

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance: Dimension of the Federal civil service of Nigeria**

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Accepted 19 April, 2010

**Institutions are established to accomplish specified goals. To achieve these goals, the human resource is seen as one of the most crucial factors, without which the goals are as good as dead. This study empirically examined strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance in the Federal civil service (FCS) of Nigeria. To achieve the objectives of the study, questionnaires were administered to civil servants at the Office of the Head of the civil service of Nigeria and structured interview was carried out with civil servants at the FCS Commission, Abuja. The study adopted the chi-square analytical technique to analyze the variables. The results showed that the strategies for employee recruitment into the civil service are mainly based on Federal character principle (equal representation of people from different sections of the country), merit, political consideration and government discretion. In terms of strategies for employee retention, the study found that the service lagged behind in providing adequate incentives to retain its workforce for performance compared to what is obtainable in the private sector. It therefore recommends that while Federal character principle may be necessary as strategy for employee recruitment into the FCS because of Nigeria's multicultural, ethnic and religious diversity, its application should however be carried out to reflect merit within the principle. In addition, appropriate incentives should be provided to retain competent employees for performance.**

**Key words:** Federal civil service of Nigeria, strategies, employee recruitment, retention, performance.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The history of the Federal civil service (FCS) of Nigeria could be viewed from different perspectives. First, the one that supported the argument that the colonial civil service actually took-off in 1900 when the colonial masters established an institution to oversee the administration of the then southern and northern protectorates (Jaja, 2001). And the second was the one that trace the colonial civil service to the annexation of Lagos by the colonial masters in 1861 (Ogundiya, 2007). Whatever is the case, it is on record that the colonial civil service was a British creation for maintenance of law and order in Nigeria (Ogundiya, 2007).

At independence however, the role of the FCS changed from that of maintenance of law and order to infrastructural development and social service delivery. The post-1960 FCS was essentially involved in setting and coordinating state policies and programmes in social

and economic management, and the establishment of public enterprises for the provision of social services. This development resulted in a more direct role of the FCS in the development of the country (Ogundiya, 2007).

In order to realize the goals of social service delivery and development, capable workforce is required. And these are products of employee recruitment and retention strategies of the civil service to achieve performance. According to Olowu and Adamolekun (2005), it is becoming more essential to secure and manage competent human resource as the most valuable resource of any organization, because of the need for effective and efficient delivery of goods and services by organizations, whether in public or private sector. Therefore, for an organization to realize its goals, appropriate strategies for employee recruitment and retention are sine-qua-non for enhanced performance.

Researchers have agreed that one of the fundamental challenges facing organizations in the area of performance is their inability to put in place strategies capable of recruiting competent employees and retaining them to achieve organizational goals (Cascio, 2003; Heneman and Judge, 2003; Gberevbie, 2008). The specific objectives of this study therefore are to empirically examine strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance in the FCS of Nigeria.

### Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses stated in null form were tested to achieve the objectives of the study:

Ho<sub>A</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the views of respondents on strategies for employee recruitment and performance in the FCS of Nigeria.

Ho<sub>B</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the views of respondents on strategies for employee retention and performance in the FCS of Nigeria.

### Scope of the study

The scope of the study covers strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance in the Nigerian FCS between 1999 and 2005. The rationale for this case study is based on the fact that it provides general and specialized services to the largest number of people in the Nigerian Federation (140,003,542 million) (NPC, 2007). The period between 1999 and 2005 was the first six years of Nigeria's democratic governance after 15 years of military rule.

### Significance of the study

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it will:

1. Help to educate human resource practitioners in public organizations about the need to give consideration to personnel recruitment strategy that focuses on merit, appropriate educational qualifications, skills and experience even within the principle of Federal character as basis for enhanced performance.
2. Inform public sector managers about the importance of providing appropriate employee retention strategies that are capable of retaining their competent workforce for enhanced performance.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Concept of employee recruitment

According to Banjoko (2003), employee recruitment is the

process of reaching out, searching for and attracting a large supply of people or a large pool of interested applicants from which the organization can choose those it considers competent or most qualified for the job. Studies have shown that the human resource is the most valuable asset in any organization (Adebayo, 2001; Ejiofor and Mbachu, 2001; Olowu and Adamolekun, 2005). The human factor is therefore fundamental to the achievement of organizational goals. As a result, the need to put in place appropriate strategy for employee recruitment of organizational workforce cannot be overemphasized.

