

## **Power Sector Reform and Economic Development of Nigeria: Case of Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States.**

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### **Abstract**

*With the steady increase in Nigeria's population and the need to provide corporate bodies and households with stable power supply, the Nigerian government is faced with myriads of challenges in addressing the frequent unavailability of electricity supply. This has greatly affected the socio-economic activities and the general development of the country. Evidence from research has shown that lack of professionals, ineffective competition and inadequate or non-use of modern technology are major factors contributing to the poor service delivery in the power sector. This study was therefore carried out using Karl Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (PPMC) and regression analysis to examine the relationship between power sector reforms and economic development in Nigeria with a view to identifying gaps as it relates to technological infrastructures and competence of personnel. The relationship of these variables with infrastructure and employment was also assessed using enterprise structure indicators. Survey design method was adopted in this study. A total of 397 copies of questionnaire were distributed across the two study locations (Calabar and Uyo) using structured questionnaire. Empirical analysis result showed that application of technology and engagement of professional personnel have strong positive relationships with economic development in Nigeria. It was also revealed that, enterprise structure has significant impact in moderating the relationship between power sector reform and economic development. The study recommended comprehensive restructuring of the enterprise, the use of modern technology, application of requisite techniques and methods to ensure adherence of best practices enhance productivity as well as preserve the lifespan of the infrastructures. Recruitments should be based on merit as this will reduce incompetence and help check unethical behavior in the sector.*

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**Keywords:** *Power sector reform, economic development, technology, infrastructure Personnel, employment*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Over last decade, size and scope of government activities had increased tremendously this has made it difficult for government to meet the needs of the people. Nigeria, among other emerging countries of the world, embraced state development in order to combat economic and social system challenges caused by the great depression after the second war world (1939-1945). Government in partnership with the private sector are directly involved in revamping economic and social situation of the country. It was argued by policy makers during the recessionary period in the 1980s that government enterprises should be operated on profit motive; hence the structural adjustment programme was set in motion to privatize and commercialize public enterprises (Udoka & Anyingang, 2012). Steady power supply is one of the instruments of developed economy. The present of electricity supply in any organization enhance efficiency and effectiveness of productivity, output and increases profitability of

such organization yielding revenue and income for government and employees. A nation propensity to grow and developed lays heavily on power sector due to its vital role in coordinating other sectors of the economy like health, transportation, education communication, business etc. Reform of public enterprises has become imperative for policy analysts in searched for solutions to improve performance of state-owned enterprises. Nigeria is not alone in the pursuance policy of improving public enterprises performance, many developing countries including African countries, have embarked on extensive reform programme within the area of macroeconomic and liberation as economic development. Power sector reform is the independent variable, measured by level of technology and personnel. The choice of technology and personnel as a property of the power sector reform was based on its crucial role in achieving steady and reliable power supply. Economic development is the dependent variable of the study measured by infrastructure and employment. Also enterprise structure was considered as a mediating variable which likely impact on power sector reform programme and economic development. Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States are areas study. This study covered the period of three years (2013-2016), when Power Holdings Company of Nigeria (PHCN) was decided to form 18 successor different companies. Transfer of ownership from government-owned enterprises to individual-ownership is a form of structural adjustment programme to solve problem of dissatisfaction in the power company's activities and improve economic development in Nigeria. Electricity power sector in Nigeria requires extensive reform in order to meet global standard and economic growth. This was the brain behind the power sector reforms in Nigeria. Many developing countries of the world have embarked on public enterprise reforms as a way of improving economic activities and also liberalizing their economic systems. Nigeria resorts to privatization and commercialization reforms in order to relieve the government of massive resources needed to sustain the state-owned enterprises which were becoming a heavy burden on the nation treasury. It is considered that privatization programme is an effective strategy in improving performance in the power sector, which served as a bond to other sectors of the economy. Attracting foreign investors, introducing experts, improved technological know-how and reducing government interference, where the private sector has the capacities and the resources to operate efficiently, will facilitate the achievement of the reform programme. The power sector over years has suffered monopoly power, which had scared away investors. There have been several studies on power sector reform and economic development in Nigeria with scanty or no empirical study on application of technology and personnel which would have improved infrastructure and employment. Based on this premise that the study examine the relationship between power sector reform and economic development of Nigeria, Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company (PHEDC) in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States as a case.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The research structure was anchored on allocative efficiency theory. Allocative efficiency applied to public enterprises deregulation, liberalization and competition which enhances implementation of privatization programmes (Jackson and Palmer, 1988). The financial outcome of privatization was a relief on the part of government particularly reduction in budget shortfalls by removal of financial supports. The proceeds of N600m from privatization of power sector invested in other subsectors of the economic gives government opportunity of advancing the economic condition of the country. The belief is that privatizing PHCN rather than government control would yield more efficient services that are useful to consumers, industries, and a nation as a whole. The concept of privatization goes with deregulation and liberalization which remove the strictness of the law on the privatized

