

# COVID 19 AND PUBLIC POLICIES SOMERSAULTING IN NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper appraised the nexus between public policies and the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. The study set out to ascertain if the ecology of Nigeria public policy caused the degeneration of legitimacy of government institutions by the citizenry. It continues with a conceptual exploration of the meaning of policy and public policies as general concept and as perceived by various scholars within the context of this study. The study looked at the elite theory as theoretical anchorage to illuminate the nature, patterns and varying degrees as well as the strategies adopted by the elites to facilitate public policies in Nigeria. The content elements of the study x-ray public policy typology, problems of public policy in Nigeria, COVID-19 and public policy somersaulting in Nigeria that portrays the failing nature of the Nigerian-state. The paper concludes that COVID-19 pandemic met Nigeria as an unprepared state that almost lost its sovereignty due to various crises generated by the pandemic. We recommended sustainable public policy paradigm and technological advancement courses at all levels of education in Nigeria as part of embodiment against such pandemic.*

**Key words:** COVID-19, Pandemic, Public Policy, Somersaulting, Sustainable.

## INTRODUCTION

The novel corona-virus (COVID-19) is a global pandemic that turned the world off-balance since early 2020. It is on record that the first official case of COVID-19 was detected and announced in Lagos State, Nigeria 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2020 (NTA News, 29 February 2020). The patient was an Italian expert who arrived in Lagos from Europe and who was few days later tested positive for the virus. Since then, the scourge remains a cog in the wheel of progress in various segment of administration and development in Nigeria. The situation has developed with more cases occurring, regardless of public policies initiated by both states and federal government as curtailment to the virus and return to normalcy. The process of strategizing these policies by both states and federal government to combat the global malady led to policy somersaulting in various sectors in the Nigerian-state. There was sudden vacation of schools, private and public offices, worship centers, markets, social gathering, restrictions and total lockdown of the state that brought untold hardship on the citizenry. For about 10 months the state and its constituent units were comatose.

The viability of the state administrative policies though an essential component of public administration and governance integrity as imperative, do evidently tested during crises situations such as COVID-19. Different instructions from different administrative segments were witnessed. A situation where state policies override federal policies and government functionaries engages themselves in words battle due to some pronouncement in various sectors in the country. Services and jobs security were perverted, various entities and organizations were coming up with different policies that could be against the ethics and norms of the general public, donations were made without accountability, misplacement of priority and values, class stratification, misleading information etc were all witnessed during this period.

### **Public Policy - Concept and Meaning**

The magnitude and complexity of contemporary issues faced by Nigeria as a state need urgent attention. There are enlarging responsibilities of public institutions and great expectations from the teeming citizenry of the state. For these issues to be effectively and efficiently managed within the given state there must be regulatory framework within which such issues can be resolved. These regulatory frameworks are what we refer to as public policies.

According to Ayuba, Charas and Paul, (2012), these various socio-economic problems need to be carefully studied while prescriptions and particularly the design, formulation, implementation and performance management of optimal and effective policies are substantially reviewed. With this, Ikelegbe (2006) asserts that society is ordered, steered and directed towards desired ends by the state through policies.

Therefore, what is public policy? There is no unanimity on the concept of public policy. Various scholars perceived the term based on their paradigm. Johnson (2012) asserts that public policy is a purposeful and consistent course of action taken as a response to a perceived problem of a nation, formulated by a specific political process and adopted, implemented and enforced by a public agency. To Sapru (2004), policy is a purposeful course of action taken by those in power in pursuit of certain goals or objectives. Policy can be seen as a formal document or framework in which a government or other institutions outline goal and the guiding principles and strategies for achieving those goals; and given the authority to undertake actions in pursuit of them (Egonmwan, 2009). Public policy is simply the action of the government designed and adopted from the alternatives available to resolve issues of public concern that have far reaching impact on the lives of the majority of the citizenry (Aisedion and Omoregie, 2018).

Shanma, Sadana and Kaur (2012) assert that public policy is the relationship of a governmental unit to its environment. The broad assertion of this concept is of two dimensions “the governmental unit and its environment”. These intend to explain the intersection of governments and the citizenry in public policy making processes. Henry (2005) noted that public policy is a “course of action adopted and pursued by government for goal actualization”. According to Dye (2001), public policy borders on “whatever the government chooses to do or not to do”.

Characteristically, public policies are sequence and programme of invents and actions of government or the state; they are geared towards the resolution of societal problems; they are reflective of the present and future; they are procedural in nature; statutorily coercive; and rigorous (Idada, 2018). In a nutshell, public policy entails government actions and inactions in a given state.

