



NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP NUANCES OF NIGERIAN EXAMINATION BODIES: THE MAGGOT-INFECTED FISH PHENOMENON

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of new public management on the leadership nuances of Nigerian examination bodies. The main aim was to ascertain whether or not the influence exists and empirically verify its significance or otherwise. Quantitative and correlational research design using cross-sectional survey was adopted. The study population was 120 respondents obtained from JAMB offices in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State and Port Harcourt, Rivers State all in Nigeria. Krejcie and Morgan's sample size determination formula was applied to deduce 92 respondents which constituted the sampling frame selected using a purposeful non-probabilistic sampling technique. The validity of the research instrument was established on the basis of face and content approaches subject to exploratory and confirmatory tests of sample adequacy. The reliability was ($\alpha \geq 0.70$) being acceptable threshold in line with Nunnally's benchmark. The primary data obtained by means of structured questionnaire were analysed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient. The findings showed that all the four hypotheses were both positive and significant in their interactions. Based on these findings, it was concluded that new public management has positive and significant influence on leadership nuances of JAMB. Therefore, it was recommended that the management team of JAMB should adopt new public management to provide leadership at all the JAMB offices in the study. Moreover, further study of other branches of JAMB, other examination bodies and public sectors of the Nigerian economy can be replicated.

Keywords:

Maggot-infected fish syndrome, apotheoses, demi-gods, world economic forum, new public management, leadership nuances, bureaucracy



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1.1 Introduction

The Nigerian examination bodies were established by the government to provide quality public goods and render quality services to the general public unhindered. Mailafia (2016) states that “it all boils down to the question of the state and its capacity to deliver those collective public goods the political philosophers since John Locke have identified as the central role of government.” The examination bodies as agencies of the Federal Ministry of Education have their fair share of bureaucracy. Max Weber (1864 – 1920) originated the concept of bureaucracy which characteristic features include: division of labour, clear hierarchy of authority, impersonality, career development based on merit, set rules and procedures as well as documentation (Schermerhorn, 2010; Sapru, 2013; Islam, 2015). These Weberian bureaucratic principles were deliberately intended to assist MDAs to function efficiently and effectively to deliver quality public goods, achieve high performance and make the respective institutions strong (Islam, 2015). On the contrary in Nigerian clime, it is the individual elements in the institutions that are strong as they aggrandise themselves as ‘apotheoses or demi-gods’ thus leading, as it were, to the weakening of the foundations of the affected institutions, Barack Obama (2009) cited in (Anonymous, 2014). Ibanichuka (2022) corroborates that “the most disturbing aspect is that these individuals/corporate entities, in most cases, always got away with their loot because of failed systems, weak institutions and inadequate procedures in place to hold them accountable.” The Global Competitiveness Index (2016) ranked Nigeria 125th out of 137th in respect of the state of its institution. Given this scenario and experience, the fundamental question becomes: have the MDAs and parastatals live up to the tall billing and expectations of the general public?

Practical experience over the past several decades since Nigeria’s independence in 1960 has shown patently that it is a sad anecdote, tales of woos and decadence spanning political, economic, religious, educational and socio-cultural spheres including technological retardation and backwardness. Incidentally, the self-inflicted greed and maniac craze for economic and financial aggrandisement have introduced nuances that shape and colour the leadership of public institutions in Nigeria. These leadership nuances have sadly been elevated to a nauseating height and to the extent of even being considered to be a “norm” (Ajie & Wokekoro, 2012). In simple and plain language, this norm has to do with bribery, corruption and large scaled-looting of public treasury either in efforts to conduct transactions in Nigerian public institutions or provision of public services in certain capacities (Ejiofor, 1987; Hughes, 2003; Ekpe, 2012; Lulu-Briggs, 2020). In the same vein, Oni (2016) identifies corruption as untreatable virus that has impeded smooth implementation of public policy and cited the case of 23-billion-naira pension embezzled by a middle-level civil servant to buttress the assertion. Sadly, Nigeria ranked 12.4% on corruption on the most problematic factor index of the World Economic Forum’s Executive Survey published in the 2017- 2018 edition of its bulletin.

