

Service Compact with all Nigerians (SERVICOM) Reform and Public Service Delivery: The Missing Link

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Abstract

Successive governments in Nigeria have embarked on various reforms in a bid to reposition the public sector to achieve set objectives. Each reform highlighted a number of factors that have resulted to inefficiency and lack of productivity in the service. In this paper, we examined various public service reforms with emphasis on the Service Compact with All Nigerians (SERVICOM) Reform and some agencies that have keyed into the policy. The study adopted the Human Relations Theory of public administration as theoretical framework. Being a descriptive and quantitative study, the study adopted secondary information from the agencies studied and observed that even though some modest achievements have been recorded as a result of the introduction of the reform, much of the reform was focused on structural and regulatory operations without consideration of workers motivation, emotion, values and satisfaction for enhanced job performance. It therefore recommended, amongst others, that the SERVICOM reform would hardly achieve the desired objective of quality service delivery if it does not integrate personnel motivation and behavioural concerns in its strategy for improved performance.

Keywords: Public Service, Motivation, Service Delivery, Organization, Human Resources.

Introduction

There is no doubt that the public service is a veritable mechanism for the overall attainment of the policy objectives of government. It is the machinery with which government implements its policies and programmes and therefore plays significant role in the development of the society. Globally, there is a marked difference between public administration in developed countries and those of developing countries, hence the resultant effect of policy outcome between the two. In this regard, we cannot overemphasize the importance of the workforce in the public sector. Over the years, the Nigerian public service has been described as one that is characterized by a myriad of problems such as: weak government, red-tapism, and lack of accountability, low professional standards, waste and corruption, poor productivity, lack of control, redundancy, over staffing, bloated staff structure Bayo (2012). Whether it is in the military era or the civilian administration, the scenario has been the same. The situation has, no doubt, contributed to the poor performance and lack of effectiveness in policy outcomes of government activities. To address these challenges, successive governments, since independence, have engaged in various reforms, in order to make it more result and purpose oriented. These are through initiation of various reforms. For instance, the Morgan

Commission was set up in the First Republic to proffer recommendations for a better public service in Nigeria. There was later the Elwood Commission of 1966; Adebo Commission of 1971, Udoji Commission of 1974, Dotun Phillips Commission, 1985; Decree No 42 of 1988, Ayida Review Panel of 1994, the civil service reform from 1999 to 2007 under the President Olusegun Obasanjo administration and lately the Steven Orosanya Panel of 2010 -2012. All these commissions were set up, at various times, to ensure that the public service yielded the needed impact by providing efficient services to the citizenry. However, despite the recommendations and implementation of these recommendations, the problem of inefficiency in the public service subsists. This, no doubt, is a major constraint to the development objectives of government in Nigeria. The questions arise, why is the situation so? Does it mean that the recommendations of the commissions are faulty or is it the lack of implementation of such recommendations?

These questions are crucial owing to the reality that the public service plays a crucial role in ensuring that Nigeria is administered in a manner consistent with principles of good governance. However, Bayo (2012) avers that what has been done, so far, in terms of civil service reforms are no more than addressing the symptoms, rather than the cause of the rot. His position stems from the quest for structural reform and reorganizing the system through general staff audit, payroll cleanup of ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), changes in nomenclature of official designation of officers, etc. One may agree with this position considering the reality that despite several reforms, the public service is yet to achieve remarkable level of efficiency.

It is in this light that this paper seeks to examine how motivation of the public workforce is the missing link in the SERVICOM Reform. This is against the backdrop that the quality of human resources, the environment of public administration, as well as the right policies play a major role in the quality of service delivery provided. According to Chuwuemeka (2004, p. 8), cited in (Emejulu, Muo and Chukwuemeka, 2012) personnel or human resource management is one of the most complex and challenging fields of human endeavor. This is reasoned along the line that not only must the organization's requirement for an effective workforce be met, the personnel manager must also be greatly concerned with expectation of both the employees and society in general. This implies that in trying to achieve the set goals for the organization or institution, the welfare of the human factors therein should not be relegated to the background. It must be taken into serious consideration. Employee's satisfaction should be as relevant as client satisfaction if the realization of the organizations or institution's goals should be thought of as achievable.

