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An Assessment of the Effect of Manpower Supply on Service Delivery at Taraba State Civil Service Commission, Jalingo

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Abstract

The persistent inadequacies in manpower supply, created a significant gap between the expected and actual performance of the civil service in delivering public services. This study examined the effect of manpower supply on service delivery in the civil service. The sample size of 61 was arrived at using census sampling technique. The study adopted public administration Theory as the theoretical framework. Descriptive survey design enabled the description of the current state of civil service and data were generated from mixed-method approach which combines qualitative interviews and quantitative data generated from questionnaire. Quantitative responses obtained from the Questionnaire were analyzed by descriptive statistic while qualitative data obtained through interview were analyzed thematically. Findings from this research reveal that frequent recruitment provide adequate supply of manpower in Taraba state civil service but the selection process is anchored with political interference, nepotism and favoritism. Such interference in the selection process has paralyzed the merit-based approach and contributed to the employment of unqualified and unskilled staff that required effective training to meet up with contemporary challenges in the civil service. Furthermore, corruption has engulfed the civil service and it

paved way to a nonchalant attitude and mismanagement of government resources. Therefore, the study recommends Independent and automated recruitment system, Sanction for corrupt behaviors, invest in staff training, enhancing resources management, legislative policy reforms and promoting transparency in recruitment should be in the forefront.

Keywords: Manpower, Manpower supply, Recruitmrnt, Selection, Service Delivery, Civil Service

Introduction

In the evolving landscape of public administration, the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery have become paramount in determining the success of any governmental institution. Within the context of the Nigerian Civil Service, the supply and management of manpower play a critical role in shaping the quality of services provided to the public. Manpower, which encompasses the human resources available for performing various administrative and operational tasks, is a key determinant of how effectively the civil service can meet its objectives. As such, the relationship between manpower supply and service delivery in the Nigerian Civil Service warrants comprehensive exploration to understand the dynamics that either enhance or impede the institution's performance.

Service delivery in the public sector refers to the provision of public goods and services by the government to its citizens. It encompasses a wide range of activities, from the delivery of healthcare and education to the maintenance of infrastructure and the administration of justice. In Nigeria, the quality of service delivery has been a subject of concern for decades, with citizens frequently expressing dissatisfaction with the services provided by government institutions (Ojo & Yusuff, 2022). However, the role of manpower supply in this equation is often overlooked.

Manpower supply in the civil service is not merely a question of quantity but also of quality. The civil service requires a workforce that is not only sufficient in numbers but also equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to perform their duties effectively (Ekpe, 2020). This underscores the importance of recruitment processes, training and development programs, and retention strategies that ensure the civil service is staffed with capable personnel. Inadequacies in these areas can lead to a mismatch between the demands of public service and the capacity of the civil

service to meet those demands, resulting in suboptimal service delivery.

The impact of manpower supply on service delivery can also be seen in the context of the Nigerian government's broader reform efforts. Over the years, various reforms have been initiated to improve the efficiency of the civil service, including the introduction of performance management systems, the restructuring of ministries and agencies, and the implementation of e-governance initiatives (Igbokwe-Ibeto et al., 2019). While these reforms have yielded some positive results, their success has been limited by the challenges associated with manpower supply. For instance, the adoption of e-governance has been hampered by the lack of IT skills among civil servants, highlighting the need for targeted training and capacity-building programs.

The research problem, therefore, lies in understanding the extent to which manpower supply affects service delivery in the Nigerian Civil Service. The study analyzes the adequacy of manpower supply and examined their effects on service delivery. This study is particularly relevant in light of the ongoing efforts to improve public sector governance in Nigeria. As the government continues to implement reforms aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the civil service, understanding the role of manpower supply in service delivery becomes increasingly important.