The seriousness of this malaise had triggered the collapse of key institutions and parastatals of government such as Nigerian National Shipping Line, National Fertilizer Company of Nigeria (NAFCON) and Nigerian Airways including Nigerian Railways that are being revamped since the immediate past through the current administrations in Nigeria. This perhaps explains why Akande (2019) raises the question thus: “what sort of man would unethically enrich himself and in the process sentence millions to a slow and painful death from abject poverty?” The answer to this innocuous question points directly to the leadership nuances witnessed in Nigeria generally and public institutions as well. The inefficiencies in most MDAs which leadership nuances breed are regrettably monumental compared only to the Department of Energy in United States of America responsible for nuclear waste disposal which U.S., congress described as the most inefficient organisation in the federal government because producing results seems to be an alien concept in the establishment (Griffen, 2005). An aviation analyst, Goody Ike (2022) in a television interaction on high cost of

aviation fuel called Jet A1 anchored by Osadolor and Omaryo (2022) stated that the operations of Nigerian Ministry of Aviation were fraught with so much inefficiency. This resonates with what Ejiofor (1987) stated that the “common description of the overall standard of performance of Nigerian economy is ‘inefficiency’.”

Leadership ideally ought to be a process of which an individual creates a vision, points the direction, influences, inspires, motivates others and shapes their behaviours towards the achievement of common set of goals and/or objectives as reflected and spelt out in the vision statement. Leadership could be effective or otherwise. For instance, the leadership of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) under the watch of Prof. Ishaq Oloyede, operated in a prudent and profitably viable manner as a large sum of money (N36 Billion) was remitted to government coffers in 2017 as against N50 Million remitted between 1978 when JAMB was established and 2016 (Oyero, 2017). But depending on how the nuances of leadership are manipulated and pursued, the leadership can assume any dimension short of being effective. Again, the cases of JAMB’s branch offices in Kano, Edo, Kogi, Gombe and Plateau readily come to the fore as huge amount of money or public fund totaling N83 Million was missing and in a bizarre manner, N36 Million was reportedly swallowed by snakes at Makurdi office of the examination body (Oyero, 2017; Aluko, 2018). A quandary of problems exists in the way public institutions are run as conflicts arising from pursuit of selfish interests weaken the entire system because individuals refuse to act sacrificially in ways that benefit the overall system unless they have incentives to satisfy themselves in some ways overt or covert (Reeves et al., 2016). Were most of the heads of public institutions to operate as the head of JAMB had done, most of these institutions would have remained strong, viable and able to serve the primary purpose for which they were created. Incidentally, the leadership of these MDAs and parastatals have allowed selfish interests more than public good to define, shape, drive and propel their official conducts and actions most of the times culminating unfortunately in the collapse and untimely decline of these otherwise valuable public-oriented institutions.

In other words, the leadership conundrum of the institutions tends to suffer from what this author opt to describe as maggot-infected fish syndrome –a phenomenon that is antithetical to the rationale behind the conception, creation and existential relevance of the public institutions. The quest for solutions to the problems of public institutions has informed the need for either partial or whole privatisation or commercialisation of the affected public enterprises (Awujo, 1996; Islam, 2015). Currently however, there is an ongoing debate on the gains of privatisation of 234 agencies in line with decree no. 25 of 1988 between Nigerian Labour Congress and Director-General of Bureau for Public Enterprises, a strong call for the audit of the privatised agencies has been made by Fashola (2021) reported in (Akowe, 2021; Awujo, 1996). The measures of leadership nuances are varied in extant literature. Tummers and Knies (2014) give the surrogates of new public leadership as consisting of accountability leadership, lawfulness leadership, ethical leadership, political loyal leadership and network governance leadership. Mohanty, Begum and Kar (2016) identify vision, articulation, rational intelligence, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence as proxies of leadership nuances. However, the author is inclined to adapt two of these measures notably: vision and spiritual intelligence (Mohanty et al., 2016) to measure and operationalise leadership nuances in this study.

Given the critical importance of public institutions vis-à-vis the challenges of competition, globalisation and technological change, a new public management of these vital institutions becomes inevitable and critically needed within the purview of sound public sector management. According to Sapru (2013), the new public management “represents a set of ideas, values and practices aimed at emulating private sector practices in the public sector.” In other words, the new public management is

viewed as an approach that seeks to leverage and adapt best practices in the private sector for the benefits of public institutions. As a paradigm shift, the new public management prioritises public interest premised on quality service delivery to the citizens as value for payment of taxes and all of which, aimed at overhauling, reinventing and repositioning the public services to justify their establishment as vibrant, accountable and responsible institutions (Sapru, 2013). The new public management is synonymous with terms like managerialism, market-based public administration, entrepreneurial government and post-bureaucratic model, Pollitt (1990), Lan and Rosenbloom (1992), Osborne and Gaebler (1992) and Barzelay (1992) all of which cited in (Islam, 2015). On one hand, Sapru (2013) identifies the dimensions of new public management as productivity and managerialism. On the other hand, Islam (2015) enumerates dimensions of new public management to include: transformation, production performance, professional management, target-based performance, output controls, disaggregation or unbundling of public sector units, contracts and tendering, private-sector management style and discipline and parsimony in the use of public resources. However in this empirical investigation, private-sector management style and discipline in resource use would be used to operationalise new public management. Overall, this study sought to probe empirically the influence of new public management on leadership nuances as reflected in their dimensions and measures respectively.