### Concept of strategy

According to Thompson et al. (2004), strategy is a game plan which management of an organization adopts to stake out market position, attract competent employees and please customers, compete successfully, conduct operations and achieve organizational goals. Strategy therefore could refer to a means by which a particular goal of an organization is attained. What the above implies is that for any organization to achieve its goals there is the need to devise certain strategies including the one involving employee recruitment of competent workforce and their retention for organizational performance.

### Performance evaluation in public organization

Performance evaluation enables organizations to adjust with a view to improving on its services for the enhancement of its survival and growth. Furthermore, it helps management to ascertain whether their organizations are improving, deteriorating or stagnant (Boyne et al., 2003). While performance evaluation in the private sector is based on profit maximization, it means efficient service delivery for the enhancement of the living standard of the people on the part of customers/citizens as regard the activities of public organizations (Boyne et al., 2003).

In this study, performance is judged in terms of infrastructural development put in place such as agricultural development, transportation, development in the educational sector and electricity supply. In measuring efficiency in public sector, the study adopts the local approach: Self-evaluation technique. Gaster (2001) posits that the local approach, self-evaluation technique puts considerable emphasis on the workforce/organization to measure their work and the opportunity to reflect and learn from it. The justification for this approach is based on the fact that data on public sector performance in developing nations like Nigeria are difficult to come by compared to that of the private organizations. This may not be unconnected with the fact that public administrators at all levels are averse to external evaluation of their performance (Egonmwan, 1991).

According to Egonmwan (1991), public officials withhold relevant data when outsiders come to evaluate their performance to ascertain the extent to which they have been able to meet the actual responsibilities assigned to them. As a result, performance in the Nigerian FCS is measured by efficiency based on the self-evaluation criterion, comparing their performance in the years under review in terms of their social service delivery and infrastructural development. Efficiency is measured by the formulae (Boyne et al., 2003):

$$\text{Efficiency} = \frac{\text{Goal Accomplished (Output)}}{\text{Public Welfare or Capital and Labour (Input)}}$$

Therefore, criteria of life expectancy, infant mortality rate and human development index (HDI) would be the basis for measuring whether the Nigerian FCS has performed well or not in their service delivery and infrastructural development for the enhancement of the living standard of the people.

### **Employee recruitment and organizational performance**

In a study on organizational behaviour, Ofoegbu (1985) and McOliver (2005) established a relationship between strategy for employee recruitment and performance in an organization. The studies identified problems such as nepotism, favouritism, political consideration and Federal character principle in employee recruitment as basis for poor performance of public sector workers in Nigeria. However, considering the multi-ethnic, religious and cultural nature of the Nigerian society, is it possible to totally neglect the Federal character principle in recruitment of employees into the Nigerian Federal civil service (FCS)?

### **Federal character, employee recruitment and organizational performance**

During the post-independence era, the Nigerian state found itself in a dilemma whereby the political setting was dominated by northern executives, leaving its administrative functions to a southern dominated bureaucracy (Ayoade, 2000). For the political executive to successfully carry out its policies, it required a facilitator in the bureaucracy, which the north was unable to provide in terms of people with required skills, educational qualifications and experience. In this regard, the south with more qualified manpower dominated the public bureaucracy. This meant that while the north dominated the political executive, the south, on the other hand dominated the bureaucracy. It was the fear of domination of one section of the country by the other in the political and administrative affairs that led to the principle of

Federal character in Nigeria. The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria recognized the imperative of Federal character to Nigeria's administrative system, hence section 14 (3) states that:

The composition of the government of the federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the Federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies.

It was in a bid to resolve the dilemma of the problem of northern political domination and southern dominated bureaucracy in the country that led to the introduction of representative bureaucracy in Nigeria (Federal character principle) (Ayoade, 2000). According to Bodunrin (1989), Federal character principle is a political settlement that enables every section of the Nigerian society to be represented in government. He argued, "The new phrase, 'Federal character' in its application and implementation is a mere euphemism for ethnic balancing which has the potential of solving the problem and fear of domination and bring about stability that is needed for development to take place in the country". Scholars have identified some advantages of Federal character principle or representative bureaucracy to include its ability to create support for government policies, including people who are local and indigenous to the environment in the implementation of government programmes in that particular area and its ability to serve as mechanism for the government party to distribute patronage to its supporters (Bodunrin, 1989; Ayoade, 2000). However, there are contradictions in the application of Federal character principle in the civil service particularly in the area of employee recruitment and promotion. According to Ayoade (2000), subjecting recruitment/appointment and/or promotion to Federal character discriminates against merit and is therefore unfair to certain sections of the country to the advantage of others. The outcome is that of acquisition of incompetent workforce into the public service and the result is that of poor performance.

