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**INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF POLICY  
ANALYSIS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES  
with special reference to Nigeria**

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## CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: THE THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES1.1 Introduction

This study is a micro exercise in policy science. Essentially, its central purpose is to investigate the prospects and problems of institutionalizing policy analysis and research for policy improvement in developing countries with special focus on Nigeria.<sup>1</sup>

1.2 The Problem

Public policy-making is an important phenomenon for every socio-political system of the world. As a synonym for decision-making, public policy-making is characterized by uncertainty and complexity. The complex character of policy-making is succinctly brought out in Lindblom's definition: 'Policy-making is an extremely complex analytical and political process to which there is no beginning or end, and the boundaries of which are most uncertain. Somehow, a complex set of forces that we call 'policy-making' all taken together produces effects called policies' (Lindblom, 1968: 122). Also the uncertain and complex nature of policy-making is underlined in Dror's characterization of policy-making as 'fuzzy or extreme gambling' (Dror, 1983b).

However, the complex and uncertain nature of public policy-making is in many ways, a reflection of the complexity of modern society and the difficulty of governance. The above authoritative characterization of public policy-making as a complex and uncertain process or as 'fuzzy or extreme gambling' implicitly and logically call for the need for policy-making to be studied, researched, analysed and improved.

The need for the improvement of policy-making is the broad problem of this study, and this brings us to the subject of public policy analysis as a corollary to policy-making. In order to handle the uncertainties of policy-making effectively and improve it for the benefit of mankind, policy analysis is necessary. For Dunn, 'policy analysis is an applied social science discipline which uses multiple methods of inquiry and argument to produce and transform policy-relevant information that may be utilized in political settings to resolve policy problems' (Dunn, 1981: 35). Kent (1971) sees policy analysis as a 'kind of systematic, disciplined, analytical, scholarly, creative study whose primary motivation is to produce well-supported recommendations for action dealing with concrete political problems'. In

effect, the purpose of policy analysis is to provide policy-makers with creative study or information necessary to improve the transparency of the decision situation. Nevertheless, the underlying assumption or implication of the above definitions of policy analysis is that it is not an easy task.

Policy analysis, in one form or the other, is as old as the business of governance. What is relatively new about it is its modern and scientific approach, including its institutionalization. The traditional approach to public policy decisions in many countries revolve mainly (if not exclusively) around the executive arm of government in which policy analysis work is done by the political executive (politicians) and especially the non-political executive (the bureaucracy). While political partisanship or bias is the usual glaring antithesis of the analytical work of the political executive, bureaucratic policy analysis suffers from the inadequacies of bureaucracy - which in many countries lack the professional or specialized knowledge necessary for thorough, scientific analysis of information for improved policy-making. Besides, the conservative functional environment of public bureaucracy and the traditional public view or stereotype of its functional characteristics (like rigidity of rules, red-tapism, inefficiency, lack of innovation, unresponsiveness to public needs and other derogatory terms) in many countries undermine the institution and contributes in some way to its incapacity to collect and process data-based information necessary for improving the quality of policy-making. In addition, the pre-occupation of public bureaucracy with policy implementation hardly permits its full engagement in scientific consideration of a broad set of policy issues with the aid of systematic analytic tools for the improvement of public decision-making, even where it is professionally competent of that.

With the historical development of democracy in Europe and North America, and even in some Third World countries, the various legislative arms of governments or parliaments began to have some involvement in policy analysis (especially, policy evaluation) to varying degrees. While salutary progress has been recorded in parliamentary policy analysis, especially in the United States and few other developed politics since the Second World War, effectiveness in this regard is often hampered by hot politics and political partisanship.

Thus, new approaches to policy analysis became necessary for the improvement of policy-making. The awareness of the need, and the search for new approaches to policy-making and policy analysis assumed more serious

dimensions in many countries after the Second World War. In this connection, much emphasis was generally placed on the awareness, need and means of inserting more concretely the academic social science (or social scientific tool of inquiry) and other professionalism into the policy-making process. This resulted in the evolution of the following institutional approaches to policy research and analysis, first in a number of developed countries, and lately in some Third World countries: Public Commissions of Inquiry, inter-university policy research organizations, policy research/analysis units of political parties, planning commissions, semi-autonomous and autonomous think-tanks and policy analysis units near government or under governmental auspices.

Each of these institutional approaches to policy research and analysis are characterized by certain merits and limitations. Public Commissions of Inquiry are ad hoc institutions - judicial or administrative - used mainly for the investigation and analysis of the performance of existing policies and for the generation of judgmental opinion (or recommendations) for future policy improvement. The Commission of Inquiry approach is often effective for policy evaluation because of its usual limited problem - focus and judicial process. Also, the findings of this approach are often objective in some countries, barring politics, because of the usual open-nature of its information-gathering techniques. The negative aspect of the use of Public Commissions of Inquiry as policy analysis approach is rooted in their lack of strength for social science procedure or inter-disciplinary methodological sophistication, lack of cumulative experience as well as lack of autonomy in problem formulation (Dror, 1984a).

The main advantage of academic or semi-academic approach - academic (policy) research institutions or inter-university policy research organizations - is that, by their nature and orientation, they are better equipped intellectually to seek empirical rigour, and more competent professionally in the use of social scientific tools of inquiry for the analysis of policy problems. Independent thought and research freedom appears to be more guaranteed in the university system or academic research institutes than any other pattern of policy analysis or research organization. An obvious defect of this organizational form is that, practically speaking, research institutes and universities are detached from the every-day policy process and are often politically distrusted in decision-making arenas, especially in the Third World.

Institutionalization of policy analysis as a unit inside political party bureaucracy may tend to be a less artificial approach vis-à-vis practical policy-making for a ruling party and may in fact enhance the readiness of decision-makers to consult professional policy analysts on the payroll of the party and accept genuine scientific analysis. On the other hand, the political party approach is characterized by the tendency of partisanship, whereby such a unit is often linked to party ideologies - a situation which could result in little or no research freedom, thus rendering analytical work unscientific and its findings questionable.

While the approach of planning commissions to policy research and analysis (especially economic analysis of development plans/policies) - otherwise called policy planning - has proved effective in some countries, optimal results in this regard are usually hampered by the tendency for very little regard for a multi-disciplinary method of analysis and over-concentration on economic and quantitative probability analysis, which alone cannot adequately probe and predict policy problems. Although it is a generally recognized aid to policy-making, planning could be nothing but a gambling activity in the face of uncertainty (Dror, 1986d).

A special and distinguishing feature of policy analysis units is that they are located functionally under or near the heads of governments 'to provide holistic and innovative analysis as an aid to top-level decision-making' (Dror, 1986a: 281). The main advantage of this pattern of institutionalization of policy analysis is that its very location near or under the heart of government or the 'central minds of government' (to use Dror's term) decreases the chance or problem of superficial or artificial analysis, and by implication enhances the depth of policy analysis. This is not only because of the readiness with which the central minds of government would want to identify with a unit which is supposedly part of its office, but also because the necessary information for in-depth analysis of policy problems could more easily be trusted with such a unit. Besides, policy analysis units located right in the heart of the government are probably more capable of analyzing, at short notice, current policy problems and urgent issues which always dominate the business of governance.

On the other hand, such pattern of institutionalization could be disadvantageous if the pressures of work common in the offices of the central minds of government prevent deep scientific analysis of issues, thus creating the problem of superficiality and shallowness of policy analysis work. Also,

there is the likelihood of such a pattern of institutionalization degenerating easily into a ready tool in the hands of government for promoting an ideology and one-sided view on policy problems. Under such circumstances, limited innovativeness and absence of research and analytical freedom would be very glaring.

The think-tank is a more advanced pattern of institutionalization of policy research/analysis than the policy analysis unit. Pioneered in the United States about forty years ago by the Brookings Institution and the Rand Corporation (Dror, 1984a), the main distinguishing feature of the think-tank is that it is either a completely independent or partially independent advisory organization located outside the government or near the government with a separate board of governors or governing council mainly tackling long-range policy problems. The main advantage of this approach of institutionalization lies in the fact that it could easily defeat or overcome some of the very limitations of the policy analysis unit as mentioned above, by virtue of its independent or semi-independent status. However, this pattern of institutionalization (by virtue of its location outside the government and its relative independence), unlike the policy analysis unit, is characterized by a tendency to isolation from the practical decision-making process; a characteristic which could render it irrelevant to the policy-making process. The isolation of the independent think-tank could take the form of information - starvation or distrust and constant rejection of its advice by the government.

In the light of the general patterns of institutionalization of policy research and analysis discussed above, one could describe institutionalization of policy research and analysis (at least in the context of this study) simply as the institutionalization of bodies of specialists, scientists or professional policy analysts inside or outside government departments or agencies for the purpose of advising government on policy problems based on policy-oriented research. Institutionalization in this sense is a twentieth century development in policy analysis which started perhaps in the United States and is spreading to other public policy-making systems of the world, including the developing countries.

It is important to clarify the distinction between policy research and policy analysis - the two terms we have so far been using synonymously. Strictly speaking, they are not synonymous. The difference between the two can adequately be explained by the nature or type of institutions which engage

in, or fall under them. Universities, inter-university policy research institutes and (to some extent) planning commissions are policy research organizations and their work is expected to influence on-going policy-making indirectly, generally and in the long run. On the other hand, think-tanks, Public Commissions of Inquiry and policy analysis units are general examples of policy analysis organizations expected to work on specific current policy options and directly influence on-going policy-making. However, the distinction between policy research and policy analysis or policy research organizations and policy analysis organizations cannot be a water-tight one. For one thing, both are basically advisory systems. For another, it is difficult to imagine any policy analysis work which has no element of research work or vice versa.

To a certain extent, the different approaches of institutionalization of policy research/analysis discussed above appear to contradict each other. But the different approaches strive to achieve a common purpose: to strengthen policy analysis capability for improved decision-making. However, for our purpose in this paper we shall concentrate on only two approaches: policy analysis units located near the central minds of government, and think-tanks or quasi think-tanks. While in fact many countries combine the different patterns of institutionalization discussed above, the processes of policy analysis units and think-tanks are apparently more compatible with the theoretical raison d'être of institutionalization of policy analysis (as will be highlighted soon); hence most models of institutionalization are derived from the two broad approaches. But the optimal choice among these and other approaches depends on the specific features of a policy-making system.

The need and urge for better policy-making and policy analysis is greater in developing countries where policy-makers are confronted with immense and protracted problems of underdevelopment. Thus, some developing countries have recently been making efforts to institutionalize policy analysis on the basis of the afore-mentioned patterns and/or models borrowed from one developed country or the other. Such relatively recent development in policy analysis in some developing countries, in their quest to improve the business of public policy-making, needs empirical investigation and analysis. Such investigation is our chief concern in this study.

With the aid of relevant theories, and using the developing nations' policy-making culture or scene in general and that of Nigeria in particular, the study will seek empirical answers to the following questions: How

feasible are policy analysis institutions in developing countries? What pattern or model of institutionalization is optimal or best suited for the policy-making scene of developing countries? Why? How? What are the real and potential limitations as well as the prospects of such an optimal model?

Essentially, our main aim in the present study is to present some description and analysis of certain advisory institutions based on the two broad approaches (policy analysis unit and think-thank), while touching on the limitations of other approaches in relation to the need and particular situation of developing countries, with the ultimate aim of locating the optimal choice of institutionalization pattern for them.

As this study will concentrate on Nigeria, the best known policy advisory organization in the country - the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Study (NIPSS) will serve as the specific focus of our investigation: its location and organizational processes, the scope of its activities, its research facilities, its relationship with decision-makers and public bureaucracy, its past and current problems, its feasibility prospects, etc. The experience of the case institution will, hopefully, support our analysis and recommendation in respect of the appropriate model of institutionalization of policy analysis for developing countries.

### 1.3 Theory of Institutionalization of Policy Research and Analysis

The theoretical foundation and justification for the establishment of policy analysis institutions is rooted in Professor Yehezkel Dror's model of optimal policy-making. According to Dror, 'Optimal policy-making requires systematic thinking that is based on knowledge and oriented toward innovation on medium- and long-range policy issues. Not enough of such thinking can generally take place in action-oriented organizations because of both the pressure of acute problems and the way that a pragmatic organizational climate, based on experience and oriented toward executing policies, depresses innovation. Establishing special organizations that are charged with taking a fresh look at basic policy issues is a necessary step toward approximating optimality in policy-making' (Dror, 1983: 261). This implies that policy analysis or policy-oriented research is a difficult task which requires some degree of de-bureaucratization in order to be effective for improving public policy-making.

The primary context of Dror's optimal model of policy-making is that if the structure and process of a policy-making system are wrong or inadequate, any substantive policy therefore is most likely to be defective. In effect, the

theoretical foundation and justification of policy analysis institutions in Dror's optimal model is rooted in his explication of certain requisites of improved policy-making. In it he suggests, among other things, the institutionalization of important aspects of policy-making through relevant structures such as special units, which specifically and periodically evaluate policy and redesign policy-making structures, as well as special units in charge of long-range thinking on policy-making, and research and development on policy problems. Dror's normative theory in this regard is relevant as our major perspective of analysis in this study.

In a nutshell, under the optimal model of policy-making analysis units or institutions should be charged with the important task of collecting, processing and analyzing information on policy problems and making it salient for use by policy makers. And in so doing, policy analysis institutions should maintain a certain level of structural and social distance from other units of policy-making so as to perform optimally (Dror, 1983a).

The theory of institutionalization of policy analysis would cover precise and functional features of policy analysis institutions, especially in respect of size, composition, financing, relationship with client, support services, location and methodology of research. Dror (1971a) theoretically specifies some of the functional features required of policy research and analysis organizations, viz.:

- that they should be oriented towards policy improvement, especially longer range policy problems with the aid of policy sciences;
- that the staff composition should be interdisciplinary: comprising mainly behavioural and management scientists, but having some few analysts with a professional background in physical sciences, history, philosophy and law, as well as a number of experienced practical policy-makers;
- that the minimum critical mass required is twenty to twenty-five highly qualified multi-disciplinary professionals on a full time basis. Part-time researchers and consultants can be added to the full-time staff;
- that staff analysts should do policy research work for four to five years, and then move to another organization (e.g. university or policy implementation organization) for some years and, may later return if they wish to a policy-oriented research organization or unit;



- that administrative facilities should be readily available;
- that the relationship between the policy researcher or analyst and policy-maker should be confidential in order to (i) enhance access to policy information, (ii) educate the policy analyst and policy-maker, and (iii) permit easy communication of research results;
- that there should be research freedom;
- that enough time should be available for policy research endeavour; also, a budgetary or financial security is a necessity;
- that organizational climate should be conducive for policy-oriented research or analysis by way of staff training, encouragement of frank criticism, uninhibited creativity, etc.;
- that policy research and analysis should be purely science-based.  
(Dror, 1971a: 90-94)

On the question of the optimal location of policy research/analysis organizations, Dror suggests that they should be located outside the policy-making structures and outside the university structures, but preferably located in non-profit entity or government corporations with independent governing boards. The reasons adduced for the inappropriateness of the location of such a unit or organization inside policy-making structures like the government or the bureaucracy are, in the words of Dror: 'the pressure of current problems, propensity to satisfy, incremental changes tendencies, practicality and pragmatism, the resistance to abstract thinking, and a variety of protective tendencies (such as post-decisional dissonance reduction, uncertainty avoidance, and ambiguity repression)'. In the same vein, Dror adduces the following reasons for the unsuitability of the university environment for institutionalizing policy research/analysis: '.. the tight compartmental structure, which inhibits inter-disciplinary and even multi-disciplinary endeavours; the distance from policy-making reality, which inhibits policy-relevant research; traditions of academic scholarship on the lines of the paradigms of normal sciences, which contradict the particular requirements of policy sciences and research rules; patterns and incentive structures for academic staff, which reward scientific conservatism and penalize innovation; tendencies to oscillate between olympic detachment from current issues and personal involvement of the 'petition-signing' type, both of which undermine possibilities for the particular contributions to better policy-making which characterize policy sciences research; ... the necessity to devote all one's time to teaching and, at the same time, inhibitive effects

of mass student pressures on the intellectual detachment required for high quality policy sciences research' (Dror, 1971a: 95-96).

Reinforcing and slightly amending his earlier theory of institutionalization of policy research and analysis, Dror (1980, 1984a, 1984b, 1986a) briefly outlines the features and potentials of pure think-tank as opposed to policy analysis unit near the central minds of government. Most policy analysts and commentators usually commonly characterize or group all types of policy analysis or advisory institutions as think-tanks. Dror thinks otherwise (Dror, 1980, 1984a, 1986a are relevant). We earlier attempted an explanation of some of the important distinctions.

Dror conceives think-tank as 'an island of excellence applying full-time inter-disciplinary scientific thinking to the in-depth improvement of policy-making, or as a bridge between power and knowledge' (Dror, 1980: 141). For him, pure think-tank should be characterized by the following principal features in order to operate at optimal level.

1. Critical mass of at least twenty to thirty highly qualified staff from a variety of disciplines, putting a considerable amount of time into team study of some momentous policy issues.
2. Functional autonomy in reformulating policy issues and questioning conventional thinking on policy matters.
3. Research freedom, especially in designing, re-designing and evaluating policy options. Research freedom also covers freedom of methodological pursuit and freedom of presentation of findings.
4. Direct and unhindered channels to top-level decision-making - the central minds of government (head of government, the cabinet, key ministers, etc.) (Dror, 1984b, 1986: 285).