enterprise, thereby encouraging expansion and competition. Allocative efficiency theory increases efficiency and checkmates management activities in order to conform to expected performance. Privatizing PHCN to private firms (PHEDC) result to operational efficiency through introduction of modern technology, full utilization of resources and create enabling business environment for investors.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Power sector reform**

The current drive to improve efficiency, effectiveness and increase in quality of service delivery in electricity distribution in Nigeria prompted the need to reform the power sector. Power sector reforms are the different policies initiative by government to alter ownership, control and management of power sector to improve performance and quality of service delivery. The power sector is considered as public enterprise in the capacity of this content. According to Nkume (2014), public enterprise reforms have taken place all over the world as global phenomenon including developed, developing and countries in transition. Power sector reform is initiated through government toward shifting from old method of running the sector to sustain socio-economic, political and technological development by re-structuring, injecting new blood, professionalism and openness which focuses on maximum efficiency of the economy. Public enterprise restructuring is planned intervention to advance state of public activities in service delivery. Omoyefa (2008), views reform as a total overhauling of a public enterprise with the aim of encouraging efficiency, effectiveness, competency and financial capability in handling the sector. The power sector reform policy through deregulation, liberalization and competition led to commercialization and privatization of the sector. Privatization is a general term to define different policy initiatives to change ownership and control of the government or/public sector. This definition is in line with Agabi and Orokpo (2014), who considered privatization as a permanent transfer of public agency to private owned. Supporting the above view, Ugorji (1995) considered privatization as a logical transmission of appropriate roles; activities from the state to private sector. Thus production and service delivery can be structured more efficiently through market and price instruments. The end product of privatization is change of ownership between the government and private sector to improve economic growth and development. Ezeani (1993) in his own view considered privatization a deliberate government decision to motivate economic growth and efficiency, reducing government interference and enhancing participation of private sector. Many countries of the world use privatization programme as a means of economic turnaround to revamp their economic activities. It is a way of fostering economic development through private participation, creating employment, improved infrastructure, investment and involving other foreign bodies in the economic activities of the country. In this study power sector reform and economic development of Nigeria, researcher used power sector reform as independent variable to examine the implication on economic development which is the dependent variable using Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company (PHEDC) as a case.

### **Measures of power sector reform**

#### **Technology**

The drive to improve operational and managerial efficiency, effectiveness and service delivery in power sector gave birth to privatization in the power sector. Technology provides the physical and economic platform in which other resources operates. It does not refer to machines alone but include others like: knowledge, techniques, tools and procedures which enhance the transformation of energy input into electricity consumption. Inyang (2008) emphasized that, technology is possible through research, science and development and

has relevant influence on work relationship of employees. Technology expand the mind set of an employee toward creativity, initiative and innovative ideas to improve on performance and increase output. Technology did not just evolve from the moon, it must have to be researched for appropriate tools which increase and improve productivity in order to make profit.

