

Public Service Reforms and Employee Performance in Selected Public Service Organizations in Anambra State

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Abstract: This research examined public service reforms and employee performance in public service organizations in Anambra State. The study employed descriptive research design and questionnaire was the major instrument for data collection. A total of one hundred and ninety three (193) staff from selected public service organizations in Anambra state made up the population of the study and complete enumeration was adopted. Spearman Product Correlation was used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that there is significant but weak relationship between monetization of fringe benefits and employee commitment in public organization. Analysis also showed that there is significant relationship between capacity building and employee job satisfaction in public service organization. It is therefore concluded that an efficient public service, acts as catalyst in the development of nations and to be at utmost performance, employee of government institutions need to be motivated in quantifiable and non-quantifiable attributes to ensure increase in performance. Hence, it was recommended that economic revelation of the policy should be encouraged. The three tiers of government should allocate a sizeable proportion of their annual budget to capacity building efforts in all critical sectors of the economy so as to effectively meet up with the man power demands.

Keywords: Public Service Reforms, Employee Performance, Monetization of Fringe Benefits, Employee Commitment, Capacity Building and Employee Job Satisfaction.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last twenty years, public sector reforms have attracted the interest and attention of policy makers, practitioner and academics around the world. These reforms have emanated from developed countries such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia. The governments of these countries have embarked on reforming their public organizations in an attempt to improve economic growth through reduction of operating costs while maintaining and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of services provided to the citizens (ogden,1995, dorsuh and yasin,1998). These reforms involve changes in structures, culture functions

and processes of the public organization- changes such as reducing government funding to public organizations, corporatization, commercialization, privatization, performance contracts, improved financial management, private-sector styles of management, contracting and decentralization (Boton, *et al.*, 1996; Awio, *et al.*, 2007; Parker and Gould, 1996; Greenpedersen, 2002; Laibi, 1999), and are labeled “ New public Management” (Hood, 1991).

New public management (NPM) reforms were introduced to developing countries through international organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and

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International Aid Agencies. These institutions, together with donor agencies have encouraged and directed NPM reforms in developing countries through loan conditions, Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) policies (2), and in some cases had imposed the changes on developing countries (Toye, 1994, Cook and Kilkpatrick, 1995, Olowu, 2002). These international organizations assume that better controls, improved efficiency and effectiveness, and economic development will emerge through the adoption of NPM reforms (Rees, 1985, Uddin & Hopper, 2003). However, earlier studies, such as those of Uddin and Hopper (2003) and Tsamenyi (2005) have presented a contrary finding.

The colonial masters carried out some reforms, among which are the Harragin-commission of 1945 which was the first commission set up to look into the Nigeria public Service, and the Gorsuch commission of 1954. The Harragin commission was the first commission set up to look into the man-power problem in the service and the discontent among the European members of what was described as poor financial reward, while the Gorsuch Commission was the first to attempt giving the regional administrative bureaucracies indigenous structure. After independence, Nigerian government carried out series of reforms among which are the Adebo Commission (1971), Udoji Public Service Review Commission of 1974, Obasanjo reform of 2003 known as Monetization of fringe benefits, Capacity building, Commercialization and Contributory pension scheme. The research focused on three aspects of public service reforms which include monetization of fringe benefits, capacity building and contributory pension scheme to see how they have influenced employee performance of public service organizations in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian public service was oversized and poorly remunerated, resulting in poor service delivery, inefficiencies, ineffectiveness and poor performance (Olukemi and Babatunde, 2013). Public servants generally received low pay and several fringe benefits such as free housing, free vehicles, and various other allowances that often led "to waste and misuse of government resources. Moreover, a weak incentive structure in the public service, which did not foster good performance, resulted in a weak work ethic and poor service delivery or ineffective service delivery, by many government ministries, often characterized by hidden or outright corrupt behavior on the part of many public servants. Reforms were therefore needed to re-professionalize the public service and increase its focus on service delivery and increased performance. There were many problems and challenges in the public service. Among these are over-bloated service, corruption, inadequate human and institutional capacities, aging population (Adegoye, 2006). To arrest these problems, reforms were carried out with the

aim of improving service delivery, good performance and promoting good governance (Adegoye, 2006). This study was therefore necessitated to examine how these reforms relate have impacted on the performance employee in public service organizations in Anambra State.