However, Dror (1980) notes that a practical and necessary feature of think-tanks which contradicts research freedom is the reliance on clients for information, money, access, feedback, and the rather subtle one, the interaction of think-tank staff with policy-makers and the exchange of ideas, without which good policy-oriented work is impossible. In Dror's reasoning therefore, clientele-dependency, though necessary, is a contradiction of research freedom and an inhibition of optimal utilization of the think-tank. He concludes: 'Optimally a mixture of clientele-financing and independent financing is desirable. Total dependence on clients inhibits in-depth and innovative research, even with the most enlightened clients... But total financial dependence may encourage too olympian an attitude, over-detached

from reality and over-isolated from implementation and impact considerations' (Dror, 1980: 150).

Also, Dror sees certain outputs such as written analytical reports, oral briefings on various aspects of policy problems and the training of professional policy thinkers and analysts as one of the think-tanks' features. Thus, think-tanks' impact can be measured with these outputs. Their impact on bureaucracies can also be employed as a yardstick for the evaluation of the former, according to Dror. The very value of think-tanks, he says, is dysfunctional for both politics and bureaucracies. Therefore, a somewhat permanent power struggle exists between them (Dror, 1980).

As we stated earlier, most of the theoretical features of think-tanks are also applicable to policy analysis units near or under the heads of government and other central minds of governments, even though the former is a much more advanced type of institutionalization of policy analysis. Among the important distinctions which Dror (1984b, 1986a) highlights, however, (and which may have some implication for our discussion on the feasibility of institutionalization of policy analysis in developing countries later in this study) is that a policy analysis unit near the central minds of government enjoys closer and better access to the client and a more practical confidential relationship with the client; and the main function of the policy analysis unit as opposed to the pure think-tank is that it is expected to be involved almost exclusively in the professional analysis and evaluation of the very current decision issues, concentrating mostly on the more critical issues.

#### 1.4 The limitations of Institutionalization of Policy Research and Analysis

In spite of the seemingly excellent supportive case as well as the theoretical justification for institutionalizing policy research/analysis, there are certain strong arguments against it.

If we recall William Dunn's definition of policy analysis as 'an applied social science discipline which uses multiple methods of inquiry and argument to produce and transform policy-relevant information that may be utilized in political settings to resolve policy problems', we would safely conclude that institutionalization of policy analysis is simply the institutionalization of a social science discipline or social scientific inquiry for aiding and improving the business of public policy-making. But the usefulness of

professional social scientific inquiry or the actual impact of policy analysis on the policy process has been questioned even by some social scientists.

For example, Lindblom and Cohen (1979) argue that professional social scientific inquiry cannot and should not play a central role in the policy-making process. For them, the solution to many policy problems could be provided without special analysis or research. They conclude that while policy-oriented research may sometimes be helpful to policy-makers, it is not an optimal or privileged source of good policy-making knowledge. A more radical view is expressed by Moore (1983); he argues that social science and policy process (and policy analysis) are fundamentally different, and also notes the ambivalent relationship between policy-makers and social scientists - a relationship sustained by the former's need or demand for simple, practical, relevant advice and the latter's concern or preoccupation with empirical rigour and the protection of scientific virtue. Moore concludes that 'social sciences (as social science) should seek arm's length relationship to the government' if they are to maintain their claims of special access to truth and/or 'insist on their right to pursue lines of inquiry regardless of the political implications' (Moore, 1983: 288).

In fact, a relatively recent review by Glaser, et al. (1983) reveals that many other social scientists share a similar or closer view to Moore by emphasizing the distance between social science and practical policy analysis on one hand, and on the other hand by insisting that social science research (and therefore policy science) had an indirect, slight impact and insignificant usefulness to practical policy problems (and therefore good policy-making). Although other social scientists (notably Pal, 1985) have convincingly debunked the above stated view, it remains a fact that such a prevailing view even among social scientists themselves is largely an indictment of institutionalization of policy research/analysis which Dror insists should be science-based. In other words, if academic social scientists are irrelevant or slightly useful for practical policy problems there may be no need to institutionalize specialized knowledge outside the bureaucracy for the purpose of improving policy-making. The implication of the view of Moore and others is that policy analysis has very little to do with scientific inquiry and that it is a job which could be well done by the government itself or the bureaucracies.

Related to the above is the question of the workability or effectiveness of institutionalization of policy analysis itself. Nevil Johnson (1979) is

one of the best known pessimists in this regard. According to him, two practical problems have affected the working of policy analysis institutions or units wherever they are found. The first is the problem of overcoming the usual hostility of well-established bureaucracies; the second is the problem whereby policy problems which command urgency usually distract attention from longer range issues - policy research/analysis units or institutions are often consulted on the latter. Johnson also believes that the effectiveness of such institutions depends largely on the readiness of political decision-makers to use them.

The most serious and fundamental problem of institutionalization of policy analysis, according to Johnson, is the 'problem of artificiality'. This problem, he says stems from the theoretical assumptions underlying the recommendation or need for the institutionalization of policy analysis: that the identification or analysis of policy options can best be done by institutions which have no executive responsibility and are free from routine bureaucratic preoccupation. Johnson argues that while this assumption is theoretically attractive, it is far from reality. He writes:

Policy issues and options must always in normal circumstances be related to a given context of activities, and to a substantial degree they emerge from and are shaped by current experience. Thus, despite the obvious difficulties stemming from the impact of implementation functions, there is much to be said for the conclusion that policy-making is essentially a line function, and that when relegated to special non-executive units it risks becoming detached from the relevant preoccupations and knowledge of those who have to take the policy decisions. (Johnson 1979: 26).

Johnson's argument is more or less a challenge to Dror's social distance theme mentioned earlier. Nevertheless, Dror (1980) makes an observation close to, but not as blunt as Johnson's on this problem - for the latter sees the problem as a fundamental one. While Dror proposes regular interaction between policy-makers and analysts as a solution to the problem, Johnson apparently does not see how such fundamental limitation could be easily overcome. In any case, the empirical implication of Johnson's thesis for ongoing experience of institutionalization of policy analysis in many parts of the world is difficult to dispute.

Finally, policy analysis institutions or units could be misused by the government. As the principal client of policy analysis institutions, the

central minds of government or the executive arm of government can easily manipulate such institutions to support its policy preferences instead of using them for opening new policy options. This could constrain policy analysis institutions' contribution to policy-making or weaken their outputs as well as strengthen the policy-making position of the executive arm of government vis-à-vis other arms, notably the legislature. The example of one popular American think-tank - the Rand Corporation's studies on the problem of American involvement in the Vietnam War, in which some analysts twisted facts to fit the expectations of the American government - is illustrative. There is every likelihood that this problem of misuse of policy analysis institutions for the indication of bad policy judgement of executive political leaders could be worse in developing countries where parliaments and interest groups are not yet solidified or as strong as in the developed countries.

#### 1.5 Organization of the study

The study consists of 4 chapters. This chapter is basically introductory, containing some analysis of the problems of policy-making, the need for policy analysis and its institutionalization, different approaches of institutionalization, the theoretical features of, and prescriptions for institutionalization, the theoretical pros and cons of institutionalization and our methodology of research pursuit.

Chapter 2 discusses the relationship between the policy-making system and institutionalization of policy analysis, a comparative discussion of some models of institutionalization, and a comparative survey of some developed countries' policy-making environment with that of developing countries. Chapter 3 deals with specific case analysis of Nigerian experience - the details of the NIPSS. Chapter 4 contains a concluding analysis and recommendations.

## THE PROSPECTS OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF POLICY ANALYSIS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

### 2.1 The Utility of Institutionalization of Policy Analysis

As stated in the previous chapter, the improvement of policy-making requires conscious integration of policy analysis into policy-making. Our review of the theory of institutionalization of policy analysis in the preceding chapter also reveals that, as a modern method of integrating policy analysis into policy-making, institutionalization is practically no more than an institutional approach for opening up channels of access for unconventional opinions and analytic inputs into policy-making, and for the protection of non-conventional thinkers from political, organizational and bureaucratic conformity pressures which is necessary for strengthening the capability of policy analysis and making its impact on policy-making more effective.

Thus, the limitations of institutionalization of policy analysis as highlighted in the previous chapter are not enough to defeat the arguments in favour of its pursuit or neutralize its theoretical justification. Rather, the said limitations should serve as guidelines for seeking improvement and for ameliorating the dilemma of this governmental practice. This, for example, is the basic idea behind Dror's usual normative exercises - particularly his recent well-articulated improvement prescriptions for think-tanks and policy analysis units (e.g. Dror, 1984a, 1986a).

Therefore, the main purpose of this chapter is to explore the possibilities and limitations of institutionalization of policy analysis generally in developing countries. Our working hypothesis is that the degree of institutionalization of policy analysis (or the feasibility prospect of a particular approach of institutionalization) in a country is conditioned by its level of political development or the maturity of its policy-making culture, other things being equal.

Since most developed countries are viewed as model(s) of growth and development by the developing countries, it is necessary to examine the institutionalization experiences (achievements, failures and problems) of some developed countries and see whether lessons from such experiences could benefit developing countries in designing or redesigning policy analysis institutions. As policy analysis institutions cannot function in a vacuum but

in the context of the socio-political environments of the countries operating them, it is essential to highlight the policy-making environment of the developed countries with a view to comparing it to that of the developing countries and in effect see if the demands, processes and problems of institutionalization of policy analysis in the former are applicable to the latter. It would thus be easier in the final analysis for this study to (confidently) propose an optimal model or the best approach of institutionalization which fits the policy-making environment of the developing countries in general.

## 2.2 The Policy-making Environment of Developed Countries<sup>2</sup>

Generally speaking, the developments of policy-making and policy analysis in the developed countries have largely been pursued in the context of an open and competitive political process. In his analysis of policy evaluation problematics in developing countries vis-à-vis developed countries, Smith (1985) excellently lists the following as the main common characteristics of the policy-making environment of the developed countries of North America and Western Europe.

1. A stability in political and administrative institutions and processes with regular elections for political leadership and supremacy of the political sector over the bureaucracy.
2. Democratic traditions and practices of individual and group freedom, lack of suppression, reasonably 'open' government, and active investigative media, freedom to criticize political leaders, administrators and government policies and programmes.
3. A diversity of centres of power with divisions and rivalries between executive and legislative branches of government and between federal, state and local levels.
4. A slow, deliberate, incremental policy formulation process, which in some policy arenas leads to competition between organized interests.
5. Public policies which are incremental in scope and impact and do not usually demand substantial change on the part of target groups.
6. A reasonably 'satisfied', well-paid, professional, public service which expects policy evaluation and policy review as part of the job.
7. An active and powerful political party out of power seeking to gain electoral advantage.
8. A lack of fundamental ideological cleavages with major political groups more pragmatic than ideological in matters of policy, and with



those groups strongly supportive of existing social and political processes.

9. An array of governmental and non-governmental bodies which support, fund or conduct policy evaluations and a large number of professional social scientists from various disciplines who teach about evaluation and conduct evaluations.
10. A large data base of social and economic information readily accessible to policy researchers. (Smith, 1985: 129-130)

The above features of the policy-making system of the developed countries are largely in agreement with the secondary criteria (based on process patterns, output, structure and input) with which Dror (1983a) tries to ascertain the quality of policy-making in the developed countries or what he calls 'Modern States'. Furthermore, public administration and public policy-making as built up in the developed Western countries has responded to the historical situation, and this is sustained by an abundance of resources and economic development, the momentum of which was and is still being provided by the forces outside the government - the private sector. Policy-making and policy analysis in the developed countries are also positively conditioned by advanced technology, availability of good information and a communication system and an abundance of highly qualified social scientists and other analysts.

The affluence of the policy-making environment of the developed countries is such that the concern of policy-making, more often than not, is how to do or accomplish the thing rather than whether the thing should be endured at all. The fundamental goals and objectives of these countries are relatively non-controversial.

In spite of the stated goodies or affluent environment of policy-making of the developed countries, the improvement of policy-making is still desirable. For one thing, poverty has not been widely and completely eradicated. For another thing, national priorities need to be examined and re-examined despite the relative consensus in national goals and objectives. This is the task of unconventional or unorthodox policy analysis. The realization of the necessity to get unconventional opinions on policy matters and strengthen the capability of policy analysis for improved policy-making (on the part of policy-makers) has led to some successful efforts of institutionalization of policy research/analysis of varying scope, size and complexity in the developed countries.

However, in themselves some of the features of the policy-making environment of the advanced countries are vital for the successful working of institutionalization of policy analysis of any scope and complexity. But the necessity of some of the said features for successful or optimal operationalization of policy analysis institutes is more pronounced for the higher or advanced approach of institutionalization, that is independent or semi-independent think-tanks than for a policy analysis unit near or under the central minds of government. Numbers 2, 9 and 10 of the characteristics listed by Smith are particularly necessary and relevant. Institutionalization of policy analysis reflects the relatively open policy environment.

The United States, the United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Belgium, France, West Germany, Sweden, Norway and a few other industrialized countries have developed some models of policy research/analysis institutions (with different size, scope and complexity). Popular examples in the United States include the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Brookings Institution, both in Washington, DC and Rand Corporation, Santa Monica. Well-known examples in Europe include the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy, the defunct Central Policy Review Staff in the United Kingdom, the Swedish Secretariat for Future Studies, the Planunggruppe in the West German Chancellor's Office, and some planning commissions and policy research institutes in other OECD countries which function partly as think-tanks.<sup>3</sup> Because of space constraint, we will only examine the experiences of The Netherlands and the UK based on the models of the Scientific Council for Government Policy and the defunct Central Policy Review Staff. We chose to discuss The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy and the defunct British Central Policy Review Staff in this respect because they are fairly representative of the two prevailing theoretical models or approaches of institutionalization of policy analysis: an independent and semi-independent think-tank and policy analysis unit near or under the central minds of government.

### 2.3 The Scientific Council of Government Policy (SCGP)

The SCGP is a fully-fledged think-tank (Dror, 1984a; Baehr, 1986) as opposed to a policy analysis unit under the central minds of government. Founded in November 1972 provisionally by Royal Decree, the SCGP became a formal legal entity in 1976 when the Dutch parliament passed a law which spells out its duties as follows:

- (a) To supply on behalf of governmental policy scientifically-based information on development which may affect society in the long-run and to draw timely attention to anticipated anomalies and bottlenecks; it must also define major policy problems and indicate policy alternatives.
- (b) To provide a scientific structure which the government can use when establishing priorities so as to ensure that a consistent policy is pursued.
- (c) To make recommendations with respect to studies on future developments and long-term planning in both public and private sectors, the elimination of structural inadequacies, the furtherance of specific research activities and the improvement of communication and coordination.

As a permanent advisory body, the Council's membership (as the law provides) is a minimum of 5 members and a maximum of 11 members, with a chairman functioning on a full-time basis and other members serving on a full-time or part-time basis (at least two days a week). All members are appointed by the Dutch Queen on the advice of the Dutch Prime Minister for a term of 5 years, but are eligible for reappointment for one subsequent term only. Apart from regular members who are ultimately responsible for the activities and outputs of the Council, the Council functions with advisory members who are usually top-ranking officers in the country's planning organizations, namely, the Director of the Central Planning Bureau, the Director-General of Physical Planning Bureau, the Director-General for Statistics and the Director of the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau. The Council also operates with a scientific and administrative staff of approximately 40 people, with the Secretary of the Council serving as the Director of staff (Baehr, 1986).

So far, the SCGP has focused its research activities only on socio-economic issues and problems of public organization, even though it can handle any subject of government policy. In theory, research activity or policy analysis work on problems can be initiated both by the Dutch government and the Council. But in practice, members of the Council decide mostly collectively on its programme of work, and they are also jointly responsible for the Council's work or reports, though minority views are occasionally expressed where unanimous consensus could not be reached while preparing reports on problems. Thus the activities of the Council are dominated by self-initiated or self-identified problems as against requests from the Government for

Scientific Information or policy advice. According to Baehr (1986), out of the 28 reports or works which the Council produced between the time of its foundation and around 1986 only five were in response to specific requests from the Dutch Government.

This brings us to the important question of the independent status of the Council vis-à-vis the Government.

Once the members of the Council are appointed by the Government, they operate independently of it. In theory and in practice, therefore, the Council is generally believed to be independent. This independence is demonstrated by the following facts. The Council's term of office is generally 5 years. As stated earlier, members of the Council have the freedom to collectively determine a programme of work for their term of office; and the Council tries to complete its self-determined programme with the 5-year term of office, because, although the next Council may willingly take over uncompleted work, it is under no obligation to do so. Nor is it under any obligation to accept any request for advice or scientific information by the government as part of its programme of work, but then a good reason (or reasons) must be given for rejecting any request from the government. The Council once rejected such a request with the excuse that it was difficult to accommodate it in its already overcrowded programme of work (Baehr, 1986).

Another area of independence concerns the research reports of the Council. Procedurally, the Council reports to the Dutch Cabinet via the Prime Minister's Office. All research reports emanating from the Council have to be studied and noted (not necessarily accepted) by the Cabinet. The Council's contact with the Prime Minister's Office is very important, not only because the Prime Minister ensures that the former operates in accordance with the law which authorized it, but also because the Prime Minister (in his capacity as the head of the Cabinet) informs the Council on his Cabinet's opinions on its reports. After the Cabinet has studied and noted its reports, the Council has the freedom to publish the said reports without any interference whatsoever from the government.

