

Civil service reforms in Nigeria: The journey so far in service delivery

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ABSTRACT

Nations all over the world are currently in the struggle to better their existence through the process of good governance, and responsible civil service for effective and efficient service delivery. Nigeria is one of such countries. However the kind of civil service bequeathed to Nigeria by her colonial master was alien and narrow in scope, and so not development oriented. At Nigeria independence in 1960, the federal civil service had a staff strength of only 30,000, this increased steadily to the level of 200,000 in the late 1990s due to political patronage. Many unqualified personnel joined the Civil Service which resulted to over sized workforce that absorbed about 87% of the total government revenue. The paper examined the civil service reforms in Nigeria from independence to the present and how they affected efficient and effective service delivery in the country. It is the position of paper that the kind of civil service reform that would tackle these problems should be evolutionary and pragmatic in nature to meet Nigeria developmental needs and the challenges of the modern world.

Keywords: Service delivery, Bureaucracy, government revenue.

Introduction

The Civil Service is the administrative bureaucracy which occupies an essential position in the political system of nations. Throughout the world, the contributions of Civil Service in promoting sustainable and equitable economic growth are receiving increasing attention. Efficient and effective management of the Civil Service are critical to sustainable socio-economic development of a nation. Thomas (1995), stated that the East Asian experience has underscored the critical contributions of the Civil Service in fostering rapid development.

The new Encyclopedia Britannica (2004) defines Civil Service as the body of government officials who are employed in civil occupations that are neither political nor

judicial. Bezzina (1994) opined that Civil Service refers to employees selected and promoted on the basis of a merit and seniority system, which may include examination. The World Book Encyclopedia (2004), noted that the Civil Service consists of people employed by the state to run the public service of a country.

Abba and Anazodo (2006), argue that civil service in Nigeria comprises workers in the various ministries or departments apart from those who hold political appointments. Civil Service reform on the other hand refers to the purposeful modification of governmental human resource management system with the goal of maximizing important administrative values (Anazodo 2009).

The Civil Service in Nigeria is of a colonial creation. The model of Civil Service bequeathed to Nigeria by her colonial master (Britain) was narrow in structure and objectives. It was basically structured in such a manner that enabled colonial masters to successfully extract the much coveted financial and material resources needed by their controlling metropolitan powers. Colonialism was therefore marked by a lack of accountability and absence of transparency.

At independence in 1960 when Nigerian nationals took over the administrative leadership, no attempt was made by them to restructure the Civil Service to suit our own developmental needs. The Nigeria bureaucrats who occupied the leadership position in the Civil Service imbibed the colonial mentality of wealth acquisition for self-aggrandizement and self-superiority. Instead of working to improve the lot of the country, they became colonial masters in a, “black man’s skin”. This aggravated the abysmal performance of the Civil Service and consequently the under development of the country. These and other factors necessitated the clamour for reforms in the Nigeria Civil Service. 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 Civil Service, and the Gorsuch commission of 1954-55. According to Anazodo (2009), the Harragin commission was the first commission set up to look into the manpower 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, Dotun Philips Civil Service Reform of 1988, Allison Ayida Committee on Civil Service of 1995. However, Nigeria is not alone in this quest for Civil Service reform. This is because according to World Bank (2002), there is a strong consensus in the international development community on the need for Civil Service reform in developing nations. It is therefore a topical issue of the moment as developing nations all over the world engage in the struggle to better their existence through the process of reforms for efficient and effective service delivery.

Significant changes have been occurring since the Mid 1970s in advanced industrialized country public administrations, governments sought to reshape rigid, hierarchical, nineteenth-century bureaucracies into more flexible decentralized, client-responsive organization compatible with the twenty-first century technological and economic requirements. For example countries like Germany, Australia, USA, UK; and New Zealand in the 1970s and 80’s respectively embarked on what they called “New

Managerialism". In countries like Ghana and Uganda incrementalist approach to their Civil Service reforms was adopted to accommodate their socio-cultural needs and it has been working well for them. It is against this back drop that the researcher sought to examine some of the past reforms in the Nigerian Civil Service to find out if they actually solved our developmental needs and if not what should we do to make our civil service responsive and efficient?

Statement of the problem

It is sometimes claimed that corruption is part of African culture, but this has been strongly denounced by the former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999. Colonialism was marked by lack of accountability and transparency. The courts existed, not to administer justice but to sustain the imposition of colonialism. Judges were simply Civil Servants wearing wigs and the style of governance was characterized by government being "done" to people, rather than a people being governed by consent (Ademolekun 1994:41). The above statement was the case in Nigeria. At Independence in 1960, when Nigerians took over the leadership of the country, the Civil Service structure was left the way the colonial master kept it. Much was not changed in the activities and roles of the Civil Service.