It is in this light that this paper takes a look at the structure and framework of the service compact with all Nigerians with a view to highlighting the underplay of motivation, a critical factor in quality service delivery in an organization or institution, with a view to strengthening the policy. The paper is divided into: conceptual framework; theoretical framework, literature review, discussion/ analysis, as well as summary/conclusion.

Conceptual Framework

Public Service: The term public service includes those workers employed by the government to carry out the implementation of programmes and policies. They also include those engaged in direct services such as departments, agencies and parastatals. They are paid from the public treasury. Public service is the institution saddled with the responsibility of designing, formulating and implementing public policies and programmes, as well as the discharge of government functions and development programmes in an effective and efficient way.

Adamolekun (1983) defines public service as the totality of services that are organized under government authority. It is the hub and centre of government activities. The strength and efficiency of the public service of a country goes a long way to determine the level or outcome of implementation of public programmes and policies.

Motivation: This term refers to the inducement that spurs an individual to put in more effort, diligence in achieving the overall performance/objective of the organization. Motivation could be internal or external. However, motivation varies from individual to individual or from organization to organization. It is imperative that the human resources manager or policy makers must be able to discern or understand what motivates a particular worker(s) in order to apply such strategies to bring out the best in them. Motivation of the individual is necessary because the human resources of an organization are necessary for the organization or agency to achieve its objectives. According to Dike (1995:p.65) when we speak of motivation in the civil service, it must be understood that we speak not of right or obligations that are enforceable at law, but of moral and material incentives, work facilities and training opportunities afforded the employee by the employer in the hope of maximizing productivity.

Service Delivery: This implies the output or performance meant to provide for the wellbeing of the citizenry of a state. Service delivery is the ultimate objective of government; hence the public service is instrumental to its attainment. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government and that within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in the constitution, the state shall harness the resources of the nation and promote national prosperity and an efficient, a dynamic and self-reliant economy and control the national economy in such a manner as to secure the minimum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity. The foregone is the hallmark of service delivery in the public service. In other words, it is the essence of good government and governance.

Organization: This term refers to a group of people formed in a structure with the purpose of achieving specific goals, which is for the overall good of the people. In this paper, the concept organization is used for such public institutions established by law with the purpose of achieving specific public goals. Public services are structured into organizations with a view to professionalize and make them more result oriented.

Human Resources: These are staff and employees of organizations who work cooperatively in line with the rules and regulations of the service to ensure that organizational goals are attained. The human resources in an organization are vital to the proper functioning of the organization and attainment of efficient and quality service delivery. The strength of an organization, whether public or private, is dependent of the quality and capacity of its human resources. In relation to this paper, human resources are the workforce in the public service that carry out the responsibility of implementation of public policies and programmes.

Theoretical Framework

In order to situate this study under a theoretical framework, we are guided by the Human Relations Theory, as theoretical underpinning. The human relations theory is one of the theories of administration adopted to explain how administration should respond to organizational structure in order to achieve efficiency in production and service delivery. The literature on theories of public administration identify: Classical (Function or Process) Theory Human Relations School, Behavioural Science Theory, Systems Theory and the Contingency Approach (Obikexe and Anthony, 2004) as theories of administration. These theories meet