### **Theoretical Anchorage**

Theories are instruments and frameworks adopted in the explanation and justification of a given phenomenon. They are used to explain the rationale of a phenomenon or the development of a paradigm (Anetekhai, 2018). Therefore, this discourse is anchored on the “Elite theory of

public policy” in our society. The theory is associated with Mitchels Mill, Mosca and other erudite scholars (Enabunene and Idada, 2002). The elite theory posits that the society is stratified into two classes. These are the elite ruling class at the top while the masses (ordinary citizens) at the bottom. They classified the elite as the rich and well educated wealthy members of the state who share common belief or varies about the existence of the state and use their status to influence and dictate public policies in the state. This class of the citizen may constitute the political elites, military elites, religion elites, business elites (the bourgeoisie) etc. The poor, non-influential and peasant citizenry that constitute the lower class only take and obey instructions (policies) given or initiated by the elite class.

According to Enabunene and Idada (2002), the argument against this theory is that the generality of the masses, the poor that largely constitute the greater percentage of the citizenry are indifferent, apathetic and ill informed about the decisions, policies and programmes in the state. These policies are automatically reflection of the wishes and aspirations of the ruling elites. The elite theory explains the power relationship in contemporary society. The theory posits that a small minority, consisting of members of the socio-economic, political elite and policy planning network, hold the most power and that this power, is independent of a state’s democratic election processes (Emanemua, 2018).

According to Haralambo & Heald (1999), the thrust of the theory are as follows:

1. Elite own its power to its internal organization and form a united and cohesive minority in the face of unorganized and fragmented masses.
2. Major decisions which affect society are taken by the elite, and these decisions usually reflect the interest of the elite rather than the wishes of the majority.
3. The masses of the population is largely controlled and manipulated by the elite, passively accepting the propaganda which justifies elite rule.
4. Major change in society occurs when one elite replaces another. Scholars refers to this as “circulation of elites” and they noted that “all elite tend to become decadent “. “They decay in quality and lose their vigour. They may become soft and ineffective with the pleasures of easy living and the privileges of power.
5. The rule by a majority is an inevitable feature of social life and that the ruling majority is superior to the masses of the state that lack capacity for self-government and require the leadership and guidance of elite.

6. They typified modern democracies as merely another form of elite domination.

With the advent of COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria, the attributes of the elite theory have been grossly witnessed. Government took abrupt and un-procedural policies, diverging from open administrative principles in search of illusory and life saving shortcuts. Policies on interactions, transactions and intergovernmental relations have been made overnight with limited or no consultation, and reasoning remains obscure for the citizenry.

Public policy formulation processes was the first administrative principle to be sacrificed in early reactions to the pandemic as consultations with the general public, principal determinants and the orthodox institutions of the public policy making in the state were deemed non-essential in the short term. The citizenry simply trust their respective governments and their agencies as they maneuvered public policies to suit the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie in the society thereby leaving the downtrodden uncared for.

### **Public Policy Typology**

Traditionally, public policy encompasses very wide range of issues, determine different purposes and generally interact with all segments of the society for goal attainment. Therefore, public policies are fortified and strategically enact for state fundamental problems that need to be resolved. Along this line, they can be classified into various groups. Some of these are: distributive public policy, redistributive public policy, regulatory public policy, fundamental public policy, global policy and symbolic public policy (Idada, 2018).

Egonmwan (2009), Ikelegbe (2006) and Makinde (2005), categorized public policies typologies into regulatory public policy; substantive public policy; distributive public policy; redistributive public policy; capitalization public policy; constituent public policy and technical public policy.

Sapru, (2004) identified global policy, national or sub-national policy, institutional policy and operational policy as public policy typologies. To Idada (2018), public policy can be classified as:

- 1. Regulatory Public Policy:** These policies are formulated to control the interaction between individuals and groups towards the maintenance and protection of their rights and avoidance of anarchy in the state. Regulatory public policy set particular standards that individual and group activities must conform to within system.

Regulatory policies are concerned with regulation of trade, business, safety measures, public utilities, etc performed by independent bodies working on behalf of the governments. Such regulatory bodies in Nigeria are, National Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), National Communication Commission (NCC), National Broadcasting Commission etc. (Egonmwan, 2009).

- 2. Distributive Public Policy:** The state is fragmented into different strata of men, groups and institutions with different interests. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all segments and interests of the state are touched and provided for by the state policies.

