ANALYSING THE INTERFACE BETWEEN BUREAUCRACY, INTEREST GROUPS, AND PUBLIC POLICYMAKING FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

Chinyeaka Justine Igbokwe-Ibeto

University of Johannesburg

E-mail: cibeto@uj.ac.za

ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9710-7802

─**Abstract**─

Introduction: Interest groups are major players in public policymaking processes, either within the legislature or the bureaucracy. They engage the tactics of lobbying and lobbyists to incorporate their interests into certain policies that help the advancement of their members and society at large. The effectiveness of interest groups' influence is diluted by several constraints, which range from structural and organisational to procedural and logistics.

Methodology: This article, which is theoretical in nature, utilised qualitative research methods and drew its arguments from secondary data, which included textbooks, journal publications, and Internet sources.

Results: This article argues that if interest groups are to explore and exploit democratic channels for their activities, they must ensure that democratic ethos are embedded in the running of their organisations.

Conclusion and Recommendations: It is concluded that unless interest groups practise democracy, they cannot champion or protect it. Perhaps the most salient challenge of interest groups in Africa is finance. In developing countries, funds are limited owing to the state of the economy. This has the potential of constraining their roles and autonomy. Bureaucrats should be proactive and deeply involved in consultations and bargaining with interest groups with a view to devising policies that will meet the expectations of their target groups in particular and society in general. At this critical juncture of Africa's developmental pursuit, this drastic and revolutionary step has become inevitable if Africa is to meet the demands of the 21st century in a globalised system.

1. INTRODUCTION

The popular saying that good policy is good politics is relevant to developing countries more than ever before. At a point when the continent of Africa is at a crossroad on how to join the league of developed societies, public policies hold the key to achieving good governance. Civil bureaucracy is the engine room for public policies (Akhakpe, 2014a:377). With the complexities of modern societies and the enormous demands placed on the executive branch of government, bureaucrats are increasingly being called upon to provide informed advice to the political executives in their effort to create sound policies and to also give effect to these policies by faithfully implementing them.

Experiences in policymaking show, however, that policymakers and implementers need input from interest groups in civil society to enable the government to develop policies that meet people's expectations and not just to fulfil the ritual of anticipating and predicting what the needs of the people are and ultimately developing policies that alienate people from their government. To give the people a sense of belonging in what the government does, the role of interest groups in policymaking must be cultivated. This endeavour will fast-track the process of development and help to produce a strong state that will be able to count on the legitimacy of the people to accept even unpopular measures in their interest, and bring about development (Akhakpe, 2014a:378).

This tradition has not been the norm in bureaucratic practices in public policymaking in Africa (Akhakpe, 2016:100; Dibie, 2014:233). Years of military rule in Africa have neglected to a large extent the participation of interest groups in development processes. There are, however, differences in the role of interest groups in two broad political systems. Under democratic rule, their activities are more pronounced and efficacious. Under an authoritarian political system, they may appear mute and sometimes go underground. At some point, some of these groups prefer to pursue their cause, not wanting to associate themselves with the "rogue" state. This perhaps explains why development was stultified under military rule for many decades in Africa. However, with the return to civil democratic rule, another chapter has been opened for interest groups to make their voices heard and to participate in public policymaking processes.

The objective of this article is to examine how bureaucracy embraces and cultivates the role of interest groups in the formulation and implementation of people-orientated policies that will uplift their material condition and place the continent of Africa on an irreversible path of development. It will also examine the challenges facing bureaucracy in this process and how interest groups themselves can maximise this opportunity to strengthen their bargaining power *vis-à-vis* the state.

For ease of analysis, the article is organised into five sections. The first dwells on the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of the study. The second discusses the nature and types of interest groups. The third explores the methods applied by interest groups in influencing policymaking processes both in the legislature and bureaucracy. Here, the exact ways they influence policymaking and their significance are discussed. The fourth analyses the challenges facing interest groups' actions and activities in a democratic setting. The fifth makes some prescriptions for making interest groups activities more robust, vibrant, and attractive with a view to improving the quality of public policies in a continent desirous of development. It ends with a summation of the high points of the article.

2. METHODOLOGY

This article, which is theoretical in nature, utilised qualitative research methods and drew its arguments from secondary data, which included textbooks, journal publications, and Internet sources.

3. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL INSIGHTS

The term "public policy" is enmeshed in conceptual confusion. Perhaps this is due to the many areas the term covers that makes sketching out its parameters a difficult exercise. In the broad view of the concept, Egonmwan (1991:76) points out that public policy "stands for various degrees of goal articulation and normative regulation of government activities; that is, what government intends to do or achieve (goals) and how it intends to do it (implementation)". Two schools of thought have emerged from this broad view of public policy. The first posits that public policy is what the government chooses to do or not to do (Akhakpe, 2016:99). This means that government action or inaction could constitute public policy. In some developing countries, contracts are awarded, the contractor is mobilised partly or wholly, yet the contract may not be executed (Igbokwe-Ibeto & Osakede, 2017:154). The second school of thought argues that public policy is not what the government chooses to do or not to do, but what it actually does (Akhakpe, 2016:99). The point, however, is that realists and idealists of public policy may

have their say but what matters in the final analysis is that the public interest should be served.

Interest groups are therefore organised bodies set up by like-minded people to pursue certain goals in their members' and society's interest (Akhakpe, 2014a:381; OECD, 2010; Dibie, 2007:6). Barett (2010) and Magstadt (2006:92) follow the same line of thought when they argue that interest groups do not seek direct control over the government, nor do they recruit, nominate, and elect public officials. Instead, they concentrate on influencing legislation, policies, and programmes in specific issue areas of special interest (Magstadt, 2006:94). Such subtle but democratic influence on policymakers is meant to improve the quality of public policy and prevent policymakers from pursuing their private interest that could negatively affect the citizens.

In order to understand the concept of good governance, it is imperative to first understand the meaning of governance. Governance as a concept has been defined as the use of power and authority by those in government to provide goods and services to the people in other to uphold the common good and fulfill the aspirations and needs of the common man (Anazodo, Igbokwe-Ibeto & Nkah, 2015:43). Governance, therefore, is concerned with power, strategies, policies, plans and projects that aim at improving the (welfare and well-being) quality of life. At the other hand, good governance implies enlightened citizenship as well as accountable and constitutional government (Anazodo, Igbokwe-Ibeto & Nkah, 2015:43).

Of the several theories that could be applied to this subject of investigation, the utilitarian theory appears more heuristic and appealing. The ultimate goal of public policy is to improve the material conditions of the people; in other words, to improve their welfare and wellbeing. However, humans are naturally egoistic and selfish, and if left to their own devices may continually pursue personal and group gains at the expense of the mass majority in the polity (Akhakpe, 2016:101). Therefore, any framework of analysis that concentrates on how to make the citizen enjoy life should prioritise the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

For Bentham (1987, in Akhakpe, 2014a:384), the principle of utility allows for consideration of the purpose of government, society, public policy, and social action against the background of facts as opposed to reliance on tradition that was the dominant practice prior to this intervention in the debate. The major thrust of the principle of utility is that an act is good or beneficial when it generates not just the happiness of the self or a few – as is the case in various political systems due to acts of political jobbers that have mounted the political saddle in Africa – but the

greatest happiness of the greatest number; that is, the happiness of the vast majority of the people (Lyons, 1965).

4. THE NATURE OF INTEREST GROUPS

In every political society, there is always a jostle for pre-eminence, wealth, and positions. This demands that there should be some form of control aimed at curtailing the egoistic desires of people that may rob others of their natural rights. In pursuance of this goal, for example, the government of the United States of America (USA) sought to enforce regulations designed to protect citizens from monopolies, abusive business practices, and other perceived economic injustices (Dye, 2011:126; Magstadt, 2006:108). This trend in public policy was strengthened during the Great Depression of the 1930s, when the government of the USA put forward programmes designed to prop up the economic security of the ordinary citizens in the areas of Medicare, training, and job programmes; expanded welfare programmes; supplemented unemployment; etc. (Adolino & Blake, 2011:109; Magstadt, 2006:108).

In highly classed societies like the USA where wealth, status, and education combine or work closely with political participation, the system remains open and public policy is the product of interest group influence and activities (Dibie, 2007:10; Magstadt, 2006:99). The incidence of policy failure in terms of its outcomes and impact could be traced to insufficient involvement of organised interest groups in its processes. It is only recently, however, that this element was brought into strong reckoning in the political system of African states. This is due to two related reasons. In the first place, unlike in Europe and North America, the state in Africa was imposed on society, which is why many people are still contesting the legitimacy of the legal-rational supra-national states in which they find themselves (Akhakpe, 2014a:386). Secondly, as a consequence of the former, interest groups in society occasionally cooperate with the state; otherwise, they prefer to stay isolated or conflate with it (Igbokwe-Ibeto, Ewuim, Anazodo & Osawe, 2014:6).