This study believes that predicating employee recruitment on Federal character does not mean that such an employee cannot contribute meaningfully towards the enhancement of the goals of the organization. This is particularly so where appropriate recruitment strategies involving the screening of potential employees based on relevant skills, experience and educational qualifications are adopted. What is important therefore is the ability of the individual employed and his/her willingness to work for the enhancement of the organization. In addition, through proper staff training and development by organizations of their workforce, organizational productivity is enhanced even where incompetent employees would

have been employed through inappropriate recruitment strategies (Okoh, 1998; Gberevbie, 2008).

Aside from being an administrative mechanism, Federal character principle in Nigeria has come to represent a political necessity to further integrate the diverse elements that comprise the nation. Given the multi-ethnic, religious and cultural nature of the country, it is clear that merit as an exclusive principle for recruitment will negate the desire for equal representation of all sections of the country in the civil service. Consequently, the place of Federal character in the country's geo-administrative and political equation cannot be over-emphasized.

### **Employee retention strategies and organizational performance**

Employee retention strategies refer to the means, plan or set of decision-making behaviour put in place by organizations to retain their competent workforce for performance (Gberevbie, 2008). Researchers have found that employees are more likely to remain and work for the successful achievement of organizational goals when appropriate employee retention strategies are adopted and implemented by organizations (Amadasu, 2003; Taplin et al., 2003; Gberevbie, 2008).

Studies have shown that appropriate employee retention strategies such as job satisfaction arising from appropriate rewards (Gomez-Mejia and Balkin, 1992; Heneman and Judge, 2003), performance pay (Griffeth et al., 2000), employee training and career development (Okoh, 1998), creation of social community in the workplace that enhances social ties such as encouraging employee marriages and siblings employment (Ayagi, 2001), job security (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), 2006), high level of wage rate and organization's image (Taplin et al., 2003) and participative decision making and information sharing (Jike, 2003; Riordan et al., 2005) serve as catalyst in retaining employees for organizational performance.

### **Theoretical framework**

Different theoretical perspectives on organizational productivity abound. The goal theory (Latham and Locke, 1979), structural contingency theory (Burns and Stalker, 1961; Neal and Hesketh, 2001), and decision-making theory, among others, are quite prominent in the study of organizational behaviour. This study adopts the decision-making theory as its analytical framework. The significance of the theory lies in its identification of the importance of decisions in organizations in the area of who to recruit, the strategies to be adopted for the recruitment and how the workforce is to be retained for performance. The decision-making theory is associated

with scholars like Simon (1945), Mintzberg (1973), Iyayi (2002) and Miller et al. (2003) in their studies on decision-making in organizations.

One of the major assumptions of decision-making in an organization is that organizational decisions are rational and that these rational decisions are necessary to facilitate the smooth running of organizations in their quest to achieve performance (Miller et al., 2003). According to decision-making theorists, decisions are the selection of a proposed course of action (Butler, 1992; Iyayi, 2002). The course of action is to realize the purposes for which the organizations are established to achieve. Another assumption of the theory is that the whole concept and purpose of organizations revolve around decision-making (Tonwe, 1994). This means that decision-making is at the very heart of business success of any organization.

Furthermore, it implies that the success and failure of any organization at any point in time is considered to be a function of the decisions taken by the management team, as it affects a particular or whole aspect of that organization. This assumption is particularly relevant to the study and the success of an organization in its desire for performance. Decisions on whom to recruit, when to carry out the recruitment and the retention strategies to be adopted to enable competent employees to be retained for performance is a crucial decisions an organization would have to make if it must achieve its goals. Iyayi (2002) had applied the decision-making theory to study decision-making process in underdeveloped organizations and came up with the conclusion that decisions in underdeveloped organizations are based on egocentrism rather than altruism.

According to him, "egocentric decisions will be characterized by a lot of political activity, less rationality and tend to rely more upon judgment and negotiation", instead of altruistic decisions that emphasize "computational and inspirational strategies." The implication of the above findings on employee retention and organizational performance is that rational or altruistic decisions bring about organizational development and survival, which makes it possible for organizations to achieve their set goals. On the other hand, non-rational or egocentric decisions hinder development and organizational survival and make it impossible for organizations to achieve their set goals. It has, however, been argued by scholars that the assumptions of rationality in human behaviour in decision-making theory are highly contentious. Management team takes decisions on their subjective views of a particular problem. Another major weakness of decision-making is the fact that it is almost impossible to identify and evaluate all possible alternatives open for a particular action before decisions are taken. This is because time and resources may be a constraint in identifying and evaluating all possible options for decisions (Tonwe, 1994).

