

## Civil Service Reforms and National Development in Nigeria

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### Abstract

*Civil service is an executive arm of government that implements the programmes and policies of government efficiently and effectively to enhance national development. Civil servants are crops of technocrat at federal, state and local level who assist government of the day with their wealth of knowledge and experience to carry out their legitimate business. Nigerian civil service has been in dilemma of partisan politics, red-tapism, leakages, wastage, non professionalism, unproductive, redundancy and over-bloated ghost workers from one administration to another since independence of 1960. Civil service revolves around people to achieve result, this prompted why successive regimes have bent on reforming to improve the machinery of government; yet the effort remain obsolescence, no enthusiasm to execute government policies. The paper examines various reforms in Nigeria civil service and finalize that nothing has been done for better service delivery. The lacuna experienced in Nigerian civil service is not far from the structure of Nigerian state coupled with socio-cultural factors on the aegis of federal character principle and quota system all this floored national development. To ameliorate this persistent deterioration of bureaucratic bottleneck, inefficiency and unaccountability, this demands meritocracy in the altar of mediocrity during appointment to enhance national development. The bureaucratic theory of Max Webber should be in place in the context of civil service reform in Nigeria to achieve result. The paper concludes that civil service reform in Nigeria will build human capacity to improve institutional structures and achieve the goal of national development.*

**Keywords:** Civil Service, Reforms, Commission, panels, Red-tapism, service delivery

### Introduction

Civil service is a wide organization that is controlled and funded by the government, it involves bureaucrats and technocrats of the state not of political or judicial office holders employed in civil capacity with their remunerations paid wholly from money voted in the parliament (Omoruyi, 1991). Civil service is the executive branch of the government machinery exists to effect government policies. The effectiveness of government machinery depends on the efficiency of civil service ability to policy decisions. Consequently, civil service is the custodian of government reputation to carry out policies efficiently, this undermine government position and stability in power. Civil service is structured into administrative class; executive class; professional class and junior cadre class. Civil service reform is the modification of government human capacity system to maximize administrative values. It is a colonial creation; this model was inherited in Nigeria from our colonial master (Britain) in structure (Adewumi, 1988). It was structured in a way that colonial masters extract the much coveted financial and material resources needed to control metropolitan powers. Nigerian state was in charge of administrative leadership in 1960 to restructure civil service to suit our development needs. The bureaucrats that occupied leadership position in civil service imbibed colonial mentality of wealth acquisition for self-aggrandizement and self-superiority (Tagowa, 1999). Instead of improving the lot of Nigerians, they were colonial masters in black man skin. This abysmal performance necessitated the clamour for civil service reforms in Nigeria. According to Anazodo (2009), the Harragin

commission was the first commission set up to assess manpower problem in civil service and discontent among European members for poor financial reward, Gorsuch commission attempt regional administrative bureaucratic structure. After independence, Nigeria embarks on many reforms such as Adebo commission (1971), Udoji commission (1974), Dotun Philips (1985), Decree 48 reform (1988), Ayida panel (1995). According to World Bank (2002), developing nations struggle to better their existence through the process of reforms for efficient and effective service delivery. When Nigeria got independence in 1960, civil service structure was the way colonial master left it, no development or innovations in the system. Nigerians that take over from the colonial masters adopted their style of management to exploit the masses. Consequently, Nigerians clamoured for Nigerianizing the system to reduce expatriate predominance and introduce regionalization in the civil service. The Northern region was given much attention in recruitment whether qualified or not, it was the same in East and Western regions of Nigeria. This culminated sectionalism in Nigerian civil service, every region vigorously practiced regionalizing their respective zones. The military take-over in 1966 and 1983 was a big blow in the system. Nigerians experienced 35 years military rule with short periods of civilian rule. The military regime exhibit non skilled capacity expert to manage the economy and this development disbanded legislative and elected representatives from the people. Ogunna (1999) states that government functioned without elected legislative, yet policies made were implemented, laws enacted were enforced. The military co-opted politicians, academic experts and career civil servants for ministerial appointment; these initiate economic, social, and political policies at the same time breed unaccountability and probity in the service. Ogunna (1999) stated that military brought insecurity into the civil service, there was massive purge in the public service during Murtala regime of 1975 and 1976, Buhari and Babangida regimes retrench massively in the system retirement, termination and dismissal generated fear, insecurity, dehumanization and frustration in the service. The galloping inflation among civil servant left average bureaucrats in misery and apathy. The low morale, embezzlement, and corruption, ineffectiveness, low productivity; assume more political powers without responsible to the people. The selfish and sectional interests in the system impaired discipline to achieve goals, they are bent on feathering their own nests to neglect societal needs. Riggs (1974) assert that the result of civil service in Nigeria is poor performance, this has not been dealt with and so the problem still lingers. It is against this backdrop that the paper limits the review of previous civil service reforms from post independence era to date and examine the dynamics of transformational change that has shaped civil service in most of these reforms to proffer solutions.