Distributive public policies are meant for specific segment of the state especially the needy. Public assistance and welfare programmes, adult literacy education programme, nutrition and food security, social insurance, vaccination, etc are all attributes of distributive policies (Makinde, 2005).

- 3. Re-distributive Policies:** The need to bridge gaps between “Haves and the Have-Nots”, the rich and the poor, the under privileged and unemployed underscores the purpose of Redistributive policy. In this regard, the particular policies and programs are enacted and pursued to create equitable allocation of resources to the citizenry.

Redistributive policies are concerned with rearrangement of the social strata of the society in terms of basic social and economic changes. Certain assets and benefits are divided disproportionately amongst certain segment of the society and so those needs to be redistributed to assure equity and fairness with a view to reaching a larger number of the citizenry.

- 4. Fundamental Policies:** Constitutional supremacy, Constitutional procedural amendment, permanence and size are the characteristic features of fundamental policies. They are funded in the legal status of the state. Examples of such are public policies on currency, security, state political structure, and human rights.

Fundamental public policy can be regarded as substantive public policies that are concerned with the general welfare and development of the state. These policies entail the provision of basic essential services in the state which may includes, the provision of education, health, economy, employment, law enforcement and general constitutional provisions. It's not restricted to any particular or privileged section of the state and it's

formulated primarily with the constitutional provision of the state as well as the norm and moral ethics of the society.

- 5. Global Policies:** Global policies are instruments adopted to regulate actions and activities that cut across several nations – states such as that emanating from the economic community of West African States (ECOWAS), African Union (AU), and United Nation (UN).

Global policies are normative guidelines, development frameworks and goals, conventions, agreements, financial commitments, human right instruments and treaties developed by various international organizations and global entities (Sapru, 2004).

- 6. Symbolic Policies:** Symbolic policies are characterized by attempt of the state to whip up sentiments of the citizenry, appeal to their emotions and create a façade of a responsible government that is keen about the interest, desires, and wishes of the citizenry. The attempt of the state here is to easily win the collective support of the citizenry. Such symbolic policies in Nigeria are the recent executive pronouncements on Not-Too-Young-To-Run. M.K.O. Abiola's Posthumous Award, and the adoption of June 12 as Democracy day.

### **COVID-19 and Public Policy Somersaulting in Nigeria**

Vast and wide ranges of countries of the world were caught unprepared by COVID-19 pandemic Nigeria inclusive. We witnessed various governments and its agencies issuing contradictory regulations, battling for policies and more than anything we witnessed panic in all ramifications. The Nigerian government eventually embarked on abrupt and un-procedural policies, perverting from overt administrative norms in search of illusory and life saving short-cuts. Policies on interaction, transactions and intergovernmental relation were made overnight with limited or no consultations, and reasoning became obscure for the populace. The principle of public policy formulation was the first government content element to be sacrificed in early reactions to the pandemic as consultations with the general public, principal determinants and the orthodox institutions of public policy making in the state were deemed non-essential in the short-term.

The citizenry notionally trust their representative governments and its agencies as they maneuvered public policies to suit the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie thereby leaving the



downtrodden to wallow in abject poverty and unsecured environment. The docility of Nigerians in response to public policies led to public policy somersaulting in the political environment. Government functionaries and the political bourgeoisie formulate policies without recourse to the plight, wishes and aspirations of the citizenry. Practical example of this scenario is the formulation and implementation of public policies in Nigeria during the process of combating COVID-19 pandemic in the country. With the federal government announcement of the presence of the pandemic in Nigeria on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2020, backward nor forward roll policies were initiated. There are multifarious pronouncements by both federal and state government in various sectors in response to COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, “All schools reopens on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2020. Public schools will run two streams, Primary 1-3 and JSS 1-3, 8am-11am, while primary 4-6 and SSS 1-3, 12noon-3pm daily. Private schools can operate one stream” (Federal Ministry of Education). The above assertion was made for schools resumption in Nigeria that was reversed within the week. This was as a result of policies somersaulting within the system. The federal government declared dates of resumption of all schools, but some states rejected and reschedule theirs. The Edo State government asserts as follows “school resumption postponed to 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 (Oviawe, 2020).

Consequent upon the official reopening of schools in the state, all primary schools pupils should note that all pupils are to resume together irrespective of the class”. This was contrary to the federal government pronouncement on resumption in Nigeria. More also, these pupils were not allowed to conduct general assembly in their various schools, but they will gathered in classes and conduct assembly in a less ventilated environment. The students whom were not allowed to stand together in order to observed COVID-19 protocol will be sitting together in 4 to a seat that is originally designed for two students. In fact, the Nigerian-state could not manage the policy process thereby contradictory the administrative processes in the country due to the pandemic.