The main aim of the study was to examine the influence of new public management on leadership nuances of Nigerian examination bodies: the maggot-infected fish phenomenon. The specific objectives included to: investigate the influence of private-sector management style on vision of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria. Examine the effect of private-sector management style on spiritual intelligence of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria. Probe the relationship of discipline in resource use on vision of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria. Examine the influence of discipline in resource use on spiritual intelligence of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria. In order to pursue the stated objectives, the following pertinent research questions were raised: how could private-sector management style influence the vision of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria? How does private-sector management style affect the spiritual intelligence of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria? What effect does discipline in the resource use has on the vision of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria? How does discipline in the resource use affect the spiritual intelligence of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria?

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide and provide tentative answers to the research questions in the study: Ho₁: There is no significant influence of private-sector management style on the vision of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria. Ho₂: There is no significant effect of private-sector management style on the spiritual intelligence of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria. Ho₃: There is no significant effect of discipline in resource use on the vision of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria. Ho₄: There is no significant influence of discipline in resource use on the spiritual intelligence of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria. The outcome of this study would be significant and yield triple benefits in terms of pointing the better way to run and manage examination bodies as public institutions to justify the reason for their establishments, enrich the literature of public sector management in terms of its contributions to knowledge and

suggestion of area(s) for further research(es) and provide current source to refresh managers of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in particular and interested members of the public and practitioners generally in the area of the management of public institutions generally for the benefit of the institutional members and the public at large.

The scope of study comprised the content scope focused on the baseline theories, the independent and dependent variables including their dimensions and measures. The geographical scope covered Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States, Nigeria as select public institutions in education sector of the economy. The unit of analysis scope was macro-level with senior cadre of staff as sampling units. The overall structure of the paper consisted of six (6) distinct and yet, related sections notably: section one, the introduction; section two, literature review; section three, the methodology; section four, results and discussion; section five, the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations and section six, limitations of the study as well as possible contribution to knowledge and area (s) of further study.

2.1 Literature Review

The review of related literature in the study revolved around the baseline theory in which the study was grounded, the predictor and criterion variables including their dimensions and measures as orchestrated in the conceptual schema used in this study.

2.1.1 Theoretical Framework

The baseline theories which could underpin this work include five related theories notably: leader-member exchange theory, transformational leadership theory, agency theory, transactional cost economics theory and public choice theory (Giauque, 2003; Northouse, 2010; Barney, Corte, Sciarrelli & Arikan, 2012). However, transformational theory was used to anchor this work.

Transformational Leadership Theory

The notion of transformational leadership theory is product of the path-goal theory of Robert House which relates to transactional theory and the term transformational was coined by Downton in 1973 (Schermerhorn, 2010; Northouse, 2010; Baffour-Awuah & Agyei, 2020). However, it was made popular by a political sociologist, James McGregor Burns in 1978 (Burns, 1978; Baffour-Awuah & Agyei, 2020). Transformational leadership ignites change driven by high enthusiasm and inspiration to which subordinates look up (Schermerhorn, 2010). Transformational leadership theory stipulates the need for organisational leaders to hold tenaciously to corporate vision, be charismatic in approach to issues, heralds symbolism in celebrating great or heroic achievements, remains a source of intellectual stimulation and above all, be of high integrity and above board (Schermerhorn, 2010). These attributes constitute, in sum, the four dimensions of transformational leadership notably: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulations and individualised consideration which are also identified with path-goal theory (Baffour-Awuah & Agyei, 2020; Chu & Lai, 2011). Transformational leaders use psychological or higher-order needs such as esteem and self-actualisation to motivate their followers (Mbaegbu & Obadan, 2013). Transformational leadership leverages the motives of the subordinates to accomplish set goals of both the leaders and subordinates (Northouse, 2010). The transformational leadership theory resonates with the idea of new public management aimed at curbing the menace of recurrence poor performance of public institutions in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