The independence of the Council is also manifested in its usual composition and the quality or scientific character of its support staff. In the words of the SCGP's Report on the second term of office (1978-1982): 'The members of the Council are appointed on a personal basis and are not departmental officials. The Council therefore is a fully external advisory committee, the members of which are appointed primarily on the grounds of their expert

knowledge. The government is further of the concern that the Council's composition should be such that, within the limits of what is possible at the scientific level, it reflects the diversity of society as a whole.' Ten people served on the Council during its second term of office and their professional or academic backgrounds were as follows: public administration (1), economics (3), sociology (2), law (1), physics (1), chemistry (1), and agricultural science (1). As stated earlier, the advisory members of the Council are usually executive heads of government planning institutions. Although the advisory members bear no ultimate responsibility for the Council's reports as the substantive members do, their purpose is to advise the Council (make necessary information available to it) and see to efficient coordination between the Council and their respective institutions whose work is more or less related to that of the Council. The scientific staff of the SCGP bears no ultimate responsibility for its reports. But the high quality of the scientific staff, its inter-disciplinary composition and research freedom enhances the independence of the Council. As at December 1982 when the Council's second term of office came to an end the number of the scientific staff was 20, distributed over the following disciplines: economics (6), sociology (4.5), political science (3), law (3), physics (1), environmental science (1), planning (1), and business administration (0.5).

The freedom of SCGP members and its scientific staff to comment publicly on policy problems within government interference or censorship is a manifestation of the independence of the Council. According to the Council's second term report: 'Press conferences were held during the second term of office upon publication of reports and certain preliminary studies. Members of the Council and the scientific staff were repeatedly interviewed or themselves wrote articles for the general or technical press... From time to time symposia or conferences were organized by way of follow-up to published reports.' The processes of the SCGP are almost completely 'open', and to that extent, it is commonsensical to suggest that the 'open' nature of the Dutch socio-political system is a big reflection on the processes or activities of the Council. Once again, it is necessary to quote the report on the second term of office on this: 'In principle the Council's work is intended for any member of the public with an interest in the direction society takes. The Council has sought to stimulate that interest, particularly by publishing the results of its work. Most of the reports and also a number of the preliminary studies have in fact attracted political attention and stimulated public

discussion of the subject in question. In the Council's view this constitutes an important element in the role it plays in society."

Finally, the independence of the SCGP vis-à-vis the Government (the executive arm or the central minds of government) is also manifested in its usual direct contact with the usual multi-party Dutch parliament. The Council's contact with the parliament is significant for both institutions: for the Council the contact (though not very regular) is a way of demonstrating and safeguarding its independence from the central minds of Dutch government; and for the parliament it is a forum for preventing the possibility of the Council turning into an instrument for strengthening the power of the executive arm of government to its (parliamentary) detriment. As a demonstration of its concern for a truly independent status for the SCGP, the Second Chamber of Dutch parliament passed a motion in 1976 which requested the Government always to make its provisional opinion on the Council's reports known within three months of receipt of the reports (Baehr, 1986).

The supposed independence of the Council notwithstanding, there are certain ways in which its activities can be influenced by the executive arm of Dutch Government. According to Baehr (1986), some of these ways could be: (a) that the Government could appoint only members who are generally pro-government to the Council; (b) that the Government could cut the Council's budget which is part of the Prime Minister's budget; (c) that the Government could refuse or delay its consideration of the council's reports - without which they may not be published; and (d) that the Government could 'bombard' the Council with an avalanche of requests for advice or scientific information which, in effect, would leave the Council with little or no room for a self-determined or self-initiated programme. Baehr maintains that, so far, the Government has not exploited these possibilities in its relations with the SCGP and that it is unlikely to do so in the future.

The main problem with this Dutch model or approach to institutionalization of policy analysis is that, by its very nature (the high degree of its open processes and activities), its impact on actual public policy-making is bound to be limited. The relatively high degree of independence and openness which the Council enjoys is antithetical to confidentiality of relationship with policy-makers and thus could render its impact or influence on public policy-making no better than the debate-oriented influence of the mass media, which is not always helpful for optimal policy-making. In other words, the 'excessive' freedom or independence of the Council could allow it to

degenerate into some kind of institutional pressure group or interest group. The impact of the SCGP is further questionable in view of the aspect of its independence which makes it possible for self-initiated programme of work to over-ride government request for advice. Given that the most important and direct yardstick for measuring the impact of SCGP-type institutions is the extent to which policy-makers accept and use policy analysis work done by such institutions for policy changes, there is every likelihood that the Government may not take the reports of the SCGP on any policy matters it did not seek advice seriously. Commenting on this and other problems of the SCGP, Peter Baehr - a former executive secretary, and third term Council member writes: 'From the point of view of the Council, this aspect of its independence has positive and negative aspects. The positive side is that it can determine its programme unhindered by political considerations on the part of the Government. More negative is that this may mean that the results of its work could be of little relevance to the Government and that no member of the Government is waiting for it. An effort is made to meet this objection by submitting the proposed programme of work to the ministerial departments and ask for their comments and suggestions. This has even led to formal meetings of the full cabinet with the Council to discuss its programme, but none of these solutions has been fully satisfactory. Indifference from ministers and their departments may be as great a threat to the position of the Council as ministers exerting too great an influence. The potential indifference is fed by the fact that the Council must deal with long-term problems, while ministers usually are more interested in solving the problems of today' (Baehr, 1986: 394).

The above quotation justified Nevil Johnson's fear about the impact or effectiveness of institutionalization of policy analysis (as discussed earlier in chapter one).

Another problem in the direction of self-initiated programme of work or research problem in respect of the SCGP is that, judged from the issues it researched and reported on so far,<sup>4</sup> (apart from the orientation of studying long-term policy problems - which is quite normal, theoretically, for think-tanks as opposed to a policy analysis unit) there is a noticeable tendency to pick non-controversial issues for research which have little or no current implications which hardly agitate or bother decision-makers. This tendency on the part of the Council surely subdues its impact, as an average decision-maker who does not want scientific information or humble advice on very

important and sensitive issues with current and lasting implications would want to encourage such a tendency. For instance, the Dutch government seems not to see the relevance of the SCGP on such sensitive issues as the denuclearization of The Netherlands, which was a policy dilemma in this country as in other NATO countries.

However, the SCGP remains an advanced-type institutionalization of policy research and analysis, comparable more or less to some American think-tanks, like the Rand Corporation and the Brookings Institution. One area of difference between the Dutch model and some American think-tanks like the Rand Corporation is that the latter enjoys much more autonomy in finance and control or maintenance of staff (The Scientific Staff and other facilities of the SCGP are under the jurisdiction of the Dutch Ministry of General Affairs). While in location and functions the SCGP operates strictly as an autonomous government parastatal, the Rand Corporation is completely located outside the government of the United States and could be said to have much more impact on U.S. government policies. It is, however, doubtful if any American think-tank or other countries' think-tanks enjoy the high level of 'openness' which the SCGP enjoys. Says the Report on the second term of office of SCGP: 'Comparable bodies have...been set up in various other countries. In terms of its nature and composition, however, and particularly the position it occupies in relation to the central government, the Council has no precise parallel.' Yet, like many fully-fledged think-tanks in the United States the SCGP can unmistakably be categorized as an advanced policy analysis institution. While most of the advanced policy analysis institutions in the West satisfy many of the theoretical specifications for institutions of policy research and analysis (as stated by Dror, 1971a, 1980, 1984, 1986a), experience shows that their performance in respect of a confidential relationship with decision-makers (which is very vital for impact or effectiveness) is largely unsatisfactory. In spite of its 'beautiful' design, the SCGP is facing this problem - which seemingly reflects on its inability or unwillingness to research into sensitive issues with current and lasting implications.

#### 2.4 The Central Policy Review Staff (CPRS)

In many respects, the British CPRS was the opposite of the Dutch SCGP. Dror (1984a) argues that, contrary to popular belief, the CPRS was not a think-tank but a policy analysis unit. Dror's argument is based implicitly on the design of the institution, the discussion of which we now begin.



The CPRS was founded in 1970 by the Conservative Party government of Prime Minister Edward Heath. It was conceived and designed to work for the Prime Minister and the Cabinet ministers as a whole, to help them take better policy decisions, to work out the implications of governmental strategies and policy initiatives, to establish or advise on the relative priorities needed for a government programme as a whole, to analyze and identify areas of policy which need new choices, and to analyze and consider the underlying implications of alternative courses of action (Plowden, 1981: 63).

The above notwithstanding, the CPRS neither had detailed terms of reference nor formal legal status. The staff is located right inside the Cabinet Office at Whitehall in London, and its work is generally supervised by the Prime Minister. Its working membership was between 15 and 20 with multi-disciplinary background. The head of the CPRS was officially called 'Director' - a position usually of the same rank with a permanent secretary in the British Civil Service. Like the Dutch SCGP, the CPRS reports were prepared first and foremost for the executive arm of government's (not parliament's) perusal and consideration but, unlike the Dutch system, the publication or otherwise of CPRS' reports was purely a matter for government decision. In effect, the CPRS was not an independent policy analysis unit, relatively speaking.

The design of the CPRS was such that it was practically within the bureaucracy (its major source of information), and was close enough to its clients - the Ministers, including the Prime Minister. Although the unit was physically located in the Cabinet Office, it was strictly speaking not under the Cabinet Office but under the Prime Minister's Office at 10 Downing Street by virtue of the fact that its work was supervised by the Prime Minister. Even then, the unit was functionally responsible to the Cabinet ministers collectively in respect of their role in the Cabinet, rather than their roles in their respective Departments or Ministries. In effect, even though the CPRS was impressively close to be government bureaucracy in general it maintained some distance from individual departments by being central to them all. This was to be expected because the unit was designed to work for the whole cabinet, and it had to exhibit some degree of independence from the various departments if it was to function smoothly in the British-type political and administrative set-up where inter-departmental politics is seemingly the rule rather than the exception.

The composition of the CPRS was usually mixed. About half of the staff were usually career civil servants drawn from a range of key government

departments. Other members usually had come from the business sector (e.g. oil companies, banking), the academic community, consultancy and international economic organizations (e.g. World Bank, OECD) (Pollitt, 1974, Plowden, 1981).

The support and clerical staff of the unit was provided by the Cabinet Office. One striking feature of the CPRS was its non-organizational, non-hierarchical procedures; the unit intentionally avoided the 'processes of organizational coagulation and mitosis that so often afflict coordinating and planning divisions in Whitehall and elsewhere' in the rather huge machinery of British government (Pollitt, 1974). The unit had the status of civil service, meaning in effect that members recruited outside the public service were not necessarily expected to leave with the government.

In sum, the strength or advantages of the CPRS vis-à-vis 'pure' think-tanks and particularly the Dutch model earlier discussed are as follows:

1. The unit was conceived and designed as an integral functional part of the government, capable of having access to secret government papers, hence there was no consideration of locating it outside the government machinery like the Rand Corporation, or designing it as a government parastatal like SCGP. The idea behind 'inside location' in respect of the CPRS was presumably to ensure a completely confidential relationship between the unit and the government, to pre-empt vital information leakage and to ensure a regular, adequate flow of necessary information for the unit, as well as sufficient political backing. The Rand Corporation-type policy institutions is after all not completely absent in Britain. For example, the International Institute for Strategic Studies and the Royal Institute of International Affairs (both in London) are advanced think-tanks comparable to Rand and other American think-tanks as well as the Dutch SCGP, as opposed to the CPRS which was designed and operated as a day-to-day functional part of the central minds of British government.

2. Unlike the Dutch model, the CPRS in theory played little or no role in the ultimate determination of the programme of its activities or the selection of subjects for research. This was done annually by the Cabinet in the form of instruction to the Staff with necessary occasional revisions and updatings; however, the CPRS could suggest subjects or issues to the Cabinet for the purpose of investigation (Pollitt, 1974). In actual practice, however, according to Plowden (1981) much of the CPRS programme over the years originated within the CPRS itself, even though the unit had to find ministerial sponsors for some of its suggested programme or subjects for

presentational or political reasons. In any case, the CPRS method of selecting subjects for investigation contrasted sharply with the Dutch SCGP which is so independent as to reject assignment from the government it was supposedly advising.

3. Another strength of the CPRS vis-à-vis the SCGP and other 'advanced' think-tanks was in respect of its working methods (or methods of influencing the central minds of British government). One of the methods was the 'bi-annual strategy meetings where the CPRS had the opportunity to confront Ministers en masse with an assessment of the Government's overall progress with its programme, an identification of any internal contradictions in the strategy and recommendations for the following six months' (Pollitt, 1974). Another method was the regular attendance of Cabinet Committee meetings by a CPRS representative. The CPRS was usually represented at the full Cabinet meeting itself whenever it had put in a collective brief or when its reports were being considered (Plowden, 1981). Besides, the unit had an extensive working relationship with the Cabinet secretariat (in order to know in advance when and how policy issues were coming up for inter-ministerial discussion, so that it could always prepare grounds for intervention accordingly, by way of memorandum sent to the ministers concerned, or particularly to the Prime Minister, or even a written idea inserted into the Cabinet Secretariat's brief). Because of its small nature and limited facilities the CPRS extensively consulted outside experts on many subjects on a regular basis.

4. Another significant strength of the CPRS which obviously enhanced its impact was the regularity of personal contact with Ministers (a privilege denied to all but the very top civil servants and personal staff of the Ministers), and particularly the asset of regular and direct access the unit had to the Prime Minister (Pollitt, 1974).

5. Unlike the Dutch SCGP, the CPRS rarely appeared in public; hardly any members would discuss public policy problematics in public, and the reports of the unit's work, as stated earlier, were only published if the government wished (as publication depended on the political sensitivity of the subject matter - no matter whether the government agreed or disagreed with the report). No doubt, this feature enhanced the confidential relationship between the staff and the government and in effect strengthened the preparedness of the government to assign sensitive subjects to the unit.

6. Finally, the unit's informal nature, small size and non-hierarchical internal structure enhanced its operational responsibilities of policy-making

improvement. For among other things, 'the staff were able to pool their talents at very short notice and focus on an issue without feeling the constraining influences of precedent or the known preferences of individual Ministers and senior officials to the same extent as would heads of divisions in an ordinary department' (Pollitt, 1974: 384).

By and large, most of the points about the CPRS raised above boosted its impact enormously in decision-making improvements in the British democracy. The role of the advisory unit in the development of the British equivalent of PPBS management method - Programme Analysis and Review (PAR) was particularly impressive (Pollitt, 1974, Plowden, 1981). Nevertheless, the British model was characterized by certain in-built weaknesses, some of which are as follows:

1. The small size of CPRS constrained it almost as much as it helped it: It was very difficult for the unit to 'be remotely comprehensive in its policy analysis work', and it was also impossible for the unit 'to keep close watch on the policy implementation phase, which, as always, took place largely within departments and will have included significant elaboration of the broad directions embodied in cabinet minutes.' (Pollitt, 1974: 381).

2. Our account of the CPRS shows by and large that it was an advisory unit completely dependent on its client - the central minds of British government for money and facilities, for information, for permission to undertake a research project and publish its reports, etc. Because of this fact, if there is any model of institutionalization of policy analysis that could best be exploited or more readily be used for advancing the policy preferences of political leaders or for promoting their general courses of action, it is the British model - the CPRS. In a situation where all members of the CPRS had civil service status, analysts were hardly entitled to views of their own (at least in the public) and research freedom was bound to be limited. For example, the Prime Minister and the first director of the CPRS disagreed in 1972 following a public lecture in which the latter warned against the declining influence of Britain; the director was subsequently officially reprimanded by the head of the British Civil Service (Plowden, 1981). There was every possibility that such restricted permissiveness negatively affected the impact of the CPRS. This fear is reinforced by the fact that most studies and specific processes or undertakings of the CPRS were not published. This, however, does not mean that the CPRS was completely subservient to, and always served the interest of its clients. At least it is on record that the British

government rejected the CPRS study or recommendations on the British car industry.

3. Perhaps the greatest 'danger' of the CPRS model which eventually led to its demise was its informal, non-legal or non-statutory basis and power. Unlike the Dutch SCGP, this feature of the CPRS gave it a picture of temporariness and perhaps a sense of insecurity as a government institution. The design of the unit was such that its work depended largely on what the government was prepared to accept, and its survival ordinarily hinged on the continuous support of the Prime Minister. Although the advisory unit survived at least two governments (both Conservative and Labour), the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher scrapped it in 1984.

## 2.5. The Policy-making Environment of the Developing Countries and its Implications for the Institutionalization Processes

Most developing countries exhibit the following features in one form or the other in their policy-making processes.

1. A highly unstable, turbulent political setting with different types of regimes, ranging from military dictatorship to fragile presidential or parliamentary democracies, and from monarchies to indefinite authoritarian or 'revolutionary' governments.

2. Absence of strong, constructive, functional opposition to the ruling government.

3. A well established tradition of strong political dominance by such central minds of government as presidents, monarchs, prime ministers, ministers and other executive institutions (by whatever names they are called) in decision-making, leaving other equally important institutions like parliament to play peripheral and mere rubber-stamping role in policy-making processes.

4. Political parties and interest groups are poorly vertically organized and ethnically mobilized.

5. As a result of political instability and a poor political base of policymakers, policy-making in some cases is characterized by tentativeness and considerable secrecy, and substantive policies suffer from the problem of inadequate time for maturity or undue abrogation by new government.

6. Incremental policy-making is often rejected in favour of radical, innovative, unpredictable policies whose implementation is usually difficult.

7. The policy-making environment is generally characterized by big government or huge state apparatus, and a vast but inefficient public sector as well as foreign-sponsored but weak private sector economies.