The Nigerians in service replaced the colonial masters and adopted their style of management for self-aggrandizement and exploitation of the masses. This was between the periods of 1960 and 1966, consequently, Nigerians clamoured for Nigerianization policy. The introduction of the Nigerianization policy in the Civil Service was meant to reduce and ultimately end the expatriate predominance in the higher Civil Service in Nigeria but it rather brought with it the problem of the regionalization of the Nigerian Civil Service, where Nigerians of Northern extract adopted the Northernization policy in which northerners were given priority attention in the area of recruitment in the service whether they were qualified or not. The same thing went for the Eastern and Western regions of the country. This culminated into segregation and sectionalism in the Nigerian Civil Service. All regions therefore vigorously practiced regionalization in their respective Civil Service. The military take over of power in Nigeria between 1966, 1979 and 1984 to 1999 dealt a devastating blow on the Civil Service. This means that Nigeria had experienced over 25 years of military rule with only short periods of Civilian rule. The military regime showed lack of skills and expertise in managing Nigeria's economy and the development of the nation because it disbanded the legislative and elected representatives of the people. According to Ogunna (1999), the government functioned without the elected legislative, yet policies were made and implemented and laws were enacted and enforced. This posed the question: who determined policies and enacted laws in Nigeria during this period? The military co-opted former politicians, academics and top civil servants to ministerial posts thereby giving them enormous powers to initiate economic, social, and political policies and at the same time executed them. This brought about the break down of accountability for public spending and lack of probity, in the service. During this time, grand corruption was pervasive among the civil servants and others who had access to political power. Okigbo reported that between 1988 and June 1994, some \$12.5 billion in government revenues in extra ordinary "Special Accounts" were unaccounted for and this loot has continued up till today. Ogunna (1999) stated that the military brought into the civil service the factor of insecurity. This

started with the “purge” in the public service which was undertaken by Murtala Mohammed’s regime in 1975/76. The Buhari and Babangida regimes took more drastic measures in massive retrenchment of Civil Servants by way of retirements, terminations of appointment and dismissals. This state of affairs generated fears of insecurity, administrative culture of dehumanization and frustration in the Civil Service. The Civil Servants lacked working tools and equipment coupled with the galloping inflation which kept an average civil servant in perpetual misery, and apathy. There were low morale, embezzlement, and corruption which ultimately resulted in ineffectiveness and low productivity in the service.

The higher civil servants assumed great political powers without responsibility to the people. They exhibited selfishness and sectional interests within the system which consequently impaired discipline and achievement of goals. The individuals were pre-occupied with feathering their own nests in total neglect of their individual and collective roles toward satisfying societal needs. However Riggs (1974) opined that in the absence of strong political institutions during the military regimes, the Civil Service tended to become powerful, corrupt and inefficient and ultimately lost its neutrality.

The present state of affairs in the Civil Service appears that the variables responsible for poor performance in the Nigerian Civil Service have not been dealt with and so the problem still lingers. It is against this background that the researcher sought to examine some of the past Civil Service reforms, to find out to what extent they were able to solve problems of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the Nigerian Civil Service and proffer the way forward.

Factors that necessitated various reforms in the Nigerian Civil Service (1960-2005).

A number of factors necessitated various reforms in Nigeria. The situation of grand corruption among the Civil Servants was facilitated by the long rule of the Military and its attendant practices of impunity, lack of probity and accountability.

Gowon’s regime was unashamedly corrupt to the macro level. It was not hidden from the public gaze. According to the Nigerian Tribune (1975), his pledge to enact an anti-corruption decree like other promises was never fulfilled. The level of corruption under Gowon’s regime came under public scrutiny when Murtala Mohammed became the head of state and set up Assets Investigation Panel to probe the governors and other public officers that served under Gowon. The panel indicted ten (10) out of twelve (12) military governors and so their assets were confiscated. The anticorruption crusade spread to the entire public service, thus, the purge of the public service that led to the retirement and dismissal of over 10,000 public servants nation-wide. The Murtala’s anti-corrupt crusade did not in any way deterred the politicians of the second republic from corrupt practices, rather they engaged in different shades of corrupt practices.

The Babangida administration came into power via coup d’état of August 27, 1985 and lunched Nigeria into eight (8) years of kleptocratic rule.

Maduagwu (1993), listed some of the highlights of Babangida’s corrupt practices as;

- \$200 million siphoned from the Aluminum and Smelter project.
- N400 million wasted on Better Life project
- Huge extra budgeting spending of N186.9 billion naira between 1989 and 1993.

Babangida regime is said to be the apogee of corruption in the history of Nigeria. Abdusalam Abubakar administration made mockery of any sense of discipline and probity. Christopher Kayode panel report revealed that the contracts awarded by the Abdulsalam administration cost Nigeria N635.62 billion. The panel also revealed that the depletion of the foreign reserve which as at the end of 1988, stood at \$7.6 billion had shrank to \$3.8 billion by May 1999.