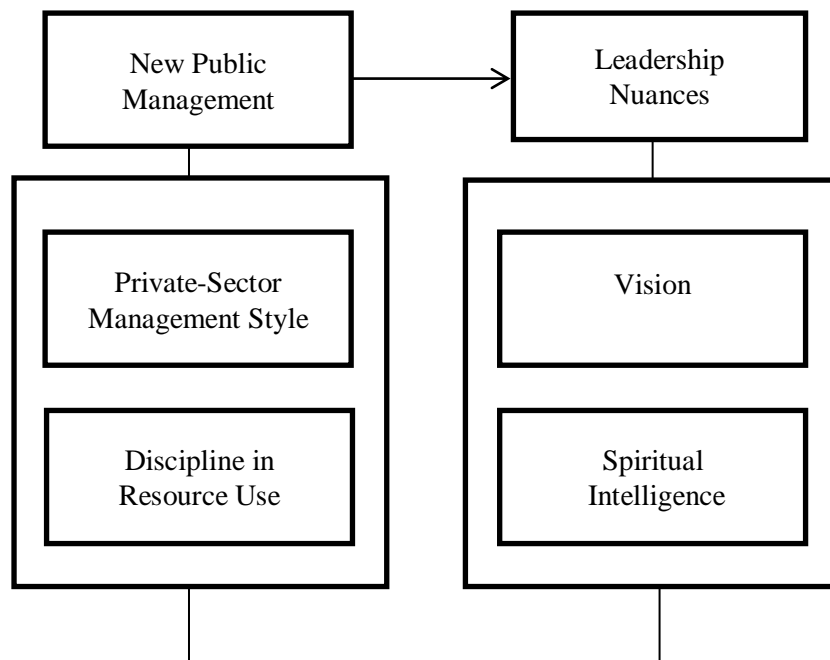


Figure 2.1:Conceptual framework of new public management and leadership nuances. The maggot-infected-fish phenomenon of Nigeria public institutions.

Source: Researcher’s conceptualisation based on dimensions adapted from Islam (2015) and measures adapted from Mohanty *et al.*, (2016).

2.1.2 Conceptual Framework

The discourse on the elements of the conceptual framework in this study focuses on new public management, private-sector management style, discipline in resource use, leadership nuances, vision, spiritual intelligence and the nexus of new public management and leadership nuances as severally elucidated below:

New Public Management

The new public management like many other concepts in management lacks a precise definition. Giauque, (2003) states all the same that discourse on new public management in extant literature is predominantly shaped and driven by its sterling characteristic features. However, Sapru (2013) states that the new public management “represents a set of ideas, values and practices aimed at emulating private sector practices in the public sector.” In other words, the new public management is viewed as an approach that seeks to leverage and adapt best practices in the private sector for the benefits of public institutions. The new public management represents a critical departure from the way and manner public administration has hitherto been carried out. The term public sand-witched between new and management to form new public management is etymologically rooted in the Latin word ‘publicus’ literally meaning people(Britannica, n.d). The public sector administration covers the whole gamut of government bureaucracy comprising many ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) including parastatals and corporations. It has onerous responsibility to conceive, formulate, mid-wife and implement, as it were, the policies and programmes of government at all times. Most of

the times and from practical evidences, the public administration does not perform well and live up to its responsibilities for several reasons.

Saliently, these reasons range from the political consideration and convenience to patronages associated with the selection of candidates who head and run the MDAs. The mission to achieve the mandates of the sitting government amid the web of set of rules and procedures including unwieldy stereotypes leaves little or no room for personal initiatives, discretion and freedom to maneuver certain situations as obtainable in the private sector (Thompson, 1993; Goodsell, 1994; Rainey & Bozeman, 2000; Giauque, 2003). This state of affairs leads unfortunately to what this author describes as “maggot-infected fish phenomenon” which is antithetical to genuine desires and aspirations to achieve all-round socio-economic and political developments in the country. This scenario informs the need for a paradigm shift to the new public management approach as a panacea more or less to administrative malaise of the public-sector administration. The merits of the new public management include: innovative private-sector management style driven by visionary leadership, discipline in the use of scarce public funds and resources and target-based performance which encourages ownership mind-set, accountability and result-oriented practice (Mohanty *et al*, 2016).

The demerits of the new public management as pointed out in the extant literature are that it is more suited for developed OECD countries than the developing countries (Mongkol, 2011). The salient reasons for this disparity include environmental contexts which vary in developing countries, lack of the requisite expertise, managerial capacity and resources, adoption of centralised as against decentralised approach to decision making and frequent abuse of due process in contract management and lack of performance-based technique among others needed to successfully implement the new public management (Bowornwathana, 1995; Christensen & Laegreid, 1998; Bale & Dale, 1998; Turner & Hulme, 1997; Manning, 2001; Huges, 2003; Mongkol, 2011). Fundamental however to argument on the adaptation of the new public management model to developing countries, of which Nigeria is one, is the challenge of successful implementation of the model in developing countries more than anything else. Again, the use of one or two cases of failure may not justify discontinuation of application of the model in some other developing countries which may produce positive results contrary to report in the extant literature.