Despite the weaknesses, it is worthy to state that the

**Table 1.** Sample characteristics of respondents.

<b>Sample characteristics (percentage)</b>	
Gender	60% respondents are male. 40% respondents are female.
Education	50% respondents had WASC/OND/NCE. 40% respondents had HND/B.Sc Degrees. 7% respondents had Masters Degree. 3% respondents had professional certificate.
Annual income	56.5% respondents earned between ₦500,000 and below per annum. 43.5% respondents earned between ₦501,000 and above per annum.
Years of service	52% respondents served between 0 – 10 years. 40% respondents served between 11 – 20 years. 8% respondents served between 21 years – above.
Job status	60.2% respondents are senior staff. 39.8% respondents are junior staff.

Source: Fieldwork (2006).

decision-making theory is adopted in this study because it identifies the importance of decisions in organizations as a catalyst in their desire to realize their goals. Due to the unique role rational decisions could play in an organization in its quest for performance, it is right therefore to posit that to base the success and failure of an organization on the decisions taken by it may be accepted as valid. Viewed from this argument, rational decisions on employee recruitment and retention strategies therefore are necessary to enable organizations achieve their goals.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Sample size and sampling technique

The study is based on a sample size of 120 respondents. The study adopted the systematic random sampling technique. The justification for this technique is based on the fact that it enables every subject in the sampling frame to have equal opportunity to be selected without bias in a systematic manner (Ogbeide, 1997). The sampling frame of the study was drawn from the employee list of 332 civil servants at the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of Nigeria. In addition, structured interview was carried out with civil servants at the Nigerian FCS Commission. These units were selected for the study because they handle the implementation of personnel policies and practice of the Federal civil service (FCS).

### Techniques for data collection

The study adopted five-point Likert-style rating scale method of questionnaire to obtain information from respondents. The Likert-style rating scale method of questionnaire design enables researchers to ask respondents on how strongly they agree or

disagree with a statement or series of statements on a five point scale, e.g. 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (undecided), 2 (disagree), 1 (strongly disagree). In addition, data for the study were obtained through structured interview carried out with 100 senior civil servants at the Federal civil service (FCS) commission with a view to eliciting information on strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance. The results of the interview formed part of the basis for this study. Four structured questions were used as interview guide. The questions asked the respondents are: (a) What are the strategies put in place by your organization for employee recruitment? (b) What are the outcomes of these employee recruitment strategies on the workforce and the organization in terms of performance? (c) What are the strategies put in place by your organization to retain its workforce? (d) What are the outcomes of these employee retention strategies in retaining the workforce for performance? Furthermore, the study applied secondary data obtained from relevant books, journals, the internet, newspapers and magazines for the section of literature review and organizational performance.

### Return rate of questionnaires

Out of the 120 copies of questionnaire administered to respondents at the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of Nigeria, 112 were retrieved, which represents 93.33% of the total questionnaires administered. However, out of the 112 questionnaires returned, four or 3.57% were not analyzed due to improper completion. Consequently, data analysis for this study is based on 108 or 90% of the total administered questionnaires.

### Data presentation

Table 1 showed that 60% of respondents were male, while 40% were female. On the other hand, 50% of the respondents had WASC/OND/NCE, 40% had HND/B.Sc Degrees, 7% had Masters Degree and 3% had professional certificate. Also, the table

**Table 2.** Gross salaries per annum for Federal civil servants grade level 01 – 17.

S/No.	Grade level	Salary range (₦000)
1.	01	133,584 – 174,380
2.	02	135,754 – 189,094
3.	03	137,607 – 203,169
4.	04	144,143 – 222,907
5.	05	163,329 – 254,833
6.	06	199,145 – 310,683
7.	07	330,681 – 501,859
8.	08	427,322 – 631,064
9.	09	501,960 – 744,538
10.	10	589,236 – 855,992
11.	12	679,669 – 975,219
12.	13	758,579 – 1,071,039
13.	14	837,855 – 1,174,235
14.	15	1,152,648 – 1,533,768
15.	16	1,425,883 – 1,883,923
16.	17	1,741,808 – 2,271,280

Source: National wages and salaries commission (NWSC) - Abuja (2006).

indicates that 55% of the respondents earned between ₦500,000 and below per annum, while 45% earned between ₦501,000 and above per annum.