The Abacha's loot tops the list of grand corruption in the history of Nigeria. Although it was glaring that Abacha's regime was corrupt, the extent of it became manifest only after Abacha's demise in 1998. Evidence showed that he, his children and their cronies had looted about \$3 billion dollars hidden in foreign accounts scattered across Europe and the Persian Gulf. Abacha was described as the "biggest thief" of the 1990s, and was alleged to have sent between \$12 to \$16 dollars out of Nigeria during his five-year reign. The African Network for Environmental and Economic Justice (ANEEJ) a non-governmental organization illustrated the level of Abacha's loot, as highlighted in the table below.

Table 1

Abacha's Loot of Nigerian Economy

BREAK DOWN	AMOUNT	THE BANKS
1995 6 th Feb.,	\$4 million & £2 million	Australia, New Zealand, London Branch Banking group
1995 17 th Feb.,	\$4 million & £2million	ANZ, Frankfurt
1995 27 th Feb.,	\$4 million & £2million	ANZ, Frankfurt
1995 8 th July	\$5 million & £2million plus £2m in travelers cheques	Bank in Liechtenstein AG, Vaduz.
1995 8 th July	\$5 million & £2million	Bank Len, Zurich
1995 29 th Dec.	\$5 million	Bankers Trust Company, London
1996 28 th March	\$5 million & £3million requested by Abacha CBN ran out of foreign currency	Bankers Trust Company, Frankfurt Banque Baring Brother, Geneva
1996 29 th May	\$5 million & 5million. The Bank ran out of pounds.	Barclays Bank London, Banque Edouard Constant Generale
1996 20 th June	\$30million & £5million	Banque Nationale de Paris, Geneva.
1996 20 th August	\$30million & £15million	Banque Nationale de Paris, Basel

1996 24 th September	\$50million	Citibank N.A London
1996 30 th September	\$50million & £3million	Citibank Newyork & N.A Luxembourg
1997 26 th November	\$24million	M.M Warburg and Company, Hamburg
1997 10 th December	\$24 million	Merrill Lynch Bank, Geneva
1997 18 th December	£6:15million	Midland Bank London, National West Minister's Bank, London

Source: ANEEJ Briefing paper on the Abacha loot, October 2002.

However wide spread corruption under the military rule and deteriorating economy have raised a number of concerns, both for the country's and from the International community. These corruption include international financial scams, criminal gangerism, drug trafficking and currency trafficking.

As the Military juntas were corrupt, so also were other public servants during the period under review.

There are several allegations against some public servants on grand corruption. However when the civilians took over power from the military, the problem of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the service still persisted.

The Civil Service Crises in this dispensation

Due to the absolute power wielded by the military during its rule, it bloated the work of the Nigerian federal civil service from less than 30,000 in 1960 to 45, 104 in 1970, it rose to 98, 877 in 1974, 213, 802 in 1988 and reached its peak of 273, 392 in 1988 during Babangida's administration. At this dispensation of civilian leadership, the political leaders also inflated the Civil Service due to political patronage. Many unqualified personnel joined the Civil Service and this resulted in over-sized workforce, and absenteeism engulf about 87% of total government revenue. All sorts of vices are associated with the civil service among which are; inefficiency, laziness, absenteeism, wastefulness and corruption. There are many allegations against some civil servants on grand corruption. In 2001, a permanent secretary of the ministry of defence was accused of embezzling funds amounting to N450 million. The chairperson of the Educational Tax Fund (ETF), and the Accountant General of the Federation, the former chairman of the Inland Revenue Services were alleged to have embezzled funds of the ETF to the tune of N40 billion between 1993 and 2000. However in 2003, Chief Vincent Azie was appointed in Acting Auditor General of the Federation for six months, he audited the annual accounts of government bodies.

He reported that most of the accounts audited in 2002 were inaccurate and showed some irregularities in most audited institutions and federal bodies. His report of 2003 showed that there were over-invoicing, non-retirement of cash advances, lack of audit inspection, payment for jobs not done, double-debiting, contract inflation, lack of receipts, back up purchases made, brazen violation of financial regulations, release of

money without the approving authorities involvement etc. The report indicted all federal ministries for gross financial indiscipline and lack of regards for laid down financial regulations (Azie 2003) see table II below.

Table 2.

Ministries Indicted by Vincent Azie (2003) Panel During his Audit

1	Ministry of Works	9	Ministry of Agriculture and rural development
2	Ministry of Transport	10	Federal Civil Service Commission
3	Ministry of Defence	11	Ministry of water resources
4	Ministry of Education	12	Ministry of Information and National Orientation
5	Fed., Min., of Finance	13	Ministry of Environment
6	Ministry of Internal Affairs	14	Federal Ministry of works and housing
7	Ministry of Police Affairs	15	Federal Ministry of water resources
8	Ministry of Power and Steel		

Source: Report of the Auditor General for the Federation to the National Assembly for the year ended 31st Dec. 2001.

The comparative losses in the federal ministries from 1997 to 2001 is shown on table 3 below.