Private-Sector Management Style

The public sector of which, Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) is a part, is administration-oriented. The term ‘private’ with private-sector is hyphenated and originated from the Latin word ‘privatus’ (Kabalarian Philosophy, 2022). The administration-orientated approach emphasises more of fidelity to procedures which tends to negate or rather sacrifice effectiveness on the altar of efficiency and strict observance of laid down rules and procedures (Sapru, 2013). It is important to highlight the difference between effectiveness and efficiency which are terms associated with Benis and Nanus (Nkuda, 2019). Consequently, the exercise of discretion and initiatives at critical moments to handle important issues especially when time is essence are, to a large extent, immaterial and as such, dispensable. How can one imagine a situation where a huge amount of money (scarce resources) is left in the office to either get missing or be allegedly swallowed by snake in the 21st century?

Contracts for execution of critical projects are abandoned, mobilisation fees squandered or embezzled, illegal charges at computer-based training centres used for the conduct of JAMB examinations charged to the innocent students with impunity or reckless abandon and bureaucratic delays in

movement of files or files outrightly hidden to exact pecuniary benefits from owners of such files especially contractors. All these anomalies or grave infractions occur because there is near total absence of strict compliance with and observance of due checks and control as well as lack of accountability systems. Where however the systems exist, the enforcement is either weak, perfunctory or selective which is symptomatic of endemic corruption in the operational fabric of the institution. The private-management style which thrives on the model of management by objectives (MBO) originated by Peter F. Drucker in 1954 explains in part why the private sector performs comparatively better than the public sector of the economy in our clime under the same operational context in the face of prevailing domestic and international environmental vagaries. The private-sector management style applies, among other tools, target-based performance which creates ownership mind-set and accountability for results and overall performance (Islam, 2015).

Discipline in Resource Use

The notion of discipline in resource use is not unconnected with the need to imbibe the consciousness that prudence should be exercised in the disbursement of public fund. It is a well-known fact that resources, from strictly economic standpoint, are scarce. To appropriate their utility maximally, requires that the resources be put to productive and prudent use at all times. Sadly, most public institutions to which Joint Admission and Matriculation Board belong are not noted for prudence in the use of available scarce resources. Exercise of discipline in the use of scarce resources does not assume a priority of place in the agenda and scheme of things in the public institutions. As a result, monumental waste and unethical practices such as sleaze become the order of the day engendering in the process retrogression in the national development efforts all-round. The former Inspector General of Police, Michael Mbama Okiro (2022) in a television interaction on workers' day anchored by Obaze (2022) submitted that some workers even work against the policy thrust of government to feather their nest. Oni (2016) patently corroborated this fact and described corruption which works against government policy as untreatable virus.

It also smacks off the fact the heads of the MDAs are not doing the right things to achieve the set goals as specified and enunciated in the policy thrust of the government. The anomaly pervades the individual public institutions JAMB inclusive triggering, as it were, maggot-infected fish syndrome. The traditional administrative approach to running public institutions is largely to blame as the command-and-rule style cripples initiative, exercise of discretion and slaughters accountability on the altar of compliance with set rules and procedures which, most times, do not serve the public good. The need to introduce new public management becomes urgent as it dove-tails from the developed countries since 1980s to the developing nations (Islam, 2015). The NPM approach encourages competition and choice which define application of micro-economics techniques and tools to quality service delivery in the public institutions. The tenet of managerialism which also drives NPM makes public managers accountable for action and results within their purview and sphere of influence to help cure this public malfeasance (Sapru, 2013; Islam, 2015).

Leadership Nuances

Researches conducted over the past several decades have provided definitions of leadership from different view-points among which are trait, skill, style, situation, contingency and path-goal. Leadership ideally ought to be a process of which an individual creates a vision, points the direction, influences, inspires, motivates others and shapes their behaviours towards the achievement of common set of goals and/or objectives as reflected and spelt out in the vision statement. Northouse

(2010) states that leadership is the process of which an individual influences the behaviours of others to achieve a common set of goals. Leadership can be viewed as a process of creating a vision founded on a common set of goals towards the realisation of which an individual courts and rallies organisational members' efforts in a given context (Nkuda, 2016). Yet, Wehrich, Cannice and Koontz (2013) view leadership as the "art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals. Salient deductions from the different definitions indicate that leadership as a process involves the leader, followers, goals, context and some forms of inducement to achieve set goals. Underlying the concept of leadership is issue of its effectiveness. Blake and Mouton (1984) cited in Sapru (2013) identify dimensions of excellent leadership in their managerial grid to be total concern for people and tasks represented by the matrix (9, 9) otherwise known as effective team management.