Consequently, while state policies come out with little input from informed groups, civil society on its part stands aloof, with passive involvement or participation in what the government is doing (Igbokwe-Ibeto et al., 2014:6). In many cases, this accounts for the poor performance of government policies (Akhakpe, 2014a:386).

5. TYPES OF INTEREST GROUPS

Perhaps one of the most popular classification schemes of interest groups distinguishes among four basic types. These, according to Akhakpe (2014a:386), are associational, non-associational, institutional, and anomic interest groups.

5.1. Associational interest groups

Associational interest groups are the most popular types based on their well-organised structures relative to others: branches and national secretariats, professional staff, fairly well-developed belief or values system, etc. Examples of this type of interest group include the Nigeria Medical Association, Nigerian Bar Association, Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), and the Academic Staff Union of the University (ASUU).

5.2. Institutional interest groups

Institutional interest groups are found within the government. Various ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) have groups unionised to press for certain interests. Although they are often out of public view, they have vested interests in government policies and programmes on which they exert influence in the interest of their members. For example, in Nigeria, the National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) has branches in all local government councils in the country, and their express mandate is to influence government policies and programmes in their members' interest.

5.3. Non-associational interest groups

Many of these groups have sprung up in recent times in Nigeria. They can be found among the numerous social, ethnic, religious, and cultural groups in every country. They can be said to have pre-dated the African states but became visible during the colonial era, particularly in the anti-colonial and independence struggles (Akhakpe, 2014a:368). They may not have strong formal structures staffed by professional personnel, but they play very fundamental roles in meeting the short- and long-term interests of their members. A number of political parties evolved from these types of interest groups.

5.4. Anomic interest groups

Anomic interest groups are formed spontaneously as individuals respond sporadically to frustration and disappointment. This group often expresses their dissatisfaction and disenchantment with violence. The reaction and actions of this group sometimes occur on the spur of the moment and fizzle out afterwards. Most

of the actions of this group lead to violence, albeit not limited thereto because some of them lack leadership and organisational quality. Several and diverse reasons may bring about anomic activities and the form they take may differ. For example, what would lead to demonstration in the Arab world may be given a mere mention in the news media on local radio in Africa. Much of the demonstrations and actions of anomic groups arise from citizens' pent-up anger and frustration regarding the failure of government policies and programmes to address the pressing concerns of significant segments of the populace (Stephen, 2012).

6. THE NEXUS BETWEEN BUREAUCRACY, INTEREST GROUPS, AND POLICYMAKING

In modern times, the largest organisations are government bureaucracies and their systems of public administration. Of importance in this regard are agencies whose members are in charge of implementing government policies. Elsewhere, the exponential growth in civil bureaucracies that is partly due to government efforts to improve healthcare delivery, create jobs, improve security of the population, and provide social welfare has been noted (Akhakpe, 2014a:388). Also, the growth in bureaucracies at the level of government may be caused by the tendency of what is called "Parkinson's disease" (Akhakpe, 2014a:388), which is a situation where bureaucracy acts like a cell and multiplies by reproducing itself into several parts. Thus, government agencies, once formed, seek to grow for their own sake. In most cases, this leads to the duplication of duties.

Under the presidential system of government is an executive arm of government that is headed by a political chief executive called the president. At the state or regional levels are the governors and at the municipal or local government levels are the local government chairpersons. They are the chief policymakers. Directly below them are a small number of top civil servants who are recruited and selected into the bureaucracies from universities. They form an elite corps with vast experience in policy advice and implementation. They enjoy permanency of office. As they watch governments come and go, they become increasingly important as policymakers, by virtue of the information they possess and their expertise and experience. Below the higher civil servants are a large group of public employees who cover varied fields of government activities. They are found in greater numbers in government agencies. The growth in the government sector has triggered high cost of governance, leaving little funds for infrastructural development (Igbokwe-Ibeto, 2019). Perhaps more worrisome is the increasing spate of inefficiency in service delivery, thereby heightening the pejorative view of the public service by the populace. However, this development has led to successive government efforts

to checkmate their activities through down-sizing or right-sizing, retrenchment, management contracts, etc. (Fatile & Igbokwe-Ibeto, 2012:16). It suffices to say that interest groups are of different kinds just as their methods of operation equally differ, depending on the type of government in power.

