

Civil Service Administration and Effective Service Delivery in Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined relationship between civil service administration and effective service delivery in Rivers State, Nigeria. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study comprised of all the civil service administrative staff in Rivers State secretariat. A sample random sampling technique was used to select 80 respondents. The research instruments for this study were questionnaire titled: Civil Service Administration Scale (CSAS) and Effective Service Delivery Scale (ESDS). The instruments items were designed and validated by the researcher using Cronbach Alpha reliability statistics to calculate the reliability coefficients of the two instruments. The reliability coefficients of Civil Service Administration Scale and Effective Service Delivery Scale are 0.85 and 0.81 respectively. The findings revealed that there is significant relationship between the role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State. Also, there is a significant relationship between improvement in civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that Rivers State Civil Service Administrators should ensure that their roles and duties under the Public Service Act are upheld and are not subject to political interference on decision of public activities. It should be made clear that the politicians by no means allowed to be a part of project processes; it is often the case that the politicians imply instructs the public managers on how projects should be done. Therefore, there should be no interference with the establishment of public projects, so as to ensure effective service delivery in the state.

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KEYWORDS: Civil Service, Administration, Service Delivery

INTRODUCTION

The civil service is mostly composed of career bureaucrats employed on the basis of professional ability rather than appointment or election, and whose institutional longevity often outlasts changes in political authority (Ezeibe&Iwuoha, 2011).As a corollary, the civil service has traditionally been the government's primary tool for achieving liable goals and targets. It is seen as a pivotal point for the growth of the national economy. This means that the management of civil service is critical to the public service, which is why governments the world over are constantly on the lookout for new methods to improve their services (Amali, 2011). The civil service administration is the vehicle via which the

government regulates and manages all facets of society. Thus, the civil service plays a significant function in determining the state of a society. Additionally, it is via this government bureaucracy that all other institutions get various forms of approvals, licences, and licences that are necessary for their continued existence and functioning. Additionally, government resource allocations flow directly and indirectly through the bureaucracy to all other sectors of society. As a result, the functioning of all other institutions is inextricably linked to the civil service administration at some time throughout their existence and operation (Emma &Eme, 2011). Thus, the research attempted to analyse the relationship

between effective service delivery and civil service administration in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

It has been noticed that despite the efforts of the majority of state governments to improve the quality of service offered through their units and ministries, there are still significant shortcomings affecting the effectiveness of the services rendered to the public. One disadvantage is the delay in task completion; the time required to complete a task; and numerous others as a result of the heavy reliance on manual procedures in processes that could be automated. McGregor documented in Sharma, Sadana, and Kaur (2013) that the ordinary human being has an innate distaste for work and will circumvent it if possible. As a result, people must be managed, directed, pressured, and threatened with penalty in order to achieve organisational goals. In a similar line, Taylor remarked in Sapru (2013) that inefficiency must be put on management and labour. He argued that a worker contributes to the problem of inefficiency through systematic soldiering or deliberate and controlled production reduction. However, the frontline workers in the majority of units receive insufficient recurrent training on new methods of service administration. As well, it has been seen that ministries continue to struggle with personnel data capture, which is why each governor who takes office takes on the duty of assuring biometric exercise in order to identify ghost workers and ensure effective resource management. Also, it has been asserted that in the majority of developing nations, such as Nigeria and particularly in Rivers State, civil service administration is routinely expensive and unsatisfactorily successful, discouraging good service delivery inside the system. Thus, this study will focus on the link between Civil Service Administration and Effective Service Delivery in Rivers State. These concerns prompted an examination of the Civil Service Administration and its ability to forecast effective service delivery in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to guide the study;

1. What is the relationship between the role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State?
2. What is the relationship between the improvement in civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State?

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between Civil Service Administration

and Effective Service Delivery in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of this study sought to:

1. determine the relationship between the role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State.
2. ascertain the relationship between the improvement in civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State

Research Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between the role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between improvement in civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State.