Leadership becomes nuanced when the ideals of leadership are abused and manipulated to achieve selfish goals at the expense of the nominated corporate goals as articulated in the vision and mission statements of the business organisation or public institution as the case may be. The public administration approach to leadership to deliver public goods and services has not fared well in Nigerian clime. Notably, self-interest overrides public interest; tardiness in service delivery replaces efficiency, corruption looms large like a colossus in place of probity, white elephant and abandoned projects litter the landscape to the total discomfort and disadvantage of the populace for whom they were conceived but partially executed, the public servants and bureaucrats across board who should be servants of the people become lords of the manor etcetera (Giauque, 2003; Islam, 2015; Sapru, 2013). These obnoxious occurrences are indictment of leadership which has lost its true meaning and essence and thus, becomes nuanced. The Holy Scripture holds that "it is the sick that need the doctor and not the healthy" (Matt. 9:12; Mark 2: 17; Luke 5: 31). This implies in emphatic terms that leadership of public institutions in Nigeria needs a major surgical treatment and therapy. This provides the fertile ground and *raison d'être* to look out for a paradigm shift of which the new public management is considered to be the possible remedy (Islam, 2015; Sapru, 2013).

Vision

Vision portrays or paints the image of the future which an organisation strives to create for itself in the long term (Nkuda, 2019). Gupta, Gollakota and Srinivasan (2009) corroborates that vision describes the broad category of long-term intentions that the organisation wishes to pursue. Vision, unlike mission which responds to changes in the operating environment, endures and provides strategic direction for a business organisation or institution even though it may sometimes be difficult to realise it in the long run. Vision needs to be concise and crispy reflecting only the shared vision of key stakeholders to be effective (Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson, 2013). The top management reserves the right to craft the vision of the business organisation or institution to reflect both the internal and external realities of the concerned organisation or institution and ensure that the shared vision so articulated is strategically communicated to critical organisational members across board (Islam, 2015; Nkuda, 2021). Anonymous (2022) corroborates "go big on meaning: inspire your employees with vision, set challenging goals, and pump up their confidence so they believe they can win." The top management which crafts the vision must necessarily be consistent and ensure that their practical actions are conformable to prescribed standards, best practices and benchmarking. The attainment of the vision invariably implies, in practical terms, the accomplishment of the specific contents of the mission statement (Nkuda, 2019).

Spiritual Intelligence

Business organisations and public institutions have goals which they are set to accomplish within certain time frames. The achievement of the specific goals will remain elusive without harnessing and prudently deploying the available scarce resources. Key among these resources is human capital resources (Hitt et al., 2013; Grant, 2008). The stock of human capital resource drives and shapes the trajectory to achieve the set goals vis-à-vis operating environmental contexts and thus, launders the corporate reputation of the public institutions or business organisations in the eyes of the respective publics which they serve. This implies that the pool of the human capital should be made up of people of value, ethics and sound spiritual background and orientation. This takes up the concept of spiritual intelligence introduced by Zonar and Marshall in 2000 (Mohanty et al., 2016; Zonar & Marshall, 2000). Spiritual intelligence was preceded by rational intelligence or intelligence quotient (IQ) in early 20th century followed in the mid-1990s by the concept of emotional intelligence by Daniel Coleman (Minchekar, 2020). A straightforward definition of spiritual intelligence is not common in the extant literature. Emmons (2000) defines spiritual intelligence as “the adaptive use of spiritual information to facilitate everyday problem solving and goal attainment.” However, to this author, spiritual intelligence can be viewed as the disposition of individuals to allow their thoughts, minds and practical actions to be wholly influenced and guided by spiritual sensitivity to do the right things at all times.

The near lack of spiritual intelligence explains why workplace spirituality has become of late a key area which has witnessed a surge in scientific researches (Kale & Shrivastava, 2003; Mohanty et al., 2016). The need to internalise and institute spiritual intelligence in the workplaces perhaps account for the habit of beginning most corporate meetings and daily operations including, in some cases, political meetings and rallies with prayers in many workplaces in Nigerian clime. It is possible that when spiritual intelligence permeates and embeds the fabric of the workforce, it tends to insure the concerned business organisation or public institution against unethical conducts and malpractices bordering on corruption which negatively impact the corporate bottom line. Spiritual intelligence makes business organisations or public institutions amenable to continually learn to develop more creative ways and systems to foster the operations and all-round development of the organisations or public institutions concerned. The spiritual exposure and well-being of the workforce in the workplaces creates conducive environments for the overall operations of the institutions and business organisations concerned.