8. Highly qualified manpower in policy science and other policy-related disciplines is generally scarce, especially in Africa.

9. Universities play very little or no result-oriented role in policy-making by way of policy research and other constructive contributions. This is not only because they are overloaded with routine teaching business, but more importantly because they are often in conflict with the political authorities. In Nigeria for example, since the early 1970s, universities' lecturers and students have transformed themselves into formidable pressure groups, regularly commenting on, and rejecting most government policies. Successive Nigerian governments view lecturers'/students' causes as leftist and subversive; violent clashes and the closure of universities is a regular occurrence.

Under such unfriendly circumstances, universities are not trusted with sensitive government policies for the purpose of research and analysis. Neither are self-initiated research efforts of universities taken very seriously by decision-makers.

10. Most of the public bureaucracies are weak and inefficient, and thus 'cannot supply very many rational components to policy-making, and so fail to counterbalance the main weaknesses of the other public-policy-making units' (Dror, 1983a: 113). Nevertheless, some developing countries maintain very powerful bureaucracies whose influence on government decision-making is strong and often unavoidable. This, however, does not in any way destroy Dror's argument that their contribution or actual input to rational policy-making is weak.

11. The relevant manpower, money and information (reliable data base) necessary for good policy-making (including policy evaluation) are scarce and inadequate. Because of their political implications, the governments of most developing countries usually jealously guard certain information (which only can be provided by government on the basis of past policy experience or on-going government projects) from policy analysis or evaluators outside their strict control, as well as from the general public. This problem is often worsened by the undemocratic and authoritarian character of most Third World governments (Smith, 1985).

The general picture of the policy-making environment of the developing countries highlighted above contrasts sharply in every respect with that of the developed countries as earlier highlighted. Theoretically, the problems which justify the improvement of policy-making and the setting up of special units for policy research and analysis for advising and improving government are the same in developed and developing countries. In practice, however, as we have shown in our previous analysis of the policy-making environments of the two groups of countries, the causes and nature of the problems are different.

Just as the affluent environment and matured policy-making practice of the developed countries could enhance institutionalization of policy analysis and minimize some of its inherent problems, so also can the under-developed policy-making practice of the developing countries constrain effective institutionalization of policy analysis and limit its impact. Therefore, the inherent problems of institutionalization of policy research and analysis could be more severe in developing countries than developed countries. In view of the sharply different policy-making contexts and political cultures of the two groups of countries, it will be inappropriate for developing countries to blindly initiate any model of institutionalization of policy analysis just because such a model is effective in one developed country or the other. The appropriate model which can be easily blended with the prevailing socio-political culture and which has the least chance of failure should be consciously investigated and pursued.

The pertinent question then is: which practical model or theoretical approach of institutionalization of policy analysis will have more chance of effectiveness with or without modification in developing countries?

The Dutch approach is both impractical and inappropriate in developing countries, given the political reality and the policy making context of the latter. A critical look at the features of the Dutch SCGP vis-à-vis the policy-making environment of the so-called Third World (as earlier elaborately discussed) clearly supports this conclusion. There is hardly any political system in the developing countries which can tolerate any model of institutionalization based on the Dutch approach, for a great majority of the Third World governments are either 'democratic dictatorship' (fragile and restricted democracies) or out-right dictatorship (those governments which do not pretend to be democratic). As shown in our earlier analysis, the Dutch SCGP enjoys a high degree of permissiveness and research freedom which,

somehow, is a reflection of the permissive and open nature of the Dutch society at large. Commenting on this, Baehr writes: 'The nature of the Council makes it typical and restricted to a democratic type of government. A non-democratic system cannot afford to allow free public discussions of future directions of society and policy alternatives (Baehr, 1986: 399).

The fact that the Dutch SCGP have the overriding power of self-determination of its programme of work and the freedom of public discussion of public policies as well as publication of reports or outputs (no matter the feelings of government) makes it highly impractical or inapplicable in the Third World context. This is because of the strong practice of discouraging other centres of power outside the executive or the central minds of government and the bureaucracy in most Third World countries, and also because of the tendency to suppress public comments on government policies which ultimately may undermine a government by showing its shortcomings - a situation which, as generally believed, can be exploited by government opponents. In effect, no Third World authoritarian political leader would in reality want to encourage a model of institutionalization of policy analysis that may contribute (however indirectly) to the course of his downfall.

Some of the reasons stated above for the impracticability of the Dutch approach for developing countries are also relevant for the difficulty of the American think-tank model. Generally speaking, one of the basic problems of think-tanks which subdue their impact on decision-making is their usual location outside the government. As shown earlier, the location of the think-tank outside the government creates the problem of big distance between the former and the latter, and by implication a more serious problem of mistrust or lack of confidential relationship between the government and its supposed advisory institution. On a serious note, no government would want to refer a serious problem to a unit or institution in which it has no confidence or no guarantee or assurance against the leakage of vital government information. The question of confidential relationships is even more relevant to the need and situation of the Third World where the political systems, as has been shown, are not as open as the Western democracies, and where dictatorial leaders are often security-conscious and thus often mark most government information as 'top secret'.

Supporting the idea that think-tanks are difficult to operate in the developing countries because of turbulent political climate and scarce resources, Dror (1986c) reasons that the optimal location of think-tanks is



not within or outside the government but within suitable universities in affiliation with (what he calls) 'Development Public Policy Schools'. In a complex set of proposals designed specifically for developing countries, Dror states four ways in which universities in the Third World could be of valuable assistance to their development-hungry countries in the improvement of development policy-making: (i) upgrading top cadres of decision makers; (ii) preparing development policy analysts of a new type; (iii) functioning as quasi-think-tank in respect to development policies; and (iv) enlightening university students about development policies.

The Dror proposal in respect of (i) above is the establishment of National Development Policy Colleges or Development Public Policy Schools which should run intensive courses on the main development issues for a period of one to six months, with participants drawn from the top echelons of decision-making bodies, the civil service, trade unions, military service, mass media, private business sector, etc. As we shall show in the next chapter, Nigeria's National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) performs this function, even though it is not affiliated to any university.

As regards (iii) above, Dror reasons: 'think-tank functions are hard to fulfil in standard universities because of their rigidity of departmental and disciplinary boundaries, as well as the antimony between knowledge and teaching-oriented activities and policy applications and delicate relations between universities and students on one hand and governments on the other hand, and so on. Still, in many (though not all) less developed countries, the best and often only possibility for at least some main think-tank functions to be fulfilled is by setting up Development Policy Study Institute in Universities' (Dror, 1986c: 420).

However, the feasibility of Dror's proposal that think-tanks can work better in developing countries if they are located in the universities in the form of 'Developmental Policy Study Institute' is highly doubtful. As we pointed out in our discussion of the policy-making environment of developing countries, universities are not friends of political leaders in most developing countries. The level of ambivalence or distrust in this regard is very high. In most countries in Africa (especially Nigeria), policy-centred disagreement between universities' lecturers/students and the government is highly regular, and this has often led to the deaths of students, dismissal of dons, and indefinite closure of universities. In South Korea and some South

American countries, university lecturers and students are usually at the centre of a political campaign for socio-political reforms. Under this situation, no think-tank can function optimally if located within universities. At best, therefore, university academicians in developing countries can be used for policy analysis work outside the university environment.

In all probability, a policy analysis unit based on the British model, CPRS, (with some modifications) is the ideal and more practicable approach to institutionalization in the developing countries. The model is likely to have greater impact and more meaningfully motivate political decision-makers and the bureaucracy to use policy analysis for decision-making without threatening them or the bureaucracy. To recall its advantageous features, the CPRS was located right inside and under the central minds of British government and was thus seen (and indeed functioned) as an integral part of government machinery, so that it enjoyed a maximum confidential relationship with the government. Also, although it was functionally separated from the bureaucracy it was nevertheless close enough to understand and appreciate the problems of the British bureaucracy (as several CPRS members were civil servants), and was therefore able to preempt many grounds of potential conflict with the bureaucracy which ultimately could have negative effects on its work. The following quotation is relevant to support our argument: 'throughout its existence the CPRS has had perhaps surprisingly good relationships with the permanent civil service, even when disagreeing with the latter's views. It has had good access to departmental and other information, and a close working relationship with officials at all levels. This can be attributed to the strong political support with which the CPRS started its life, partly also to the cultural and personal affinities with the civil service derived from its part-official membership.' (Plowden, 1981: 81).

Given the fact that political and administrative power is highly centralized in the central minds of government and bureaucracy in most developing countries (and the fact that there has been no genuine attempts or willingness to decentralize power), a CPRS-like design of policy analysis and research institution will not only fit the existing political administrative arrangement or policy-making environments of these countries, but will also enhance the readiness of political leaders to use analysis for decision-making. For as long as the policy analysis unit is located under or near

political leaders, the necessary confidence and political support needed by the former for optimal functioning can certainly readily be assured.

Thus, it is inadvisable for developing countries to rush into an autonomous think-tank approach of institutionalization of policy analysis. For in many developing countries the main features of even a minimum think-tank - critical mass of 20 to 30 high quality interdisciplinary staff, autonomy in reformulating issues and questioning accepted conventional policy assumptions or wisdom, freedom in designing and evaluating policy options and alternative values, and direct channels to top-level decision-makers - are extremely difficult to realize; and without these features the impact of think-tank would be equal to zero.

Being aware of the great barriers to the realization of his theoretical specifications for the think-tank in many countries, Dror himself (1984b) concludes that an autonomous think-tank is not viable under certain prevailing political conditions; in which case, it might be easier to build up in the first instance a policy planning and policy analysis unit, which might subsequently serve as a basis and support for designing and developing a think-tank.

It is advisable, therefore, for the developing countries to design policy analysis institutions on the model of the defunct CPRS, but with some modification. Some description of such a design will be done later in the study. Essentially however, the design should be such that it is not a blind imitation of the CPRS. The negative experience of the CPRS should (perfectly) be taken into consideration in the design. In particular, the informal nature and non-statutory basis of CPRS (which facilitated its demise) should be avoided. But then there appears to be no solution to the problem of zero political support: a political leader who does not want certain types of advice will certainly always have his way. Thus, even if the CPRS was not closed down at the time it was, the conservative government of Mrs Thatcher could have as well rendered it useless by not making use of it at all - which would have been as good or bad as closing it down. Her government seemed not to believe in CPRS at all, and there is apparently no solution to that problem. In conclusion, it is important to stress that political will is an essential support factor for institutionalizing policy analysis/research.

THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE: THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR POLICY  
AND STRATEGIC STUDIES (NIPSS)

3.1 The Nigerian Policy-making Scene and NIPSS Antecedents

As our focus is on Nigeria, it is important to discuss some specifics of her socio-political environment and the unique features of her policy-making system against which policy research and institutionalization of policy analysis needs to be examined. This is necessary not only to understand the basis of the activities and operation of the NIPSS but also to appreciate the prospects and limitations of the existing different models of institutionalization (particularly the model on which NIPSS is implicitly based) for the Nigerian socio-political situation.

Nigeria is a federation of 21 states with an estimated population of 100 million people. The country ranks high among the politically unstable states of Africa. Between October 1960, when political independence was granted by Britain, and August 1985, Nigeria had 2 democratic governments and 4 military governments. Thus, the present military government, which came to power through a palace coup in August 1985, is the 7th Nigerian government since independence.

While the two democratic governments had sharply different decision-making processes, the various military governments had a high degree of similarity in this regard. The first post-independence political system was fashioned after the British parliamentary democracy, and the party which formed the federal government lasted until 1966 when the military struck. Unlike in Britain, where several actors, public and private, come into play in the determination of public policy-making, only the political class and the bureaucracy featured prominently in the public policy-making scene of Nigeria between 1960 and 1966.

Constitutionally, a policy formulation role was assigned to the parliament and the political executives, while the execution of policy was the responsibility of the bureaucracy. In practice the latter dominated both phases of policy-making. During the period of parliamentary democracy, an average minister conceived his role as approving or disapproving whatever proposals were placed before him by his permanent secretary without having to think out the policy himself (Adebayo, 1981).

The hot political atmosphere of the parliamentary democracy (1960-1966) contributed immensely to poor policy-making, as politicians had no time to monitor enacted policies and reflect on the possibility of formulating new ones. According to Balogun, factors such as 'the constituency interests, the loud and strident demands for patronage, for social amenities and for other forms of assistance, the keen (and sometimes violent) competition with rival political parties and/or candidates, all conspired to divert the politician's attention from his policy-making responsibility' (Balogun, 1983: 110). The bureaucracy therefore dominated the scene, but its impact was low and unable to compensate for the poverty of contribution to policy-making by other units or actors, partly because of lack of appropriate training and guidance by political executives.

The second period of democracy in Nigeria was between 1979 and 1983 when the country practiced the American-type of presidential government. The presidential constitution assigned different roles in public policy-making to different institutions, notably the Presidency and the National Assembly. Evidently, there was increased effort on the part of political leaders during the period to improve policy-making through the use of political party policy analysts, advisers, presidential panels and commissions of enquiry. The judiciary, whose role was modelled after the American judiciary, also featured prominently in the policy-making arena during the period. For example, its firm decisions on some government policies were respected and implemented. The National Assembly and various States' Legislative Assemblies did not shape - or improve government policies in any significant way, compared to the United States Congress and State Parliaments. With the notable exception of Bendel and Kaduna State(s') Assemblies, the other legislative Assemblies including the National Assembly did not in the main play a beneficial role in policy-making. There was virtually no policy initiative from the parliaments (legislature).

Despite the seemingly pluralist nature of policy-making under the American-style presidential government from 1979-1983, the public bureaucracy remained strong in the policy-making scene of Nigeria. On this, Adamolekun writes: '.... The preoccupation of Nigerian higher civil servants with policy formulation while inadequate attention was paid to policy implementation was also valid for the entire period of the presidential system. Ordinarily, one would have expected the increasing efforts of political leaders to reduce the involvement of higher civil servants in the provision of policy advice and

in the formulation of policies to result in pushing the latter to concentrate more on policy implementation' (L. Adamolekun, 1986: 152). However, the impact of the bureaucracy in policy-making during the Second Republic was anything but effective. This was due to the politicization of the institution as well as its limited professionalism.

On the other hand, the policy-making scenes of the various military governments in Nigeria were characterized more or less by identical features: no parliament, no political parties, a less powerful judiciary (on public policy), less public debates of policy options, a high degree of centralization of power, institutionally powerful heads of government and a highly influential and powerful bureaucracy. Unlike the two different forms of democratic political system mentioned above, the military as an institution has enjoyed a much longer period of control of government in the political history of Nigeria. Broadly speaking, military governments can be divided into 3 main historical phases: 1966-1975, 1975-1979 and 1984 to date.

The principal decision-making institutions in most of the military governments which replaced institutions of democracy at the federal level are (in order of power): the Supreme Military Council, currently renamed the Armed Forces Ruling Council (mainly comprising a few selected senior military officers) the Federal Executive Council or Council of Ministers (mainly comprising Federal ministers) and the Council of States (consisting of military service chiefs, State Military Governors and some traditional rulers representing each state of the Federation). At different periods, each of the institutions, where applicable, was chaired by the military head of the state and government. At the state level, the only decision-making body was - and still is - the State Executive Council (a small council of state ministers or commissioners) chaired by State Military Governors.

In theory, the various bodies contribute to the effectiveness of public policy-making by shaping the course of policies through different shades of opinions and inputs. In practice, the public bureaucracy dominates the scene, because in most cases the Councils hardly do any other thing than approve policy memos prepared by the bureaucrats. Partly because of its preoccupation with the planning and execution of coup, some of the military regimes, on assumption of office, did not have articulated and coordinated programmes which they were committed to implement. Thus, they relied heavily on the high echelons of the bureaucracy. Specifically, under General Gowon's government (1966-1975), certain developments in the socio-economic milieu of Nigeria,

such as the creation of more states in 1967, the prosecution of the civil war (1967-70), the oil boom of the early 1970s and its concomitant expansion of government business and the post-war multi-million dollar reconstruction programmes all made a lot of demands and a big impact on the bureaucracy. Bureaucratic power grew tremendously as top civil servants exercised unrestricted influence on policy-making. A small group of permanent secretaries popularly referred to as 'super Permanent Secretaries' emerged as partners of top military leaders in the exercise of governmental power, openly exercising greater influence on public policies than some civilian ministers or commissioners. Balogun (1983) describes the period as the 'finest hours of technocracy' in Nigeria.

In spite of certain 'hostile' policies of the Murtala/Obasanjo government towards the civil service aimed in part at reducing the powerful role of the bureaucracy in the policy-making arena, bureaucratic influence remained very solid. The mass purge of the civil service in 1975 and 1984 by the military governments of Murtala/Obasanjo and General Buhari respectively did little (if anything) to reduce the influence of the top echelons of the civil service on policy-making and the heavy reliance on it by the soldiers. Commenting on the State of the Civil Service following the fall of the Gowon administration in 1975, the retired secretary to the Federal Military Government and Head of Service, Gray Longe says: 'Initially, the dependence on the civil servant as adviser was muted. The impression was given during this period that the powers of the higher civil servants had been severely curbed, but in fact there was considerable dependence on them for the same type of advice and assistance that they used to give prior to the 1975 purge. Civil servants were required to participate in brain-storming sessions on specific aspects of policy. They were listened to patiently, their erudition and expertise was recognized ....' (Longe, 1983).