Objectives of the Study

The study examines public service reforms and employee performance as the broad objective. The specific objectives are:

- I. To investigate the effect of monetization of fringe benefits on employee commitment in public service organizations in Anambra State.
- II. To determine the effect of capacity building on employee job satisfaction in public service organizations in Anambra State.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Framework

The Public Service is often referred to as the employees of government who are responsible for the functioning of government through the implementation of government policies (Onuoha, 1993). In other words, those who are in the public service constitute the permanent officials of the various government departments that are responsible for the execution of government policies and programmes (Adebayo, 1981). Therefore, the public service in Nigeria is made up of workers in various government ministries, parastatals and agencies. On many occasions, leaders undertake reforms in order to achieve effectiveness and efficiency. Olaleye (2001) sees 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 reforms may occur for the purpose of addressing problems arising in operation, structure and organization of an institution.

Reforms therefore refer to purposeful change introduced to improve the capacity of a given organization to respond to changing demands. To Adewumi (1988) in reforms are usually embarked upon on the assumption that "it is possible and feasible to reach the optional level in the working of a given organization if the administrative process is fully equipped to provide such support" Reforms should be purposeful or goal oriented changes which are designed to improve the skills as well as the preparedness of members to satisfy the organizational set goals or objectives. In sum, reform involves identifying an existing problem and attempting to solve it. Monetization in the context of this study is the monetization of fringe benefits. The Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation (2003), Federal Government of Nigeria (2002), Nweke (2012) the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the

Federation, (OSGF, 2006) defined monetization of fringe benefits -as "the qualification in monetary, terms of those fringe benefits which government used to provide for its workers^ as part of the conditions of service such as accommodation, transportation, utility, leave grant, chauffeur-driven cars, residential furniture, utility services". Adekeye, (2003) sees it as a "withdrawal of direct funding of the basic amenities of the public servants by the government". Monetization is the process of converting or establishing something into legal tender. It means converting items into money. In this sense therefore, monetization may also refer to exchanging securities, possessions, goods, and services for money (Okoye, Anazodo, Izueke & Eze, 2012). Furthermore, Onu (2006) explains monetization as the process of converting fringe benefits attached to workers salaries into cash incentives. The cash incentives are to be paid in swoop or in installment depending on the financial strength of the paying body. Fayomi (2013) defines monetization as something that gives the character of money to an economic policy while various scholars conceive monetization as a systematic replacement of work benefits with cash payment. Monetization is the process of converting or establishing something into legal tender.

According to Mimiko (2003) monetization of fringe benefits is a precipitate of government concern with the continued escalation of cost of running the machinery of government as a result of the huge bureaucracy with which the economy is delivered. Mobolaji (2003) defines monetization policy as government initiatives that involve systematic cash payment for benefits previously available in kinds to "public officers. Newstrom and Davfes (2002) in Malikeh, Batol (2013) define employee commitment as the degree to which an employee identifies with the organization and wants to continue actively participating in it. It is a measure of the employees' willingness to remain with a firm in the future. It often reflects the employees' belief in the mission and goals of the firm, willingness to expend effort in their accomplishment, and intentions to continue working there. Coetizee (2005) employee commitment is an individual's belief in and acceptance of the goals and values of an organization, a willingness to work hard on its behalf and a strong desire to remain in it. Employee satisfaction with their jobs, have been found to be related .to number of organizational outcomes, such as increased customer satisfaction (Ryan, *et al.*, 1996), lower turnover rates (Mobley 1977), increased response rate of employee (Ryan, *et al.*, - 1996) and higher performance at work place (Lauderweerd & Boumans 1988), it is not surprising that the concept of job satisfaction has attracted much attention in the public sector organizations. Capacity' refers to the people, institutions and practices that enable countries to achieve their developmental goals. The compound word 'capacity building' entails the ability to identify and analyse problems, make rational choices, formulate

solutions, and implement actions designed to achieve set objectives (World Bank, ^1996). Ani (1997) defined capacity building as the -ability 'to formulate plans, identify and select viable options, execute, monitor and evaluate implementation of plans. Akinola (1997) sees capacity building as the utilizable ability of people, institutions and practices within.a country. It entails the creation and strengthening of this utilizable ability for development. Azikiwe (2006a) defines capacity building as the process by which an individual, irrespective of sex, are equipped with skills and knowledge they need to perform effectively and efficiently in their different callings. The author also added that capacity building could also be defined-as the ability to enable the people to make use of their creative potentials, intellectual capacities and leadership abilities for personal as well as national growth and development.