Nexus of New Public Management and Leadership Nuances

Leadership, like the sheep and the shepherd, requires followership. In the context of group undertaking, purposeful leadership is very important and cannot be over-emphasised to explain the dynamics of change and continuity (Viloria & Iglesias, 2011). It is often when the true meaning of leadership is altered and manipulated to serve selfish and ulterior motives of bureaucrats and their task-masters who specify policy directions that leadership becomes nuanced. When this anomaly occurs, compromise sets in and achievement of set institutional goals becomes difficult necessitating a new approach. This development therefore explains the desirability of the new public management to help tackle the shortcomings and weaknesses of the traditional administrative practices (Sapru, 2013). The hallmark of the new public management entails the adaptation of private-sector management techniques into the public sector to better performance via purposeful reforms (Giauque, 2003; Sapru, 2013). Specifically, the new public management insists on managerialism, productivity, performance-based targets and accountability for results using key performance indices (KPIs) etc. The presidential committee set up in 2011 by Goodluck Jonathan’s regime on restructuring and rationalisation of federal

government parastatals, commissions and agencies headed by Mr. Steve Orosanye recommended among others that the size of Nigerian civil service be reduced through scrapping, merger of related ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) and making some autonomous (Saleh, 2021). The committee's report submitted in 2012 and white paper published in 2014 resonated or evinced somewhat the idea of new public management. Incidentally, the report was not given much push as ministers at federal level and commissioners at state levels not only engaged in lobbying to halt implementation but also raised the issues of lack of the powers to control prompt release of budgeted funds and to recruit staff with skills-set to enable them deliver on their set targets (Abah, 2019). This scenario only indicated lack of commitment and faith to make the NPM to work. Regardless however, this study seeks to examine the influence of new public management on the leadership nuances of Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) from empirical standpoint.

Empirical Review

Matthew, Rajam and Nair (2021) investigated "leadership style and work engagement: A comparison of private and public sector firms in India." Descriptive correlation design was adopted. Respondents of 240 managers drawn from both private and public sectors on proportional basis represented the sampling frame for the study. Structured questionnaire was used to obtain data from the respondents and statistical analysis was carried out using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings showed that dominant leadership styles were not significantly different in both public and private sectors. In terms of engagement, the findings further showed that private-sector employees were comparatively more engaged than their counterparts in the public sector and leadership style appeared to be significantly correlated with levels of engagement only in the public sector firms.

Tan, Chin, Seyal, Yeow and Tan (n.d), examined the "the relationship between spiritual intelligence and transformational leadership style among student leaders" in Malaysia. Correlational design and cross-sectional survey were adopted. There were 200 respondents from whom primary data were obtained using structured questionnaire. Analysis was done using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The result of findings showed that a correlation existed between spiritual intelligence and transformational leadership style of student leaders in the area of study.

Nduka et al. (2019) investigated "workplace discipline and organizational effectiveness: Evidence from Abia State Polytechnic, Aba." A survey design was used in the study. The population of respondents was 250 out of which some sample respondents of 238 (95.2%) was drawn using purposive sampling procedure. Data analytical techniques included descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient. The results showed that unfair management practices, lack of adequate supervision and nepotism in handling critical issues accounted for indiscipline in the institution.

Gera et al. (2020), studied "human resource development and spiritual intelligence: An investigation amongst management students in Delhi, NCR." The study aimed at ascertaining the relationship between spiritual intelligence and its relative impact on students' academic performance." Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analysed. Spiritual intelligence was measured using spiritual intelligence self-report inventory (SISRI) developed by David B. King in 2008. The findings showed that spiritual quotient factors were not only present in Indian context, but also spiritual intelligence significantly correlated with academic performance in terms of critical existential thinking (CET) and personal meaning production (PMP).

3.1 Methodology

Going by Friedrich Shelling (n.d) cited in Dunleavy (2003) that “all rules for study are summed up in this one: learn only in order to create”, this study adopted a correlational and quantitative research design using cross-sectional survey as the study sought to empirically determine the influence of the predictor’s variable on the criterion’s variable (Creswell, 2009; McNabb, 2012). As a macro-level study, the study population covered 37 States in Nigeria including Federal Capital Territory, Abuja out of which a random sampling technique was used to select JAMB offices in Akwa Ibom and Rivers States. The respondents comprised 92 senior staff from the ranks of supervisor and above determined using Krejcie and Morgan’s sample determination table (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970; Kenpro, 2012) out of 120 numerical strength of senior staff category. The sampling units or respondents were selected using the purposeful non-probabilistic sampling techniques (McNabb, 2012). Primary data for analysis were obtained after face and content validation through structured questionnaire graduated on 5-point Likert’s scale (Creswell, 2009). The empirical indicators for both the predictor variable (New public management) and criterion variable (Leadership nuances) were adopted from extant literature (Giauque, 2003; Hughes, 2003; Islam, 2015; Mohanty et al., 2016). The reliability of the instrument was obtained using Cronbach’s alpha (α) ≥ 0.70 in line with the threshold or benchmark specified by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). A total of 92 copies of questionnaire were distributed using Bowley’s (1964) proportional formula cited in (Dike & Onwuka, 2015) out of which 85 copies (representing 92.4 % response rate) were retrieved and after scrutiny and cleaning, 80 copies were used in the study. The Pearson’s product moment correlation co-efficient (PPMCC) was used to analyse the data with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