LITERATURE REVIEW: CONCEPTUAL EXPLANATION

Explanation of the Term "Manpower Supply"

Manpower supply refers to the availability and provision of human resources that an organization or sector needs to function effectively. It encompasses the processes of recruiting, selecting, training, and retaining employees who possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies required to meet organizational goals (Adeyemi & Okpala, 2022). At its core, manpower supply involves ensuring that an organization has the right number of employees, with the right skills, at the right time. This concept is closely linked to human resource planning, which involves forecasting future manpower needs and devising strategies to meet these needs. Effective manpower supply ensures that there are no significant shortages or surpluses of staff, both of which can hinder organizational performance. For example, a shortage of manpower may lead to overworked employees, delays in service delivery, and decreased productivity, while a surplus can result in underutilization of resources and increased operational costs (Ibekwe et al., 2021).

In the Nigerian Civil Service, manpower supply is particularly challenging due to a combination of factors such as inadequate recruitment processes, political interference, and systemic inefficiencies. Recruitment practices in the Nigerian Civil

Service have often been criticized for being slow, biased, and not merit-based. These issues contribute to the employment of individuals who may lack the requisite skills and competencies for their roles, thereby affecting the overall quality of service delivery (Nwosu & Chukwuemeka, 2021).

Another critical aspect of manpower supply is the ongoing development and training of employees. It is not enough to recruit and select staff; continuous training is necessary to ensure that employees' skills remain relevant in a rapidly changing work environment. However, within the Nigerian Civil Service, there is often a lack of sufficient training and development programs. Inadequate training may lead to a decline in service quality (Akinwale & Adebayo, 2022).

Retention of skilled manpower is another vital component of manpower supply. High turnover rates can be detrimental to organizational stability and service delivery. In the Nigerian context, the civil service has faced significant challenges in retaining skilled personnel, often due to poor working conditions, lack of motivation, and better opportunities in the private sector or abroad. This phenomenon, often referred to as "brain drain," results in a loss of experienced and knowledgeable employees, which in turn affects the continuity and quality of public services (Olatunji & Adetayo, 2022).

In conclusion, manpower supply is a multifaceted concept that involves the strategic planning, recruitment, training, retention, and management of human resources to ensure that an organization can meet its objectives. In the Nigerian Civil Service, the challenges associated with manpower supply have significant implications for service delivery, governance, and overall public satisfaction. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that includes reforming recruitment practices, enhancing training and development programs, improving working conditions, and implementing effective retention strategies.

Explanation of the Term "Service Delivery in Nigerian Civil Service"

Service delivery in the Nigerian Civil Service refers to the provision of public services to the citizens by government agencies and departments, carried out by civil servants. It encompasses a wide range of activities, including the implementation of government policies, the provision of essential services like healthcare, education, water supply, and sanitation, as well as regulatory and administrative functions. Effective service delivery is crucial for achieving good governance, promoting socio-economic development, and enhancing the quality of life for citizens (Akinyemi & Agboola, 2023).

In the Nigerian context, service delivery has historically faced numerous challenges that have impeded the ability of the civil service to meet the needs of the population

effectively. These challenges include bureaucratic inefficiencies, corruption, inadequate infrastructure, and poor resource management. As a result, public services in Nigeria are often characterized by delays, inefficiencies, and a general lack of responsiveness to the needs of citizens (Nwosu & Eze, 2022).

The Nigerian government has undertaken various reform initiatives aimed at improving service delivery in the civil service. These reforms include efforts to streamline administrative processes, reduce corruption, and enhance the capacity of civil servants through training and development programs. Despite these efforts, significant challenges remain, and the impact of these reforms has been mixed. While some improvements have been noted, the overall effectiveness of service delivery in Nigeria continues to be hindered by systemic issues that require sustained and comprehensive interventions (Ibekwe & Umeh, 2022).

