirect rule system in Anglophone West Africa, the British found it politically expedient, administratively suitable and operationally less expensive to administer the natives through their traditional ruling elites. In addition, one of the aims of the British government in the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast and Nigeria was to rule as far as possible through the chiefs and their councils having studied their relevance and roles in the pre-colonial period (Kay & Thomas, 1965:120).

In developed bureaucracies of the world like America, Bowman & Kearney (2005:16) maintain that ethnicity and culture still matter and researchers found these to have explained the state's policies and political background. For example in the down South Africa, the permanent control of national party drew the distinction between the interests of the state and the interests of the *Afrikaner* ethnic group and there was continuity in the opposition of liberal and nationalist forces that challenged the national party-dominant bureaucracy (Picard, 2004:311).

During colonialism, central government was in the hands of Governor, who was assisted by an executive and a legislative council. Local government was largely in the hands of the tribal leaders and traditional authorities under the supervision of British officers. Kay & Thomas, (1965:120) quoted Lord Lugard as saying that:

The government utilizes and works through the native chiefs and avails itself of their intelligence and powers of governing

According to Usman (2015:28) cited by PAUL & Edino (2015:23), despite the fact that the new nation states commonly represent the most advanced type of the society, traditional administrative system formed a unified social arrangement in medieval periods. The northern and southern part of Nigeria for instance already had a well-developed system of government called "Emirate Council" and "Oba and Council" respectively (Oyero, 2013:131). As Rodney (1972: 54) notes, from a political perspective, the period of transition from communalism to feudalism in Africa was one of the state formation. According to Oyero, different parts of Nigeria were under the administration of traditional leaders before the emergence of contemporary public administration. At the beginning, the state remained weak and immature. Though it acquired definite territorial boundaries, inside those boundaries subjects lived in their own communities with scarcely any contact with the ruling class until the time came to pay an annual tax or tribute (Rodney, 1972:54).

As Umeh (1990:1) contends in the literature of comparative and development administration, several studies have addressed the relationship between public administration and its particular environment. Thus, Olowu (1994:2) asserts that we cannot pretend to tackle the problem of African public services separate from the larger political systems of which the public service is merely an instrument. At first public servants who were petit-bourgeoisie had very limited ideological clarity and this for example in Sierra Leone resulted in open confrontation between the colonial

masters and the Civil Servants Association founded in 1907 (Ake, 1981:77). At the village level in Guinea, the Municipal Council of Commune consists of the party's traditional executives who are charged with multiple political, administrative and judicial functions (Adamolekun, 2006:23).

This was a common concern during the early days of the field of public administration in Africa and other developing countries as Umeh (1990:1) cites scholarly works of Dorn (1931); Marx (1935); Gaus (1936); Marx (1963); Eisenstadt (1964); Esman (1966); Cleaves (1974); Grindle (1980), which continued to the present day. Many of these studies focused on specific aspects of the bureaucracy in developing countries such as the role of bureaucrats, administrative apparatus, implementation of policies, and characteristics of political regimes in the developing nations where implementation was pursued.

## **7. The Synthesis of Public and Traditional Administration**

The question therefore is not whether the traditional and “modern” systems of governance are competing against each other but how to integrate the two systems more effectively in order to better serve citizens in terms of representation and participation, service delivery, social and health standards and access to justice (ECA, 2006: iii).

According to Adamolekun (2005:60), by the 1990s in Africa, customary chiefs were still powerful with a blend of harmonious and conflictual interactions with the state political leaderships, and with either official or unofficial in political administration and resource mobilization functions. Cutirs (1993:3) asserts that Britain presents an interesting mixture of traditional and modern forms of organisation and behaviour till today. Putting these administrative events, actors and problems in their historical perspective requires a dialectical approach, which examines the relationship between environmental changes and relationship (Olaopa, 2009:71). In the socio-political and administrative nature of Africa, there were many changes that accompanied the expansion of the administrative structures. This is because the interaction between culture and public administration is not unidirectional but rather bilateral (Sharma, Sadana & Kaur, 2011:129). Therefore, it is noteworthy that the political structures were inseparable.

Olowu (1994:6, 7) identifies the unfortunate situation that African post-colonial state has taken on more elements of the colonial state rather than of the pre-colonial state and that the legacy of the colonial state is the weak vertical and horizontal integration of the African state, the dominance of power rather than authority and the low-level of government accountability and responsiveness. For instance, Agere & Chiwaro (2004:368) observe that the budgetary system inherited from the colonial administration in Zimbabwe has remained virtually unchanged. To this end, Kiragu (2004:331) pictures public bureaucracies in Tanzania which tended to be more responsive and accountable to the political patrons than to the public that they were created to serve. He identifies the following factors as being responsible for this situation:

I. First, there was really no major transformation of the philosophical and organization principles of the state at independence.