4.1 Results and Discussion

The finding of hypothesis one showed that there is significant influence of private sector management styles on the vision of joint Admission and matriculation board in Akwa Ibom states and River States. The result shows that private sector management styles are effective in predicting the vision of joint Admission and matriculation board in Akwa Ibom states and River States. The finding was negated the work of Matthew, Rajam and Nair (2021) whose findings showed that dominant leadership styles were not significantly different in both public and private sectors but supported in terms of engagement and further showed that private-sector employees were comparatively more engaged than their counterparts in the public sector and leadership style appeared to be significantly correlated with levels of engagement only in the public sector firms.

Consequently, the finding of hypothesis two indicated that private sector management styles have significant effect on spiritual intelligence of Joint Admission and Matriculation Board in Akwa Ibom and River states. This finding is supported by the work of Gera et al. (2020) whose findings showed that spiritual quotient factors were not only present in Indian context, but also spiritual intelligence significantly correlated with academic performance in terms of critical existential thinking (CET) and personal meaning production (PMP). The finding is in Agreement the work of Hitt et al., (2013) who maintain that achievement of the specific goals will remain elusive without harnessing and prudently deploying the available scarce resources. Key among these resources is human capital resources. The stock of human capital resource drives and shapes the trajectory to achieve the set goals vis-à-vis operating environmental contexts and thus, launders the corporate reputation of the public institutions or business organisations in the eyes of the respective publics which they serve. This implies that the pool of the human capital should be made up of people of value, ethics and sound spiritual background and orientation.

In the same vein, the finding of hypothesis three indicated that discipline in resource use has significant effect on the vision of joint Admission and matriculation Board in Akwa Ibom and River states. It shows that the result is effective in predicting the symbiotic link between discipline in resource use and vision of Joint Admission and Matriculation Board in Akwa Ibom and River States. The finding is in agreement with the work of Obaze (2022) who opined that the notion of discipline in resource use is not unconnected with the need to imbibe the consciousness that prudence should be exercised in the disbursement of public fund. It is a well-known fact that resources, from strictly economic standpoint, are scarce. To appropriate their utility maximally, requires that the resources be put to productive and prudent use at all time. It also collaborates the work of Nkuda (2021) who states that the top management reserves the right to craft the vision of the business organisation or institution to reflect both the internal and external realities of the concerned organisation or institution and ensure that the shared vision so articulated is strategically communicated to critical organisational members across board.

The finding of hypothesis four revealed that discipline in resource use has significant influence on the spiritual intelligence of Joint Admission and Matriculation Board in Akwa Ibom and River states. The result clearly revealed that the interaction between discipline in resource use and spiritual intelligence statistically influence the success of an organization. This finding is supported by the opinion of Islam (2015) who maintains that the need to introduce new public management becomes urgent as it dovetails from the developed countries since 1980s to the developing nations. The NPM approach encourages competition and choice which define application of micro-economics techniques and tools to quality service delivery in the public institutions. The tenet of managerialism which also drives NPM makes public managers accountable for action and results within their purview and sphere of influence to help cure this public malfeasance.

5.1 Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

The synopsis of the statistical analyses showed that private-sector management style and discipline in resource use as dimensions of new public management have significant influence on vision and spiritual intelligence with which leadership nuances were measured. The logical conclusion was that new public management has significantly and tremendously affected leadership nuances of Nigerian examination bodies which, in some cases, have been plagued by maggot-infected fish phenomenon. On the strengths of the findings and conclusion, it was recommended that the management of Nigerian examination bodies such as Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) should adapt and adopt new public management approach in the conduct of the affairs of the examination bodies in Akwa Ibom and Rivers State to enhance overall efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the examination bodies.

6.1 Limitations of the Study

There are more than one examination body in Nigeria. But this study focused on just one of them which, to an extent, is a limitation. Cross-sectional survey approach was adopted whereas longitudinal approach could also be applied. Access to obtain primary was not so easy because of the wrong perceptions of institutions and respondents in relation to any form of investigation its academic nature notwithstanding.

7.1 Competing Interest

The author notes that there is no competing interest in part or whole in this study.

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