7. METHODS OF INTEREST GROUP ACTIVITIES

The techniques and methods interest groups apply in their activities will depend on several factors, such as the type of political system in operation in a given country, the level of decentralisation of political power, the resources at the disposal of the groups, membership size and commitment, discipline, and the organisation of the interest groups themselves.

Under a democratic system, interest groups seek to influence policymaking processes by influencing elected officials and public opinion at different levels of government (Marume, 2016). This is done through one or all of the following ways: by seeking access to elected public officeholders, by seeking the election of candidates who will be sympathetic to their cause, and/or by carrying out media campaigns (Akhakpe, 2014a:389). They may also engage the services of lobbyists to promote them or gain credibility and reputation in the perception of legislators (Akhakpe, 2014a:389). Lobbyists use their specialised knowledge and sometimes arrange for those who know specific legislators, or groups of them, to press their viewpoints on given issues (OECD, 2010). They also explore and exploit modern information and communications technology to carry out campaigns on particular policy issues. They could also coordinate and work in cooperation with like minds on similar legislative matters. Besides this, they may organise parties or charity events to bring lobbyists and legislators in closer communication where they can press their interests. All these engagements of lobbyists with legislators may be possible in advanced democracies where political structures and institutions have endured over time and space. However, in new democracies, such as in Asia and Africa, old traditional patterns of interaction might still be dominant.

8. LIMITATIONS TO INTEREST GROUPS' INFLUENCE

Several factors may constrain the ability of interest groups to influence public policymaking. Some of these challenges include membership size, absence of similar interest groups that can pursue the same or specific and keenly felt issues, availability of funds, level of personal networks and political contacts, support for political parties, and leadership abilities. These factors are briefly explained below.

Interest groups can be differentiated mostly by the size of their membership. Some interest groups are small in size, although this may have little to do with their effectiveness. For example, in Nigeria, the one-time influential Kaduna mafia in the days of military rule was numerically small and restricted, at the zenith of its power, to the northern part of the country. On a general note, the larger the size and the better the organisation of an interest group, the more influential it is likely to be.

Where an interest group dominates a specific and keenly felt area, it will most likely be effective (Akhakpe, 2014a:389). On some policy issues, there are no counter-interest groups that push the same issues. This gives room for the sole interest group in an area to specialise and to develop knowledge that would be useful in shaping specific public policy for the advancement of their members and government policy (Akhakpe, 2014a:389). In Africa, however, such divisions of labour and specialisation are hardly cultivated among interest groups (Akhakpe, 2014a:389). Instead, many interest groups mushroom without experience and expertise in an area of policy.

Money or financial strength is an indispensable ingredient for the success of any organisation, and interest groups are no exception. Apart from the day-to-day running of the organisation, interest groups require funds to engage lobbyists and to carry out political and media campaigns. Where there is no deep conviction by the members, and lack of goals and/or financial muscle to shoulder their responsibilities, such as payment of take-off dues, such an organisation is likely to rely heavily on funds from a few members and from those in the diaspora, with severe implications for internal democracy and autonomy in the organisation. Several inchoate interest groups in developing countries belong to this category.

To meet their interest, interest groups could support a political party and some candidates to gain political power through the ballot box, with the hope that when they ascend to power, they would support their views and positions on specific public policies. In some cases, they may support one or more parties so that any one that emerges victorious will support their interests whenever such interest comes up for consideration in the legislative or executive branch of government.

9. SIGNIFICANCE OF INTEREST AGGREGATION TO PUBLIC POLICYMAKING AND IMPLEMENTATION

In an established democracy with a mature political culture, interest aggregation is very important in policy initiation, formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Through interest aggregation, the desires and demands of citizens are reduced to a few policy options. Policies that reach this stage are very important because they

must have been cited to become matters for political consideration. Policies that do not have the support of interest groups are seldom implemented because they need the citizens' acceptance. In electoral democracies, this may not, however, be the case. This is the case in political formation where the citizens are politically passive.

Another important point to note about interest aggregation is that the pattern of differences in the political culture of a country is often carried over to the policymaking body. In a consensual society, the national assembly is likely to be made up of moderate parties, such as in Germany. In this type of situation, the policymaking style of the legislators will be more consensual. In Nigeria, where the dominant political culture leans towards ethno-religious cleavages, policy debate and decisions are coloured by such divisions. For example, the Child Rights Act that was deliberated on in 2013 took the pattern of ethnic and religious divide as voting on the issue was carried out along these lines.