II. Secondly, a number of environmental factors – the prevalence of intellectual and real politik traditions in the West and East that favoured strong centralized state and central planning.

III. Finally, the people were themselves content to give their faith to new found central authorities which promised much but delivered little.

However, it is an acceptable norm that government businesses should be conducted in accordance with the public interest which conceives the practice of public administration in its right perspective (Bhagwan & Bhushan, 1963:1; Bowman & Kearney, 2005:233). As a result of this situation, Rodney (1972:50) posits that the most developed areas of Africa were those where all the elements of bureaucracy and traditional systems converged, and the two socio-political features which were the outstanding indices to development were the increase of stratification and the consolidation of state apparatus. Nevertheless, specific environmental conditions, demographics, dominant culture, ideological orientation and leaning prevalent in any given state as Vyas-Doograp, et al (2013:14) maintains ultimately determines the structure of the government. Following the fact that the colonial state was philosophically elitist and absolutist – civil servants and politicians-centred as identified by Wunsch & Olowu (1990:23); Sharma, Sadana & Kaur (2011:78), Morris (1979:22) therefore argues that in choosing indicators of performance of development programmes vis-à-vis the government, efforts should be put in place to situate unethnocentric measures that allow for differences in traditional practices and the formal institutions. In the perception of Sharma, Sadana & Kaur (2011:120), there is a constant interaction of culture and administration that redefines the role of government and public administration particularly in developing countries of Asia and Africa.

Consequently, the dilemma for public and local administrators lies in the definition, principles and practice of public service delivery which numerous compete at different times. Particularly, the support of traditional leaders for securing the resources necessary to develop and operate a successful government policies, projects and programmes is seriously needed. In addition, they are significant political and policy setting assets to bureaucracies in Africa. All these clearly reflect that public administration and traditional administrative systems fusion are essentials of public service delivery for all societies in Africa– developed or developing, autocratic or democratic.

## **8. The Challenge in Practice and Synthesis of Administration in Africa**

During the decolonization era, the political leaders who led the nationalist struggle for independence saw the traditional chiefs as allies of the alien rulers and resolved either to reduce their powers significantly or to abolish the institution altogether after independence. In Guinea the traditional Chieftaincies were abolished immediately after independence; other countries used different methods to subordinate the chiefs to the new national leaderships (Adamolekun, 2005:60). From the analysis of the relationship between policy design and its target, service delivery, historical development, Africa has gone through upheavals in governmental administration and a decayed political economy (Vyas-Doograp et al, 2013). Fundamentally, there are challenges of:

I. The existence of heterogeneous and other forms of ecological factors such as the elite bureaucrats, traditional and local leaders, and their institutions. This has hindered accountability and transparency thereby resulting in dissimilarities in functions instead of structural and functional differentiation that exist in developed bureaucracies of the world (Imhanlahimhim, 2000:26; Olowu, 2005:139).

II. The problem of mystification between public and private interests. In the extensive findings of Ayeni (2005:211); Ayee (2005:271); Adamolekun & Mvula (2005:288); Otobo (2005:307); Picard (2005:325); Kiragu (2005:342); Kisubi (2005:358); Agere & Chiwaro (2005:372) this factor is fundamentally responsible for corruption, poor public and service delivery which are recurring decimal across public administrative system in Africa.

III. An existentiality of bureaucratic ideals' overlap and disagreement with traditional and other primordial interests.

## 9. Conclusion and Recommendations

Although the system of formal government is more complex, and there is much more from it than merely defending the territorial boundaries, maintenance of law and order, and settlement of disputes were the primary pre-occupation of traditional administrative system in Africa. Presently however, the importance of effective and efficient public bureaucracy emerged as a result of high demand for the provision of critical infrastructures like educational, health, communication, transportation, socio-economic and political structures among the African states.

According to Kay & Thomas (1965:9), whether it is a simple or a complex system of government being practiced in Africa before the emergence of public administration, the community must have a fixed set of laid down rules and by whom it shall be governed. For example, they noted that if every time a Chief died, there was a fight over who should succeed him, the community could not survive; or if there were no way of deciding when a man should stop being Prime Minister, and how the next one was to be chosen, there would be confusion and a very poor standard of government.

Ultimately, the achievement of this study is the need put in place all-encompassing measures that will enable and stabilize the performance of public institutions for effective and efficient service delivery in Africa. Essentially, the analysis of the multifaceted connection between public administration and traditional administrative systems in Africa brought about the following recommendations:

I. There should be decentralisation and restructuring of public administrative system in Africa so as to devolve bureaucratic power to traditional authorities. Additional discretionary power and resources should be delegated to the traditional institutions.

II. There is need to enhance harmonization, agreement and efficiency of public administration in Africa with its ecological factors, particularly the traditional administrative structure. This is concerned with strengthening and recognition of the present roles of traditional leaders charged with overseeing the activities of the people within their community in order to ensure that peace and harmonious co-existence reigns.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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