Conceptual Clarifications

Administration

Administration, as a management philosophy, has benefited from numerous contributions from scholars who have invested considerable time and effort in providing extensive explanations of its true meaning. These experts' contributions are judged sufficient that contemporary authors rely on them to elaborate on the subject. Jayanta and Ratnaprava (2016) quoted Nigro, who defined administration as the arrangement and use of individuals and substances for the aim of accomplishing a goal. Moreover, he stated in Simeon's beliefs that administration is defined as the activity of organisations cooperating to attain common aims. Fayol claimed in Sharma, Sadana, and Kaur (2013) that administrative processes are universally similar, as the same administrative skills are necessary in industry, government, and household administration. Besides, they highlighted, in the words of Fayol, that administration is a process that must occur at all organisational levels. He defined administration as consisting of five primary elements: planning, organising, commanding, coordinating, and controlling. Gulick defined these as POSDCORB, that has to do with planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting.

According to Gladden, as reported in Marume (2016), administration is a lengthy and apparently pretentious term, yet it has a modest meaning, as it is the act of caring for or looking after people, managing affairs, and it is purposeful action carried out with a conscious objective in mind. He used Veig's concept of administration as purposeful behaviour oriented toward a certain objective. It is the methodical organisation of operations and the sensible use of resources with the objective of obtaining the desired results while avoiding developments that are in conflict with our objectives. It is concerned with marshalling available labour and supplies in order to

get the intended output at the lowest feasible energy, time, and financial cost..

According to the preceding definitions, the term "administration" encompasses the following four distinct perspectives depending on the context in which it is used. They are as follows: (i) As a discipline, (ii) As a profession, (iii) As a process, and (iv) As a synonym for the terms Executive or Government (Jayanta and Ratnaprava, 2016).

Civil Service Administration

Civil service administration is the engine or vehicle that propels economic growth in public sectors. To carry out the government's numerous development policies, programmes, and projects, the government establishes a number of specialised administrative entities generally referred to as public businesses that operate under the supervision of government ministries/departments. Due to the close relationship between the civil service and public service, some scholars use the words interchangeably. The civil service's indispensability and incontestability to a country is perhaps best highlighted by (Emma & Eme, 2011), who contend that it is a branch of government that is often associated with the Executive and without which government cannot operate.

As Kwaghga (2010) correctly notes, public service management is vital to the survival and, indeed, advancement of any governmental system. In whatever political arena, the civil service as the engine of advancement is a sine qua non. The civil service, in general, provides the appearance of government, and the effectiveness and productivity of any government are highly reliant on the efficiency of the civil service. As the administrative and technical arm of the political apparatus, the civil service is the sole viable vehicle for policy formulation, policy advice, and policy implementation. This may be why Olaleye (2001) believes that whereas political leadership without administrative and technical support is power in a vacuum, administration without political leadership is only order in a state of stagnation. The civil service, by virtue of its critical tasks, is the lifeblood of every nation's growth.

To that effect, Olaopa (2008) observes that although the term "Civil Service" is often used, it is usually misinterpreted and abused owing to its lack of definition. He observes that local laws, customs, and norms all have an effect on its meaning, and hence there is no internationally accepted definition. Maduabum & Gayya, 2004). Adebayo, 2000; Maduabum & Gayya, 2004. Arowolo (2012) defines the civil service as a well-organized body of permanent paid officials allocated to ministries and departments within the executive arms of government

who are responsible for executing government policies and programmes in line with established rules and procedures. According to Asawe (2014), the civil service is described in Ayeni's definition as "state officials who are appointed to their government positions via a non-elective method." These officials operate in the major ministries and non-ministerial departments of the government.

While ministers run their respective ministries, chairmen lead their respective extra-ministerial entities. Okereke (2003) reaffirmed this stance, noting that the word "civil service" means government departments and divisions tasked with the duty of policy implementation. They are federal, state, and local government employees who are mainly responsible for policy implementation and the providing of inputs to policy creation. According to Anazodo, Okoye, and Chukwuemeka (2012), the civil service is the administrative bureaucracy that exists inside a country's democratic system and is crucial for achieving sustainable and equitable economic development. He emphasized the critical significance of effective and efficient public administration in a country's long-term socioeconomic growth. Eneanya (2009:29-41) expanded on this notion by identifying the following desired characteristics of the civil service:

Permanence: According to him, the civil service is a permanent government entity, and personnel have tenure security. Thus, although governments may change on a recurring basis, the civil service stays unchanged.

Neutrality: Political neutrality is critical because it enables the civil service to devotedly work with any government in power, regardless of the dominant party. As a result, state workers are obligated by law to leave their jobs whenever they express an interest in party politics. According to Lungu (1998), the civil service aid all governments regardless of the political organization in which they vote.