diverse explanations and concepts in organizational objectives. For instance, in their study of efficiency theories, their applicability and effects on Nigerian secondary schools in Cross Rivers State, Ada and Ada (2013) adopted the scientific management approach. So also it is with the other theories. For us, the Human Relations Theory is most appropriate to explain the missing link in the effective service delivery in the public sector, as provided for in the Service for Compact (SERVICOM) reform. The theory emerged to fill the gap created identified in the classical perspective. This theory incorporated and extended the classical theory and became the forerunner of the behavioural science theories. Proponents of this theory are George Elton Mayo and Frits J. Roethlisberger in their famous Hawthorne experiment. The human relations approach has its focus on dealing with human behaviour, rather than just his skills and aptitude and that it is when this is considered and applied that the best in the individual will manifest, thereby creating efficiency in service delivery. Indeed, the Hawthorne studies of 1924 at the Hawthorne workshop of Eastern Electric Company in Illinois, USA was used to illustrate how workers react in different environment. Amongst others, the Hawthorn discovery was that besides the need for money, people also have need to be accepted, recognized and feel that they belong, particularly to a system. It also stressed the social needs of workers and that organizations, factory, office or shop is not merely a workplace, but also a social environment and this recognition influence the quality and quantity of work produced; that recognition of the man, his feelings, his group, his family, his emotions, values, sentiments, temperaments would affect his performance; social satisfaction of a work group was a vital element in the success of organization (Obikeze and Anthony, 2015). So then, making regulations and putting in place organizational structures that should enhance productivity of workers in the public service is not all there is in achieving the objectives. A well-motivated workforce is highly useful and this can be achieved in numerous ways which the human relations approach provides answers. If theory as explained by Ndu (1998) is a reasoned shorthand explanation of the general and basic principles of a fact or set of facts which belong to the same family, then we are certain that the human relations theory best suits the missing link this study is aimed at, in the SERVICOM reform, for effective and efficient service delivery in the public service. Indeed, the focus of the SERVICOM was more of scientific, than the human relations perspective, thus has some resultant effects on policy implementation and outcome.

Methodology

This study is historical, descriptive as well as qualitative. We obtained data from secondary sources (books, journals, newspapers, as well as various online sources for information that enabled us discuss and analyze our findings. Personal observations were also helpful in the study and we were able to draw conclusions from the data obtained.

Literature Review:

That the public sector is a veritable instrument in the attainment of the objectives of government cannot be over emphasized. It is against this backdrop that Denhardt and Denhardt (2009, p.8) highlight the importance of the operators of this this sector when they argued that:

In terms of the actions and experience of the public administrator, therefore, we may say that it is the publicness of the work of the public or nonprofit manager that distinguished the public administrator from other similar activities....

It recognizes that you are likely to experience an inevitable tension between efficiency and responsiveness as you work in governmental and non-governmental organizations, a tension that will be absolutely central to your work.

The foregoing, invariably, provides an insight into the workings of the public service. In this regard, we make a few explanation of the public service as opined by some scholars.

Adamolekun (1986) defines public administration as commonly used to refer to both activities concerned with the management of government business and the study of these activities. Nnoli (1986) refers to public administration as the machinery, as well as integral processes through which the government performs its functions. It is a network of human relationships and associated activities extending from the government to the lowest point and powerless individuals charged with keeping in daily touch with resources, natural and human, and all other aspects of the life of society with which the government is concerned. Generally speaking, public administration is about service to the public, which is carried out by public administrators or civil servants. According to Nwosu (1977) the civil service is a term used to cover public servants who are direct employees of federal and state governments, other than the police, armed forces personnel, judicial personnel and the teachers. For Adebayo (1986) the civil service comprises all servants of the state other than those holding political appointments who are employed in a civil capacity and whose remuneration is paid out of money voted by the legislature. For Adamolekun (1983) the civil service is the body of government officials appointed to assist political executive in formulating and implementing government policies.

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides that:

The public service covers all those employed in the service of the federation or the state in any capacity, including all staff of the National and State Assembly, a member of staff of the judicial or any commission or authority established by the National or State Assembly, staff of statutory corporation or educational institution established or financed principally by the government of the federation or a state, staff of a company or enterprise in which government or its agency owns a controlling share or interest, members or officers of the armed forces of the federation or the Nigerian Police Force or other government security agencies established by law and staff of a local government.

