

**Public Service and Democracy in Developing Societies:
The Nigerian Experience**

Bonnie Ayodele and Kehinde Bolaji*

Department of Political Science, University of Ado Ekiti, Nigeria

Telephone: 234-8038475573, 234-8028301895, E-mail: bonnieayodele@yahoo.com

**Public Policy Analyst, Julius and Julius Associates, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria*

KEYWORDS Public service; democracy; developing societies; efficiency

ABSTRACT The public service remains very critical and crucial to national development and democratic stability in developing societies. While years of military rule and authoritarian regimes in most developing societies have impacted negative political culture on the character and philosophy of the service, yet, its roles in national development cannot be undervalued. However, since military regimes and other authoritarian regimes have lost their appeal in modern government the need to reform public service to be in tune with democratic values becomes highly imperative. There is no gainsaying that the public service plays critical role in galvanising the nation and its resources to development. An efficient public service acts as catalyst in the development of nations. While on the other hand, its inefficiency can constitute as one of the heaviest millstones round the neck of developing nations. Therefore, it is important to note that the public service must be efficient to service the newly found democratic project for stability and survival of the polity. Since it is the vehicle and machinery of public policy formulation and implementation, the service has a very critical role to play. It is also worthy to note that democracy with its attractive valves will enhance the workings of the public service and redefine, re-orientate and reposition it to be more effective, mobile and productive partner in national reconstruction agenda. Public service must be a partner in reform driving which is imperative for democratic survival. This paper therefore intends to examine the symbolic and complementary roles of public service and democracy in developing societies especially a transiting society from authoritarian rule to democracy.