## **Conceptual Clarifications**

### **Civil Service**

Adamolekun (2002) states that civil service is the machinery of government; this is so in Britain and most common wealth countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. In the British conception, the civil service is used to refer to the body of permanent officials appointed to assist the decision makers. Section 318 sub-section 1 of the 1999 constitution define civil service is service rendered to the federation, state or even local level in a civil capacity, staff to the office of the president, vice president, governor, deputy governor, ministries, departments and agencies of the federation and state with the responsibility to business of the government of the federation or state (FRN, 1999). The civil service is the body of men and women employed in a civil capacity and non-political career basis by the federal and state governments primarily to render and effect government decisions and implementation (Ipinlaiye, 2001). Such career officers got their appointment from civil service commission, and exercise power of delegating duties and responsibilities to ministries, department and agencies of government in accordance with laid down rules. Presently, civil service is an institution bequeathed to mankind in the process of

revolutionizing an efficient way of organizing large human organization. It is in this respect that the civil service is regarded as bureaucracy. Civil service is a complex body of permanent officials appointed to assist the political executives in formulating, executing and implementing government policies in ministries and extra-ministerial departments within which government business is carried out. The new Encyclopedia Britannica (2004), states that civil service is the body of government officials employed in civil occupations that are neither political nor judicial. Bezzina (1994) assert that civil service is the employees selected and promoted on the basis of merit and seniority system, which include examination. World Book Encyclopedia (2004) noted that civil service consists of people employed by state to run public institution of a country. Abba and Anazodo (2006), argue that civil service in Nigeria comprises workers in various ministries, departments and agencies apart from political office holders.

### **Civil Service Reforms**

Olaleye (2001) sees civil service reforms as an attempt to reconstruct administrative structure and revamp operational machinery and techniques capable of improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency. This definition shows that civil service reforms may occur for the purpose of addressing problems arising in operation, structure and organization of an institution. Civil service reforms refer to purposeful change introduced to improve the capacity of a given organization to respond to changing demands. Adewumi (1988) state that civil service reform is embarked on the assumption that it is feasible to reach the optional level in the working of a given organization if the administrative process is equipped to provide such support. Civil service reform is purposeful or goal oriented changes designed to improve the skills as well as the preparedness of members to satisfy the organizational set goals or objectives. Summarily, civil service reform involves identifying an existing problem and attempting to solve it, this has to do with policies formulated to restructure and transform an organization from bad to a better condition in analyzing the civil service reforms and national development in Nigeria.

### **National Development**

Some scholars have attempted to explore the definitions of national development for the purpose of this study. National development refers to a sustainable growth and development of a nation to a desirable one. National development is people oriented and its success is evaluated on the impact to improve the lot of the masses (FGN, 1980). Wood hall (1985) defined national development as the improvement of a country's productive capacity through changes in social attitude, values and behaviour and finally, changes toward social and political equality and eradication of poverty. Onabanjo and M, Bayo (2009), states that national development is human oriented, that is individually in collectiveness and not individual. Elugbe (1994) view national development as the growth of nation in terms of unity, education, economic well-being and mass participation in government. National development entails the provision of all the necessary materials and equipments that will guarantee man in every society to make a living.

Todaro and Smith (2003) identified the objectives of national development as increase in availability of basic life sustaining goods such as food, shelter health and protection. The levels of living like high incomes, employment, better education and greater attention to cultural and human values. The expansion of economic and social choices available to individuals and nation by freeing them from servitude and dependence, forces of ignorance and human misery. Okpata (2004) agrees that national development is the cornerstone of every economic growth for sustainable development, this may mean "growth, change or planned growth of a nation" Abah (2000) states that development exists in a tri-dimensional concept, development has consumatory dimension connotes increase in the quantity of usable items available to man in the society. The national development is a multi-dimensional process involving organization and re-orientation of the entire socio-economic system, an improvement of income and output, radical changes in

institution, social and administrative structures as well as popular attitudes, customs and beliefs, such as physical (societal), a state of mind (psychological) and transformation of institution. This argues that development is a state of the mind or an issue bordering on the society; it is paramount to note that development is anchored on human resources.