Furthermore, 52% of the respondents were those who served the organization between 10 years and below, 40% served between 11 and 20 years and 8% served for 21 years and above. In addition, the table shows that 66% of respondents were senior staff and 34% were junior staff.

#### Instrument for data analysis

The chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) analytical technique is used to test for significant relationship between variables. Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) formula:

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$$

Where  $f_o$  = observed frequencies and  $f_e$  = expected frequencies.

#### Employee recruitment strategies

The strategies put in place for staff recruitment into the Federal civil service (FCS) is based on Federal character principle (equal representation of people from different section of the country), merit, political consideration and government discretion (interview, 2006). Employee recruitment into the FCS is an on going process because of the unique role of the service at meeting the ever-increasing social needs of the people, developmental drive of the Federal government and the need to create job opportunities for the citizenry. As a result, anyone wishing to pick-up employment with the FCS, particularly at the senior category, goes to the Federal civil service commission (FCSC) to obtain an unsolicited job application form designed for that purpose, filled and returned to the FCSC.

And once there is a vacant position, those that have indicated their interest to work at the FCS and have completed the job application form are invited for interview, and if found qualified at the interview stage, such persons are given employment into the civil service (interview, 2006). Viewed from this process, merit plays a vital role in employee recruitment into the FCS. According to Babura (2003), the FCSC is a constitutional body, established under section 153 (1) D of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Paragraph 11b of Third Schedule of the constitution vests the commission with powers: (a) to appoint persons to offices in the FCS and (b) to dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding such offices.

Due to government desire to satisfy the employment need and aspirations of Nigerians from various parts of the country in their quest to work in the FCS, merit alone could not be used as the basis for employee recruitment into the FCS. This development made it possible for vacancies at the FCS to be filled through pattern of employee recruitment other than merit, Federal character principle, political consideration and government discretion. It is important to know that advertisement in the newspapers, radio and television as a way of attracting potential employees into the FCS exists as it is in the private organizations in Nigeria (interview, 2006). However, in an interview with civil servants on the outcome of employee recruitment strategies of the FCS on performance, the respondents attributed the poor performance of the civil service to the current employee recruitment strategies which emphasize political consideration and Federal character principle (interview, 2006). Commenting on the shortcomings of employee recruitment strategies in the FCS on performance, a senior staff at the FCSC stated thus: In my opinion, if the FCS is to achieve its goals of quality service delivery, then it must adopt the business strategies of the private sector organizations in terms of employee employment, remuneration, provision of appropriate incentives and strict business discipline and practices of the 21st century business organizations.

The above explanations showed that the poor performance of the civil servants in their assigned role of social service delivery and infrastructural development could be attributed to inappropriate employee recruitment and retention strategies, poor remuneration and provision of poor incentives by public organizations and non-adherence to strict business discipline and practice as compared to what are obtainable in private organizations.

#### Staff retention strategies

In order to retain employees for performance, the Federal civil service (FCS) should put in place various strategies in form of incentives and rewards. These retention strategies include: Payment of monthly salaries to employees; relatively good monthly salaries and allowances; provision of car, housing and furniture loan facilities; health insurance scheme; job security; regular promotion; health care services to employees' families; maternity leave with full pay for female employees and regular training of employees (interview, 2006).

#### Employees' remuneration

Table 2 shows the remuneration paid to employees at the FCS from salary grade level 01 – 17. A closer look at the table shows that the least paid Federal civil servant on salary grade level 01 earns a gross maximum monthly pay of ₦14, 531.166, senior officer on salary grade level 08 earns gross maximum monthly pay of ₦52, 588.67, while the highest paid civil servant at the Federal level, permanent secretary (PS) on salary grade level 17 earns gross maximum monthly pay of ₦189, 273.33 (NWSC, 2006). When compared to the salaries paid to employees at Nestle Nigeria Plc,

Nigerian Breweries Plc and Zenith Bank Plc (private organizations), it is obvious that the salaries paid to employees at the private organizations are far higher than that paid to employees at the Federal civil service (FCS). For instance, a senior civil servant on salary grade level 08 with the FCS earns ₦52, 588.67 per month, while the counterpart at the private sector with Nestle Nig. Plc earns ₦150, 000 per month, the same employee with Nigerian Breweries Plc earns ₦132, 000 per month, and that of Zenith Bank Plc earns ₦125, 000 per month. At the highest salary grade level at the FCS for instance, employee on salary grade level 17 earns ₦189,273.33, while the counterpart with Nestle Nig. Plc earns ₦416,666.67, Nigerian Breweries Plc earns ₦833.333 and Zenith Bank Plc earns ₦600,000 (NARA, 2005; NBFRA, 2005; ZBAR, 2005; NWSC, 2006).