### **Personnel**

The scarcity of skilled manpower in the sector is a major challenge hindering the success and productivity of the power sector. For the new companies to be efficient and effective in service delivery, there should be alliance between National Power Personnel is the human factor which harmonies other factors to perform efficiently. Placing the right person on the right position will result in efficiency and effectiveness and also reduce wastage in terms of materials and financial resources. The crisis of service delivery in the sector link to the failure of ethic and professional values in the sector. This point is supported by Osawe, (2014) who stated that, the inability to maintain standard in public services has led to poor performance, which affects various aspect of Nigerian society. Lack of professionals in Nigerian's public enterprise has increased the rate of crimes in the society, this is because personnel cover up for their incompetency in discharging their responsibilities.

### **Power sector reform and economic development of Nigeria**

Reform concept formed principal of market-based substitute for state-own-parastatal and has very vital part in implementing structuring adjustment programmes in developing countries. Many considered the advancement of private ownership as panacea to successful transformation of developing countries' economies. It is believed that reform programmes in less advance countries is encouraged through inner and exterior elements. Research has showed that the external factor evolved from advanced nations, World Bank and IMF". It inspired developing countries to reform and liberalized their economic policies in other to attract multi-national support and investors. World Bank and IMF encourage privatization knowing the potentials of privatization policy to developing nation (Vickers & Yarrow, 2006). Privatization involved full potential utilization of material and human resources to increased productivity, profitability, enhanced operational efficiency, encouraged investment, create employment which improves standard of living, increased in per capita and economic growth. All reform progrommes intends to generate revenue and motivate corporate management as well as competitiveness. State-owned enterprises are commonly known with its bureaucratic nature which causes inefficiency, wastefulness, overstaffing, dependence on subsidies and monopolist. Efficiency result in cost minimization and profit maximization which is lacking in public enterprises induce productivity enhancement. Study presented that profitability level and value chain in privately-owned business cannot be measured with public counterpart (Killick, 2004). Reform policy is considered as an appropriate remedy to power sector problems, because private firms invest their capital in order to yield returns (Shirely, 1996). Market devices improved efficiency and resolved public finance challenges. In a privatized economy, micro level profits stimulate macro level development through gain machinery where conversion process employed efficient and effective method. Change of ownership will lead to increased profit, revenue generation, and investment in others sector of the economy, reducing political interference in the control and management of power sector. All these are signals for productivity and indication for economic development. Motives for privatization varies from countries to countries, in developing countries is subjective to broad and external economic burden of public businesses. Evidence indicated the large level of fiscal challenges face by public authority and monetary organization in Africa (World Bank, 1995). The big financial institution encouraged privatization as measure for relieving public debt from country and yardstick for grant provision of loan. Privatization programmes in

developing countries is on increased in order to attract economic benefits from stronger national and multinational financial support. The objectives are to make supplementary income, stimulate fiscal competence still maintaining level of employment and reducing government interference in managing enterprises. Additional economic benefits of change of ownership to the private individual are; introduction of rivalry using economic liberalization, acquaintance with marketing ethics, emergent capital plan and involving national investors. The process if properly executed can restore the state of the economic by even distribution of resources creating social and political sanity, avenue for growth and expend infrastructural facilities.

Furthermore, the goal of achieving determined productivity using limited means to reduce poverty is achieved by developing countries like Nigeria. Reform policy in the sub-Sahara Africa was meant to revamp state companies performing below expectation which much fund from tax money is been invested in and no proportional turn-over. It is recorded in most less advance nation that policy of privatization contribute for the totality of their economic success. Country where private investment is allowed to actively involved in economic decision contribute to growth and development from the massive capital in funding projects especially as a means of social responsibility in a community where operation is establish.