### Civil Service Reforms in Nigeria

Since the independence era, Nigerian Civil service has undergone series of reforms aimed at tackling institutional problems to reposition development challenges of the 21st century. From 1960 to date, the table below summarizes the successive reforms of civil service in Nigeria.

**Table 1:** Civil Service reforms in Nigeria

Reforms, Commissions and Panels	Year
Morgan Commission	1963
Eldwood Commission	1966
Adebo Commission	1971
Udoji Commission	1972
Dotun Philips Commission	1985
Decree No. 43	1988
Ayida Review Panel	1994
Obasanjo Civil Service Reform	1999-2007
Steven Oronsaye Panel	147
Sources: <i>National Population Commission (2006)</i>	

**Morgan Commission (1963)/Elwood Grading Team (1966)** The nationalist movement that ushered independence in 1960 used indigenization of civil service as part of its campaign. Shortly after the colonial rule, prescient Nigerian leaders at that time introduced and implemented Nigerianization policy where British officials in the civil service were replaced with Nigerians. The fallout of this policy came with attendant problems such as shortage of skilled manpower, inefficiency, politicization and complaint about wages. The general strike of September 27, 1963 put intensive pressure on the government and was forced to set up Morgan commission to look into the agitations of trade unions for increases in wages. Morgan commission not only revised salaries and wages of junior staff of the Federal government but introduced for the first time a minimum wage for each region of the country (El-Rufai, 2008). The Morgan Report metamorphosed into the Elwood Grading Team. The Elwood commission was appointed to identify and investigate anomalies in the grading and other conditions relating to all posts in the Public Service of the Federation, with a view to determining an appropriate grading system and achieving uniformity in the salaries of officers performing identical duties (Collins, 1980:324).

**Adebo Commission (1971)** was commissioned to ‘review the existing wages and salaries at all level in the public services and in the statutory corporations and state-owned companies’ (Collins, 1980). The commission observed that low remuneration package is responsible for shortage of senior civil servants. The Adebo commission recommends setting up public service review commission to examine several fundamental issues, such as the role of public service commission, the structure of civil service, and its conditions of service and training arrangements. The acceptance of the commission led to the setting up of Udoji public service review commission.

**Udoji Commission Of 1974** was set up during General Yakubu Gowon administration to review and over-haul the entire public service, and to ensure development and optimum utilization of manpower for efficiency and effectiveness in the service (Anazodo et al, 2012). The major thrust of the commission is to carry out holistic reform of the civil service in terms of ‘organization, structure and management of the public service; investigate and evaluate methods

of recruitment and conditions of employment; examine all legislation relating to pension, as regarding all post; establish scale of salaries corresponding to each grade as a result of job evaluation. The commission recommended a coordinated salary structure that would be universally applicable to the federal and state civil services, the local government services, the armed forces, the Nigeria police, judiciary, Universities, teaching services and parastatals. The commission recommended the introduction of an open reporting system for performance evaluation, and suggested the creation of a senior management group, comprising administrative and professional cadres (Salisu 2001). The relevance of Udoji Commission is particularly salient in its proposition of modern management style, techniques and procedures that enhance the efficient functioning of the institution (such as the adoption of “New Style Public Service based on Project Management, management by objective (MBO) and Planning Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS). Added to this is the recommendation that encourage the mobility of manpower between the private and public sectors. Udoji commission is credited with providing a comprehensive review of quality service delivery, and compensation in the entire system (Dibie, 2003)

**Dotun Phillips Commission (1985)** was set up by the Military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida to review the structure, composition and methods of operation to cope with the demands of government in the 1980s and beyond, (Omoruyi, 1991). The commission looked into the problems of inefficiency, lapses and inadequacies in the civil service and attempt to introduce structural changes to ensure swiftness in administrative practices and eliminate red-tapism. Dotun Philips commission recommended the position of Permanent secretary be replaced by more politically oriented position of Director-General (Jain 2004). The overview of the commission report, as Anazodo et al (2012) observed, suggest that ‘the minister was made both the chief executive and the accounting officer of his ministry. But before the reform the permanent secretary was the accounting officer of the ministry. The permanent secretary’s appointment was made political as its duration was left for the pleasure of the president or governor by making their position non-permanent any longer. The Dotun Philips reforms properly and correctly aligned the civil service structure with the constitution and presidential system of government, designating permanent secretaries as directors-general and deputy ministers. They were meant to retire with the president or governor. The permanent secretary had a choice whether or not to accept the post. The review commission professionalized the civil service, because every officer whether a specialist or generalist made his career entirely in the ministry or department of his choice. Each ministry was made to undertake the appointment, discipline and promotions of its staff and the ministries of finance and national planning were merged. The acceptance of some of the recommendations of Dotun Philips Commission report led to the civil service