Employee Performance

In today's competitive business environment, high employee performance is the key objective of most organizations. However, performance does not just happen in workplaces it is motivated by series of factors. Good remuneration has been found over the years to be one of the policies the organization can adopt to increase their workers performance and thereby increase the organization productivity (Muogbo 2013). Also, with the present global economic trend, most employers of labour have realized the fact that for their organizations to compete favourably, the performance of their employees goes a long way in determining the success of the organization. On the other hand, performance of employees in any organization is vital, not only for the growth of the organization, but also for the growth of individual employees (Meyerand Peng, 2006).

Monetisation of Fringe Benefits in the Public Service of the Federation

The Committee on the Monetization of Fringe Benefits in the Public Service of the Federation was set up by Mr. President on November 11, 2002, under the Chairmanship of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief J. Ekaette. The establishment of the Committee became necessary because over v: the years, the cost of governance has continued to escalate, arising mostly, from the burden of providing basic amenities to public servants by the Government. These amenities include residential accommodation, transport facilities, medical services, and utilities such as electricity, water and telephone. The merits of monetization include efficiency in resource allocation, equity in the provision of amenities and encouragement of public servants to own personal houses. It also enables public servants to plan for a more comfortable post-service life.

Monetization Policy and Employee Commitment

One of the thrust of monetization policy in public sector organizations was to encourage increased

productivity because of the euphoria of increased Income. Akintoye (2000) asserts that money remains the most significant motivational strategy. Money is the fundamental, inducement; no other incentive or motivational technique comes even close to it with respect -to its influential value (Sara et al, 2004). It has the supremacy to magnetize, maintain and motivate Individuals towards higher performance. As far back as 1911. Frederick Taylor and his scientific management associate described money as the most important factor in motivating the industrial workers to achieve greater productivity.(Adeyinka *et al.*, 2007). Taylor advocated the establishment of incentive wage systems as a means of stimulating workers to higher performance, commitment, and eventually satisfaction. Money possesses significant motivating power in as much as it symbolizes intangible goals like security, power, prestige, and a feeling of accomplishment and success. Katz, in Sinclair, *et al.*, "(2005) demonstrates the motivational power of money through the process of job choice. He explains that money has the power to attract, retain, and motivate individuals towards higher performance.

Capacity Building in Nigeria Public Service Organizations

Organizations are "rational instruments established to accomplish specific ends". These ends are organizational goals. One can posit therefore that worldwide organizations are set-up for pre-determined goals and objectives, the attainment of which is to satisfy pre-identified societal needs and aspirations. Organizations no matter their size (small, medium or large) and nature (formal or informal) consist mainly of materials, money, methods, men and market. In other words, capital, equipments and men have been identified as the basic factors of production in all organizations. However, of all these resources, the human resource (or personnel) has been identified as the most important. Therefore the human factor is indisputably acknowledged as a critical factor in the development of any action. This is because the: human resource constitutes the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations rather than capital income or material resources, which are passive factors of production.

The public service has come intense criticism from within and outside for its epileptic service delivery. The citizen (customer) perceives the public service as oppressive, unjust, imposing, non-existent, unproductive and inefficient (Sekoto and Straaten 2013), Achieving the service delivery dreams in Nigeria public service calls for a deliberate and systemic capacity building initiative for the entire public service. It requires equipping/empowering everyone with the requisite knowledge, skills and attitude to be able to achieve service delivery and understand while service delivery is germane to the overall, turnaround of the African state from a failed state;

Theoretical Review

The work is anchored on the Equity Theory of Motivation credited to Adam J, Slacy (1965 in Harder 1991; in Robbins 2003; in Kinicki and Kreitner 2003, Muogbo 2013, Abdelghafour & Faisal 2012). He advocated that individuals make comparisons on the rewards (output) given to them as a result of their contributions (input) with that of others to see whether it is fair or not. According to Adams theory of equity, an important factor in motivation is whether individual perceive the reward structure as being fair. One way of addressing this issue is through equity theory which refers to individual subjective judgments about the equity or fairness of the reward they got in relationship to the inputs (which includes many factor such as effort, experience, education and so on) in comparison with others.