Although the various military administrations used other actors or components of the society to shape and improve public policy, for example special panels and commissions of enquiries, the bureaucracy was and still is dominant. The dominant role and influence of the civil service in policy-making does not mean that its impact on or contribution to policy-making is very effective. As Adamolekun (1985) believes, the civil service should be partly responsible for the blame of the failed policies of the period when its advisory role was dominant in the policy-making arena of Nigeria.

Theoretically, this justifies the institutionalization of policy analysis or policy advice outside the bureaucracy.

However, to a reasonable extent the role of the civil service as a whole in the policy cycle was commendable in respect of (i) collection and analysis of relevant data for urgent (or crisis) decision-making, (ii) constant contacts with various institutions and groups affected by government policies, and (iii) monitoring implementation of policies to see that stated policy objectives were being achieved. Rightly or wrongly, the history of the Nigerian policy-making scene is a history dominated by the bureaucracy.

In conclusion, the following historical facts about the policy-making scene of Nigeria necessitated and still necessitates institutionalization of policy analysis and research:

- (i) Because of rapid political change or change of regimes, the policy-making process was fragmented.
- (ii) There was no long term view of policy problems and no coordination in policies of various ministries to ensure consistency.
- (iii) The oil boom of the 1970s provided a boost to or expansion of distributive policies and infrastructure: availability of easy funds lowered the pressure for justifying policies, and priorities were not emphasized.
- (iv) Poor functioning or absence of legislature meant that there was no external evaluation of public policies and pressure on the executive or the central minds of government to justify ongoing or new policies.
- (v) As higher education expanded concomitantly with the oil boom, intellectuals and professionals pressurized the government to be heard and be included in policy-making business.

What forces and circumstances were responsible for the emergence of policy analysis or advisory institutions in a policy-making environment traditionally dominated by the bureaucracy? Some developments in the political history of Nigeria in the 1970s readily provide answers to this question. Decision-making during the 30-month civil war (1967-1970) could be characterized, using Dror's concepts, as 'policy-making under acute adversity' (Dror, 1986a, 1986b). In the course of prosecuting the civil war, the military government of General Gowon appeared to distrust many important groups of actors and institutions (including some segments of the military) who could have meaningfully contributed to the effectiveness of public policy-making. A notable exception was the top echelons of the bureaucracy (the super permanent



secretaries and their immediate subordinates); they enjoyed the consistent confidence of the military government and thus remained the most reliable group of policy advisers until the demise of General Gowon's administration in 1975. Their pre-eminence became more pronounced in 1971 after the resignation of the powerful, brilliant Minister of Finance and Vice-Chairman of the Federal Executive Council, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, whose contribution to the initiation and effectiveness of certain policies designed to bring the civil war to an end are generally well-known in the country.

Following the coup of July 1975, which terminated Gowon's administration and brought in what is popularly known in the political history of Nigeria as the Murtala/Obasanjo military administration, the new government acted very swiftly to curb the power of the bureaucrats in policy-making. The two principal characters of the new government - General Murtala Mohammed (Head of State) and General O. Obasanja (his deputy who later became the Head of State when the former was assassinated in 1976) had served in the previous government of General Gowon as Commissioner or Minister, and apparently had an unpleasant experience with the 'super permanent secretaries' during their tenure under the Gowon administration. Consequently, most of the top and middle bureaucrats were purged from the civil service in 1975, and those who survived the purge were ordered to confine their activities strictly to the traditional British-style role of the civil service: policy execution or implementation.

To fill the vacuum in the professional policy advice created by the exit of 'super permanent secretaries' and the concomitant reduction in the power of the bureaucracy in policy-making, the Murtala/Obasanjo administration (1975-1979) made extensive use of ad hoc advisory bodies or commissions of enquiry (which were insignificantly used by previous regimes) for policy advice and policy evaluation.<sup>5</sup> Apart from the ad hoc advisory committee or commissions of enquiry, the Murtala/Obasanjo regime also encouraged the use of non-ad hoc advisory councils, especially economic advisory councils both at the federal and state levels, the membership of which were (usually) mostly drawn from the universities on a part-time basis.

In addition to the regular use of the two categories of advisory bodies described above the federal government under Murtala/Obasanjo established an institutional 'think-tank' called the National Policy Development Centre in 1975. The Centre was charged to 'undertake policy research and analysis, develop new ideas and guidelines; suggest new dimensions to existing policies,

conduct studies of the economy and society generally, review government policies and measures from time to time and draw attention to those that are inconsistent with overall objectives' (West Africa, 24 May 1976: 243). The National Policy Development Centre which operated under the umbrella of the Central Cabinet Office in Lagos comprised three full-time members forming a directorate, an administrative secretary and a seven-man advisory board, chaired by a renowned professor of education - Professor Babs Fafunwa; the advisory board was to serve for a term of 3 years.

Most of the 'working core' members or the Scientific staff of the National Policy Development Centre worked on a part-time basis from the universities. It appears that the Centre had a scope of activity like that of the British CPRS, but a structure and membership which somewhat resembled that of the Dutch SCGP. Although the activities and processes of the Centre were not often open for public scrutiny, it later became an open secret that the Centre did not take-off meaningfully before it was closed down in 1979 prior to the establishment of the NIPSS.

The apparent failure of the National Policy Development Centre was due to the inadequate political support from the federal government of Nigeria and particularly the unpreparedness of the federal bureaucracy to cooperate with it. Adamolekun (1986) attributes the demise of the Centre to the hostility of the civil service towards it. He states: 'While the civil servants tolerated the use of advisory bodies as demanded by the military rulers, they found the idea of an institutionalized 'think-tank' too much to bear. Although they could not prevent its establishment, they rendered it ineffective and it, too, disappeared in the form in which it was a direct challenge to the higher civil servants' role in policy-making' (Adamolekun, 1986: 128).

The Murtala/Obasanjo government could not effectively and durably curb the power of the higher civil service as it appeared determined to do initially. The top bureaucrats who survived the mass purge of the civil service in 1975 gradually rebuilt their power. As we stated earlier, the higher civil service under the Murtala/Obasanjo government was still able to exert some influence on the formulation (let alone implementation) of major public policies in one way or the other, in spite of the outward hostility of that government to it. Despite the regular use of advisory bodies as indicated earlier, the influence of the civil service continued more or less. The following quotation is a

good description of just one of the methods by which the higher civil service still influenced decision-making under the Murtala/Obasanjo administration:

Because there existed a tradition of using advisory bodies before 1975, some of the established procedures and attitudes within the civil service also persisted. While it was easy for the military rulers to dictate what they wanted as far as membership and terms of reference were concerned, they felt obliged to accept the established procedure of deriving government policies from reports prepared by advisory bodies. This is the British practice of issuing a 'white paper' which sets out the government's decisions on the recommendations proposed by a major advisory body. Usually, the white paper is published at the same time as the report. The reports of the other bodies are rarely published, and decisions on them are taken through correspondence within the governmental administrative hierarchy, at the apex of which is the Head of State. In all this, senior civil servants - and specifically permanent secretaries - play an important role through what has been called the 'civil service filter' (The term is used to refer to an arrangement in a British-style government administration that enables top civil servants, ... to comment on practically every policy proposal on which the supreme political authority has to take a final decision). It was largely through this process that civil servants succeeded in securing an important role for themselves in the formulation of government policies between 1975 and 1979 (Adamolekun, 1986: 123).

It is against the above stated background of the enormous influence of top bureaucrats that the dilemma of the National Policy Development Centre could be understood. It was easier, apparently, for the civil servants to manipulate and cripple it because it was supposed to function under the umbrella of the then Cabinet Office which was dominated by top bureaucrats.

Nevertheless, the Obasanjo government was not very comfortable with the rather low level impact of the National Policy Development Centre in its short history of almost 5 years. This, and the problem of effective communication among the functionaries of the various levels of government (following the creation of more states and local government areas in 1976)

and the expanding private sector prompted the Federal Government to set up a panel in 1978 comprising 11 Nigerians to examine the feasibility of establishing a larger, semi-autonomous institutional think-tank not only for analytical policy advice, but also for the promotion of harmony, understanding, cooperation and communication among the initiators and executors of policy from all sectors of the Nigerian economy.

The panel submitted its findings and recommendations to the Federal Government after undertaking a study tour of institutions with identical objectives in the United States, the United Kingdom and Belgium.

Consequently, the Supreme Military Council (the highest policy-making body during the Murtala/Obasanjo administration) approved the establishment of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) in July 1978. The National Institute was given a legal status by the promulgation of Decree 20 of 1 January 1979.

### 3.2 Functions and Locations of the NIPSS

According to the official view and the law establishing it, the NIPSS functions as 'a high level centre for reflection, research and dialogue where academic excellence, seasoned policy initiators and executors and other citizens of mature experience and wisdom drawn from different sectors of national life in Nigeria meet, reflect and exchange ideas on great issues of society.' In order to achieve these broad objectives, the legal instrument of NIPSS charges it with the following tasks. Among other things it:

- (a) Conducts courses for top level policy-makers and executors drawn from different sectors of the national policy, with a view to widening their outlook and perspectives and improving their conceptual capacity, quality of analysis and decision-making.
- (b) Conducts in-depth research into the social, economic, political, security, scientific, technological, cultural and other problems facing Nigeria with a view to formulating and presenting available and usable options for their solution.
- (c) Conducts seminars, workshops and other action-oriented programmes for leaders in the public services (including the armed forces and other disciplined forces), the private sector, political organizations, professionals and other groups with a view to promoting, defining and enhancing their appreciation for long-range national plans and objectives.

- (d) Disseminates through the publication of books, records, reports and general information about its activities as a contribution towards knowledge, and for better national and international understanding.

The Institute is located, deliberately we suppose, outside the turbulent environment of the federal capital city Lagos and outside 'the immediate reach' of the government bureaucracy, but in a somehow isolated environment of Kuru, near Jos in the middle belt area of the Nigerian federation. The Lagos-based National Policy Development Centre was immediately merged with the NIPSS.

When the establishment of the NIPSS was being made public by the government, it was announced, among other things, that lecturers and analysts for the former were being drawn from similar institutions in the United States and the United Kingdom. This drew angry responses of disapproval from the local press and intellectuals.<sup>6</sup> We have no concrete information to the effect that the Federal Government actually recruited foreign instructors and analysts for the take-off of the NIPSS. Even if it did, foreigners must have constituted a very low percentage of the total number of the pioneering staff. The fact that most policy analysts of the defunct National Policy Development Centre were absorbed into the NIPSS partly explains this.

### 3.3 Structure and Organization of the NIPSS

As a semi-autonomous government parastatal, NIPSS affairs are generally directed by a Board of Governors, usually comprising eight or nine members - all appointed by the Head of the Federal Government. The Board of Governors is usually made up of a chairman (not elected by the Board members among themselves, but directly appointed by the Government), the Director-General of the Institute, one or two representatives of the Armed Forces,<sup>7</sup> one or two distinguished academicians, one or two retired or serving top civil servants and a distinguished person from the private sector of the Nigerian economy. That has been the rough pattern of the composition of the NIPSS Board of Governors since 1979. Neither the federal cabinet nor any of the federal ministries have ever been represented on the Board.

For example, the first Board of Governors comprised a retired veteran public administrator who was a former Nigerian Representative in the United Nations as the Chairman, the Chief of Army Staff, the General Manager of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, two former Federal Permanent Secretaries, the Executive Secretary of the National Science and Technology

Development Agency, and an academically-oriented consultant economist who at one time was Economic Adviser to the Federal Government, and the Executive Director of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Some essential parts of the task of the Board of Governors are to deliberate on, and approve the long-range plan of activities of the Institute as well as its programme of studies, courses and major research. The Board also considers and approves not only the annual budget of the Institute, but also the annual report of its activities - including its general administration and audited accounts for the previous year.

The chief executive of the NIPSS is designated the Director-General. His appointment is directly made by the Head of the Federal Government, and he is answerable to the Board of Governors for the day-to-day administration of the Institute. The first director-general was a serving major-general in the Nigerian Army. After his retirement in 1981, a professor of sociology of development was appointed the first intellectual civilian director-general. The professor was replaced in December 1984 with another major-general of the Nigerian Army who served up to December 1989. Another major-general was appointed in January 1990 as the fourth director-general of the Institute. What is noteworthy in the appointments of the Directors-General is that they appeared to reflect the types of government in power or the change of government: from a military government to civilian regime and back to another military administration.

The Institute is structured into three departments: an Administration Department, Studies Department and Research Department. Each of the departments is headed by a director who is responsible to the Director-General for his departmental duties. The Department of Administration provides support services for the studies and research departments, and is in charge of the routine administration and finances of the Institute. The Studies Department conducts policy-oriented courses for policy initiators and executors, and also organizes seminars and workshops on policy problems. The research Department is responsible for the organization, undertaking, collation and management of the Institute's policy analysis and research activities. The Department is also in charge of other research-related activities like the periodic review of research resources and capability in the country with a view to coordinating research projects undertaken with the joint efforts of other individuals and institutions in order to maximize their use for solving policy problems.

### 3.4 The Staffing of the NIPSS

The 'operating core' of the NIPSS are the staff in the Departments of Studies and Research. In Mintzberg's dictum, the 'operating core' of any organization encompasses staff members who perform the essential or basic work that keeps it alive or justify its existence (Mintzberg, 1979: 24). In effect, the Institute's in-house research personnel shared between the studies and research departments constitute its operating core.

The NIPSS has a policy whereby the recruitment of research staff is done on short-term basis, but this is subject to periodic renewals on the basis of need and individual merit of the staff. The official argument for that policy is that it is necessary in order to ensure that the NIPSS always has some of the best analysts or research skills in Nigeria. The in-house research personnel of the NIPSS are officially styled 'fellows' but they are appointed in different grades. As we shall show shortly the greater part of the research work of the NIPSS is done by the fellows, but their research effort is often complemented by a team of research retainers or associate fellows.<sup>8</sup>

The NIPSS tends to be conscious (though to some extent) of the need for a team of inter-disciplinary research staff in its recruitment policy. Usually in effect, the Institute's analysts and researchers come from a variety of professional backgrounds, especially the academics, and to some extent, Federal and State bureaucrats or technocrats on special leave of absence, trade unionists, industrialists and military personnel. For example, between 1981 and 1985, the Institute had 14 high-ranking research personnel and analysts, including the former civilian director-general, Professor Justin Tseayo, who is a sociologist. Others include a professor of economics, one professor of politics and development administration, another professor who specializes in urbanization problems and spatial aspects of development, one doctor of philosophy with special expertise in international relations and industrial relations, a political economist, 2 historians, a lieutenant-colonel whose research specialty is in defence and security aspects of international relations, one documentation and information expert, another expert in environmental management, one ambassador, an educationist and a business management expert. The renewal of appointments and the fresh appointment of research personnel have usually been carried out more or less in line with the aforementioned professional backgrounds. In effect, the

NIPSS appears to be much more inter-disciplinary and nearer to Dror's suggestions on multi-disciplinary composition of such bodies than the Dutch SCGP.

### 3.5 Research and Policy Analysis in the NIPSS

Although some of the research fellows of the Institute function both as instructors in the Studies Department and analysts in the Research Department, the research activities and policy analysis work of the NIPSS are the functional responsibility of the Research Department. However, there is considerable cooperation and coordination between the departments of studies and research in research work.

It will be recalled that, by law, the NIPSS is required, amongst other things, to conduct policy-oriented inter-disciplinary research into the 'social, economic, political, security, scientific, cultural and other problems facing the country and to formulate and present in usable form available options for their solution.' In effect, NIPSS research activities and resources are directed to achieve this broad research objective via the Research Department. Theoretically (at least), the impact of the NIPSS on policy-making can be more effectively evaluated on the basis of the availability and acceptability of its research activities to the government - although training could also improve and indirectly influence policy-making.

In order to facilitate the realization of the research objective of the Institute there is an established post of Director of Research as well as a Research Committee, usually of 8 or 9 members (including both the directors of Research and Studies, the Director-General and some members of the Board of Governors, but excluding most of the research fellows and research assistants of the research department). Although we have no detailed data about the specific process or processes of the Research Committee (the Board members who are members of the Committee function on a part-time basis),<sup>9</sup> the main practical task of this Committee is to consider and approve NIPSS research projects on behalf of the Board of Governors - which is the body that is formally charged to do that. The Board seems to have virtually delegated that power to the Research Committee.

There are three main sources of the initiation and selection of NIPSS research topics or policy subjects: the government, the Institute (via the research committee) and any of the research fellows. The initiation and selection of research topics by the Institute's research fellows is subject to the approval of the research committee. However, all research subjects



are expected to conform with the Institute's general research programmes which are organized into two broad areas of studies, 'policy' and 'strategy', and therefore handled within the framework of two broad divisions: policy studies division and defence and security studies division. The organogram below shows the research operational chart of the NIPSS.