In spite of the differential in salaries between the public and private sector workers, labour turnover at the FCS has been observed to be low. In an interview with a senior officer at the FCSC on employee retention, he stated thus: "it is important to note that even though the salaries paid to employees at the FCS is small compared to what is paid to employees at the private organizations, the fact that the service guarantees job security makes many civil servants want to remain in the employment of the FCS". What the above means is that job security or the feeling of it by employees and adequate incentives in terms of good and regular monthly salaries, proper working condition, employee's recognition in decision making on issues affecting them and performance pay serve as motivating factors for the continuous stay of staff in the employment of an organization to achieve its goals of performance.

### **Performance of the Federal civil service**

The Federal civil service (FCS) is an institution established for the implementation of policies of the Federal Government in its quest for the enhancement of the living standard of Nigerians in terms of quality social service delivery and infrastructural development. What this means is that the poor performance of the Federal Civil Servants does affect negatively the realization of the goals of government. The enhanced performance of the civil servants on the other hand affects positively the goals of government, which could be measured by the level of the living standard of the people in terms of life expectancy, infant mortality rate and human development index (HDI). In this study, performance of the FCS is discussed under the following: Agriculture and crude petroleum, transportation infrastructure, education development and electricity power supply.

### **Agriculture and crude petroleum**

In the area of agriculture, there was a substantial growth in the years under review. For instance, agriculture accounted for nearly one-third of Nigeria's GDP in 2004. There was also substantial growth in the crude petroleum sector of the Nigerian economy. For instance, crude oil accounted for 36% of the nation's GDP in 2005. Crude petroleum production was 2.5 million barrel per day (mbd), and of this production capacity, 2.05 million barrel per day was exported at an estimated average price of \$55 per barrel in 2005 (ADB/OECD, 2006).

### **Transportation infrastructure**

The transportation sector in Nigeria (road, air and maritime) contributed about 2.4% to the nation's real GDP in 2004, with road transport alone accounting for about 86% of transport sector output. In the road sector for instance, number of vehicles increased on the average annual rate of 17% from 1.3 million in year 2000 to 2.2

million in the year 2004. In the case of air transportation, there was an improvement of 54% freight tonnage and 9.4% in passenger traffic per annum between 2000 and 2005. As for the maritime sector, merchandise shipments increased at average of 14.2% and passenger traffic increased at average annual rates of 5.4% between 2000 and 2005 (ADB/OECD, 2006).

### **Educational development**

The education sector in Nigeria has suffered from neglect by past governments. Total expenditure for education in the country was very low. For instance, total expenditure on education in the year 2004/2005 was less than 1% of Gross National Income (GDI), far below the continental average of 4.71%. This development has led to decline of standards and facilities in the education sector (ADB/OECD, 2006). The introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) by the Olusegun Obasanjo's government is a welcome development at encouraging school enrollment particularly at the primary school level. For instance, the total gross primary-school enrollment rate increased from 98% in 2000 to 120% in 2005, while the total secondary-school enrollment rate rose from 34 to 36% during the same period (ADB/OECD, 2006).

### **Electricity supply**

To improve electricity supply in Nigeria, the Federal Government through the Ministry of Power and Steel entered into an agreement with Lahmeyer International GmbH (L1) of Germany for the management and supervision of rehabilitation works at thermal power stations in the country located at Afam that has 18 gas turbines with a total electricity power generation capacity of 710 Megawatts (MW); Delta power station, Ughelli that has 20 gas turbines with a total capacity of 912 MW; Sapele power station that has 6 stream turbines and 4 gas turbines with a total capacity of 720 MW and 300 MW, respectively and Lagos power station, Egbin that has 6 stream turbines with a total capacity of 1,320 MW (Lahmeyer International, 2004).