### **Empirical review**

Udoka and Anyingang (2012) studied the result of privatization in economic growth in Nigeria: from 1979 to 2007. The study was conducted in Calabar and its objective was to ascertain the relationship between public and private company spending and gross domestic product. The paper used the ex-post facto investigation design and the statistics gather were analyzed using the least square multiple regression statistical model. The study revealed strong significantly connection between public and private sector spending with gross domestic product, they also discovered that privatization is the way forward for the poor and inefficient performances of state-owned enterprises. Built on their discoveries, it was suggested amongst others foreign investors be encouraged to participant and in invest in the privatized companies to create global linkage and create employment opportunities. Ayara, et al., (2013) analyzed effectiveness and utilization of electricity by household within Cross River State. They adopted descriptive information in the study, 1,206 questionnaires were administered to households across the 18 LGAs in the state. It was revealed that, some rural communities in the state depended solely upon wood source of energy which has environmental repercussions on vegetation and other elements covering earth surface. They recommended that improving in power infrastructure provision via budget procedure, active and competent implementation can minimize those challenges faced by the people of the state. Udoudoh and Umoren (2015) studied public electricity performance and its implication in economic advancement of Nigeria. Structured questionnaires were administered to respondents and simple percentages were used to rank the responses. The study unveiled that, while blueprint of electricity delivery is great, shown with 263 respondents which represent 72% from sampled, the preservation principles was poor. Total of 217 respondents showing 59% of sampled sustained thus; lack of amenities maintenance in PHCN resulted to instability power supply. They recommended government should partner with the non-governmental sector tackling electricity affairs of Nigeria in order to attain economic development.

Agba, Ushie, Agba and Festus (2010) researched on privatization, job security and performance efficiency in priavtised firm in Nigeria with the aim of investigating the influence of privatization in engagement opportunity, work safety and outcome efficiency in government owned enterprise of Nigeria. The study conducted in some selected northern

cities in Nigeria. Their result shows that, despite the challenges in privatizing state owned enterprise, it encourages employment creation, ensures tasks safety and profitability of enterprise. It was commended thus, administration should use appropriate to bodies evaluate and assess asset and their worth before privatizing, government should ensure adequate enlightenment programmes, enforce equity distribution to geographical zones in Nigeria and also to encourage management of the new company to adhere to effective measure in form of labor intensive, make available occupations and safeguard work sanity to encourage labor and trade union acceptance of privatization in Nigeria. Ifionu and Ogbuagu (2013) researched on privatization and economic performance in Nigeria (1990–2010). The study was conducted in Port Harcourt and Awka and the objective was to examine the control privatization has with economic growing of Nigeria by Ordinary Least Square method (OLS) co-integration and Error correlation model. It observed privatization positively impacted economic progress in Nigeria, many factors were responsible including political and economic instability, inappropriate policies execution to accomplish good result. It was noted that government should create supportive and enabling situation to attain progress. It was also endorsed for government to deregulate and attract more private participation. Ohajianya, Abumere, Owate and Osarolube (2014) examined issues liable for erratic energy supply in Nigeria and noted these factors as government unreliable and imprudent energy sector reform plan, inadequacy of power generation, transmission, distribution, and consumption within effectual workers in electricity distribution companies. Models were used to analyze their findings but based on experience and judgmental views. It was discovered that main causes of unstable power supply in Nigeria was the energy wastage by consumers due to defaults, projected bills structure implemented in electricity distribution companies, administration wrong power reform policies, truncated level and non-maintenance of transmission and distribution infrastructure, deployment of untrained and technically incompetent staff by power generation, transmission and distribution companies. The study recommended the adoption of energy conservative policies, instant stoppage of estimated billing structure, face-lift in power distribution and transmission facilities and also the engagement services of competent staff with experienced by electricity distribution companies.