**Reform Decree No. 43 of 1988:** was implemented under the Military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida in 1988. The reform which was widely termed ‘Decree No. 43’ was a military fiat to reposition civil service without input and democratic discussion from the public. The 1988 reforms formally recognized the politicization of the upper echelons of the civil service and brought about major changes in other areas. The main highlights of 1998 reforms are: the merging of ministerial responsibilities and administrative controls and their investment in the Minister as chief executive and accounting officers, replacement of the designation of permanent secretary with ‘Director-General’ whose tenure will terminate with the government that appointed him/her and who will serve as Deputy Minister; greater ministerial responsibility in the appointment, promotion, training and discipline of staff; vertical and horizontal restructuring of ministries to ensure overall management efficiency and effectiveness; permanency of appointment, as every officer, is to make his/her career entirely in one ministry; abolition of the office of the head of civil service; and abolition of the pool system (Igbuzor, 1998). The reform established new administrative department called the Presidency with retinue of top government

officials, purposely to coordinate the formulation of policies and monitor their execution, and serve as the bridge between the government and the civil service (federal ministries and departments). However, the 1988 civil service reforms despite its lofty ideals of efficiency, professionalism, accountability, and checks and balances, did not achieve its desired objectives.

**Alison Ayida Panel of 1994** The Ayida review panel on civil service reforms was inaugurated on 10th November 1994 to re-examine the 1988 reforms. The report of the panel was highly and constructively critical of the 1988 reforms. It reversed most of the reforms of 1988, namely, that the: civil service should revert to the system that is guided by the relevant provisions of the constitution, civil service rules, financial regulations and circulars; the ministers should continue to be the head of the ministry and should be responsible for its general direction but he/she should not be the accounting officer (Fatile and Adejuwon 2010). Instead, the permanent secretary should be the accounting officer of the ministry; the title of permanent secretary should be restored. She/he should be a career officer and should not be asked to retire with the regime that appointed him/her; the position of head of civil service should be re-established as a separate office under the President and a career civil servant should be appointed to head the office; the pool system be restored for those professional and sub-professional cadres that commonly exist in ministries/extra ministerial departments; ministries/extra-ministerial departments should be structured according to their objectives, functions and sizes and not according to a uniform pattern as prescribed by the 1988 reforms. Each could have between two (2) to six(6) departments; personnel management functions in the civil service should be left to the federal civil service commission with delegated powers to ministries; financial accountability in the civil service should be enhanced through strict observance of financial rules and regulations; recruitment into the federal civil service at the entry point should be based on a combination of merit and federal character, but further progression should be based on merit; Decree 17 of 1984 which empowers government to retire civil servants arbitrarily should be abrogated; the retirement age in civil service should be sixty (60) years irrespective of the length of service; government should harmonize the pension rates of those who retired before 1991 and those who retire after 1991; and salaries, allowances and welfare packages of civil servants should be substantially reviewed upwards and should be adjusted annually to ameliorate the effects of inflation, and discourage corruption (Anazodo et al, 2012).

**President Obasanjo Civil Service Reform (1999-2007)** The inception of transition to civilian rule that ushered the emergence of President Olusegun Obasanjo as the Nigerian Head of state came with fulfilling 'electioneering' promise of reforming the civil service and other public institutions with a view to expunging extant rules, procedures and regulations that frustrate effective service delivery consistent with modern systems in the civil service. The economic philosophy under which civil service reform under Obasanjo regime hinge was on market: 'that government has no business. All the existing government projects, plants, enterprises, refineries and shareholdings in industries, trade, banking, finance and agriculture must be privatized and sold, so that government, particularly the Federal Government, can concentrate on governance. So, the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) has been very active, since the present regime came on board on May 29, 1999, in selling off enterprises, including houses and other landed properties owned by the Government<sup>13</sup>. The major thrust of civil service reform under Obasanjo regime can be summarized in five ways:

**Pension Reform** In 2004, President Obasanjo regime enacted a law to decentralize and privatize pension administration in Nigeria through the pension reform act 2004. The national pension commission (PENCOM) was constituted as a regulatory body to oversee and check the activities of 25 registered pension fund administrators (PFAs). This new pension scheme is in line with the regime's neo-liberal policies in all areas of life. Before the 2004 new scheme, there had been in existence the Nigeria social insurance trust fund (NSITF) and in 1962 the creation of

national provident fund as compulsory savings for workers in both public and private sectors. This old pension scheme was inherited from British colonialism, which purposely designed it for expatriates. It later accommodated local public sector workers and was in operation until the 2004 decentralized and privatized scheme. Although, in 1974, a little amendment was made which retained the private sector within the national provident fund, the public sector was withdrawn from it. And in 1993, another amendment was made with NSITF re-established and converted from a provident fund into a limited social insurance scheme. The pension scheme of 1962, as amended in 1974 and 1993, was very relatively favourable to workers (Elekwa et al 2011). It was a non-contributory benefit scheme that allowed government to allocate specific resources to the consolidated revenue meant to pay pensioners. This made public sector attractive to workers since their old age could be guaranteed after quitting service, especially in a country where there is no social benefit for the unemployed and senior citizens. The contributory pension reform is one of the key elements in the public service reforms ensure that persons who have worked in the public and private sectors receive their retirement benefits as and when due. Under this new scheme, a compulsory contribution of 7.5% of workers' basic salary and 7.5% of same from employers of labour will now become pension of workers after retirement. The scheme accommodates workers in both public and private sectors with minimum of five employees, and only pensioners and those with 3 years to retirement as from 2004 are exempted (Salami and Odeyemi 2012). The new scheme, therefore applies only to the workers from 2008. The analysis of the Pension reform act suggests that the new pension scheme is not uniform to all categories of workers. While 7.5% of every worker salary is deducted as his/her contribution to pension with the employers remitting 7.5%, totaling 15%, only 2.5% is deducted from armed forces workers while their employer-government-remits 12.5% totaling 15%. Again, judiciary workers under Section 8 (2) of the 2004 pension reform act are exempted from the new scheme entirely. This contributory pension scheme adopted the Chilean pension system put in place by military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet in 1974.

**Monetization Policy** is one of the elements in the public service reforms that will help to ascertain the true cost of spending that government official used in maintaining governmental positions. The fundamental aim of the policy is to prevent and thwart government officials from using the Public or tax-payers money for personal gain. Prior to the implementation of this policy, public office holders and civil servants had numerous fringe benefits attached to the condition of service and remuneration of package. For most civil servants and public officials, residential quarters were provided, furnished and maintained by government. Utility bills for these quarters, including electricity, water and telephone services, were also picked up by government at minimal cost to the officers. In a similar manner, government facilitated procurement of vehicles by these officers at generous rates that could be conveniently deducted from their salaries. The domestic servants were hired for them at government expense while their medical bills as well as those of their spouses and children were also defrayed from public purse. However, with the new monetization policy passed into law vis-à-vis passage of certain political and judicial office holders acts 2002, it is legally stated that monetization of the salaries and allowances of all categories of federal public servants that were formally paid in kinds be converted to cash by the salary and wage commission (Stephen 2011). Under this scheme, 'the government's houses, cars, furniture etc which were for the use of bureaucrats and other Political Office Holders were to be converted into private property. The policy makers believed that the scheme will encourage private initiatives and facilitate creativity and motivation and most importantly, improve the service of quality delivery, promote patriotism and efficiency among civil servants. The monetization policy of Obasanjo regime which was borrowed from the United States primarily to curb excesses and save money for solid development purposes, noted for cutting unnecessary and unproductive spending by the political office holders and top echelon of the civil servant as well

as reducing the burden of providing basic amenities for political office holders have contributed significantly to the continued increase in government recurrent expenditure. What turn out to be the greatest undoing of the policy is that it was characterized by fraud and corruption. For instance, House of Representatives paid almost N500 million above the showroom price of 380 units of Peugeot 407 cars acquired at a princely N2.3 billion. The leadership of Nigerian parliament sold their official government houses to themselves at give away prices.

**Restructuring of Pilot Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs)** is one cardinal policy in public service reform of Obasanjo administration to re-organize MDAs for effective service delivery. The regime observed that federal bureaucracies have number of duplicating and overlapping functions between agencies, and tiers and arms of government. In doing this, the federal government established Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR) in September 2003 as an independent agency in the Presidency to ensure the re-organization and re-assigning of all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of all arms and branches of the federal government (El- Rufai, 2011). The restructuring policy ensures that all MDAs structure to have between 4 and 8 departments and 2-4 divisions per department. These were approved by the Executive Council of the Federation on May 16th, 2007 and applicable to all MDAs immediately.