Historical Development of Public Service in Nigeria: The development of public service in Nigeria could be traced to the different stages in the political development of Nigeria as follows: pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era. The various epochs are characterized by diverse features and outcomes. The pre colonial era was the administration that characterized the different ethnic groups which comprised what is today known as Nigeria. They were distinct ethnic groups that had different cultures and traditions and carried out administrative services as such. For instance, the northern Hausa/Fulani group had a strong monarchical system of administration in which the emirs wielded enormous powers and controlled the people. The emirs were both the traditional, religious and political leaders of the people in the administrative structure. It was described as absolute monarchy. The western Yoruba also had monarchy that was not as strong as the northern Hausa/Fulani group. This system of monarchy was described as constitutional monarchy. The Oba was both the traditional and administrative head of the people, who ruled in conjunction with his council of chiefs (Obiajulu, Obi and Iwuoha, 2016). For the Eastern region which comprised mainly the Igbo tribe, the republican system of traditional administration was in vogue. It was a system of administration in which the oldest people from the various families formed the council of elders that formed the government of the community. It was a gerontocracy. It was the council of elders who sat and took decisions that bound all the people and they used the able bodied youths to enforce decisions. This was, indeed, the nature of administration in the pre-colonial era.

The public service in the colonial era was introduced by the British colonialists in a bid to administer the various parts of the country colonized. According to Ibiamu (2011), the modern

public service in Nigeria is a product of British administration. The structure and orientation of public service were tailored towards creating an enabling environment for her imperial rule to thrive via maintenance of law and order, provision of essential services for the convenience of expatriate administrators and the mobilization of local resources, pursuant to British economic interests; export-oriented production of primary products (cocoa, timber, coal, tin, palm produce, groundnut, cocoa, etc.)

Evidently, the history of Nigeria public service can be traced to the early British colonization of the different parts of Nigeria in the 19th century. Its formal origin began at the amalgamation of 1914 when the colony of Lagos (annexed in 1861), the oil Rivers Protectorate (1891) later called the Niger Coast Protectorate and subsequently renamed the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1900 Okonjo, (1974, pp. 1-3) were merged under Governor Lugard to form what is today known as Nigeria. It is also observed that the public service during this period was marked by two epochs: the era of administrative unitarianism and excessive centralism (1914-1945) and the era of administrative decentralization and institutional transfer, whose trajectory, values and development were shaped and defined by several intermeshing factors such as the impact of traditional political cultures, imposition of indirect rule system (with different effects on social mobilization across localities), exposure to western education and missionaries, rise of new political elite, ethnic rivalry, imbalance in resource allocation, the rise of nationalism and partisan politics, extreme regionalism and the institutionalization of sub cultural nationalism, as well as the British policy of deference toward one area *vis a vis* other parts of Nigeria.

Public Sector Reforms in Nigeria

Over the years, Nigeria has witnessed a number of public sector reforms. The aim of these reforms was to reposition the sector for improved effective and efficient service delivery. The reforms spanned both the colonial and post-colonial era. Chikwendu (1990) identified five major civil service reforms during the colonial era as follows: The Tudor Davies Commission (1945); The Harragan Commission (1947); The Hugh Foot Commission (1948); The Gorsuch Commission (1945), as well as the Mbanefo Commission (1959). Obiajulu and Obi (2004) identified: the Adebo Commission (1971), Udoji Commission (1972), the Babangida Reform of 1988, as well as the Ayida Panel of 1994 as reforms under taken by successive administration in the post-independence era of the public service. The Morgan Commission attended to the general demand for wage increase consequent on the Mbanefo award of 1959, proposed a minimum wage on geographical basis Ake (2015), while Elwood Grading Team tackled the anomalies arising from the grading of points and proposed uniform for civil service officers performing identical tasks. According to Olaopa (2009, p.134) the Adebo Panel set up to inquire into the issue of wages and salary. However, deeper managerial challenge pushed its terms of reference beyond wages and salary, to issues of organization and structure. According to Ayeni (2008), the Dotun Phillips Commission stressed the effectiveness of the public service which eventually led to recommendations on reduction in personnel and introduction of professionalism. It was on the basis of this report that the Babangida regime enacted the 1988 civil service reform through Decree 43 of 1988.