To further improve on electricity power supply, the Federal Government through the power and steel ministry introduced the National Integrated Power Project (NIPP) designed to fast-track electricity power supply in Nigeria through the implementation of generation, transmission, and distribution and gas supply projects. The first generation of power was expected for the 1st quarter of 2007 (Lahmeyer International, 2004). The transmission consists of 22 projects including the erection of 17 new substations and the expansion of 32 existing substations. The identified 250 distribution projects cover the entire country. A new system of distribution at a higher voltage level is to be adopted. Villages with 5 km radius of the plants are to be connected to the stations directly. The main data for the NIPP include: 21 Gas turbines, PG 9171E – 2,444 MWel, 3 stream turbines – 300 MWel, transmission line (330kv, 132 kv – 3,000 km, Add. capacity (330 kv, 132 kv) – 8,903 MVA, Substation autotransformer, 60 – 300 MVA, Distribution – 3,540 MVA and new distribution transformers – 22,600 Pcs (Lahmeyer International, 2004).

### **Comments on the performance of the FCS**

The data presented above seem to be a positive indication of performance of the Federal civil service (FCS) at implementing the policies and programmes of the Federal Government when viewed from their face value. But the issue is on whether these performances have actually helped in the enhancement of the living standard of the people in the area of quality social service delivery and infrastructural development. The yardstick to measure the

**Table 3.** Chi-square test of association between the views of respondents on strategies for employee recruitment, their annual income and performance.

Reponses	₦500,000 and below	₦501,000 and above	Total
Strongly agree	41	30	71
Agree	17	12	29
Undecided	1	1	2
Disagree	1	2	3
Strongly disagree	1	2	3
Total	61	47	108

Source: Fieldwork (2006).

performance of the FCS at proper implementation of government policies to achieve its goals therefore is to find out the current level of the living standard of the people in terms of infant mortality rate, human development index (HDI) and life expectancy in the country.

Studies have shown that more effort is required in terms of quality provision of social amenities and infrastructural development if the living standard of Nigerians is to improve. For instance, social indicators have improved only marginally between the year 2000 and 2005. Nigeria ranked 158 out of 177 countries in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) human development index (HDI) in 2005. The country's HDI, at 0.453, is lower than the average HDI for sub-Saharan African countries (0.515) and marginally above the average for countries in the ECOWAS (0.434) (ADB/OECD, 2006). In the area of transportation, Nigeria's transportation-infrastructure services are inadequate and in deplorable condition. For instance, Nigeria has a total of 193,200 Km of roads, 3,775 Km of rail and currently the rail system is in a total mess in terms of performance. There are also 19 airports, 62 airstrips, 13 major ports and 3,000 Km of navigable waterways. Of the number of roads, only 15 percent of roads are paved, and about 23% of the paved roads are in bad conditions. This development led to road accidents, which reached an average of 3.1% per annum between the year 2000 and 2005, rising from 12,705 in 2000 to 14,279 in 2005 (ADB/OECD, 2006). Nigeria's welfare system is in a sorry state to the extent that life expectancy is as low as 43.3 years between the year 2000 and 2005; infant mortality at 101 per 1,000 live births; illiteracy rate as at 2005 of 29.2% and per capita, purchasing-power parity (PPP) valuation as at 2005 of \$1,776.

In the area of health, the statistics is the same in terms of poor performance. For instance, public-health expenditure accounted for only 1.2% of GDP in 2004. Per capita health expenditure in 2004 was about \$50, compared with nearly \$700 for South Africa, \$400 for Botswana and \$110 for Core d'Ivoire. Similarly, the number of physicians per 100,000 people in Nigeria in 1990 - 2004 was just 27%, lower than that for comparable countries such as Egypt (212), Tunisia (70) and South Africa (69%). These figures represent some of the worst in Africa according to recent studies (ADB/OECD, 2006). The sorry state of welfare system and social service delivery presented above is in spite of the huge revenue that accrued to the Federal Government in the past decades. For instance, studies have shown that in a space of 20 years, the country realized a total sum of \$300 billion from the sale of crude petroleum in the world market (Gberevbie and Arowosegbe, 2006). With huge amount of financial resources available to the Federal Government, and little development, it means that there is a problem of performance in social service delivery and development. This problem could be attributed to either of two major factors or both. These factors are poor performance of the FCS in its assigned role of social service delivery and infrastructural development arising from incompetent employees and/or corrupt practices on the part of public officials. To

overcome the problem of corruption in the public service, the Federal Government established anti-corruption agencies like Independent corrupt practices commission (ICPC) and the economic and financial crimes commission (EFCC) to fight corruption in the country.