**Down-sizing and payroll reform** one of the complaints about Nigerian civil service is that it is over-bloated largely as many workers perform a duty that should have be done by few people. In correcting this, Obasanjo regime began down-sizing of staff across all MDAs following the review of three critical questions: how many people do we need to do the job and what type and with what skills? What is the best way to get this work done? (Eme and Ugwu, 2011). During the down-sizing process, it was observed that ‘the civil service was rapidly ageing, mostly untrained and largely uneducated. Their average age then was 42 years, and over 60% were 40 years. Less than 12% of the public servants held university degrees or equivalent. Over 70% of the services were junior grades 01-06, of sub-clerical and equivalent skills (El-Rufai, 2011). The cleaning up of civil service vis-à-vis down-sizing began with the headcount of all civil servants across all MDAs. About 45,000 names were prepared by MDAs and forwarded to BPSR for removal.

Eme and Ugwu (2011) noted that ‘the first batch of officers that were retired total 35,700 officers. The federal civil service commission issued 20,000 disengagement letters to the affected officers. In compliance with the directives of President Olusegun Obasanjo, social pre-retirement training was organized for the disengaged officers at the conclusion of which cheques covering severance payments were issued to the retirees. In terms of payroll reform, it was discovered that 20% of the public service employees were ghost workers-non-existent people on the payroll which goes to staff of personnel and accounts departments (El-Rufai, 2011). In rectifying this anomaly, the executive council of the federation approved the implementation of Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) to all MDAs in February 2006. IPPIS is computerized and biometric database to capture all the bio-data of employees during the headcount process and eliminate payroll fraud. El-Rufai (2011) noted that ‘in federal capital territory (FCT), out of an initial headcount of 26,000, we found 3,000 ghosts in the first round of audit. By the time biometric ID is introduced and centralized, computerized payroll, we found nearly 2,500 who failed to show up for documentation.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this paper is “New Public Management theory” as propounded by theorist like Shah, 2006, Pollit, 1996, Hood, 1991 Larbi 1998. The new public management theory is the transition from process and procedure to an arrangement that is workable, practicable and result oriented. The theory emphasize on good governance as a result of the recent globalization of the economy, technological and innovation. As a conceptualization of the effective service, new public management theory is a relentless movement in the direction of



greater transparency in resource allocation, decentralization of management authority and performance management through service quality (Pollit, 1996). New Public Management theory captures the basis of institutional and organization restructuring as an attempt to raise its performance by improving the quality of service delivery. It is focused rather than the process of result. The theory is concerned primarily with how to deliver public goods efficiently and equitably (Shah, 2006). The theory came up with different concepts for performance and principles to achieve it (Hood, 1991). The principles of accountability and efficiency; reduction of public sector expenditure; improvement in resource use through labour discipline; flexibility in decision making; competition in the public sector through decentralization and emphasis on result not procedure. Jones and Thompson (1999) interpret new public management as five Rs , restructuring to focus on competences, reengineering of work process, radical organization reinvention, realignment activity based costing and responsibility budgeting, rethinking by re-conceptualizing public sector bureaucracies. They conceptualized four categories as efficiency model, downsizing and decentralization model, management of change model and public service orientation to change model. These models engender effective service delivery. Larbi (1998), states that the theory centers on accountability, transparency, democratization and citizens participation. This theory was an effort to improve government service delivery to the citizenry because of the expectations of the people. In many developing countries new public management was a paradigm shift from autocracy to democracy in the dawn of political pluralism. It is an avenue to transform governance that will lead to public policies that are technically efficient and effective and responsive to the needs of the citizenry. The new public management argues for an incentive environment in which leaders are given flexibility in the use of resources but held accountable for results (Shah, 2006). The emerging focus on client orientation and results-based accountability is encouraging civil service to innovate in many parts of the world. In line with the principles of new public management, civil service abysmal performance in Nigeria can be viewed and understood as a carryover effect of this deviation. This captured vividly the reason for the 'procedure without result of civil service operation in Nigeria. It can be noted that various civil service reforms in Nigeria did not consider the option of new public management as alternative to excessiveness, policies are good on paper but the implementation and workability is a tall dream. Civil service in Nigeria is still an old school bureaucracy that depends on degree rigidity of rules, formal structuring and inefficiency, and this affect sustainable development at all levels of government in Nigeria.

### **Analysis of Civil Service and National Development in Nigeria**

Since earliest times, strong recognition has been accorded a permanent body of officials for the sole purpose of implementing governmental decisions. With the emergencies of modern states, the civil service of a state is a derivation of the political system within which it operates. The primary functions of civil service include, advising political office holders on policy formulation on all aspects of governmental activities to ensure formulation of policies that are in line with the objectives of the incumbent government and that are relevant to peoples' needs, implementation of governmental policy decision, sustenance of continuity of the state, regulation of business activities and provision of social services, the civil service also plays a dominant role in socio-economic development of any country, especially in Nigeria where the public sector plays a direct role in national development (Ajayi, 1997). Civil service in Nigeria occupies a unique position in formulating and implementing national development plans.