The various reforms made far reaching recommendations. For instance, the Adebo Commission made a number of recommendations on the structure and organization of the civil service, as well as 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 (Anazodo, Okoye and Chukwuemeka, (2012).

The Udoji Public Service Review Commission of 1974 made 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). It also recommended a unified grading structure to embrace all posts and that the minister should continue to be head of the ministry only and the permanent secretary the accounting officer so as to introduce checks and balances. According to the commission, the absence of these modern management techniques greatly hindered the ability of the civil service workers to achieve desired results, Anazodo, Okoye and Chukwuemeka (2012). The Orosanya Committee asserted that of the existing 541 MDAs in the country, only 163 ought to exist. It also noted that N124.8 bn would be reduced from agencies proposed for abolition; about N100.6bn from agencies proposed for mergers; about N6.6 bn from professional bodies; N489.9bn from universities; N50.9 bn from polytechnics; N32.3 bn from colleges of education and N616 bn from boards of federal medical centres (Ogunrofito, 2012).

Table 1.1. Showing Civil Service Reforms in Nigeria

NAME OF COMMISSION/PANEL	REFORM	YEAR OF THE REFORM
Morgan Commission		1963
Eldwood Commission		1966
Adebo Commission		1971
Udoji Commission		1972
Dotun Phillips		1985
Decree No 43		1988
Ayida Review Panel		1994
Civil Service Reform under President Olusegun Obasanjo		1999-2007
Steven Oronsanya Panel		2010-2012

Source: Ikejiani- Clark (1997), Ogunrotifa, (2012)

Problem of the Public Sector in Nigeria: The civil service has been characterized by a myriad of problems, which no doubt, has affected its performance over the years. Nwachukwu in Nwachukwu, Onwubiko and Obi (2011) identified the problems of: political stability, corruption, poor reward and punishment system, godfatherism, religionism, ethncism, sexual harassment, favouritism and statism, poor communication system, inadequacy of working materials, as well as government bureaucracy and red- tapism, as problems affecting the civil service in Nigeria. It is obvious that these problems and more have resulted in the poor level of implementation of public policies and programmes in Nigeria. In their own contribution, Anazodo, Okoye and Chukwuemeka (2012) argue that in Nigeria, governance is largely typified by expansion patronage and authoritarian rule and that poor African countries perform badly, considering the varying degrees they suffer from a number of pathologies like inefficiency, centralization, fragmentation, and poor leadership, lack of capacity, patrimonialism, corruption, poor accountability and legitimacy. Ogunrotifa (2012) avers that prominent amongst the problems of the public service is politicization and that the Nigerian civil service had been politicized to the extent that most of the top officials openly supported the government of the day. On his own part, Salisu (2001, p. 2) opines that “considerable political interference in the process of personnel administration has led to improper delegation of power, ineffective supervision and corruption. This, thus, results in official apathy that has so far culminated into unauthorized and unreasonable absenteeism, lateness and idleness and

notably, poor workmanship.” For Eme and Ugwu (2011), the introduction of the federal character principle of recruitment and other spoils system techniques have sacrificed efficiency and effectiveness in the Nigerian public service. The problems which may be considered as constraints in the ecology of public administration are basic issues which the reforms in the public service are expected to address.

Dike (1985) distinguishes the problems of the public service into organizational and attitudinal criticisms. For organizational criticisms, he identifies organization, painlessness, over staffing, as well as over centralization as major concerns which have been attributed to pose problems to the Nigerian civil service. As regards the attitudinal criticisms, he identifies: apathy, resilience to change, corruption, red tape, insecurity, incivility and high tenderness, lateness, truancy and maligning business and incompetence, laziness, as well as favoritism. There is no doubt that these factors have contributed to the level of inefficiency in public service, hence the need to evolve mechanisms and policies that would strengthen the service to realize its objectives. Dike further alludes that the heterogeneous nature of the Nigerian state has resulted in the introduction of the federal character principle which also comes with its attendant problems in the public service. The constitutional provisions of the principle with respect to appointments into certain federal positions in the public service has resulted to a situation in which the process of appointing persons to office from certain under represented states and ethnic groups, the government elevated junior officers above more experienced and qualified persons. The resultant effect is large demoralization and ultimately inefficiency and low productivity in the public sector.