In conclusion, service delivery in the Nigerian Civil Service is a critical aspect of governance that directly impacts the lives of citizens. While the civil service is tasked with providing essential public services, it faces numerous challenges that hinder its ability to deliver these services effectively. Addressing issues such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, corruption, inadequate infrastructure, and poor resource management is essential for improving service delivery and achieving the broader goals of socio-economic development and good governance in Nigeria.

Key Stages in the Recruitment Process

The recruitment process in the Nigerian Civil Service typically involves several stages, each designed to ensure that the most qualified candidates are selected while adhering to the principles of fairness, transparency, and inclusiveness.

i. *Workforce Planning and Vacancy Identification*: The process begins with workforce planning, where MDAs assess their staffing needs based on their strategic objectives, existing workforce capabilities, and anticipated retirements or resignations. This stage involves identifying vacant positions that need to be filled to maintain or enhance service delivery. The vacancies are then formally declared and submitted to relevant authorities, such as the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF) or the Civil Service Commission (CSC) (Ojo & Adegbite, 2022).

ii. *Advertisement and Application*: Once vacancies are approved, they are advertised to the public through various channels, including newspapers, official government websites, and other media platforms. The advertisements typically outline the job descriptions, required qualifications, application procedures, and deadlines. Potential candidates are required to submit their

applications, which may include academic credentials, work experience, and other relevant documentation. The objective at this stage is to attract a broad pool of qualified candidates (Nwosu & Eze, 2021).

iii. *Screening and Shortlisting*: After the application period closes, the next step is screening and shortlisting candidates. This process involves reviewing the submitted applications to ensure that candidates meet the minimum qualifications and requirements specified in the job advertisement. Candidates who do not meet these criteria are eliminated from the selection process, while those who do are shortlisted for further assessment. The screening process aims to narrow down the candidate pool to a manageable number for the next stages of recruitment (Adelabu, 2023).

iv. *Assessment and Selection*: Shortlisted candidates are typically invited to participate in further assessments, which may include written examinations, interviews, and other evaluation methods. Written examinations are often used to assess candidates' general knowledge, professional competence, and aptitude for the job. Interviews, on the other hand, provide an opportunity for the selection panel to assess candidates' communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and suitability for the role. The final selection is usually based on the combined performance in these assessments, with the goal of identifying the best-qualified candidates (Ogunyemi & Afolabi, 2023).

v. *Appointment and Induction:* Successful candidates are offered appointments to the civil service, subject to medical examinations and background checks. Upon acceptance of the offer, new recruits undergo an induction program designed to familiarize them with the workings of the civil service, its policies, and ethical standards. The induction also serves as an orientation to the specific MDA they will be working in, helping them to integrate smoothly into their new roles (Olatunji & Adebayo, 2021).

Challenges in the Recruitment Process

Despite the structured nature of the recruitment process, there are several challenges that have hindered its effectiveness in the Nigerian Civil Service.

I. *Political Interference and Nepotism*: One of the most significant challenges is political interference in the recruitment process. In many cases, appointments to civil service positions are influenced by political considerations, leading to the recruitment of individuals based on their political affiliations rather than merit. This practice undermines the integrity of the recruitment process and

often results in the appointment of less qualified candidates, which negatively impacts the performance of the civil service (Agba & Ushie, 2022).

II. *Corruption and Bribery*: Corruption is another major issue in the recruitment process. There have been numerous reports of candidates being required to pay bribes to secure civil service jobs, with positions sometimes being "sold" to the highest bidder. This not only excludes qualified candidates who cannot afford to pay but also perpetuates inefficiency within the civil service by placing unqualified individuals in critical roles (Nwosu & Eze, 2021).

III. *Inadequate Transparency and Fairness*: The lack of transparency in the recruitment process has also been a longstanding concern. In some instances, the criteria for shortlisting candidates are not clearly defined or consistently applied, leading to perceptions of bias and unfairness. Furthermore, the influence of the federal character principle, while intended to promote inclusiveness, has sometimes led to the selection of candidates based on their state of origin rather than their qualifications, which can dilute the overall competency of the civil service (Ojo & Adegbite, 2022).