### **Problems of Public Policy in Nigeria**

There are multifarious issues contending with efficiency and effectiveness of public policies in Nigeria especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the period, we see government battling for policies and issuing contradictory regulations and more than anything we see panic over the state. The causes of these abrupt and un-procedural attributes of public



policies are: The principle of federal supremacy, multiplicity of agencies, inadequate communication or coordination, attributes of public policy determinants, lack of continuity, ambiguous policy statement, over-ambitious policy goals, lack of technological advancement and the Nigerian syndrome (corruption).

**1. The Principle of Federal Supremacy:** Federal supremacy is a constraint to efficacy of state policies in the system. In his 1983 treatise, “The Trouble with Nigeria”, Chinua Achebe pin points the dominant development challenges facing Nigeria. Among the dominant issues facing public policies in Nigeria is the principle of federal supremacy, which is a constitutional conditionality in Nigeria (Inyang, 2015).

Stephen, Jan and `Glenda (2015), observe that this principle is partly responsible for the numerous agitation from the federating units (the state). In the Nigerian constitution, the federal government is expected to provide the overall direction and leadership in the planning processes, from formulation through the implementation and evaluation stages. The decision making under the federal supremacy principle requires the National Executive Council which is presided over by the president which is automatically binding on every citizen of the country. Most decisions taken at the federal level are at variance with the activities of the federating units. When most policies or decisions are passed by the Legislature, the president gives final assent to them and the bureaucrats are given directives on implementation of such programmes and policies. Most policies give rise to other public policies through evaluation. At this stage, the citizenry responses to public programmes legitimize the entire processes of public policies. Most often, as it is in the case of COVID-19, the citizens have little or no option to accept policy initiated by the federal government. A practical instance is the president assent to COVID-19 law which is binding on every citizen no matter the status and location within the country. Another instance is the general lockdown of the country despite the fact that two states conducted their governorship election within the period. The Kogi state government un-acceptance of the existence of virus in the state is a clear example of federal supremacy that overrule the state through its agency NCDC subsequently carry out test and pronounced the state as COVID-19 affected state.

**2. Proliferation of Public Agencies:** Multiplicities of government agencies is a constraint to goal attainment in public policy. This complexity prioritizes public programmes in the state. Take for instance, under the ministry of education, various activities and programs are put in place under various agencies such as Universal Basic Education Board, Technical Basic

Education Board etc with specifications in goal attainment. However, most activities in these various are replications. During budgets and budgetary processes, we see conflict of ideas and administrative responsibilities within the ministry thereby posing difficulties in implementation. One of the reasons is that both federal unitary schools, state modern schools and modern schools are operating within the environment guided with the same curriculum and calendar. The variation between these departments is the fiscal commitment that always creates apathy within the ministry and the bureaucrats.

**3. Inadequate Communication:** Lack of proper coordination hinders goal attainment by public policies in our society. Policy intentions are not spelt out clearly through the right organizational channels established for the transmission of policy to those involved in policy formulation thereby making such policy blunt. According to Emanemua (2018), in some cases, most policy formulators are usually not well informed about the intervening variables and therefore they simply assume the interplay of just political and economic variables; neglecting others – social, administrative and external environmental variables, consequently, many policies are formulated with deficiencies.

**4. Attributes of Public Policy Determinants:** The major determinants of public policy are the orthodox institutions, the bureaucrats, private institutions and the citizenry. The orthodox institution comprises of three organs of government and its component units at all levels. The bureaucrat entails all government departments and career service workers at various agencies and ministries. The citizenry constitutes 70% of the general or gross population of the country. These are the less classed members of the state that had little or no voice in public policy processes. The inability of the policy actors to involve target policy beneficiaries group in their prior to policy execution have contributed to public policy failure in Nigeria. This is because there may be a mismatch between the need of the people and policy objectives of the people. Such policies consequently fail to be client –oriented and get out of touch from people at the grass-root (Emanemua, 2018). In Nigeria, it is expected that citizens should be more concerned with the distributive aspect of policies because this is the policy aspect that will impact meaningfully in their lives. It is also the aspect which can improve on their lives thereby giving them the enabling environment and ability to contribute to the wellbeing of the country. Unfortunately, most policies are made by the government without considering the target population, and as such; the

masses are not given the opportunity to contribute in the formulation of policies that concern their welfare (Emanemua, 2018).