Table 3: Comparative Losses in the Federal Ministries 1997-2001

YEAR	N0. OF CASH LOSSES	AMOUNT IN NAIRA	LOSSES OF STORES/EQUIPMENT
1997	12	3,722,019.94	8
1998	10	4,215,871.42	1
1999	6	1,933,157.45	15
2000	15	3,254,438.86	26
2001	14	1,379,758.47	14

Source: Report of the Auditor General for the Federation to the National Assembly for the year ended 31st Dec. 2001.

For decades civil service has mainly served the interests of bureaucrats and those engaged in the accumulation of public resources for private gain. To this extent, the London based Economic intelligence unit has rated Nigeria as one of the worlds highest risk business locations, behind Iraq and Russia. Some Economists suggests that corruption in Nigeria constitutes up to 10% of the country's GDP. At the grassroot level, officials and administrators ask for gifts of "Dash" or "Bread" for conducting even the most basic paperwork. Despite the increasing reported cases of corruption in the Civil Service, sanctions are not effectively implemented. As a result, Civil Servants often are not punished for offenses such as misappropriation or mis-use of public funds.

Based on the afore-mentioned maladies in the Nigeria civil service, various reforms have been introduced by different military regimes and civilian administrations in Nigeria to ensure better management, effective service delivery and accountability of public service.

The ultimate goal is to raise the quality of services delivered to the population, support economic and social development, enhance the capacity to carry out core government functions-revenue generation, financial management, personnel management, policy formulation etc. To achieve the above, Nigeria had embarked on many post independence civil service reforms. Among the most important ones are the Adebo Commission (1971), Udoji Public Service review commission (1974) Dotun Philips Civil Service Reforms (1988) and Allison Ayida Commission (1995).

PUBLIC SERVICE REFORMS (1963-1999)

Morgan salaries and wages commission (1963): This Public Service Reforms (1963-1999) was directed towards the review of salaries and wages of workers because of an unbearable high cost of living in the country. The commission recommended a review of grading of officers and corresponding salary structure to take care of the discrepancies in various parts of the country on an ununiform salary grade level, conditions of service and uniform remuneration for officers performing the same duty in different parts of the country. It also recommended the award of a minimum living wage although; this was turned down by the government. Because some of the commission's recommendations were turned down, and the implementation of the accepted ones did not achieve the intended goal the Civil Service continued to perform poorly.

The Adebo Commission (1971)

The commission studied and reformed the Civil Service. It made a number of recommendations on the structure and organization of the Civil Service. It reviewed the salaries and wages of workers and recommended that a public service commission should be put in place to take up the responsibility of effectively reviewing the salaries and wages.

Udoji Public Service Review Commission Of 1974

The Udoji Public Service Review Commission of 1974 during Gowon's regime, overhauled the entire public service. The basic reason for setting up the Udoji Commission was to ensure the development and optimum utilization of manpower for efficiency and effectiveness in the service. The review commission was tasked to examine the 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, etc. The commission made a number of recommendations that led to the adoption of a "New Style Public Service based on Project Management, management by objective (MBO) and Planning Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS)". The Commission opined that the absence of these modern management techniques greatly hindered the ability of the Civil Service workers to achieve desired results. Other recommendations included a unified grading structure to embrace all posts

in the Civil Service, salary to depend on job content and performance, promotion to be based on merit, public sector composition to be in line with that of the private sector, finance and personnel management to be modernized, introduction of code of ethics, motivation of workers, man power development, the term administration to be changed to management etc. The Udoji Public Service Review Commission attempted to achieve a “New Style Public Service based on result oriented management which would be capable of meeting the challenges of development”. However institutional and cultural problems combined to weaken the effectiveness and efficiency of the Civil Service reform and this led to a drastic reduction of the workforce in which about 12,000 public servants lost their jobs in 1975, culminating to low morale of the workers which adversely affected productivity in the service.

Dotun Philips Civil Service Reform Commission 1988

Still trying hard to re-engineer the Nigeria Civil Service for effective service delivery, the Dotun Philips Civil Service Reform Commission of 1988 was set up by the Babangida regime, under the chairmanship of Dotun Philips. The Commission was set to study the structure, staffing and operations of the federal Civil Service. This reform did more harm than good as it encouraged corrupt practices in the state bureaucracy. The highlights of the reform were 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/tenure was left for the pleasure of the president or governor by making their position non-permanent any longer. 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 etc.

Allison Ayida Civil Service Reform (1995)

Barely a decade of operation of the 1988 reform General Sani Abacha came into power and introduced another reform following the opposition raised by top Civil Servants on the politicization of the post of permanent secretaries. The reform panel was chaired by Allison Ayida in 1995. The Abacha regime discovered that the Nigeria Civil Service was dying gradually due to the effects of the 1988 reforms. The panel was meant to examine and properly define the role of the Civil Service as an executive arm of government, examine various provisions of the Civil Service Decree NO. 43 of 1988 and make recommendations on how to improve performance, efficiency and commitment in the service, make appropriate recommendations on how to raise the morale of the workers, examine the problem of co-ordination and accountability in the ministries and make recommendations, examine the abolition of the office of the head of service and the pooling system etc. after studying the above issues, the Ayida committee recommended that for effective economic management of the Civil Service, the ministries should be structured according to their objectives, functions and sizes and not on uniform pattern,

and that the minister should continue to be head of the ministry only and the permanent secretary the accounting officer so as to re-introduce checks and balances.