The public service Review Commission report of (2004) is primarily with development and the use of public service for this purpose. The report argued that we must understand and articulate our objectives and define appropriate means to achieve them. The commission affirmed that a trend in social change in Nigeria is the increasing role of government in sustainable development.

This required that public services, especially the civil service increasingly adopts management methods, development requisite managerial skills and acquires a new approach that include project management that will ensure and assure sustainable development. Civil service has been affected by the nature and politics of Nigeria since independence. During the colonial era, the civil service was mainly concerned with the maintenance of law and order and existence of a peaceful climate suitable to the colonial masters. After independence, the emphasis was on social and economic development. The civil service had to adapt its basic role to the new challenges. With the advent of the military government in January, 1966 and the suspension of the constitution, the civil service became exposed to functions essentially incompatible with its traditional roles (Olagunju, 2000).

After the civil war of 1967-1970, the role of the civil service shifted to preserving national unity, nation reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. With increase in oil revenue, emphasis shifted to the development of infrastructures and provision of social services. From early 1979, the role of the civil service has had to adopt to modern challenges of managing an ailing economy through structural adjustment programme (SAP), rationalization, nationalization and recent privatization, poverty alleviation, empowerment. It should be noted that series of reforms have been carried out in the civil service over the years. These reforms are put in place to bring sanity to the system and position civil service for effective service delivery capable of ensuring sustainable development in Nigeria. Most of these reforms are also implemented at state and local level so as to generate development in the grassroots.

### **Challenges of Civil Service and National Development in Nigeria**

Civil service in Nigeria is faced with myriads of problems over the years and this has made it difficult for the system to function effectively as a vehicle for national development. Since independent era, the structure and composition of Nigerian civil service has changed and witnessed significant transformation. Immediately after independence, the Civil Service comprises the federal civil service and other civil services in three regions (West, East and North) and later between federal civil service and that of twelve states of the federation. The Nigerian civil service comprises the federal civil service, the thirty-six autonomous state civil services, the unified local government service, and several federal and state government agencies, including parastatals and corporations.

The federal and state civil services were organized around government departments, ministries and extra ministerial departments headed by ministers (federal) and commissioners (state), appointed by the president and governors respectively to take of policy matters. The administrative heads of the ministry were the permanent secretaries formerly called Director-General. The chief Director General was the secretary to the government and the 2<sup>nd</sup> republic doubled as head of the civil service. As chief adviser to the government, the head of the civil service liaise between government and civil service. The service is divided into administrative, executive, professional, clerical and messenger class who function as a catalyst to crystallize the shared goals of the society and machinery for policy formulation and implementation. Despite its contributions to national development, civil service over the years has been plagued by numerous problems.

**Politicization:** The Nigerian civil service had been politicized to the extent that most top officials openly supported the government of the day. The introduction of quota system in recruitment and promotion, adherence to federal-character principle, and the constant interference of government in the activities of civil service especially through frequent changes in top officials and massive purges meant that political factors rather than merit alone played a key role in civil service. Eme and Ugwu (2011) noted that ‘the enthronement of federal character principle in recruitment and other spoilt system techniques have sacrificed efficiency and effectiveness in

Nigerian public service. Salisu (2001) posits that considerable political interference in the process of personnel administration has led to improper delegation of power, ineffective supervision and corruption. Thus, result in official apathy that has so far culminated into unauthorized and unreasonable absenteeism, lateness and idleness and, notably, poor workmanship. Strong institutions cannot emerge from present day Nigerian civil service where top echelons of these bureaucracies are handpicked on the basis of ethnicity, religion and class.

The disgruntled elements within and outside civil service politicize the activities of state by reading meanings and prejudice on government policies and programmes on the basis of primordial, religious, ethnic and regional sentiments. For instance, the recent government policy that limit the tenure of permanent secretaries to eight years regardless of the persons age or service generated huge controversy as the affected officials used religion, ethnic and parochial sentiments to fight back. The policy stipulated that two terms of four years each for permanent secretaries with officials only allowed to commence the second tranche after being evaluated on completion of the first and found worthy. This implies that whatever effort that calls for more accountability in spending and the reduction of waste in carrying out government's activities or attempts at preventing corruption and underhand dealing will be blackmailed and politicized by the affected officials in order to maintain the status quo (Okotoni 2003).