Impartiality: Eneanya (2009) and Emma and Eme (2011) argue that government servants must perform their official obligations impartially toward all of the people they serve, regardless of their religion, class, gender, ethnic, or other sectoral affiliation.

Anonymity: Civil workers are not held accountable for their official conduct, but commissioners are held politically accountable for their ministry's success or failure. Additionally, Civil Servants are not required to divulge government secrets or talk to the press about official topics without the authorization of the minister managing the ministry.

Expertise: Eneanya (2009) states that while political office holders may not be specialists in the fields they supervise, the creation and implementation of government programmes and policies are heavily reliant on the competence of civil officials. This is because the civil service is composed of highly skilled and experienced professionals in a variety of professions. According to Emma & Eme (2011), civil servants are professional men and women who work as permanent staff in government offices. They are administrative personnel and are frequently referred to collectively as public administration, bureaucracy, or public servant.

Bureaucracy: The civil service is defined by a high level of conformity to established norms and regulations. This obstructs the enforcement of government policies and programmes at times.

Merit system: The Civil Service Commission hires only persons who are qualified and competent via competitive written tests and oral interviews. Thus, hiring processes and advancement in the Civil Service are typically based on merit and also in line with established norms and directives.

Dissimilarities between Administration, Public Administration and Civil Service Administration

Concepts	Dissimilarities between concepts
Administration	This is generally the use of men and materials to accomplish a purpose for any organization.
Public Administration	This is a function of administration that is conducted in the public interest. It is basically has do with the structure of government policies and programmes, as well as the behaviour of officially accountable authorities.
Civil Service Administration	It is a well-arranged body of permanent paid officials from government ministries and agencies entrusted with the duty of carrying out government plans and programmes in line with established rules and procedures.

Effective Service Delivery

Effective service delivery is often characterised as the ability to accomplish a certain objective, better still, it is "getting the right things done" (Druker, 2004). In a service management environment, delivery an excellent service system is described as "the structure (facilities, equipment, etc.), infrastructure (job design, skills, and so on), and procedures for delivering a service" (Goldstein, Johnson, Duffy & Rao, 2002). As a consequence of the foregoing definitions, it is evident that the effectiveness of a civil service is proportionate to the extent to which a system's goals are realised; hence, an effective civil service is one that is capable of delivering the results for which it was intended and created. Delivering high-quality services is crucial for service providers interested in creating and delivering value to their customers (Grönroos & Ravald, 2011). Businesses may increase client satisfaction, loyalty, and consequently long-term income by delivering great service (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2000). In other words, the Rivers State civil service offers value to the public by delivering high-quality services. Service organisations must prepare for service delivery and ensure that the actual plan is carried out effectively.

Research Methodology

The aim of this study was to ascertain the relationship between civil service administration and effective service delivery in Rivers State, Nigeria, using a correlational research design. The population for this study was comprised of all administrative staff in the Rivers State secretariat's civil service. 80 respondents were chosen using a simple random sampling technique. The Civil Service Administration Scale (CSAS) and the Effective Service Delivery Scale were used as research instruments in this study (ESDS). The instruments are divided into two sections (A and B). Section A elicited demographic information from respondents, whereas Section B prompted respondents with items related to research questions one and two. The instruments' items were rated on a Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) (SD). The researcher gathered the majority of the data for this study. Eighty (80) questionnaires were distributed to respondents, and 73 copies were retrieved and determined to be suitable for analysis, resulting in a 91 percent response rate. The reliability coefficients for the two instruments were calculated using the internal consistency method and Cronbach Alpha reliability statistics. The Civil Service Administration Scale and the Effective Service Delivery Scale have reliability coefficients of 0.85 and 0.81, respectively. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) statistics were used to analyse the data collected for the study. The correlation coefficient's value and direction were used to answer research questions. At the 0.05 level of significance, the same correlation statistics were used to test the corresponding hypotheses. According to Elendu (2010), Correlation coefficients between 0.90 – 1.00 were considered to be a Very High (VH), 0.70 – 0.80 are High (H)

while correlation coefficients between 0.50 – 0.60 were Moderate (M) and between 0.30 – 0.40 were Low (L) while below 0.20 (< 0.20) were Very Low (VL).

Results and Analysis

The results of the analysed data for the research questions and its corresponding hypotheses are presented on tables.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between the role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State?