Interest groups' influence is very much felt in policy formulations and helps to improve the quality of any policy made (Marume, 2016). A government cannot act as if it has no citizens for too long, nor can it fully rely on the legislators who, after winning elections, hardly connect with the citizens to know what they want at any given point in time. Interest groups help to bring the government closer to the people by making available to policymakers vital information that can help the final outcome of a policy. This role is particularly crucial in a developing continent like Africa where economic planning and welfare state activities are often important national policies. In this regard, interest groups are vital instruments. The role and influence of interest group are also extended to policy execution processes. The government cannot be everywhere at the same time. It needs the citizens through interest group platforms to get policies and programmes to them. This becomes expedient because "the crisis that today's national leaders must carry as well as the developmental goals they set for themselves and others would be close to failure, if they attempt to function without such groups" (LaPalombara, 1974, in Akhakpe, 2014a:341).

As an important factor in policymaking and implementation processes, interest groups affect issues like national identity, legitimacy, penetration, and participation (Akhakpe, 2014a:341). In the same way, they can aid policymaking and penetration. Their presence or practice can also aid or vitiate national integration (Igbokwe-Ibeto & Osakede, 2017:152). In Africa, these processes are very fluid. On the one hand, interest groups can aid national integration, while on the other hand, they can become agents of destabilisation. With ethno-religious revivalism on the ascendency in the Africa, many observers and concerned Africans fear that

these developments may spell doom for Africa. Insurgency and all kinds of social vices have become a thorn in the flesh of the national and state governments in areas affected by their operations. One can imagine the dividends the African countries can reap if these same energies are carried into national integration programmes. In developing countries, they are more or less incipient and their roles are marginal. These could be explained by a number of factors. The section that follows attempts some generalisations on the constraints facing them in developing countries in particular and liberal democracy in general.

10. CHALLENGES CONFRONTING INTEREST GROUPS IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

Interest groups hardly go in search of members who will value their organisations for what they stand for and ultimately see their values as sacrosanct. Before long, their members begin to reify them as if they have life of their own. Apart from the more established associational groups that draw their members from the local, state, and federal governments' institutions, others are more or less tailored or portfolio interest groups without broad-based membership structures. This affects their ability to mobilise political support to advance their members' interests.

Closely related to the above point is the presence of democratic deficits in most interest groups. Again, this is not unrelated to the weak structures and organisational bases of some of them. These organisations are sometimes administered as a "one-man show". Decision making is exclusive rather than inclusive while the rights of members and staff are trampled on with impunity (Akhakpe, 2014a:342). As clientele or "parental" groups, they need internal democracy to be able to advertise themselves to the legislators and policymakers within the bureaucracy. Jumping onto the train of whatever is in vogue in the politico-economic terrain does not make these organisations strong; rather, they become incipient or inchoate (Akhakpe, 2014a:342). This is perhaps the case because most interest groups lack ideological platforms on which they can operate. Failure to carve a niche for themselves means that they face pressure from groups with similar ideas and focus. Operating in the same areas of concern with many other groups may render them weak. Interest groups are likely to be more effective if they concentrate on a given policy area that has gained recognition from policymakers in the bureaucracy and legislature.

Furthermore, most interest groups in developing countries lack autonomy. Many of them deliberately seek government patronage, which renders their actions and activities compromised *ab initio*. It weakens their strategies for influencing public policy, which renders them ineffective and beggarly (Akhakpe, 2014b:96). Where

they are not handicapped by the government, they fall under the tutelage and supervision of some foreign donor agencies. Since "he who pays the piper dictates the tune", these interest groups can hardly stand their grounds on national policy issues.