Onyishi (2012) studied the effect of privatization and commercialization on the Nigeria economy (1970-2010). The study was conducted in Enugu. The researcher adopted multiple regression and OLS technique of estimation to examine the effect of the reform programme on the economy. He observed, that the reform programme was an opportunity to improve the Nigeria economy in this 21st century. It was therefore recommended, that government should grant private sector liberty to established transmission companies to create competitive electricity market. Similarly, Aminu and Peterside (2014) in their research impact of privatization in power sector Nigeria with a political economic style were conducted in Kogi state. The paper used qualitative approach to examine the implications of privatization of power sector in Nigeria. It revealed that, the Nigerian experience of privatization indicated negative consequences on the economy, which among others include: retrenchment, price hike, domination by the elite etc. they conclude that, privatization has it benefit on increased profit level and service delivery, but privatization of the power sector is not healthy for Nigeria economy nor the best option to savage the sector since the government is the key contributor to inefficiency of the power sector. It was recommended that, the government should provide a conducive environment to attract investors with technical expertise who can run the affairs of the sector to ensure better service delivery for consumers at affordable price. There is need for Nigeria Electricity Regulatory Commission to control activities of the new companies to ensure conformity with standards of service delivery to the consumers Ndiyo, Asor and Henry (2016) studied impact of power sector reforms is small scale business in Cross River State. The objective is to assess role power

sector reform perform in small scale business in the state. The research makes use of ex-post facto research technique and the data gathered was subject to descriptive analysis using simple percentage. The study revealed that, inadequate supply of electricity affect the operation of their businesses and profit level. It also observed that, power supply has been relatively good compared to the pre-reform era. In their results, it mentioned among others for the state government to consider the issue concerning electricity supply seriously by constructing more electricity infrastructure, setting monitoring term to check illegalities and short-changing of electricity consumers in the state. Anwana and Akpan (2016) researched on power sector reform and electricity distributing growth in Nigeria. The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom state with the aim of evaluating the impact of the reforms on electricity supply growth in Nigeria. They adopted Error correction mechanism (ECM) to examine the impact of the reforms on electricity growth. It was noted that, the present power sector reform will bring about great development if appropriately implemented. It was recommended that the government should relinquish total production of electricity to the private investors and set monetary and regulatory bodies to monitor their activities.

### **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The study employed survey research measures. This served as a guideline for collection, analysis, discussion of findings and interpretation of the data which were collected from the field. The research study also used frequency and simple percentage to rank the respondent socio-demographic status and perception on the level of satisfactory derive from Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution (PHED). The population was drawn from consumers of electricity in the areas under survey. This was obtained through distribution database in Calabar business unit and Uyo business unit. Calabar business unit has twenty-eight thousand one hundred and seven (28,107) household consumers while Uyo business unit has thirty-two thousand, five hundred and twenty-four (32,524) household consumers. The total population of the study is sixty thousand, six hundred and thirty-one (60,631) household consumers from the two metropolis selected. The research study adopted the stratified and simple random sampling in grouping areas. Two selected areas represent the strata. Simple random sampling is then applied in each stratum for data collection. Taro Yamane formula technique was adopted in the study. Therefore, the total sample size of the study from Calabar and Uyo is three hundred and ninety-seven household consumers. Data is primarily sourced from field, which was gathered using structured questionnaire administered to respondents in Calabar and Uyo. Pearson Product Moment correlation was adopted in this study

### **FINDINGS AND RESULTS**

The research empirically investigate relationship between power sector reform and economic development of Nigeria. Based on the analysis, the following hypotheses were revealed. In hypothesis one, it was revealed that there is a broad connection in technology in PHEDC and infrastructure in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States. Finding conforms to works of Inyang (2008), who posits that technology is possible through research, science and development and has relevance influence on work relationship of the employees. Technology has tools which increases and improve productivity in order to make profit. It provides the physical and economic platform in which other resources operates. It does not refer to machines alone but include others, like knowledge, techniques, tools, procedures which enhances the transformation of energy input into electricity consumption. The finding conforms with the works of Agabi & Orokpo (2014) who posit that the rate of modern devices contribute tremendously toward energy consumed in thermal plants can be converted to electricity source to improve on level of technology in PHEDC. Furthermore, Udoudo & Umoren (2015) posit that enhancing efficiency in service delivery and cost efficient in handling affair

of power sector was brain behind privatization of the sector. Efficiency in technology is a way of utilizing available resources to obtain maximum outcome. Introduction of modern technology increases efficiency, effectiveness and enhance expansion of infrastructure on the sector. It is a way of ensuring unified functions of internal structure of organization and capability of an institution to accomplish needs of their consumers.