Hypothesis (Ho₁): There is no significant relationship between the role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between the role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State

		Role of Civil Service Administration	Effective Service Delivery
Role of Civil Service Administration	Pearson Correlation	1	.622**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.011
	N	73	73
Effective Service Delivery	Pearson Correlation	.622**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	
	N	73	73

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

To answer the research question one, data on Table1 reveal a correlation coefficient = 0.62. This value is moderate and positive, indicating that there is moderate and positive relationship between role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State. This implies that increase in the role of civil service correlates with effective service delivery in Rivers State.

For hypothesis tested, it was revealed from Table 4.1 that r of 0.622 is significant with $P < 0.05$ because the calculated probability value of 0.011 is lesser than the critical probability value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, there is a significant relationship between the role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the improvement in civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State?

Hypothesis (Ho₂): There is no significant relationship between improvement in civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between improvement in civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State

		Improvement in Civil Service Administration	Effective Service Delivery
Improvement in Civil Service Administration	Pearson Correlation	1	.741**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	73	73
Effective Service Delivery	Pearson Correlation	.741**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	73	73

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

To answer the research question two, data on Table2 reveal a correlation coefficient = 0.74. This value is high and positive, indicating that there is a strong and positive relationship between improvement in civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State. This implies that an improvement in civil service administration correlates with effective service delivery in River State.

Table 4.1 demonstrates that r of 0.741 is significant with a P value of 0.05 because the calculated probability value of 0.000 is less than the critical probability value of 0.05. As a result, the null hypothesis is discarded. By extension, there is a strong correlation between civil service administration improvement and effective service delivery in River State.

Discussion of Finding

The study's first finding established a moderately positive association between the civil service administration's role and effective service delivery in River State. This implies that the expansion of the civil service is associated with more effective service delivery in Rivers State. This finding is consistent with Ezeani (2006), who stated that the civil service as a formation through which political organization execute a variety of tasks, including policy formulation, policy advice, and policy implementation, all of which contribute to the state's effective service delivery and development. In agreement with this, Osawe (2014) asserted that the civil service administration's role is to ensure effective service delivery. According to Osawe (2014), civil servants provide input into the political class's decision-making process via memoranda to their commissioners and permanent secretaries. They give the political class with information, facts, and informed opinions. All of these roles have a direct impact on how civil servants deliver services. As a result, the role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State are inextricably linked.

Finally, the study's second finding established a strong and positive relationship between civil service administration improvement and effective service delivery in River State. This means that improved civil service administration is associated with more effective service delivery in River State. This conclusion is consistent with Ezeibe and Iwuoha(2011), who stated that effective service delivery and state development are highly reliant on the organisation and administration of the civil service. There may be some obvious challenges confronting the civil service administration that have hampered active service delivery, but if properly addressed and addressed, they will result in a significant improvement in service delivery and state development (Ezeibe&Iwuoha, 2011). As a result, there is a strong correlation between civil service administration improvement and effective service delivery in River State.

Conclusion

This study has been able to establish that in an ideal situation civil service administration correlates with

effective service delivery. This portends that a collection of capable human and material resources available to manage state affairs in properly organized will bring about growth and development in a manner that meets the citizens expectation. Consequently, this research concludes that;

1. there is significant relationship between the role of civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State; and
2. there is a significant relationship between improvement in civil service administration and effective service delivery in River State.

Recommendations

Base on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are presented:

1. Rivers State civil service administrators should take a practical step to strengthen their roles and capacities under the Public Service Act and ensure that political interference in the decision-making process regarding public activities is circumvented. This is because politicians are not authorized to engaged in project processes; frequently, the politician simply instructs public executives on how projects should be carried out. As it were, no interference should be made within the premises of public projects in order to ensure the state's effective service delivery.
2. Training should be routinely carried out in order to keep staff abreast with best practices as this will help them in delivery effective service to the public. Also, every good policy that is to the benefits to the general public should will be properly institutionalized by the state assembly in such a way that will be difficult for another administration to reject or ignore the required responsibilities. All of these will help in the continuous improvement of civil service administration for effective service delivery and development of River State.
3. The public service commission should set up anonymous channels for submitting complains relating to corrupt practices perpetrated by workers and appropriate disciplinary actions should be taken without compromise. This will also help to advance it service delivery.

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