Dike also argues that the problem of inefficiency in the Nigerian civil service is a complex phenomenon. It is at once a moral, a management, a political and a jurisdictional problem. In seeking solutions to the management problem, particular attention should be paid to such factors as motivation, the adoption of an effective system of supervision and disciplinary control and the application of meritocracy in the recruitment and reward policies. This implies that apart from increase in salaries and wages of public servants, reforms should be more encompassing considering non material factors in motivation staff for improved service delivery.

The Service Compact with all Nigerians (SERVICOM) Reform Background

There is no doubt that improved service delivery has been a major concern of government. In 2003, the Federal Government under the Chief Olusegun Obasanjo administration arrived at the conclusion that reform process will be credible and sustainable if government cannot demonstrate any leadership commitment with a public declaration about service delivery among other essentials. Consequent upon this, the administration set up a Nigerian Service Delivery Research Team which visited the United Kingdom in 2003 to investigate how the British government went about improving service delivery. Based on their feedback, the Federal Executive Council supported the implementation of service delivery programme for Nigeria. A technical Team was commissioned in January 2004 with the following terms of reference: to review service delivery in Nigeria; examine institutional environment for service delivery; reflect on peoples’ views and experiences, and draw road map for service delivery programme in Nigeria. (The SERVICOM BOOK, 2004).

Policy decisions and service delivery from cover to cover were examined in the following key areas: business registration (Corporate Affairs Commission); immunization (Maitama General Hospital); Hospital Out Patient Department (Maitama General Hospital FCT); National

Electric Power Authority (NEPA) now Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) (THE SERVICOM BOOK, 2004).

Despite the evident limitations of the team, it identified consistent pattern of poor services, failure to meet low expectations. In January 2004, Service Delivery in Nigeria: A Road Map was launched. At the conclusion of a special presidential retreat on service delivery in Nigeria, the President and his Ministers entered into service compact with all Nigerians, hence the birth of SERVICOM on 21st March 2004. The compact's core provision says: "We dedicate ourselves to providing the basic services to which each citizen is entitled, timely, fairly, honestly, effectively and transparently. By SERVICOM, all ministries, parastatals, agencies were mandated to prepare and publish not later than 1ST July, 2004, SERVICOM charter which will provide the following information: quality services designed around customer's requirements; set out citizens' entitlements in ways they can readily understand; list out fees payable and prohibit illegal demands; commitment to provision of services within realistic time frames; specified officials to whom complaints may be addressed; publish these details in conspicuous places accessible to the public; conduct and publish surveys of customer satisfaction. (THE SERVICOM BOOK, 2004).

Broad Objectives of SERVICOM

Among major objectives of SERVICOM include: to provide quality service to the people; to set out entitlements of the citizens; to ensure good leadership; to educate the citizens (customers) on their rights; to empower public officers to be alert to their responsibilities in providing improved efficient, timely and transparent service, (FRSC, SERVICOM, 2020).

Following the launch and implementation of the policy, ministries, parastatals and agencies commenced its implantation. The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) commenced its implementation by establishing the SERVICOM Networking Standing Committee. The NCC is responsible for creating an enabling environment for competition among operators in the industry, as well as ensuring the provision of qualitative and efficient telecommunication services throughout the country. In other to achieve its mandates, the commission put in place the necessary licensing and regulatory frameworks for the supply of telecommunications services and initiated several projects such as: state accelerated broadband initiative (SABI), wire Nigeria (WIN) project and the emergency communication centres across the nation to help stimulate demand and accelerate uptake of ICT, internet penetration and broadband services necessary for the enforcement of knowledge society in Nigeria (NCC, SERVICOM, 2020).