Present State of the Civil Service

The Nigerian Civil Service has undergone several organizational and structural reforms, both before and after independence as we have X-rayed above, yet there is no tremendous improvement in the quality of service provided to the citizenry. Corruption still rears its ugly head again after many years of military exit in governance. There is weak national consciousness due to earlier introduction of the Nigerianization and regionalization policies that encouraged ethnicity and sectionalism in the rank and file of staffers in the service. There is multiplicity of classes and grades which brought about over bloating of the number of Civil Servants resulting to high re-current expenditure to the peril of infrastructural development. There is still a uniform centralized control of the Civil Service as was put in place by the colonial masters. In this twenty-first century, there is disillusionment with the uniform centralized control of the Civil Service management. Such 'controls according to experts was to assure impartial application of personnel policies to professionalize the Civil Service cadres and to route out corruption and patronage. But it is obviously clear today that these variables have not been dealt with, therefore a decentralize civil service will to some extent provide a panacea to the problem of development in Nigeria.

Critical Analysis of the Impact of the reforms

These reforms starting from the Morgan Commission of 1963 to the Allison Ayida Panel of 1994, tried quiet a lot at improving the Civil Service in Nigeria. But by 2005, it was obvious that a result oriented Civil Service had not emerged in Nigeria. The quality of the Civil Service was severely hampered by cultural, structural, institutional and other management defects.

The Way Forward

In Nigeria governance is largely typified by expansion patronage and authoritarian rule. Poor African Countries perform badly, considering the varying degrees they suffer from a number of pathologies like inefficiency, centralization, fragmentation, poor leadership, lack of capacity, patrimonialism, corruption, poor accountability and legitimacy. According to Ayoade (1988:107-111), the need to improve efficiency and accountability in Nigerian Civil Service is therefore obvious. Nigeria should stop copying verbatim foreign models of Civil Service but develop her own model that will enable her achieve her developmental needs. She has to do this by emulating those countries that had suffered the same fate but have now adopted their Civil Service to their socio-cultural values and have achieved results. With the disillusionment of a centralized control of the Civil Service in Nigeria today, the government is increasingly under pressure to improve its administrative efficiency and to render faster, better and more responsive services to a client public. Unfortunately there is still a uniform centralized control of the service as was put in place by the colonial masters although with little modification. It was effective for them in the accomplishment of their mission in Nigeria. But today it is no more effective for us if we must meet the challenges of development in this 21st century.

Nigeria therefore should decentralize her Civil Service to a reasonable extent from the center to the out-post offices so as to give them power to attend to emergencies as they arise. This will go a long way in strengthening the system. Nigeria should borrow a leaf from some advanced countries like Asian countries, France, US, Germany, Netherlands, and Canada who have tremendously improved their Civil Service by making it more Client public-oriented. They achieved this by using a model of centralized control allowing a reasonable degree of decentralization, flexibility and delegation of Civil Service Management system. Nigeria should emulate the above mentioned industrialized countries by embarking on a search for ways to reduce Civil Service expenditures and at the same time improve performance standards in government by adopting the “New public management (NPM) style” or the “New Managerialism”. It could do this by way of adopting different phases in her reform process. Hood (1991), opined that major New Public Management (NPM) doctrines are that (a) direct public sector costs must be cut, (b) Private sector style management practices must be applied to increase flexibility in decision making (c) competition in the public sector must be increased to help lower costs and better standards (d) the public sector must be decentralized to make units more manageable and productive (e) results should be stressed rather than procedure (f) explicit standards and performance measure must be established because accountability requires clearly stated aims and efficiency requires attention to goals (g) managers must be given powers for professional management, because accountability requires clear assignment of responsibility not diffusion of power. According to Jann (1997:96), the NPM inspired measures include reduction and refocusing of public sector functions through staff reductions and changes in budgetary allocations, restructuring of public organizations through reorganization of ministries, decentralization, delinking or hiring-off of central government functions to local governments or other bodies or private sector, etc.