In hypothesis two, it was observed that there is significant relationship between personnel of PHEDC and employment opportunities in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States. Finding conformed with study conducted by Onyishi (2012), who posit that for the new companies to be efficient and effective in terms of service delivery, it is necessary for the purchasers companies to collaborate with National Training Power Institute of Nigeria in terms of human skill development. Placing the right person in the right position will result in efficiency and effectiveness and also reduce wastage in terms of materials and financial resources. Anwana & Akpan (2016) supported that inability to maintain standard in public sector is resultant impact in low productivity in labor output, which affect every aspect of Nigeria humanity. Insufficient professionals in Nigerians public enterprise has increased the rate of crimes in the society, this is because personnel most cover up incompetency in discharging responsibilities. Aminu & Peterside (2014), supported that, consequential consequence in concession of standard in discharge of services means everyone in the society becomes affected, because anytime a personnel act unprofessionally, been it in education, medical field, law, it therefore affects the moral and peace of the society. Staff should be inform on moral rules and practice as main content of proficiency, showing proficient self-control and well behaved character. Professional personnel ensure efficiency and effectiveness in service by maintaining ethical conduct. In hypothesis three, it was revealed that enterprise structure significantly moderate the effect of power sector reform on economic development. The finding agreed with the works of Nkume (2014), Omoyefa (2008) who posit that the current drive to improve efficiency, effectiveness and increase quality of service prompted the need to reform power sector. Power sector reform is a total overhauling of power sector enterprise with aim of encouraging efficiency, effectiveness, competency and financial capability in handling the sector. Restructuring the sector gear toward sustain socio-economic, political and technological development and openness which focused on maximum efficiency of economy. The major findings from study include;

- i. There is significant relationship between in PHEDC technology with infrastructure in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.
- ii. There is significant relationship between personnel of PHEDC and employment in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.
- iii. Enterprise structure in PHEDC significantly moderate effect of power sector reform on economic development in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.

## CONCLUSION

This study examined the nature of relationship existing in power sector reform and economic development of Nigeria. Power sector reform was initiated by government to transfer possession of generate and distributing subsector from power sector to private sector by restructuring, injecting new blood, professionalism and openness which focused on maximum efficiency of economy. Power sector reform is seen as a tool of overhauling public enterprise with aim of encouraging efficiency, effectiveness, competency and financial capability in handling the sector. The study concluded that technology have significant relationship with infrastructure, personnel has significant relationship with employment and enterprise structure significantly moderate the relationship between power sector reform and economic development.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Sequel to findings above, following suggestions are recommended:

1. Application in technology facilitate productivity in service delivery and human activities. It is necessary for management of the privatized companies to introduce modern technology to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and improved infrastructure in the sector. It is a way of ensuring harmonious functioning of both human and material resources to obtain maximum profit.
2. Placing right person in the right position result in efficiency and effectiveness and reduces wastage of materials as well as monetary resources. Managers in companies should adhered to strict recruitment exercise based on merit and not on nepotism has this influence ethical conduct of the companies. Image of a company is promoted by the quality of personnel .Lack of professionals in the public sector result in rampage of crimes in the society and cases of corruption.
3. The power sector reform is government policy initiative to embrace more stakeholders in decision making in the sector, it is therefore important for management to establish structure which will enhance achievement of efficiency and effectiveness of both human and material resources through restructuring of the sector to achieve vision 2020 (steady and reliable power supply).

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