The Federal Roads Safety Commission (FRSC) inaugurated its SERVICOM unit on May 26, 2005 and immediately swung into action by carrying out sensitization and public awareness lectures on Federal Government civil service reform ethics on quality service delivery and all departments and corps offices at the national headquarters, Abuja and nearby commands. The management approved the production of FRSC charter and plaques, establishment and furnishing of SERVICOM offices and appointment of nodal officer and other staff.

The vision of the charter was to develop for the nation, disciplined, committed, honest corps, highly polished and accessible to all road users with sustainable capacity for efficient service delivery in road safety, injury prevention and emergency management services (FRSC SERVICOM, 2020).

The National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) set up its SERVICOM unit with the following objectives:

- Learn the principles, ideals and tenets of service delivery within the Agency;

- Develop mechanism for collating all complaints, both internal and external, institute a framework for resolving and escalating all unresolved complaints, including obtaining feedbacks from the complaints;
- Assist the staff to understand the need for service excellence;
- Assist staff to take personal responsibility for customer satisfaction
- Make the agency more customer focused in their service delivery procedures and processes, and
- Heighten staff awareness among damaging effects of service failures to all staff of the agency.

The Commission further outlines the functions of the Unit as follows:

- Spearhead the agency's service delivery initiative through SERVIICOM compliance;
- Monitor performance of charter yearly and review the charter biannually;
- Manage the agency's customer relations policy including providing opportunities for customer feedback on services and institute a complaint procedure including grievance redress mechanism;
- Promotion of quality assurance in the agency's performance of its functions;
- Provide a comprehensive and effective training policy for frontline staff and organize service delivery meetings/ workshops, seminars and conferences;
- Disseminate best practices and other tips on service delivery improvements periodically;
- Serve as link between the agency and the SERVICOM office and is also the secretariat of the agency's service delivery committee, which meets quarterly;
- Facilitate a safe and conducive working environment for staff at all levels of service delivery;
- Report to the Director General on performance against agreed objectives, timescales and budgets quarterly; as well as
- Establish project and departmental key performance indicators (KPIs), including the establishment and maintenance of fully functional and efficient service/ help desk. (NITDA SERVICOM, 2020).

For the National Universities Commission (NUC), the SERVICOM unit is the engine for service delivery in the university, as customer satisfaction is the overriding consideration. It is generally charged with the complete monitoring of how services are delivered to the satisfaction of the University customers.

THE National Universities Commission provides that the SERVICOM unit does the following:

- Spearheading the university's service delivery initiative;
- Formulating, implementing and reviewing service charter with input from the stakeholders and approval by management;
- Developing service improvement plan (SIP) for service excellence and raising the level of customer satisfaction;
- Developing customer care policy to guide and improve staff-customer relationship and management in the service delivery process;
- Sensitization of stakeholders;
- Performance monitoring and reporting;
- Developing complains handling procedures; identifying and diagnosing service delivery failures;

- Monitoring academic and non-academic activities at various service windows for efficiency in line with service charter which includes assessing the conduct of lectures; examination invigilation, prompt marking, submission of results and malpractices) inspection of classrooms, lecture rooms/theatres, studios, workshops, laboratories, hostels and impromptu check on punctuality and lateness to work; participation at post-UTME screening exercises, matriculation ceremonies, fresh students orientation, environmental sanitation (keep campus clean), etc. (NUC SERVICOM, 2020).

The Missing Link:

From the foregoing, we have deduced the reality that the need for improved service delivery in the public sector necessitated the SERVICOM policy. It is not in doubt that the policy has yielded impressive results since it was established. For instance, in their study of the effect of SERVICOM on service delivery in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital, Nnewi, Emejulu, Muo and Chukwuemeka (2012) discovered that the SERVICOM charter stimulated several positive changes and repositioned the health institution towards a much better satisfaction of demands of the clientele. It is evident that from the framework of SERVICOM in the agencies identified in this paper, the structures and operative mechanisms are poised towards effective and efficient quality service delivery. SERVICOM, no doubt, focuses on the operational structure that would enhance the quality of service provided by the various ministries, departments and agencies, including the measurement of output of services. However, it is pertinent to state that the emphasis is on how best and timely a customer would access the desirable service at the least cost possible. In general terms, policy formulation and implementation are geared towards achieving objectives which, most often, are towards addressing societal challenges. This is what previous reforms in the public sector have attempted to do. In the case of SERVICOM, the right steps, approaches and conceptualization are appreciated. However, the holistic consideration of all factors may not have been taken into cognizance in its formulation and implementation. For instance socio-cultural values of the multi ethnic nature of the Nigerian state has not been considered in the SERVICOM reform. It is like treating symptoms of an ailment rather than treat the root cause of the disease. The cure would, certainly, not be complete.