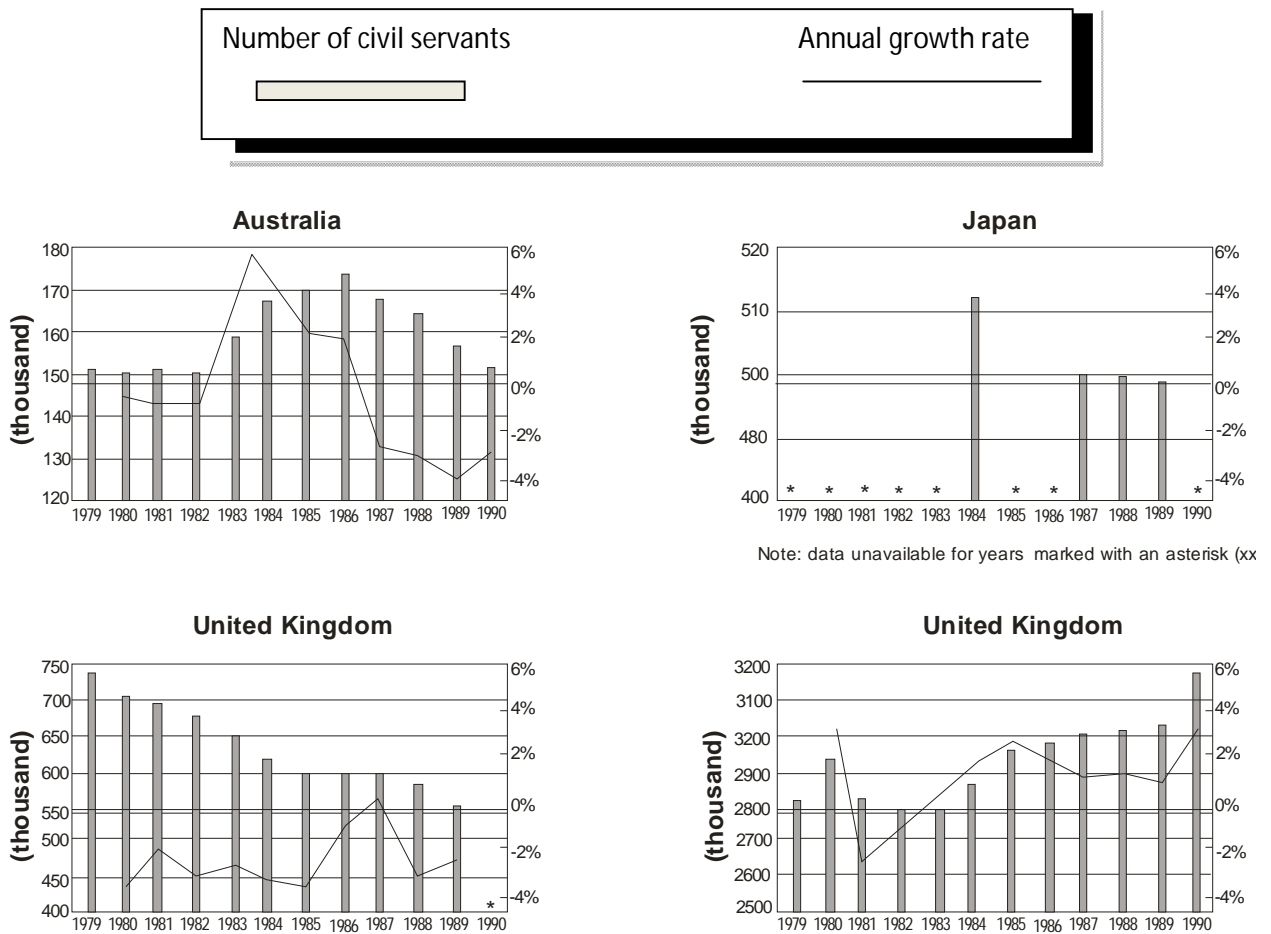
To reduce and refocus Civil Service activities in Nigeria, Civil Service workforce must be reduced. Lienert and Mordi, (1997) agree that measures are to be taken along this line and they must come in phases. The first approach could be called “cut back management” which will help in curbing public spending and Civil Service staffing in response to the fiscal constraints of the country. This could be done through further down-sizing exercise of the Civil Service staff which would be achieved through the removal of “Ghost” workers, elimination of vacant posts, retrenchment of redundant staff or recruitment slow downs, freezing of hiring, compulsory retirement at a legal age, transparent privatization of government functions / activities, establishment of guaranteed jobs for graduates, voluntary retirement and lay off of non-permanent staff.

The second approach is to (a) reduce direct role of government in managing the economy and in producing services so as to enable the private sector, local governments and communities provide such services, (b) policy formulation, co-ordination, regulations and monitoring functions of government should be strengthened (c) to change the way Civil Service is managed by establishing performance incentives and (d) to re-organize ministerial functions including decentralization, corporatization, out sourcing and privatization.

The third approach is to use fiscal reform to spearhead shifts in budgeting allocations, towards core government functions.

The Nigeria government is advised that in applying the above approaches, it should do it in line with the level of the social and economic needs of the country. Some examples of the countries that adopted cut back management according to Nunberg (1995) included the United States of America in the early 1980s. Dutch government's downsizing exercises reduced the Civil Service personnel by two percent per annum, in the mid 1980s, a Japanese programme to reduce Civil Service staff by five percent took place between 1986 and 1992, and the U.K's reduction of Civil Service staff by 22 percent was between 1979 and 1989 (see figures 1, 2 and 3).