Funding is a major challenge to interest groups in Africa. Since the membership base is weak, take-off dues constitute a negligible portion of their funds (Akhakpe, 2014b:96). Some of them are wholly financed by their owner(s)/founder(s), while others with international wings receive financial support from their members in the diaspora. Others solicit funds from foreign donors. Any of these avenues cannot constitute stable sources of funds for these organisations. Funding hinders interest groups from taking a firm stand on issues of central concern to them because they want to please their benefactors, who may have different agendas or viewpoints to pursue.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE WAY FORWARD

Interest groups' influence on public policymaking is more appreciated in robust and vibrant democratic systems. Africa is still relatively new in the practice of liberal democracy and needs time to consolidate it, and for the citizenry to learn and perfect its norms and core values (Igbokwe-Ibeto & Osawe, 2013:12; Igbokwe-Ibeto et al., 2014:6). As democracy matures or endures, interest groups will also master the act of practising their trade. Military and authoritarian rules, which dominated greater parts of the post-independent years in most African countries, did not avail them this opportunity (Igbokwe-Ibeto et al., 2014:10). The current democratic wave in Africa presents an auspicious opportunity for the voice of the people to be heard and informed policymaking to be carried out.

There is the need for interest groups to have financial autonomy so that they can boldly carry out their roles without compromise or intimidation from the powers that be, either within or outside the country. While it may not be possible for interest groups to shut their doors to aid from individuals and/or organisations within and outside their country of operation, such funds should be properly investigated and screened to ensure that there are no untoward conditions attached to them. It is doubtful that funds from dues paid by their members will comprise a sizeable proportion of the total monies they need to function properly. Even the present economic downturn in most African countries may further dim the possibility of this source of funds constituting a substantial proportion of the resources of interest groups. Yet, it is imperative that they have a steady source of funds for their operations for them to make any appreciable impact on public policymaking.

The infighting in some interest groups can be narrowed down to lack of internal democracy in these organisations (Akhakpe, 2016:99). Interest groups must therefore be good advertisers of what they want to sell by making democracy their watchword in all their activities and dealings with stakeholders in the policymaking process. Democracy must be seen in the selection of their leaders and other strategic officials in the organisation. More often than not, "sit-tight" leaders tend to dominate these organisations, making citizens question their democratic credentials. All these must change if they are to be meaningful in the scheme of things.

12. MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The implication of the findings of this theoretical article which analysed how bureaucracy can embrace and cultivate the role of interest groups in public policy formulation and implementation that will uplift the well-being and welfare of Africans and place the continent of Africa on the path of development is that, lack of proper synergy between bureaucracy and interest groups create room for lack of fit between policy formulation, implementation and people's choice, thereby making government policies and programmes unproductive and at the same time inhibiting national development. Empirical evidence appears to support the view that synergy between management and interest groups in policy making can influence the quality of policy outputs (Igbokwe-Ibeto & Osakede, 2017; Akhakpe, 2014b). Organizations interested in the growth and development should involve interest groups in decision making process. Therefore, the immediate priority for policy makers and public sector managers in Africa is to re-examine the reliability and validity of traditional public administration theories still in use.

13. CONCLUSION

The concept of bureaucracy, interest groups and public policymaking have been examined with an attempt at clarifying the nexus between bureaucracy, interest groups and public policymaking for good governance in Africa. In addition, searchlight was also beamed on the theoretical framework for a better understanding of the issues under analysis. Thus, the utilitarian theory underpinning the work has also been examined.

This article has demonstrated how bureaucracy can embraces and cultivates the role of interest groups in the formulation and implementation of people-orientated policies that will uplift their material condition and place the continent of Africa on an irreversible path of development. Yet, it also identified the challenges facing

bureaucracy in this process and how interest groups themselves can maximise this opportunity to strengthen their bargaining power vis-à-vis the state.

This article therefore argues that, bureaucratic leadership holds the key to unlocking the doors of development in African countries. The technical knowledge, experience, and expertise of the civil service were expected to bring these qualities to bear on the making and implementation of public policies. However, unless interest groups practise democracy, they cannot champion or protect it. Bureaucrats should be proactive and deeply involved in consultations and bargaining with interest groups with a view to devising policies that will meet the expectations of their target groups in particular and society in general. At this critical juncture of Africa's developmental pursuit, this drastic and revolutionary step has become inevitable if Africa is to meet the demands of the 21st century.

14. SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Synergy between bureaucrats and interest groups in the policy making process must be recognized as one of the critical and vital elements that contribute towards good policy formulation and implementation. The African public sector is faced with the challenges of poor policy formulation and implementation. It is instructive to note that though researchers in the western countries have carried out researches in these areas, however, it was observed in the course of our literature review that little or no research has been carried out in these areas in the non-western countries. The present study may serve as a drive and template for upcoming researchers and scholars alike to undertake further research to validate or invalidate the claims of the western scholars as regards the effects of interest groups on sustainable development.

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