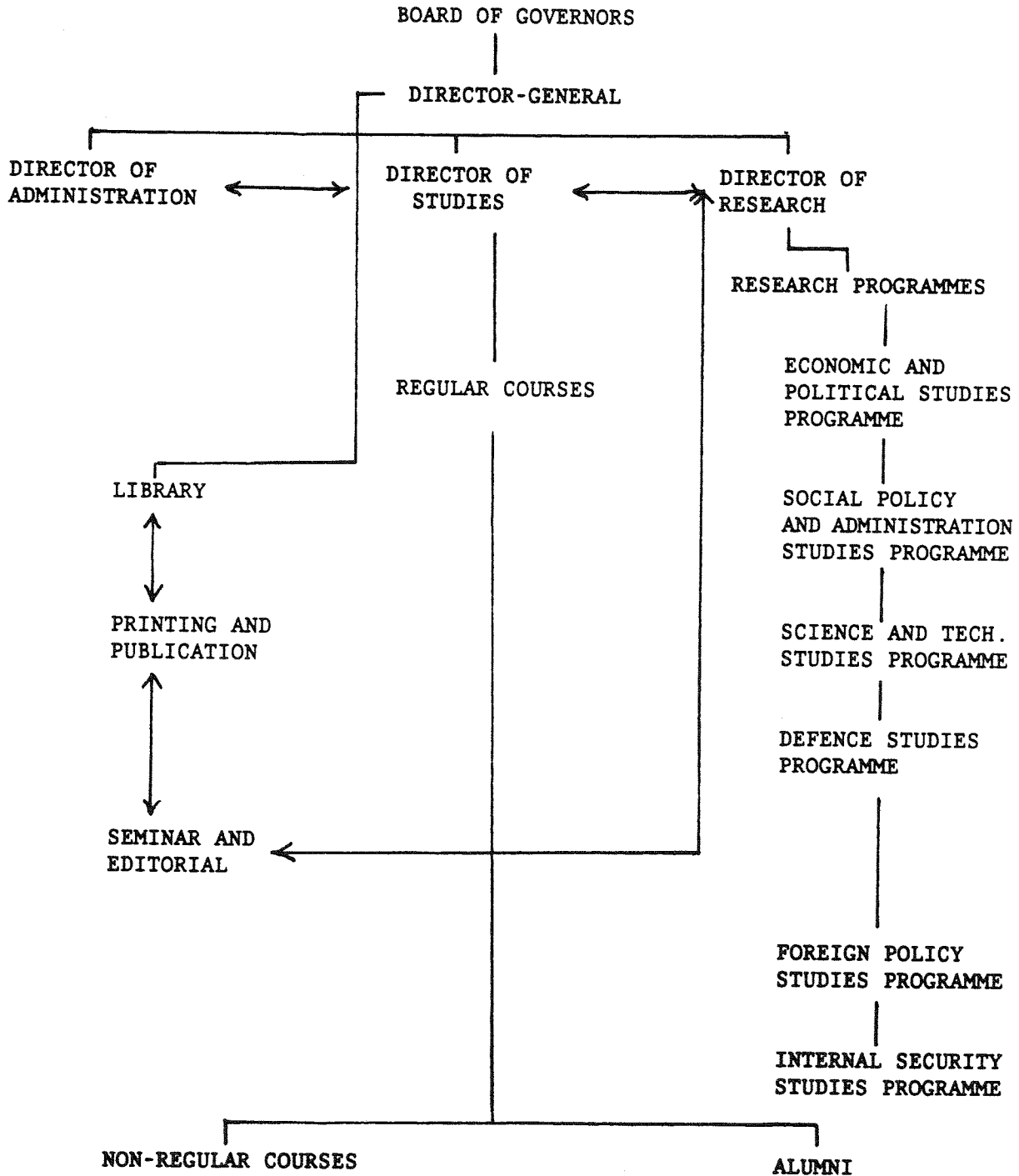
The Policy Studies Division handles research subjects on the economy, the political system, social and cultural development, the administrative system, science and technology and other general aspects of policy problems. The research activities of the Defence and Security Studies Division focusses on all aspects of security, defence and foreign policy, and this involves specific areas or issues like the management of strategic or defence resources, the nature and changing patterns of international relations, intelligence information gathering, internal security problems, African unity, South-South cooperation, the South Africa's racial problems, the Middle East conflict, etc. In any case, the research work of the NIPSS is both long-range and short-range in form.

Apart from the Institute's in-house research fellows and research assistants, high-ranking academicians from some Nigerian universities were hired in the past and are still being hired on part-time basis as visiting research fellows to handle some of the research problems or topics undertaken by the Institute. The Institute also maintains and supervises a network of researchers who work on its research projects from their regular places of work in some parts of Nigeria.

Joint research work involving two or more fellows or analysts on a single research problem or topic is very rare in the NIPSS. Instead, what is common is the handling of research problems by research fellows on an individual basis, but the assignment of a particular research problem to a fellow is determined largely by the professional expertise or background of that fellow. However, all research findings - no matter who initiated and undertook them - are deliberated upon by most of the senior research fellows collectively and also by the Research Committee in order to ascertain their authenticity before they are passed to the government.

In effect, the NIPSS always sends policy research papers to governmental authorities for consideration. But the Institute's research findings are very rarely published for general consumption. The bulk of NIPSS' existing publications are monographs on public policy problems on specific topics on which it previously organized seminars.

Organization Chart of NIPSS (1989)



### 3.6 Research-Related Activities in the NIPSS

Obviously, one of the main objectives of the NIPSS is to conduct seminars, workshops and policy-oriented programmes for leaders in the public services and private sector of the Nigerian national life. Most of the research-related activities of the Institute stem from that objective.

In this connection, one of the most important activities is the Institute's regular Seminar/Workshop programme. Usually, three seminars/workshops are planned and organized yearly. The purpose of the seminars and workshops is, as officially explained, to stimulate and generate new ideas for the solution of policy problems which fall within the broad research agenda of the Institute, thereby indicating and enhancing subsequent directions and methodology for intensive research into the relevant policy problems. Essentially, therefore, top echelons of the civil service and armed forces, academic and other professionals from both the public and private sectors are all normally invited for the Institute's seminars/workshops to engage in brainstorming, dialogue and debate on general policy problems. Somehow related to the Institute's regular seminar/workshop programme is another research-related activity officially tagged 'Policy Review Series.' Under this occasional programme, existing public policies are usually diagnosed in a critical evaluative style.

Another research-related process of the NIPSS is officially called the 'Bimonthly Policy Forum'. Under the bi-monthly forum, brainstorming sessions are organized and held in camera on selected major current issues. The in-house sessions are attended by a very few carefully selected participants: the Institute fellows, relevant government officials, and a few relevant resource persons outside the government circle. Without the slightest media publicity and publication of proceedings and decisions, policy memoranda are usually prepared after each meeting only for the consumption of the government.

Finally, there is what is referred to as the 'Nigerian Forum' in NIPSS. This is supposedly an annual forum on the state of the nation in selected critical issues, to which only Nigerian leaders of remarkable service and experience in various fields are invited for lecture and reflection.

### 3.7 NIPSS Facilities

Since its foundation in 1979, the NIPSS has consciously developed some research facilities and resources, and is still trying to develop and consolidate other potential research resources.

The first in this connection is the Institute's library. The library is well stocked with books and policy documents not only for research purposes, but also for the use of participants of the Institute's senior executive course programme. However, the library is not open to the public.

Secondly, a scheme which more or less serves as an opportunistic facility for the NIPSS is the 'Distinguished Fellowship' scheme. Under the scheme retired public figures who have distinguished themselves in public and private service e.g. ex-heads of government, ex-politicians, retired top civil servants and military officers, academicians, industrialists, etc. are invited to the Institute for a short period of residence as distinguished visiting fellows. The official purpose of the distinguished fellowship scheme is to give the distinguished fellows the opportunity for reflection and interaction in the Institute and ultimately use the facilities at the Institute for the writing of memoirs, if they like. The research advantage of the distinguished fellowship programme is that the Institute, through personal interaction with participants, stand to gain first-hand information from them on their personal experience in their various fields. Such information could be used for research work on current policy problems.

Finally, the senior executive course organized regularly for the top echelons of the public service by the Studies Department is an indirect source of facility for the Institute. The course is designed to fulfil one of the cardinal objectives of the Institute earlier outlined. Admission for the senior executive course is based strictly on the nomination of the following sponsoring organizations the Federal and State civil services, the armed forces, the police, federal and state parastatals (including the Central Labour Union), the Universities and the Nigerian Chamber of Commerce. The Institute's requirement for admission in terms of professional skills and experience is very high. In the armed forces, for example, nominees are expected to have attained the rank of colonel at least or its equivalent in the other services. While in the civil service, nominees are required to have progressed to the post or the equivalent of the post of Director and above; in the private sector they should at least come from the category of senior managers who are members of their (establishment's) management boards.

Usually, the senior executive course lasts for 9 months. The broad areas of study covered by the course are: (a) executive communication techniques; (b) the domestic environment of policy-making; (c) defence and security; (d) policy, strategy and management; (e) international politics and economics;

and (f) international organizations. As part of the course programme, every participant is required to write a thesis of about 8,000 words on an approved subject. Although there is no teaching faculty as such in the Institute, as exists in the University, the small group of resource persons in the Studies Department function as the facilitators of the senior executive course, and to a large extent they determine the course contents.

To a large extent, however, the course is run on a system of self-study, whereby participants are given ample opportunity to compare notes, experience problem-handling and contribute (authoritatively) to discussion in class. Besides the Institute's in-door course facilitators, course participants benefit from the experience and expertise of guest lecturers who are usually invited from almost all sectors of the Nigerian society to stimulate and facilitate participants' classroom discussions and self-study. The other modes of learning for the participants in the senior executive course are seminars, syndicate work and study tours. The study tour's aspects of the course programme are usually undertaken in three phases: a local tour which takes the participants' syndicates to some towns in most states within Nigeria, an African tour, and a world tour.

The Institute's policy research work undoubtedly benefits, indirectly at least, from the interaction of the Institute's staff with the high-profile participants of the senior executive course. One research fellow in NIPSS told us that some of the syndicate papers and dissertations written by participants are very valuable materials for the diagnosis of policy problems by the Institute's policy analysts. In other words, the participants in themselves are, or could be sources of valuable information or data for NIPSS research.

### 3.8 The Relationship between the NIPSS and the Government

Although the NIPSS is a federal government-established institution, it is remote from the government. As stated earlier, the Institute is not located in Lagos, the seat of the federal government, but situated far away at Kuru, near Jos, the capital of Plateau State. This is understandable because the Institute was conceived and planned to be a semi-autonomous institution. Notwithstanding that, NIPSS relates with the federal government of Nigeria in a number of ways.

In the first place, the Institute's budget is 100% funded by the federal government of Nigeria. The NIPSS does not charge fees for its senior executive course and it has no other means of income. Thus it is always at

the mercy of the government for its budget. Secondly, as stated earlier, members of the governing board and the director-general of the Institute are government appointees. There were few occasions when the federal government had by-passed the board of governors and the director-general to make a direct appointment to fill some less high-ranking posts within the Institute. After the military coup of December 1983, which terminated presidential democracy in Nigeria, for example, the new federal military government redeployed the clerk of the defunct National Assembly (by Parliament) to the NIPSS as the director of administration. Thirdly, the NIPSS relates to the federal government by way of annual reports of its activities, administration and audited accounts which are annually submitted to the head of the federal government. In all matters concerning its relations with the government, the NIPSS is directly supervised by the executive office of the head of the federal government.

### 3.9 Analysis of the Impact of NIPSS on Policy-making

Prima facie, the NIPSS is in many respects designed and operated as a multi-purpose institution that combines general policy studies with military strategic studies, as is the case with some American think-tanks. As a matter of fact, the NIPSS is unique in Africa, if not in the whole of the Third World, in that it functionally combines 3 major activities: (i) a high level training programme for senior executives; (ii) policy study or research; and (iii) strategic study or research.

Although the NIPSS is not an outright imitation of any particular (practical) model of institutionalization of policy analysis in the developed western countries, we believe its design combines many different features of existing policy institutions and institutes of strategic studies in almost all the advanced countries visited by the government-appointed panel - on whose recommendation the foundation and design of the NIPSS was based. No doubt, the NIPSS is designed deliberately as a high profile institution.

The activities and operationalization of the NIPSS show that it falls in-between some American think-tank models of institutionalization of policy analysis/research (e.g. the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Washington DC; the Brookings Institution, Washington DC; Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, etc.) and the Dutch model of the same (the SCGP in The Hague). To some extent NIPSS has also some similarity with the British CPRS in function rather than structure. Yet, generally speaking, the NIPSS has a certain uniqueness of its own, however rudimentary.

The National Institute (i.e. NIPSS) appears to have a much closer relationship with the Chief Executive of the Nigerian federal government than is the case with the aforementioned American think-tanks and the Dutch SCGP. In this respect, the NIPSS partially resembles the British model - CPRS. Yet, as we shall show very shortly the NIPSS is in many respects different from the CPRS. While some American models like the Rand Corporation are located completely outside the government and thus function independently, the NIPSS has SCGP-like status: semi-outside location (government parastatal) and semi-autonomy. Of course, as it can be seen from our description of the Dutch SCGP and Nigeria's NIPSS, the former obviously enjoys much more independence or freedom in practice than the latter in spite of the fact that both of them are government parastatals. Nevertheless, both the NIPSS and SCGP negate the CPRS in that the CPRS had no semi-autonomous status, nor was it partially located outside the government as a government parastatal, but it (CPRS) was completely located inside the government and near the central minds of the British government. As we have shown, NIPSS, unlike CPRS, has a governing board and a few other semi-autonomous features. To a certain extent therefore, the NIPSS looks like an advanced form of institutionalization of policy research and analysis - more advanced in form at least than the defunct CPRS. The word 'advanced' as repeatedly used in the description of policy institutions in this study does not necessarily mean 'effective' or 'effectiveness', rather it means legal 'autonomy' and 'complexity'.

In spite of the fact that the NIPSS is ordinarily a government parastatal like the Dutch SCGP and the fact that SCGP enjoys much more practical freedom and autonomy than the NIPSS, the multi-purpose outlook or functions and complexity of the NIPSS represents, prima facie, a higher form of institutionalization process than the Dutch model: the NIPSS is involved in high level training activities for senior Nigerian executives as explained earlier; the scope of the Dutch SCGP does not cover training programmes. NIPSS' training function is more or less comparable to the postgraduate teaching activities of the Brookings Institution and Rand Corporation in policy analysis. While the Brookings Institution has stopped or suspended its teaching activities (but remains an accredited institution for awarding degrees), the Rand Corporation operates a graduate institute which runs a doctorate programme in policy analysis (Dror, 1980). NIPSS is also different from the Dutch model in the sense that it (NIPSS) is involved in periodical policy analysis and policy evaluation of ongoing policies. This role

resembles the CPRS role - especially in respect to public expenditure review. Besides, the 'Strategic Studies' components of the work of the NIPSS and the high degree of involvement of the military in civilian issues in the NIPSS makes it fundamentally different from SCGP in scope.

Nevertheless, the design of NIPSS has no complete resemblance with either the British model or the Dutch model or the American think-tank model as discussed. Yet, in our view the NIPSS is a think-tank rather than a policy analysis unit, and thus represents an advanced form of institutionalization of policy analysis, relatively speaking. Its semi-outside location and semi-autonomous status as a government parastatal or corporation with an 'independent' governing board justifies this conclusion (at least in theory; how the semi-autonomous status is realized and maintained in actual practice may be another story).

It is against this background that we begin our evaluation of the NIPSS. In the previous chapters we highlighted some of the pros and cons of different theoretical and practical models of policy analysis and the research institutional process, and based on that we concluded that the advanced type think-tank institutionalization process could be difficult to operationalize in developing countries. How far is that conclusion valid in respect of the NIPSS? Although our seemingly favourable account of the operationalization of the NIPSS so far seems to negate our pessimistic theoretical position on NIPSS-type institutions in developing countries, the impact or effectiveness of the NIPSS still needs to be examined in order to actually determine whether our 'speculation' in the previous chapter is applicable to the Nigerian situation.

Based on our definition of the problem of this study, the impact or effectiveness of the NIPSS will be examined below mainly in connection with its policy research and analysis work, which happens to be just one of its statutory functions.

At least, for our main purpose in this study that is the most important function. Others are ancillary. This does not imply that other functions and objectives are not essential for improved policy-making. For example, the training programme of the Institute earlier discussed could help to expand the capacity of the participants - senior public service officials - to grasp and apply the tools of policy analysis to increase or improve the quality of decision-making for development. Yet, we see policy analysis work which produces well-supported advice or recommendations for policy action, as the



most vital aspect of the Institute's work. In this regard, therefore, the indicators of the impact of NIPSS, strictly speaking are: (i) government's acceptance and use of policy analysis done by NIPSS for policy changes, and (ii) an increased desire on the part of the government to remit policy problems to the NIPSS for study. However, because of the difficulty we experienced in penetrating the NIPSS for concrete data, it is impossible for us to embark on a systematic impact analysis based on indicator (i) above.

Therefore, our impact or evaluation analysis of the NIPSS will proceed along the yardstick of indicator (ii) above - an analysis which will be largely shaped by the political environment of the Nigerian policy-making system and the locational status and general design of the NIPSS.

(a) The Political Environment of the NIPSS

The Institute was inaugurated barely one month before the founder of the military government of General Obasanjo handed over governmental power to the elected presidential administration in 1979. In effect, the NIPSS actually did take off under the government of President Shehu Shagari who came to power determined to implement an avalanche of party policies and whose political party maintained a highly partisan policy analysis unit in the party secretariat headquarters.

Between September 1979, when the Institute was inaugurated with the first Board of Governors, and September 1983 (that is, shortly before the end of Shagari's presidential government) the Board was reconstituted twice. In other words, the NIPSS Board had 3 chairmen between the foundation year (1979) and the end of the presidential democracy (1983). Not long after the armed forces regained political power at the tail end of December 1983 the Board of Governors was again reconstituted. That Board was again sacked and later reconstituted following the change of government in August 1985. This of course is hardly surprising, because in most cases the governing boards of government-owned companies, institutions and parastatals in Nigeria usually go with the government that appointed them in the first place, regardless of their statutory tenure.