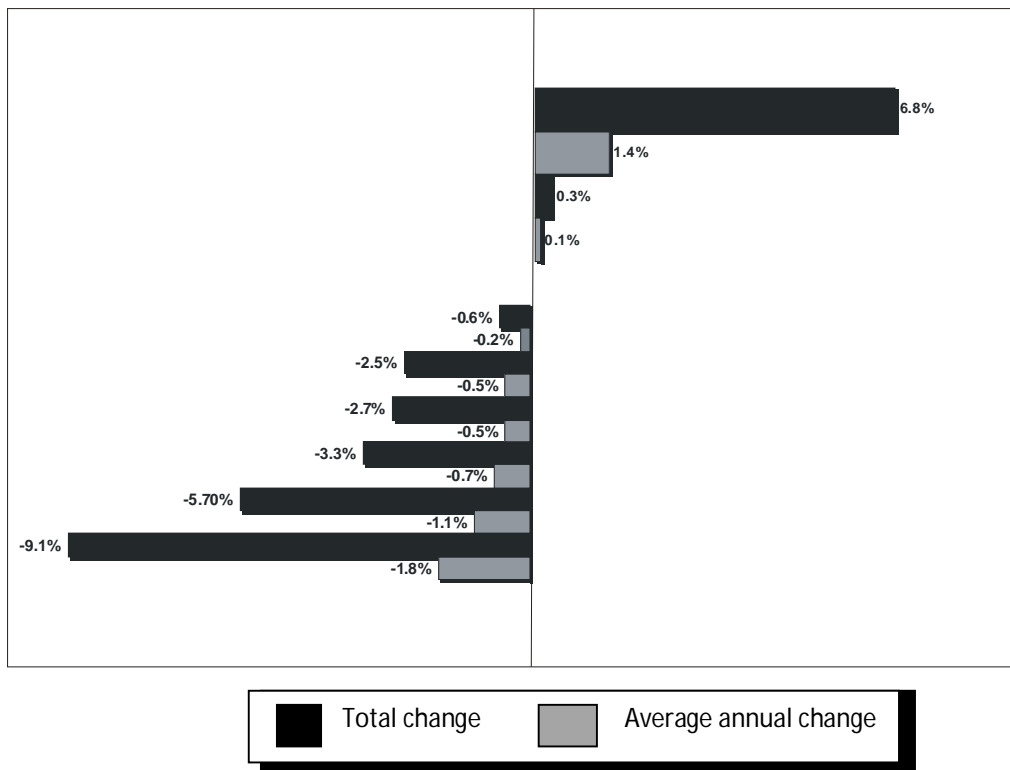
Figure 1
Civil Service Employment In Selected Oecd Countries, 1979-1990



Source: World Bank Discussion Papers managing the Civil Service (1995)

Figure 2

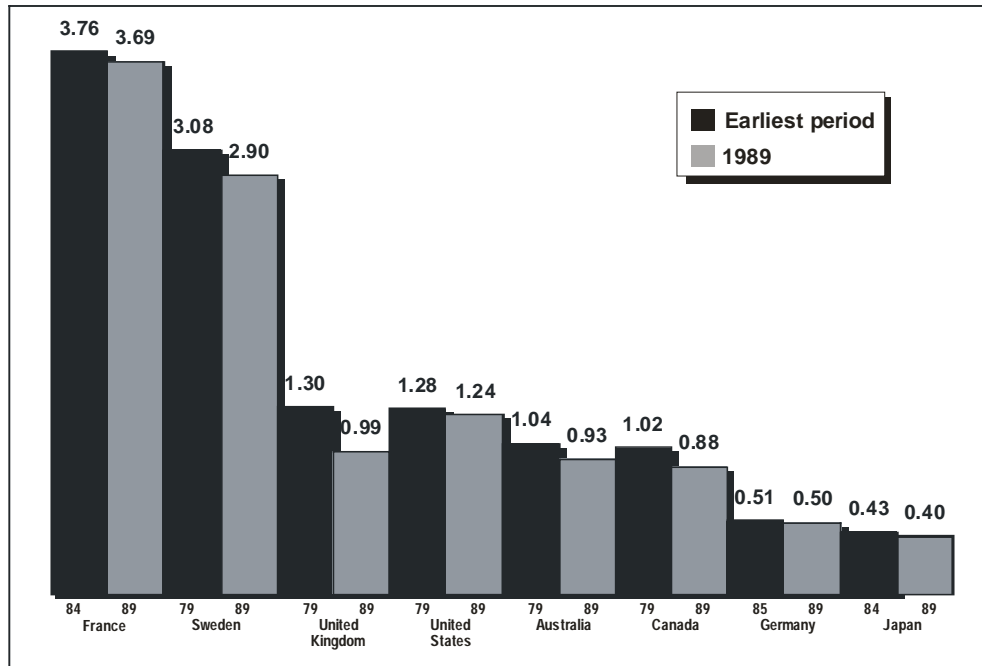
Percentage Changes In Civil Service Employment For Selected Oecd Countries, 1984-89