**High level of corruption:** is a major problem limiting public bureaucracies in Nigeria. Corrupt practices occur nearly in all ministries, departments, and agencies where virtually all members of the upper and lower levels of bureaucracy are involved. The graft corruption include bribery, extortion and nepotism characterized by subordination of public interests to private aims and violating duty norms and welfare, accompanied by secrecy, betrayal, deception and callous disregard for any consequences suffered by the public. The public considers graft and corruption to be widespread and persistent in Nigerian civil service (Ogunrotifa 2012).

**Fraught and Discontents:** lack of measurable objectives; inadequate evaluations; mismanagement of time; inadequate facilities; disorganization; personnel mismanagement; and over centralization. These internal weaknesses led many public organizations to define their output as money disbursed rather than service delivered, produce many low-return observable outputs, glossy reports and frameworks and few high-return less observable activities like ex post evaluation, engage in obfuscation, spin control, and official amnesia exhibiting little learning from the past, and putting enormous demands on administrative and technical skills (Easterly, 2002). This culminates in marring of government's laudable policies vis-a-vis poor implementation strategies ( bureaucratic procedures) adopted by the civil service, effecting unworkable solutions, putting obstacles in the way of policies formulated by the political officials (Okotoni, 1996). Most civil servant has no genuine interest for development because it is no mans business. They are not committed to the course of development; rather they are interested in what will benefit them and their immediate family. They are less concerned on the overall development of the country. However, these problems stems from Max Weber model (western) of bureaucracy that Nigerian civil service lack political will especially ruling elite and the nature of economic system in Nigeria-capitalism emphasizes primitive and excessive accumulation of wealth.

**Poor remuneration:** Despite the increment in salary, the civil service salary in Nigeria is still very low because of the poor salary remuneration, most civil servants engage in sharp practices, most of them keep business letter headed papers, invoices receipts of various companies owned by them and because suppliers and contractors even to their own offices. This affects their contribution to development. Most of the civil servants are living above board as it concerns their income (Omotoso, 2001).

**Over bloated civil service:** The Nigerian civil service is over bloated with many redundant staff, as many are employed without doing anything. The incessant state creation exercise contribute to the problem, when new state is created, civil service is expanded, therefore, the urge

to fill the necessary position in civil service by the new state always lead to urgent and compulsory promotion in this process, many civil servants are promoted above their efficiency and productivity.

**Inadequate training and retraining:** This affect productivity of the civil service and consequently development of the nation. Training is not adequate in the civil service, even when it is carried out, it is politicized.

**The use of obsolete equipments:** Most government MDAs at federal, state and local government levels are still working with manual typewriting machine in this computer age 21<sup>st</sup> century. The worst of it is that most civil servants are not computer literate. They are not acquainted with the knowledge of operating new and modern machines, this affect efficiency and productivity. These factors together contributed to the failure of the numerous attempts to reform the civil service from post independence period to date (Expo 1979).

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Civil service has failed to deliver efficient service to the people as it suffers from obsolescence, lethargy and lack of enthusiasm in carrying out government policies. Most reforms failed due to non political will to implement the reforms on the side of political office holders, sentiments and mediocrity undermined the recommendations of several committees, government attempt to reform civil service out of the way of its capitalistic foundation without taking a break from the status quo, and conscious attempt to ignore democratic practice in managing civil service. The ongoing civil service reform is not going to achieve desire result unless the problem associated with lack of democratic practice in the administration of civil service is addressed, this will curb weak governance structure, red-tapism, weak accountability, low professional standards, wastage corruption, poor productivity and redundancy that characterise the affairs in civil service.

The reform of Nigerian civil service will help to build institutional capability that will improve institutional structures and processes, and enhance public institutions to perform specific activities to achieve its goals for sustainable development and societal expectations.

There is need to embark on realistic, workable and practical reforms that have human face rather than the usual cosmetic approaches. There is need for government to create enabling conditions of service; this has to do with adequate pay package and other economic incentives. If this is duly implemented, civil servants will be discouraged from using unethical means in getting economic benefits from clients and public in general, The current national minimum wage of N18,000.00, should be increased to N50,000 as a starting point.

The reform process should focus on the restructuring of the public service sector to avoid unnecessary duplication of ministries, departments and agencies of government. This would definitely prevent waste of resources in the system. Finally, there is also the need to promote sound policies on recruitment, training and retraining of civil servants for effective service delivery. These polices will contribute immensely to enhancing and promoting professionalism, and ethical, values of honesty, integrity, confidentiality, political neutrality, accountability, discipline and transparency in the conduct of government business. Recruitment and promotion or advancement on the job should be strictly based on meritocracy, performance and achievement.

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