The SERVICOM Reform is what Emejulu, Muo and Chukwuemeka (2012) describe as civil revolution in its public service. It is incontrovertible that there was an urgent need for a complete reorganization and restructuring of the system. This includes attitudinal changes of personnel in the public office. However, considering how we got to where we presently are, regarding the low quality service delivery in the public sector is a function of the personnel in the system. We argue, here, that this reform failed to take into consideration the reason for the lack of productivity in the public service. For instance, vices such as corruption, lateness to work, absenteeism, lack of commitment to work schedule, performing incommensurate job, nepotism and tribalism in the discharge of official duties are maladies that have eroded quality service delivery in the public sector. Taking a look at the conception and *modus operandi* of the reform, we observe that its focus was on providing improved quality of service to the customers, without taking a look at the intrinsic factors and values that are inherent in both the society and the workers. More so, the reform focuses attention on the junior staff workers by emphasizing on supervisory and regulatory mechanisms for the control of the activities of the workforce. Perhaps this is against the backdrop of previous research findings which according to (Maduaburn, 1990) suggests that poor work attitudes are more prevalent among junior civil servants. Ogunrin and Erhijaikpor (2009), in the face of improving service delivery in Nigeria public sector, proffer that upward review of salaries which appears integral to the wider civil service reforms being implemented should be generous to the lower cadres in order to correct

an insidious correlation of pay size with the level of work commitment being expected from employees. We suggest motivational strategies to be integral part of the structural and operational mechanisms for improved service delivery. Commensurate pay for commensurate job performance should also be an integral part of the policy. This, invariably, agrees with studies by Nigerian academics and international economists who strongly suggest that the problem lies with government, which must put in place merit-based and transparent governance systems, including adequate reward systems to motivate civil servants to put utmost efforts in their jobs (Ogunrin and Erhijaikpor, 2009). Also, like Emejulu, Muo and Chukwuemeka (2012) noted beyond the attitude, the role of quality personnel, modern diagnostic and therapeutic equipment and adequate remuneration of workers would never be overemphasized. Regular quality assurance of human and natural resources should be a complementary aspect of the project of better service delivery in all sectors of the Nigerian economy, most importantly, the health sector.

Summary/Conclusion

In this paper, we looked at the Service Compact with all Nigerians (SERVICOM), a policy response of government under the Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's administration to re direct the public service for a more purposeful, service oriented activities. It was the then administrations' strategy to ensure that citizens (customers) derived satisfactory services for its policies. This is against the backdrop that successive regimes have made efforts at reforming the sector for better services. Ministries, departments and agencies of government were expected to key into the policy. The paper also highlighted the SERVICOM *operandi* of agencies like the National Communication Commission (NCC), National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), as well as the National Universities Commission (NUC). The paper also observes that, obviously, missing in the policy framework was the human relations perspective and motivation of the personnel that would engage in the operation/services. The measures so far adopted in the reform could be seen as what Ekekwe (2020) describes as hardware, using a computer system as an analogy. The strategies put in place are the hard ware of evolving quality service delivery, while motivation is the software. For him, both the hard and the software must be present to have a functioning computer. In this paper, we therefore recommend that there should be a review of the SERVICOM reform; the reform should take cognizance of emotions, values, attitude and human relations concerns as well as some reward system that would motivate the workforce for enhanced service delivery.

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