Note: Changes in Germany are based on 1985-89 time period

Source: CECPS

Figure 3
Civil Servants Per 100 In The Population In Selected Oecd Countries



Source: CECPS

As the above figures (1,2 and 3) depict, the cutback management programme brought about reductions in public employment in the Civil Service of selected countries as shown above. For Nigeria, the cutback management will not be enough to make the Civil Service performance more efficiently and responsively. She should deepen her reforms by increasing flexibility and devolving still more responsibility and accountability to lower managerial levels as is perceived in U.K. This is called “Next Steps Programme”. The aim is to further relax central financial and management controls and to devolve more responsibilities to the line managerial level. In countries like Australia and New Zealand, the ‘Next Steps’ administrative reform has spun off various central government functions to newly formed executing agencies. However policy functions should be retained in central departments while agencies should be charged with service delivery. The ministers to whom these agencies report to should be responsible for programme outcomes. In Nigeria, central control of the activities of the Civil Service has seriously impeded prompt service delivery. So while bearing in mind her social environment, Nigeria should embrace the ‘next steps’ programme the way it would suit her. The Civil Service management should be tripartite, usually with powers divided

among a policy guidance body, and oversight agency which would help to ensure fair and meritorious practices, financial control cum monitoring organ, under which a regulatory body to take charge of the workers' salary should be established. This measure will go a long way in curbing the frequent struggles between the government and the workers on the matters of remuneration. Workers often struggle with the government before they are paid their minimum wage or living wage. Sometimes some states will agree to pay, while some other states disagree to pay the minimum living wage to the workers. If a salary regulatory body is established, workers salaries would be adjusted based on the state of the country's economy and this will drastically reduce the frequency of strikes, embezzlement, other corrupt practices, and low morale by the Civil Servants. In Malaysia, for example, a New Remuneration System has been established which ensures that incentive packages are regularly given to the workers. Still and, in particular personal achievements are recognized and rewarded. In countries like, USA, Australia and Germany, salary regulatory bodies are established. In Botswana public service, a salary regulatory body known as "Presidential Salary Review Commission" has been instituted to regulate the salary of workers in line with the state of the country's economy. Following the increased revenues from diamonds and the annual rate of inflation, the body made automatic annual adjustments in 1982 and 1990 the annual adjustments were followed by the award of salary increase based on the recommendations of the presidential salary review commission (Mogolori Modisi 1996:70). In those years salaries were thus increased twice as shown in the table below.

Table 4

Grade	1983/84 P	1993/94 P	Folds of Increase
F0	21,768	124,728	5.7
F1	21,012	108,456	
F2	18,984	94,320	
E1	17,460	82,008	4.6
E2	16,428	71,316	
D1	15,408	62,004	
D3	14,388	48,456	
C1	13,476	37,872	2.8
C2	9,948	30,792	
C3	6,984	25,056	
B1	6,996	16,080	2.3
B2	4,920	13,464	
B3	3,972	10,992	

Source: Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM)

The re-structuring and re-organization of the Civil Service should not be only in the area of nomenclature but also in personnel utilization. This will help to ensure that manpower is optimally deployed and that there is effective monitoring system of the productivity of individual workers to ensure high productivity of the whole work-force. The initial recruitment and placement of workers should be on the bases of skills and competence. Appraisal and promotion of workers should be more objective based on skills and, in particular, personal achievements just as it is obtained in the Malaysian New Remuneration System. There is need to identify workers training needs to find out where they are deficient so as to train them accordingly. Anybody who fails or does not perform after the training should be asked to voluntarily retire. There should be a substantial freeing-up of centrally imposed rules on budgetary and staffing matters, so as to enable managers be both efficient and effective. The fact that excessive rule and regulations create inefficiencies, while devolution and freeing-up the rules give managers flexibility in improving public sector performance should not be ignored while considering the various options in this paper vis-à-vis the Nigeria socio-cultural environments. The research also recommends that other African Countries especially in the West African sub-region that were once colonized should consider the above options recommended for Nigerian civil service for the improvement of their own civil service in consonance with their socio-cultural values and circumstances.

Conclusion

Having identified the problem in the Nigerian Civil Service from independence till date and proffered suggestions on how to improve the service, what Nigeria needs now is to adopt a “new style management” bearing in mind her social and economic environment. Again the implementation strategy and monitoring systems of the Civil Service are to be taken seriously so that the Nigerian Civil Service would be service-and-result-oriented geared towards the achievement of the nation’s socio-economic development.

Finally, for the Nigerian government to succeed, the Civil Service should be organized in such a way to be in fore-front of the national change process initiating, guiding and managing change. Above all, the neutrality of the Civil Service should be guarded jealously.

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