Given the role of the Board of Governors of the NIPSS in its research and other activities, as earlier enumerated, the instability of the Board (as a result of instability in the polity, was dysfunctional for the Institute's policy analysis work. As research undertakings and a research budget must have the approval of the Board, it was difficult to consolidate policy research activities under the aforementioned situation. The problematic

nature of the situation can be better appreciated if viewed against the fact that most members of the Institute's Research Committee are normally drawn from the Board of Governors.

A similar argument holds for the post of Director-General or Chief Executive of the Institute. As mentioned earlier, the first director-general who was appointed by the founder-government of General Obasanjo in 1979 was replaced in 1981 by the Shagari government after barely two years in office. The second director-general was replaced in 1984 after about 4 years in the post by the military administration of Major-General Buhari which dismissed President Shagari's government. Normally, one would then expect a new institution like NIPSS to enjoy a fairly stable leadership in order to consolidate its activities and make its impact felt, not only within government, but also widely in a problem-ridden society like Nigeria. In short, the political instability of Nigeria negatively reflected on the functioning of the NIPSS. Political instability, then, is a negative index for the NIPSS-type policy analysis institution in developing countries. But this argument cannot be carried to the extreme because, despite political change, NIPSS has continued and expanded and all regimes have used it (though superficially in most cases). Of course, such an institution is politically important and therefore must reflect the political climate of the country. Nevertheless, political stability and consensus (comparable more or less to that in some Western countries like The Netherlands) is very important for functional optimality for a NIPSS-type think-tank.

(b) NIPSS Location and Effectiveness

As we have shown, NIPSS is designed as a semi-autonomous parastatal and so has an outlook of 'semi-outside' location in the government, which, strictly speaking, is inconsistent with the British CPRS, which is located inside and very close to the government. It will be recalled that, apart from research freedom, the CPRS was not known to have enjoyed any form of independence or semi-autonomy. So it is right to say that the NIPSS is not as socially close to the central minds of the Nigerian government as the CPRS was to the central minds of the British government.<sup>10</sup>

As already mentioned, the military leadership under which the NIPSS was initiated and established in 1979 did not stay in power long enough to 'experiment' with the Institution. Therefore, the real 'experimentation' of the Institute, so to speak, started concretely under the presidential democracy (1979-1983). Throughout that period the impact or influence of

NIPSS research work on policy decision-making, both at the state and federal levels of government, was extremely low.

In the first place, most of the top political functionaries of President Shagari's federal government believed that the justification of NIPSS was limited to the conduct of senior executive courses for senior non-political public servants and the organization of seminars on some national problems which have a long-range research character. The ruling National Party of Nigeria (at the federal level and in most states) came to power with some policies extracted from its manifesto, and the party maintained a powerful but grossly partisan and small policy analysis unit in the party secretariat. Socially and physically, the party's policy analysis unit was closer to the President and his Cabinet than the NIPSS.

In effect, most of the ruling party's tangible, capital-intensive policies were not referred to the NIPSS for analytical advice. The in-house analysts of the ruling National Party of Nigeria regularly had access to the press and electronic media, and used them to justify or argue in favour of party policies, even in the face of evident failure of such policies. Judging from the ruling party manifesto and rhetoric, the most important of its policies was the housing policy. In spite of the large amount of money expended on the housing policy, it was a colossal failure - so much so that it became the subject of a scandal, which the next government set up a panel to investigate. Our investigation reveals that the government did not consult NIPSS on the design and implementation of this expensive housing policy.

By and large, the civilian presidential government (1979-1983), consciously or otherwise, avoided the use of the NIPSS for policy advice. Consequently, during that period the Institute's research work was saddled with long-range problems (with little or no current implications), most of which were self-initiated by the research fellows.

Even when his government was not making use of the NIPSS for the analysis of most of its policies, President Shehu Shagari made certain public remarks which sounded more or less like an indictment of the Institute. For example, at the graduation ceremony of one of the series of senior executive courses organized by the Institute in 1982, the President said that, despite the numerous activities of the Institute, it was difficult to conclude that the results of its activities had become matters of public policy and action. According to him, this was perhaps due to a lack of perception of the impact which valid propositions from the efforts of the Institute could have on

public policy. The President said further that the studies conducted by the Institute could only form solid inputs into public policy formulation if they were related to problems facing the country. He also called on the Institute's governors to re-examine its objectives critically and include in the think-tank's research agenda studies on indiscipline, corruption, nepotism and poor attitude to work among the populace (Tunde Adesina, Nigerian Tide, 23 September 1983). The above remarks of the President of the Republic clearly demonstrated how distant the Institute was to the executive decision-making authorities in the country.<sup>11</sup>

The second director-general was even more blunt on the problems of the Institute which rendered it ineffective during the period of Shagari's presidency. Shortly after his appointment by President Shagari in 1981, Professor Justin Tseayo expressed disappointment with the research work of the Institute and publicly acknowledged that its research unit had not properly taken off (Daily Sketch, 6 April 1981.) About two months after this the government of President Shagari was ousted in a military coup, and the then director-general of the Institute, Professor Tesaeyo, wrote a newspaper article which at the outset suggested there was an ambivalent relationship between the Institute and the ousted government, or an outright lack of confidence in the former by the latter. It will be very useful for this study to quote Professor Tseayo extensively in this connection:

.... the first Board of Governors .... and the management of the Institute wanted to show the rest of the world that ours was not only an honourable institution but also one which will bring a positive change in the style and methods of pursuing our national interest both in the public and private sectors of our economy. We are however, not happy to report that this was not to be. The vital cooperation of top civil servants and the National Security Organisation (NSO), which is necessary for us to execute most of the sensitive work of the National Institute, has never been given to us [emphasis by underlining is ours]. The worst culprits in this 'conspiracy' to keep out the National Institute from performing its functions for the nation have been policy executors at the Federal Ministries of Defence, External Affairs, the former Executive Office of the President and of course the National Security Organisation (NSO). The Ministry of External Affairs has refused both to participate in our courses along with other Senior Executives, and to assign on a two year basis, suitably qualified senior ambassadors as Directing Staff to the Institute. I want to place on record the exceptional cooperation and support the National Institute has continued to receive from the Military services: the army, the navy, the airforce, and the Nigerian Police Force. It would appear that only members of the armed forces of Nigeria including the Police properly understand and appreciate the importance of NIPSS. I am not despairing for I hope that the top echelon of our Federal Civil Service and the Nigerian universities may soon wake up to appreciate the reality of

NIPSS. The consequence of the action of the police implementators in these ministries and executive departments we have complained about, has been to deny the Federal Government avenues to alternative available options to the solution of our social, economic, political, security, scientific, cultural and other problems facing the country .... Nigeria belongs to all of us and the protection of the Nation's national interests cannot be a monopoly of the civil bureaucratic class; it has to be seen as a collective responsibility of all patriotic Nigerians (New Nigerian, 28 February 1984)

The following are some of the implications of the director-general's outburst:

- (a) That in spite of the semi-outside location NIPSS and its social distance from the bureaucracy and the machinery of government, it still needs the cooperation of the bureaucracy to function properly, and if it wished the latter could still frustrate the Institute.
- (b) That the Institute has been engaging in some kind of power struggle within government circles for survival.
- (c) That the new military government should come to the aid of the Institute. This demand was subtly made by making his intention known through the media and by publicly acknowledging the positive assistance of the armed forces. The director-general seemed to be saying that the Institute is after all the baby of a military government.
- (d) Above all, the director-general's media outburst showed practically the insensitivity of the government to the Institute's activities, and the mounting problem of its social distance from the policy-making authorities.

Although some members of the Governing Board of the NIPSS during the Shagari presidency were members of the ruling political party, that did not improve the problem of access and research influence of the NIPSS in relation to the decision-making authorities. Part of the explanation for that is that most party members appointed into the governing Board were more or less non-influential figures within the party; that by implication, showed the little importance that the government attached to the Institute. Also, the director-general, a non-party member, had no practical direct access to the President. Neither did the Institute have any practical official relationship with the National Assembly which could have possibly helped it to agitate for its maximum use by the Federal government. Practically, too, the NIPSS did not maintain any meaningful relationship with the State Governments. In fact, it would have been impossible for the NIPSS to cope with the demand of its

expertise if all the governments were to make maximum use of it for policy advice, in view of its small structure and seeming functional overload.

For day-to-day advice on general policy problems, the Office of the President and the Chief Executive of the States maintained some intellectual advisers under different names (e.g. political adviser, economic adviser, security adviser, etc.), most of whom were members of the ruling parties. In most cases, they struggled with the bureaucracies to solidify and consolidate their position, and they were principal contributors to the little or zero impact of the NIPSS research on policy making. The political atmosphere in Nigeria from 1979-1983 was very hot and partisan. In such an extreme partisan atmosphere, the NIPSS was practically reduced to a training institution for top civil servants as well as an avenue for rhetoric conferences to the detriment of real policy analysis. In effect, it is safe to conclude tentatively that an extremely inflammable and partisan political atmosphere is a negative index for NIPSS-type institutions of policy research and analysis.

However, the NIPSS presently appears better under a military government than the turbulent presidency of the civilian era in terms of practical access to the government, a prerequisite so vitally needed by the Institute if it expected to exercise direct influence on decision-making. In view of the structural set-up of the NIPSS, the director-general of the Institute, rather than the chairman or members of the governing board, is in our opinion better positioned to constantly bring the Institute close to the arena of decision-making. The present military government of President Ibrahim Babangida seems to realize this, for the President himself is an alumnus of the NIPSS. The intellectually-oriented Director-General, Professor Tseayo, was replaced by a pragmatic Major-General Charles Ndiomu with effect from 1 December 1984. Actually, he was appointed by the government of Major General M. Buhari. But in spite of the palace military coup of August 1985, which brought in President Babangida, Major-General Ndiomu still kept his job until 1989 when he retired from the Army.

The difference between the former directors-general and General Ndiomu (as well as his successor) is that he had direct access to the head of the government. Until very recently, before his retirement he was a member of the Armed Forces Ruling Council (the highest ruling body under the present dispensation). Major-General Ndiomu was therefore opportune to represent the

scientific interests of the NIPSS during debates on vital policies, as all major national policies and legislations are authorized by the Council.

Yet, it is doubtful if that was sufficient to improve the impact of the NIPSS on national decision-making. The ambivalence of the bureaucracy towards the Institute has continued; the orthodoxy or conservatism in the decision-making process is still largely present - all to the detriment of the Institute. Specifically on the latter subject, successive Nigerian governments, especially military governments have developed and entrenched themselves in a culture of using commissions of enquiry for solving most major policy problems in the country. This culture has undoubtedly been undermining the scientific utility of the NIPSS for policy advice. This problem is further compounded by the use of a part-time advisory committee located within the government; the current head of government, President Babangida, maintains a 6-man Presidential Advisory Committee, consisting mainly of university dons. The Committee functions right inside the president's office. Naturally, the president would rely more on the advisory Committee than the socially distant NIPSS for scientific advice. Conflicting views between the Presidential Advisory Committee and the NIPSS are probably a regular occurrence.

In sum, despite a decade of operation, the influence of the NIPSS on policy-making as an advisory think-tank is very low. The Institute spent a great part of its past years in struggling for survival and power in a policy-making environment powerfully dominated by the bureaucracy. Most of the institute's published research studies are too academic and distant in relation to the real problems facing Nigeria. Besides, many Nigerians have a tendency always to evaluate the Institute only by its teaching activities, which is widely believed to be too elitist.

## CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION4.1 The Problems of Institutionalization of Policy Research and Analysis in Developing Countries

Just as the policy-making incapacities and dilemma of a country can be investigated by diagnosing the culture and the environment of public policy-making of that country, so also can the prospects and problems of institutionalizing policy research and analysis be examined through a diagnosis of the same. This sounds a little ironical if viewed against the fact that the purpose of institutionalization of policy research and analysis itself is to improve policy-making and remove certain incapacities of governance.

Much as institutionalization of policy-oriented research and analysis is highly desirable in developing countries, insuperable problems in this regard are almost certain to render it meaningless or ineffective unless the relevant approach which fits the environment and political culture of the developing countries is vigorously pursued. In view of the scarcity of resources and increasing international debt problems in developing countries, utmost care should be taken not to commit the little available resources on 'grandiose' and 'white-elephant' institutions which could ultimately have very little or no impact on the improvement of the quality of their development policy-making.

While we are not suggesting that Nigeria's NIPSS is a white-elephant institution, we believe that not many developing countries can afford such a complex organization which functionally combines teaching programmes with policy research and strategic studies. Obviously, the Federal Government of Nigeria annually spends a considerable amount of money on the maintenance of the NIPSS.

Nigeria has the largest population of the African continent and an estimated Gross Domestic Product of US\$ 71 billion,<sup>12</sup> which surpasses that of every other African state (and most if not all South American States), but is equal to that of South Africa (Guardian, 28 April 1987). In fact, to the best of our knowledge the NIPSS is the only institution of its type in Africa and South America. Fairly (but not precisely) comparable policy institutions exist in some 'developed countries' of the developing countries of Asia.

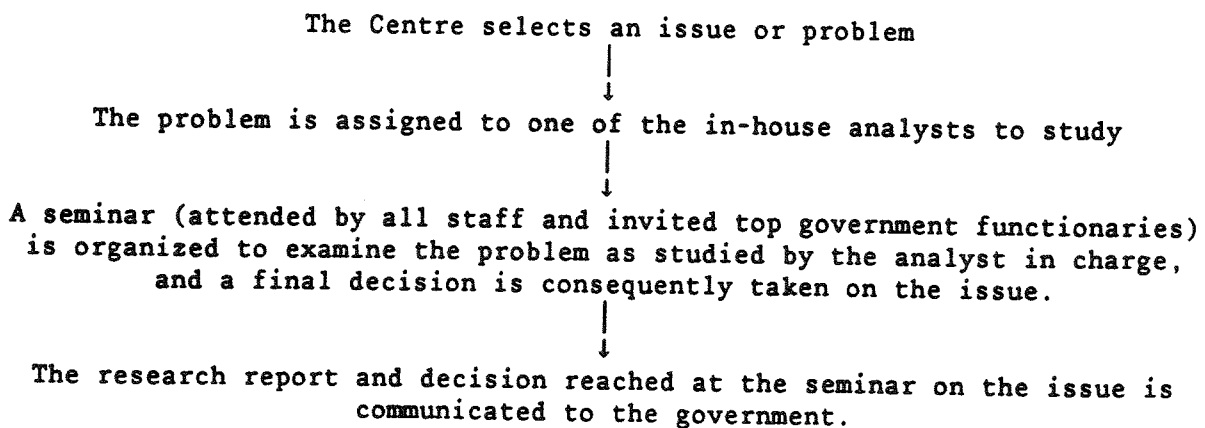
In India for example, a number of autonomous research institutions (established in the late sixties and early seventies) engage, like Nigeria's



NIPSS, in policy-oriented work for both the federal and state governments. Some popular examples are (a) Centre for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi; (b) National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), New Delhi; (c) Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Trivandrum; (d) Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS), Madras. The Centre for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi, probably has the closest functional characteristics (of all the above listed institutions) with Nigeria's NIPSS.

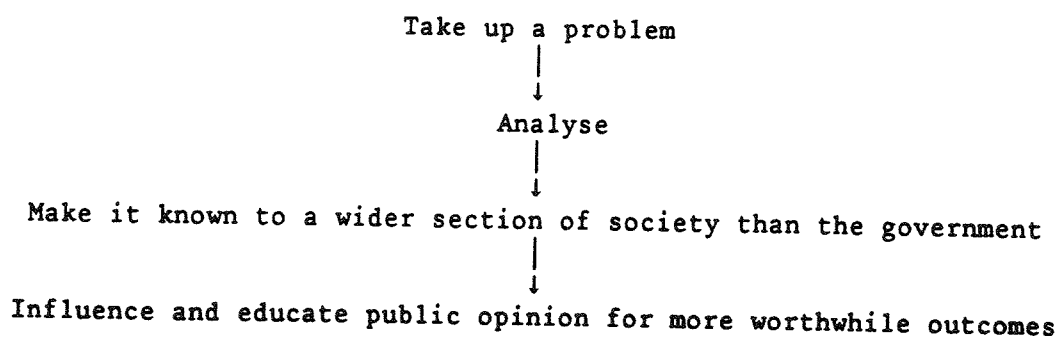
Founded around 1973, the CPR (like many other so-called autonomous research institutions in India) is on the grant-in-aid list of the Indian Council of Social Science Research under the Ministry of Education of the Government of India. As a think-tank located outside the government, the CPR - with its terms of reference or objectives - is concerned with three dimensions of policy: how public policies are formulated, how they should be formulated or made, and what they should be. Generally, the Centre gives advisory services to public and private sector organizations in a wide variety of fields e.g. industrial development, agricultural development, public administration, rural development, banking, etc.; the CPR maintains a high calibre of staff for its work. The staff composition is fairly representative of the elite professions of India: retired civil servants, highly experienced former ministers or high level policy makers, private sector managers, senior university professors, journalists, etc.