In addition, he asserts that there are no human resources or capital to implement these plans as a result of the low income human capital development in the country. For instance, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2016) report reveals that Nigeria was ranked 152<sup>nd</sup> nation out of 187 countries, in human development. This ranking put Nigeria's Human Development Index fairly above the average of 0.5. By the UNDP ranking, Nigeria could not even come or appear in the medium Human Development category in which some developing countries such as Ghana, Morocco, Sao'tome and Congo among others featured.

Another attribute of public policy determinant is the inability of most policy makers to ensure time targeting in policy implementation. Time targeting in policy implementation simply describes achievability and feasibility of a plan within the proposed time for execution. This has often been neglected because most leaders present policies which are too cumbersome and difficult to achieve within the short period of their administration with the hope of being reelected to complete such projects. When such officers are not reelected, such projects are usually abandoned at the end of their tenures if subsequent governments leave the plan uncompleted. This therefore explains reasons for numerous abandoned projects found in developing nations – Nigeria inclusive. Regrettably, the failure of past public policies in Nigeria may be partly responsible for the lack of morale among citizens to contribute maximally to nation building because policy failures may de-sensitizes citizens and propel them to be less patriotic.

**5. Corruption:** Corruption is tagged as the Nigerian syndrome because it now practice as cultural heritage to the extent when a government, individual or an organization want to live an upright life within the state it will be tagged wickedness. Bribery and Corruption is one chronic problem in Nigeria that is affecting public policy processes (Makinde, 2005). Most policy goals in Nigeria are based on the personal rewards and interests of the political actors and their godfathers with the result that a policy is judged more on its political merit than with the real developmental dividends (Emanemua, 2018). By federal supremacy, veto-power and political will, the orthodox institutions and various entities established by the state to ensure optimum implementation of public policies are influenced to falsify policy output and water-down reactions from the citizenry and probing within the system. With these attributes, all the activities

by the political system to liberate the targeted audience through public policy will ever remain weeping.

**6. Lack of Advance Resources:** Resources are of various dimensions. There are human and material resources, the human resources entails both skilled and unskilled labour force within the state while the material resources comprises of the unrefined, refined and the eco-system. These resources are to be in an advance form to enable the state to lead plausible public policy processes. Advance human resources entails well trained personnel in all ramifications that can render selfless services to the state as nature desires. Humans that can lead by example, expresses self with non-parochialism and nepotism in attributes and actions before the state. Adequate finance is also an aspect of this concept. Indeed, to effectively implement public policies, the implementing agencies needs money, human and material resources in adequate and timely manner and such not being the case of Nigeria explains, in part, the failure of certain public policies to achieve desirable ends (Nweke, 2006). At times, government disburse substantial fund for effective execution of projects and programmes within the state, due to corrupt activities between and among the ministries, agencies and the bureaucrats, most policy programmes remain unexecuted all over the nation. The major reasons for these experiences in this country is that there is untold relationship between and among the orthodox institutions, the bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie and the public bureaucratic organizations that are of the elite class in the state.

Lack of advanced human resources also comprises of inadequate technological advancement in our society. E-governance, E-banking, E-congress, E-voucher, E-voting, E-demographic registration etc, are bane to public policy processes in Nigeria. Despite the fact that some electronic activities are going on in the nation, much enlightenment is needed to ensure optimum awareness is created among the citizenry. This is why “Universal Basic Education Policy” is a bedrock public policy programme that can liberate Nigerians if properly handled.

**7. Lack of Continuity:** Lack of continuity and abandonment of public policy programmes and projects is a syndrome in Nigeria that is being practice as a culture. With trajectory analysis of public policies in Nigeria, multifarious policies that have been rose-coated died or vanish along with the initiators. Programmes such as: the Green Revolution, Operation Feed the Nation, Back to Land, DFRRI, MAMSER, Better Life for Rural Women, Seven Points Agenda, Transformation Agenda, National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy

(NEEDS), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) Subsidy Reinvestment Programme (SURE-P) and the current scheme in Nigeria under President Buhari administration. The National Social Investment Programme (NSIP), National Cash Transfer Programme (NCTP) N-Power etc. All these programmes couldn't go beyond the initiators regime, every government in power initiates programmes with developmental objectives without establishment of continuity mechanism for sustainable development and economic growth in Nigeria. If most of these programmes were sustained, by now Nigeria could have be one of the G-20 of the world.