According to Adams (1965) felt injustice will lead to dissatisfaction, anger, and guilt. People will feel angry and dissatisfied when they are getting less of what they expect in comparison to what they input. The essential idea behind equity theory is that when individuals work for an organization they present certain inputs (e.g., abilities or job performance). Based on what they input in, people expect to get something in return, for example when people input high performance they expect to get a high pay and other benefits (Cropanzano, 1993). Equity theory predicts that low rewards produce dissatisfaction; this would in turn motivate people to take action and reduce the discrepancy between their ratio and the ratio of the comparison other. Perry (1993) found a strong relationship between pay equity and job satisfaction. In his study, African-Americans whose income was more than \$2000 below the national- average reported the lowest level of job satisfaction, and African-Americans whose income was more than \$3000 above the national average reported the highest job satisfaction. Equity theory is considered to be one of the most valid frameworks to understand human attitudes and motivation (Miner, 1984, Zawahreh and Madi 2012). According to Miner (1980), equity theory has the following characteristics: Prediction of performance, Prediction of work satisfaction, Construct validity, feasibility and utility.

The equity theory can be expressed the form shown below:

Outcome of a person = Outcomes of another person.
Input of a person = Inputs of another person

Review of Empirical Studies

Sinclair, Tucker, Cullen and Wright (2005) advocated that money has the power to attract, retain, and motivate individuals toward higher performance, lit has been ' argued that organizations need to balance the elements between direct compensation and employee benefits if they are to effectively motivate employees and attain high performance levels (Schuler, 1996;

Armstrong; 2003.; Onasanya, 1999; Cole, 2001). The need to balance in the direction of either direct compensation or employee benefits can have major implications for motivation; job satisfaction and employee performance.

Adeleke (2010) investigated monetization of fringe benefits and workers commitment at Adekunle Ajasin University, Ondo State. Theories of Social Exchange and Rational Choice were adopted. Questionnaire and unstructured in-depth interviews were used to collect data from the participants. Content analysis was used for qualitative data, while descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequency distribution, chi-square and logistic regression were used to analyze quantitative data. Quantitative results revealed that sex and education were significantly related with commitment. However, marital status and income had no significant relationship with commitment. It was recommended that rewards should be properly planned towards commitment, participation of workers should be allowed in decisions that affect them at the policy level.

Benjamin (2010) carried out a study on monetization of fringe benefits and job satisfaction using the five most recent waves of the National Longitudinal Survey, both pooled cross-section and fixed effects estimates explain the relationship between monetization of fringe benefits and job satisfaction. The potential endogenous relationship is also tested using a recursive bivariate probit procedure. Finding reveals that monetization of Fringe benefits are significant and positive determinants of job satisfaction. The potential endogeneity between monetization of fringe benefits and job satisfaction is not shown in this dataset while controlling for fixed effects does not remove the significant impact of monetization of fringe benefits.

Centres and Bugenla (2007) based their research on Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation, which separated job variables into two group; hygiene factors and motivators. They made use of sample of 692 subject to test the validity of two-factor theory. And it

was discovered that at higher occupational level, "motivators" or intrinsic job factors were more valued, while, at lower occupational level, "hygiene factors" or extrinsic job factors were more valued. From this work they concluded that organization that satisfies both, extrinsic and intrinsic factor of workers get the best out of them.

Bergum and Lehr's (2004) in Muogbo (2013) investigated the influence of monetary incentives and its removal on performance, showed that the subjects in the experimental group who receives individual incentives performed better than those in the control group.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a Descriptive Survey Research Design. A total of one hundred and ninety three (193) staff in the selected public service organizations in Anambra state was used. The study made use of complete enumeration. The instrument used in data collection was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured in a Likert Scale format. It has five scales; Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). It contains ten (10) items, five (5) each for the dependent and independent variables. The instrument was validated using content and construct validity. Cronbach Alpha coefficient was used in determining the internal consistency (reliability) of the research instrument. The coefficient obtained was .725. Spearman Product Correlation was employed in analyzing the data obtained from the distributed questionnaire. The significance level used was .05 (5%). A total of 193 (100%) copies of the questionnaire were analysed.

4. ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses One

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Monetization of Fringe Benefits and Employee Commitment in Public Service Organizations in Anambra State.

Table 1: correlation Analysis for Hypothesis One

			TOTMFB	TOTEC
Spearman's rho	TOTMFB	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.142
		Sig. (2 tailed)	-	.049
		N	193	193
	TOTEC	Correlation Coefficient	.142	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.049	-
		N	193	193
Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Hypotheses Two

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Capacity building and Employee Satisfaction in Public Service Organizations in Anambra State.

Table 2: correlation Analysis for Hypothesis Two

		TOTMFB	TOTEC
Spearman's rho	TOTMFB	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	-
		N	193
	TOTEC	Correlation Coefficient	-554
		Sig. (2-tailed)	-000
		N	193
. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Summary of Findings

- The result from analysis reveals that there is a weak but significant relationship between monetization of fringe benefits and employee commitment in public service organizations in Anambra State.
- The analysis also shows that there is significant relationship between capacity building and employee job satisfaction in public service organizations in Anambra State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the analyses carried out, several findings were made and are presented below.

- The results of our empirical data analysis revealed that respondents perceived that monetization of fringe benefits had momentary benefits such as the provision of most transparent avenue for disbursement of remuneration from employer to employee. Monetization policy has ensured equitable disbursement of fringe benefits.
- The analysis also shows that there is significant relationship between capacity building and employee job satisfaction in public service organizations. Respondents agreed that capacity building help to increase the skill and experience of employee in public service organizations. They were more motivated to perform their duties whenever they receive training, as such the level of employee satisfaction recorded was high. The relationship between capacity building and employee satisfaction was much higher than that of commitment. This implies that training and retraining of employees in public service has help to increase service delivery and good performance. This is in agreement with Nadeem, Training, Salary and Job Involvement with Employee Performance. Degraft (2012) who found that training and development had positive impact on employees' performance.

5. CONCLUSION

Productivity of governmental institutions is largely determined by the effectiveness and efficiency of public servants engaged therein. Public Service remains very critical and crucial to national development and democratic stability in developing societies. An efficient public service acts as catalyst in

the development of nations. While on the other hand, its inefficiency can constitute as one of the heaviest millstones round the neck of developing nations. To be at utmost performance, employees of government institutions need to be motivated in quantifiable and non-quantifiable attributes to ensure increase in performance. One measure adopted by the Nigerian government is the public service reforms aimed at improving the welfare and living condition of workers. The Federal Government Circular (December 9, 2003) noted that the reforms "is a very indigenous way of catering for the welfare of workers even after they retire". Among the objections of the reforms was to improve the standard of living of workers, ensure adequate human capacity for quality service delivery as well as foster a comfortable retirement of employee in public sector. It is also important therefore, that reforms be managed by the authorities in manners that will facilitate the realization of the goals of the reforms and minimize undesirable outcomes. Studies, however, show that some of the reform have failed to live up to it expectation as practices like corruption and abuse of government properties are still prevalent in the public sector.

Recommendations

The following policy recommendations are made based on the findings of this study:

- Proper documentation of payment plans-monetized benefits and who got what should be made. As with most financial plans in the country corruption has eaten deep in its financial arrangement, where possible independent consultants should be employed to administer the policy initiatives.
- Political detachment of the policy from the national governance systems should also be stimulated. It is a widely known fact that politically motivated programmes are stalled from inception, as different interests groups declare intentions. One major setback of monetization policy in Nigeria is the political undertone behind its implementation.
- Economic regulation of the policy is also encouraged. Agencies like the CBN should be involved in implementation, as increased pay of workers is directly linked to economic turbulent issues like inflation, scarcity, etc. that determine the potential benefits of such policy.

- That capacity building strategies should be enhanced to incorporate relevant trainings based on skills acquisition and utilization and such trainings programmes should be adequately sequenced according to assessed needs.
- The three tiers of government should appropriate and allocate a sizable proportion of their annual budget to capacity building effort in all critical sectors of the economy so as effectively meet up the manpower demands.

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