### Hypotheses testing

Two hypotheses earlier stated in the work are tested to achieve the objectives of the study. The objectives of the study are to find out the relationship between the views of respondents on the strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance in the FCS.

### Hypothesis (A)

Ho: It is hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between the views of respondents on strategies for employee recruitment and performance in the FCS.

Question: Do strategies for employee recruitment of the FCS of Nigeria based on Federal character principle and political consideration affect negatively the calibre of the workforce and organizational performance? Table 3 shows the reaction of respondents to the question raised.

### Research decision

Calculated  $\chi^2 = 1.60$   
 Critical or table  $\chi^2 = 7.78$   
 Degree of freedom (d/f) = 4  
 Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = 0.05%

### Research result

Calculated  $\chi^2$  of 1.60 is less than the critical or table  $\chi^2$  of 7.78 at alpha ( $\alpha$ ) level of 0.05%. This means that data are not statistically significant. The result is to reject the research hypothesis (Hr) and accept the null hypothesis (Ho.), which states that there is no significant relationship between the views of respondents based on their annual income category on strategies for employee recruitment and performance in the Federal civil service (FCS) of Nigeria.

### Interpretation

What it means is that there is no evidence to prove that respondents' annual income category affect their views on strategies for employee recruitment and performance in the FCS.

**Table 4.** Chi-square test of association between the views of respondents on strategies for employee retention, their job status and performance.

Responses	Junior employees	Senior employees	Total
Strongly agree	32	50	82
Agree	7	8	15
Undecided	2	3	5
Disagree	1	2	3
Strongly disagree	1	2	3
Total	43	65	108

Source: Fieldwork (2006).

However, out of the 108 respondents sampled in this study, 100 or 92.59% agree that strategies for employee recruitment based on Federal character principle and political consideration affected the calibre of the workforce and performance negatively in the FCS.

### Hypothesis (B)

Ho: It is hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between the views of respondents on strategies for employee retention and performance in the FCS of Nigeria.

### Question

Do you agree with the view that employee retention strategies of the FCS of Nigeria are inadequate to retain competent workforce for enhanced performance? Table 4 shows the reaction of respondents to the question raised.

### Research Decision

Calculated  $\chi^2 = 0.36$   
 Critical or table  $\chi^2 = 7.78$   
 Degree of freedom (d/f) = 4  
 Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = 0.05%

### Research result

Calculated  $\chi^2$  of 0.36 is less than the critical or table  $\chi^2$  of 7.78 at alpha ( $\alpha$ ) level of 0.05%. This means that data are not statistically significant. The result is to reject the research hypothesis (Hr) and accept the null hypothesis (Ho.), which states that there is no significant relationship between the views of respondents based on their job status on strategies for employee retention and performance in the FCS of Nigeria.

### Interpretation

What it means is that there is no evidence to prove that respondents' job status affected their views on strategies for employee retention and performance in the FCS. However, out of the 108 respondents sampled in this study, 97 or 89.81% agree that strategies for employee retention of the FCS of Nigeria are

inadequate to retain competent workforce for enhanced performance.

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This study empirically examines strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance in the FCS. To achieve the purpose of the study, two hypotheses were formulated and tested using the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) analytical technique. The result of the first test showed that there is no significant relationship between respondents' annual income category and their views on strategies for employee recruitment and performance in the FCS. This view could be further supported by the fact that out of the 108 respondents sampled, 100 or 92.59% agree that strategies for employee recruitment based on Federal character principle and political consideration affected negatively the calibre of employee and performance of the FCS.

The second test showed that there is no significant relationship between respondents' job status and their views on strategies for employee retention and performance in the FCS of Nigeria. However, out of the 108 respondents sampled, 97 or 89.81% agree that strategies for employee retention of the FCS of Nigeria are inadequate to retain competent workforce for enhanced performance. Based on the findings, the study recommends that while Federal character principle and political consideration may be necessary as strategies for employee recruitment into the FCS particularly because of Nigeria's multicultural, ethnic and religious diversity, its application should however be carried out to reflect merit within the principle in terms of appropriate educational qualifications, skills and experience. In addition, appropriate incentives to retain competent employees for performance should be put in place. The appropriate incentives could be in form of: Good and regular monthly salaries; outstanding performance awards to employees; provision of children education scholarship scheme to children of employees; proper working environment and good condition of service; prompt payment of gratuity and pension to disengaged employees; reasonable housing

and car loan facilities for employees; performance pay and policies that favour job security for employees.

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