In theory, both the Central Government of India and faculty interests of the CPR are major sources of work for the Centre on public policy issues. But in most practical cases, the Modus Operandi of CPR in matters of public policy is as follows:



In the final analysis, it is left to the government to use the output of the CPR for policy decisions or not. The other method by which CPR attempts

to influence policy-making in India (apart from the *modus operandi* described above) is the organization of periodic seminars and conferences for the discussion of various policy issues, bringing to the notice of policy makers the expert views of participants of such discussions. Of course, this aspect of the working methods of CPR is similar to that of the NIPSS as discussed in chapter 3. Neither is the organization of policy-oriented seminars and conferences peculiar to the CPR in India. Almost all the other Indian policy research institutions (mentioned earlier) also try to influence policy-making through seminars and conferences. Essentially, almost all Indian policy institutions (especially the CPR, CDS and MIDS) use the national mass media for highlighting crucial findings of seminars and conferences and for disseminating policy research. In a reference to institutions like CDS and MIDS, Ganesh and Paul (1985) write that they 'moved in the direction of creating a climate of opinion among the public rather than focusing on the government as the sole actor in the policy arena.' According to Ganesh and Paul: 'MIDS, for example, considers its mission to be one of creating an awareness among the larger community on important problems. It considers social policy as a much broader concept than government decision-making and would like to challenge the governmental line whenever appropriate'. The operational method of most Indian policy institutions in this connection, according to Ganesh and Paul (1985: 270) is as follows:



In several respects, the modus operandi of some Indian policy analysis institutions as described above bears some resemblance to the open process and 'permissiveness' of the Dutch SCGP. This is not surprising because India has established itself among the developing countries as the most stable democracy, and in fact the country is the largest non-Marxist democracy in the world.

The truth is that such 'advanced' Indian policy-oriented institutions located outside the central minds of the Indian central or state governments

are bound to have a very minimal effect (if any) on actual public policy-making in India. The problem of the Indian institutions is comparable with that of the Dutch SCGP and Nigeria's NIPSS which, as we have analysed, maintain some functional autonomy from the central minds of government and are not located directly under the central minds of government, and are consequently practically removed from the nerve centre of policy-making.

Ganesh and Paul maintain that the Indian institutions are used by the government much more for the preparation of background studies and papers than for systematic research and analysis of specific public projects or policy issues. They write further: 'While the institutions have some feeling of being 'useful' the larger feeling is one of lack of systematic and continuous impact on policy makers through institutional efforts. Another predominant feeling is one of inability to make any headway in respect of policies where the political stakes are high' (Ganesh and Paul, 1985: 269-270). One disturbing implication of the design of such Indian institutions is that by their very nature, the important confidential relationship needed between the analysts and policymakers hardly exists. Our feeling is that policy-makers will continue to refuse or feel reluctant to refer serious policy-oriented problems to such institutions as long as that level of locational distance and high degree of functional autonomy remains. It will be recalled that this problem of confidentiality was alien to the British CPRS almost throughout the period of its life. Margaret Thatcher's government would probably have not scrapped the CPRS (but would instead have maintained a disguised distance from it) if it was not a confidential institutional partner in the British government or if it was located outside the central minds of the British government.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4.2 Some Lessons from the Experience of the NIPSS

By and large, there is still limited knowledge about the substantive activities of the NIPSS - including the extent of its interaction with policy makers. Nevertheless, the NIPSS prima facie appears to enjoy a more confidential relationship with policy-makers in spite of its semi-outside location and other semi-autonomous characteristics. The library of the NIPSS is not open to members of the public for the purpose of research or for any other reason. Our impression is that the 'closed door' policy of the NIPSS is born out of the desire of the Institute to uphold the confidential relationship which supposedly exists between it and its client (by keeping 'sensitive' documents away from the public). Of course, there are other ways by which the NIPSS can maintain confidentiality without altogether closing its

door to the public or 'starving' the Nigerian public of information about its substantive activities.

Yet, available evidence, as analysed in chapter 3, shows that the relationship between the NIPSS and the federal government of Nigeria is ambivalent. In this connection, the Presidency of Shehu Shagari (1979-1983) was probably the worst period for the NIPSS. Even when the NIPSS was maintaining a high level of confidentiality or secrecy of its policy analysis work then, it was not enjoying the confidence and full co-operation of the government. Our quotation from the article of the second director-general of the NIPSS in chapter 3 is clearly illustrative. In fact, despite President Shagari's rhetoric about the NIPSS (with reference to chapter 3), the practical policy of his government towards the Institute can be summarized in two points as follows.

In the first place, the President and his ministers practically expected the NIPSS to function as a pure research organization, doing research for the sake of the accumulation of general knowledge in policy matters without providing a practical frame of reference for government policy actions. This expectation is hardly a surprise to us because there are numerous autonomous research institutes like that in Nigeria, classified as government (federal or state) parastatals or corporations under the supervision of one ministry or the other whose research functions are, practically speaking, for the accumulation of knowledge and whose research outputs mean little or nothing to the government for the purpose of policy-making. In chapter 1, we explain some theoretical distinction between this type of pure research institute which is expected to use its research work to influence public policy-making only indirectly and in the very long run and policy analysis units/think-tanks whose influence on public policy-making should be more direct - touching on current policy options as well as working on long term problems with current implications.

Secondly, President Shagari wanted the NIPSS, more importantly, to concentrate its activities on training civil servants in the skills of better policy formulation and implementation rather than suggesting what substantive policies his government should follow. The latter was to be done at political party level or the level of political consideration, so that policy making will be in the interest of the party and not necessarily always the people in general. This partly explains why most capitalist and socialist democracies would prefer the location of the policy analysis unit to be in a political

party; many political parties in Europe and North America already maintain such a unit. In effect, we think that the initiative for the establishment of the NIPSS would probably not have come from the politicians or the civilian government of Shehu Shagari if the military government which preceded it had not already provided it.

The newspaper article written by the second director-general of the NIPSS in February 1984 (as quoted earlier in chapter 3), and indeed our entire analysis of the NIPSS (in chapter 3) suggests that the Institute enjoyed and still enjoys a better relationship with the Military Government vis-à-vis civilian government. The following reasons can be offered for that:

- i) Military leaders have few policy ideas or preferences of their own compared to politicians, and are therefore more eager to listen to others.
- ii) Military leaders, bureaucrats, technocrats and intellectuals have a more or less common concept of policy making and policy analysis as objective problem solving in the public interest. On the other hand, most politicians see policies as politics, and as opportunities for achieving their party programmes and providing benefits to groups which have helped them to gain political power.
- iii) Military leaders come into power not on the basis of election but on the basis of the power of the gun or coercion, and the only constituency they have to keep happy is the army itself. Leaving this policy area, they are open to any creativity in all other policy areas which will increase their popularity.
- iv) The army believes much more in technological and institutional innovation than politicians.
- v) Finally, the NIPSS hardly selects policy issues or problems which affect the interest of the military for analysis. The more the NIPSS ventures into policy issues of the military the greater the likelihood of the former questioning the status quo, thus risking conflict with the military.

However, either under military government or civilian government, the necessary co-operation expected from the bureaucracy and some vital government departments is still not fully forthcoming for the NIPSS.<sup>14</sup>

Despite the NIPSS policy of secrecy, its supposed confidential relationship with the government is still highly suspect. Most NIPSS research projects are

still self-initiated, and as such the government is neither agitated by them nor anxiously waiting for the research outputs. Also, most of the past and ongoing research projects of NIPSS are long term issues with little or no current implications, and have very little or no priority for Nigerian decision-makers, civilian or military. The impact of the NIPSS on public policy-making in Nigeria could therefore be improved significantly if it also advises, or is allowed to advise on current policy issues.

An important conclusion from our investigation of the NIPSS is that its present design or status is of very little relevance to the Nigerian policy-making environment. Although the NIPSS meets some of the theoretical prescriptions for think-tanks (by Dror, 1971a, 1986a), our data on the Institute's current problems confirm some of the reservations of Nevile Johnson (1979) about institutionalization of policy analysis. We believe that some of the current problems of the NIPSS will not disappear as long as the present design of the Institute is maintained. After all, the present problems of the NIPSS are more or less in-built problems of the think-tank (as distinct from policy analysis unit) common with most (known) think-tanks in the world (see especially Dror, 1984a for an excellent review of some of the problems). Although the prospect of the NIPSS has improved significantly under the previous and present military governments (in contrast to the last civilian government), our fear is that this improvement may not be permanent as the present military government has recently enacted a programme of disengagement from power by which political power will again be handed over to an elected presidential government in 1992.

#### 4.3 Some Final Thoughts

Yes, institutionalization of policy analysis is highly desirable in developing countries. To the extent that the developing countries are faced with serious problems - most of which are caused by poor policy making, Dror's prescription and theoretical justification of institutionalization of policy analysis is correct and applicable to developing countries.

But as we have shown, problems abound also in institutionalizing policy analysis. When we explore and compare Dror's extensive body of normative theories on institutionalization of policy analysis to data from developing countries, we find quite a number of bottlenecks which confirm Johnson's pessimism. Of course, in social research theories change as they are exposed to data, and the meaning of data is transformed or re-interpreted as newer and more articulated theories are brought to confront the data. However, because

of the dialectical confusion which usually characterizes the interaction of theory and data, this study does not claim to have perfectly and flawlessly examined the prospects and problems of institutionalization of policy analysis in developing countries. But the salient issues involved have been highlighted with the aid of the available data in one country.

In the final analysis, the following questions - some of which have been answered systematically and some of which should be left (aloof) for further research - are pertinent. Which model of institutionalization of policy analysis is likely to have a better chance of success in developing countries? What strategies are needed to overcome the resistance of the bureaucracy to institutionalization of policy analysis? Can the developing countries provide the expensive and highly trained manpower resources necessary to man pure think-tanks? Are the extra expenditure and conflicts with bureaucracy worthwhile in terms of the gain? Should governments in developing countries first support the establishment of pure research organizations and subsequently policy analysis organizations? Has there been any visible impact of policy analysis institutions in terms of (a) creating more awareness of the need for policy analysis; (b) looking at policy problems from a broader perspective - i.e. going beyond bureaucratic policy analysis (muddling-through strategy); and (c) actual change or initiation of new policies?

Some of these questions can form excellent points of take-off in any research exercise. While not going into long repetitions over earlier analysis in connection with some of these questions, this chapter will conclude in the same way as chapter 2: the policy analysis unit, like the British CPRS, appears to be the best model of policy analysis institutions for developing countries. As analysed in the body of this study, there are two reasons for this conclusion: (1) the policy analysis unit located near or under the central minds of government appears to create a better impact on policy-making than autonomous or semi-autonomous think-tanks located outside the government; (2) the policy making environments of developing countries are more receptive or accommodating of a policy analysis unit near or under the central minds of government than autonomous or semi-autonomous think-tanks.

Our conclusion takes the views of both Dror and Johnson into consideration. In fact, Johnson's pessimistic view about the institutionalization of policy analysis, strictly speaking, is more applicable to autonomous think-tanks than policy analysis unit like CPRS. Besides, not many developing countries can fulfil Dror's prescriptive features of think-tanks. For example, in spite of

one decade of operation NIPSS is yet to fulfil the 'critical mass of a minimum of twenty to thirty high quality staff members'. According to Ganesh and Paul (1985), some Indian policy research institutions consciously keep their faculty size small in tune with available budgets from the Indian Council of Social Sciences Research and their clients. In view of the apparent difficulty in fulfilling the necessary requirements or features of pure think-tank in developing countries, it is better to go for a simpler model of policy institution: a policy analysis unit near to the heads of government.

In addition, despite the utterly attractive theories of western democracies, policy-making in both the capitalist and socialist democracies requires a reasonable degree of confidentiality; so confidentiality is an important factor in policy analysts/decision-makers relations. As our analysis shows, policy analysis units near the central minds of government better fulfil this necessity (than autonomous think-tanks), thus having better access to and impact on policy-making.

However, in designing a policy analysis unit near the heads of governments, developing countries should guard against partial institutionalization. In other words, policy analysis units in developing countries should be fully and legally institutionalized so that political authorities do not abolish them at will, as was the case with the British CPRS. In fact, the British CPRS cannot be described as an 'institutionalized' model in the strict (legal) sense of the term.

Although the NIPSS is currently supervised by the Presidency, strictly speaking it is still not located inside the government in view of its autonomous characteristics. To that extent, its impact on practical policy-making would remain questionable. We recommend, therefore, that while the institution is being improved and developed, policy analysis units as suggested above should be established to assist in the improvement of Nigerian public policy-making. If the NIPSS were to be fully engaged as a think-tank by both the federal government and all the 21 state governments, it definitely could cope (in its present form) with the demands for its policy analysis work.

It is therefore necessary for the federal and state governments to set up policy analysis unit near the office of the heads of various governments to engage mainly in the analysis of current policy problems or options. At the federal level, in Nigeria the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC) presently working for the administration of President Ibrahim Babangida can be



transformed into a full-time institutionalized policy analysis unit. It is important to note that NIPSS currently functions better as a high level policy training institution than an advisory think-tank. Therefore, not much is known to the public and researchers about the direct contribution of the NIPSS as an institution to the public policy process, as distinct from the contribution of its alumni.

On the other hand, the PAC has a more direct and greater impact on the nation's policy-making process. The PAC began operations in 1986 as an integral part of the Office of the President. Although its 6 members function on a part-time basis, the Committee meets at least once in a month and maintains a full-time secretariat. The body has access to the facilities and resources of the Office of the President. High-ranking officials of ministries and extra-ministerial departments regularly appear before the PAC to defend their budgets, projects and policy initiatives. It is therefore reasonable to believe that most projects and policy initiatives which have current implications) emanating from ministries and extra-ministerial departments are accepted, rejected or fired on the basis of the advice of the PAC.

Yet, the PAC cannot strictly be described as a policy analysis unit because it lacks some of the theoretical features of that approach of institutionalization. But it can easily be reformed into a policy analysis unit, and it is recommended that this should be done.

Since our conclusion supports the 'inside method' rather than the 'outside method' of institutionalization of policy analysis, we would suggest that, in addition to maintaining strong policy analysis units near the heads of both the Federal and State Governments, each ministry and extra-ministerial department (both at the federal and state levels) should also set up a micro unit for planning, research and policy analysis; and should be staffed with well trained analysts - having direct and confidential relationships with decision-makers of their respective ministries and departments. This recommendation should apply not only to Nigeria, but also to all development-hungry countries in the Third World. This approach may go a long way to solving the problem of bureaucratic resistance to the use of modern policy analysis. Nigeria is already making some positive moves in this connection: One of the specific requirements of the 1988 civil service reforms in Nigeria is that each ministry or extra-ministerial department should set up a department of Planning, Research and Statistic (DPRS). The department is supposed to be a micro think-tank in charge of policy planning and policy

analysis in each ministry or department. However, the DPRS is yet to take off meaningfully in many ministries and extra-ministerial departments because of staffing problems - an issue which is being tackled but sluggishly.

Notes

1. This paper is a revised version of my M.A. research paper in Development Studies at the Institute of Social Studies (ISS), The Hague. I am grateful to Dr. V. Moharir and Professor Y. Dror for their supervision of the research paper and their subsequent suggestions for improving the paper for publication. I am also indebted to the Publication Committee of the ISS for its valuable suggestions which were particularly helpful to me in reducing the original size of the research paper.
2. This discussion will be restricted to Western, non-Communist countries.
3. See Baehr, P. and Wittrock, B. (1981) for a deep analysis of some of these policy research and analysis institutions.
4. See the lists of some of the issues or policy problems in Baehr (1986) and the Reports of the First and Second Terms of Office of the Council.
5. Examples of such ad hoc bodies are the panel on the creation of new federal capital, the panel on the creation of new states in the Federation, the panel on land use policy and the technical committee on revenue allocation.
6. For instance, an article in New Nigeria of 12 July 1979, authored by Dr Chuba Okadigba, was very critical of the whole idea of establishing the NIPSS.
7. The armed forces have always been represented in the Governing Board of the NIPSS, presumably because of the 'strategic' component of the Institute's studies and research.
8. We have no concrete data on the financial incentive system (salary and allowances) for NIPSS analysts in comparison to what is obtainable in the bureaucracy and the universities. However, we are inclined to believe that the Institute operates a similar salary scale and structure to Nigerian Universities as other Government-owned research institutes.
9. For reasons not clear to the writer, none of the functionaries of the NIPSS contacted in the course of this study was willing to disclose the exact or rough figure of the Institute's annual research budget. Neither is the information available in any of its information booklets.
10. While the CPRS and the Dutch SCGP are physically located in London and The Hague respectively, the NIPSS (not unlike most US think-tanks) is physically located outside Lagos - the seat of the federal government of Nigeria, but in a remote small town - Kuru, which is several hundred kilometres away from Lagos. However, physical location has little or nothing to do with effectiveness.
11. President Shagari's remarks suggested that part of the problem of the underutilization of the NIPSS was also due to the NIPSS not selecting research topics which were priority issues for political leaders.
12. Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, former Foreign Affairs Minister, gave this and other data about Nigeria's 'credentials' of middle powership in a speech to a cross-section of the country's foreign policy elites on 27 April 1987 as justification for Nigeria's initiative role in the controversial policy of the Lagos Forum or Concert of Medium Powers.

13. In other words, it would probably have been easier for Mrs Thatcher to isolate a policy analysis institution like the Dutch SCGP under the cloak of independence or autonomy for the latter than take the political trouble to abolish a non-independent unit like the CPRS, which, ironically, was initially established by a government of the Conservative Party. In effect, Mrs Thatcher's Conservative government would have loved to inherit an institution like the SCGP or the Indian CPR, without any obligation to make use of it.
14. In the 1983 edition of the NIPSS brochure, it was clearly stated that the Institute was regularly appealing to the federal and state governments to make information available to it for the purpose of its research and policy analysis work. That remark suggests, at least, that the Institute was being denied necessary data by the government; otherwise the remark was uncalled for.

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