**8. Ambiguous Policy Statements:** The ambiguity and complexity of most public policies makes its objectives difficult to be ascertained by the citizenry. During the COVID-19 total lockdown in Nigeria, there were contradictory policy statements within the system. The federal government declared total lockdown of the country, where public offices and institutions were under lock and key, worship centers and market places were closed down, inter-state movements were restricted, but two governorship elections were conducted without observing the COVID-19 protocol. During this process, the citizenry see no reason of staying at home if government functionaries and politicians can move freely in the streets of towns and villages to canvas support from the restricted populace living in extreme hunger and destitution. The social distance policy was not in place during political rallies and conventions within the states. This is what can be regarded as policy somersaulting in Nigeria. The classification of state led to the societal apathy. Ambiguity in policy statements also entails a situation whereby a policy is double edge. At this stage there is no specification thereby creating apathy on the masses which is a sign of non-compliance and the policy lost its legitimacy.

**9. Over Ambitious Policy Goals:** Most Nigeria policies are rose-colored thereby giving great hope and expectations to the citizenry. Practical example of over ambitious policy goal is the ongoing "National Social Investment Programme" (NSIP) in Nigeria. The NSIP scheme consist of four major components include the "Job Creation and Youth Empowerment (N-Power), National Home Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP), National Cash Transfer Programme (NCTP), and Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP). One of the most captivating policy programme among the scheme is the N-Power.

Specifically, the N-Power is the employability and enhancement programme of the federal government of Nigeria, aimed at imbibing the learning work enterprise culture in youth between the age 18-34 (NSIP Document, 2018). The programme is designed for graduates and

non-graduates in the state. The graduate's category is further splinted into three units namely, the N-Teach, N-Health and N-Agro. The non-graduates unit is made up of N-Build Scheme which is geared towards equipping its beneficiaries with necessary and meaningful skills to be self-employed.

The question is, how effective is this public policy? Are the impact felt by the youths? Are there plain level grounds for this policy? Etc. There is no equal and optimum implementation of this policy throughout the Federation. The human factors that are mainly are corruption and parochial ethnicity never allows this policy to tackle the problem to which it was fashioned. The Nigerian youths are of great expectation with this policy, but observations, many youths continuously apply to be absorbed into the programme without positive outcome. The scheme is highly rose-coated to the extent that many graduate youths heartedly welcome the programme by personally venture into skills acquisition with the hope of getting government grant as take off. We witnessed that N-Teach version of the scheme have not been absorbed into the teaching as many them have returned to streets, private schools and community teachers in their various states. Even some of them are still demanding for their 3-6 months allowances after their batch expiration since 2019/2020. What a sweet blunted public policy scheme in Nigeria.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

COVID-19 is a global pandemic that caught all nations of the world unprepared and throw them off-balance. The interface between COVID-19 and public policy cannot be down played. Policy encompasses, among many others, the guide, instrument of control, allocation, distribution, re-distribution and regulation serves as means to different ends. This ends being the promotion and maintenance of health services; education; security; economic; peace and order; promotion and sustenance of good governance and the general welfare of the citizenry. The level of development and status of any given state is a consequence of the nature of public policy framework in existence. Therefore, the existence of blunt and unpopular public policies in a state can unavoidably plug the citizenry into pervasive sorrow, hopelessness and general attributes of underdeveloped state.

COVID-19 pandemic aborted almost all the administrative principles in most of the affected states of the world. Consultation of the orthodox institutions and determinants of public policies in these states were perverted. Rash decisions were taken which were in return

detrimental to the rights and lives of the citizenry. Health facilities and functionaries were worked out. Lives, properties and jobs were distorted due to unprecedented wave of the pandemic. Therefore, states must re-strategize, mobilize, stabilize and standardize for future occurrences.

The achievement of this feat is anchored on the sustainability of public policies. Sustainable public policies are state policies that are formulated and implemented for the total transformation of the state in all ramifications with the use of resources at the state disposal, thereby preserving the entire socio-economic, political, cultural and the eco-system for smooth existence of the future generations. With this, we recommended the existence of supportive and collaborative legislature, executive and judiciary that are substantially and sufficiently empowered to execute their statutory responsibilities. Our political functionaries need urgent re-orientation towards altruistic and patriotic dispensation of their civic responsibilities. In fact, the Nigerian political environment should be re-structured to eliminate ubiquitous power at the central government. Technological base courses should be encouraged at the foundational level of education in order to improve technological advancement which is one of the banes in fight against COVID-19 pandemic in our society.



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