IV. *Delayed Recruitment Process*: Delays in the recruitment process are another challenge that affects the civil service's ability to meet its staffing needs promptly. Bureaucratic bottlenecks, lengthy approval processes, and administrative inefficiencies often result in prolonged recruitment timelines, leaving critical positions vacant for extended periods. This can disrupt the delivery of essential services and place additional strain on existing staff (Ogunyemi & Afolabi, 2023).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION THEORY

Public Administration Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the impacts of recruitment reforms in the Nigerian Civil Service. This theory, as articulated by scholars such as Dwight Waldo and Herbert Simon, focuses on the organization, management, and implementation of public policies and services, and offers insights into how bureaucratic structures and processes influence administrative outcomes. Applying this theory helps to elucidate how manpower supply intends to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness of the civil service, as well as the challenges faced during implementation. The theory is built on several key components:

1. *Bureaucratic Structure*: Public Administration Theory stresses the significance of a well-defined bureaucratic structure in ensuring orderly and predictable administrative processes. Bureaucracies are characterized by hierarchical

organization, formal rules and procedures, and a clear division of labor (Weber, 1947). These elements are intended to enhance efficiency and accountability within public organizations.

2. *Administrative Efficiency*: Efficiency in public administration is a central concern of the theory. It involves optimizing resource use and minimizing waste while achieving organizational goals. Efficient administrative processes are crucial for effective service delivery and are often a focus of recruitment reforms aimed at streamlining operations and improving performance (Rosenbloom, 2019).
3. *Accountability and Transparency*: Accountability and transparency are fundamental principles in Public Administration Theory. They ensure that public officials are answerable for their actions and that administrative processes are open to scrutiny (Kettl, 2002). Recruitment reforms often aim to enhance these principles by introducing mechanisms to monitor and evaluate recruitment practices and outcomes.
4. *Challenges in Implementation*

Despite the benefits of Public Administration Theory, the following practical challenges often arise during implementation.

I. *Political Interference*: Persistent political interference undermines the merit-based recruitment processes intended to enhance efficiency and accountability. Political considerations can skew recruitment decisions and compromise the integrity of the civil service (Agba & Ushie, 2022).
II. *Corruption*: Corruption remains a significant obstacle to effective recruitment reforms. Despite efforts to introduce transparent systems, corruption can persist through practices such as bribery and nepotism, impacting the fairness and efficiency of recruitment (Adelabu, 2023).
III. *Resistance to Change*: Resistance from civil servants and other stakeholders can impede the successful implementation of reforms. Change management strategies are essential to address resistance and facilitate the adoption of new systems and procedures (Nwosu & Eze, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The study area is Taraba state civil service commission, Jalingo. The sample size is 61 staff of civil service commission and it was determined by census sampling technique which involve gathering data from every individual in the population size. However, 6 people were

purposively selected from the public to support the interview session with their personal experience and perception on the nature of service delivery by the civil service. The data was collected through quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data retrieved from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics (such as frequencies and percentages) to summarize the data. The qualitative secondary data, and data obtained from interviews were analyzed thematically. This involves coding the data into themes and categories that reflect the key issues related to manpower supply and service delivery in the civil service.

Table 1: **Determinant of Rate of Return/Responses**.

Area of Study	Population	Drawn Sample	Retrieved Questionnaire	Copies Analyzed	Percentage Analyzed %
Taraba State Civil Service Commission Jalingo.	61	61	55	55	90

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 depicts the rate of questionnaires administered at the study area. The total number of useable questionnaires is 55 and the percentage is 90%.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 2: The Prevalence of Manpower Supply in Nigerian Civil Service:

QUESTIONS	SD 1	D 2	NO 3	A 4	SA 5	TOTAL	REMARK
ADEQUACY	10 (18%)	15 (27%)	-	19 (35%)	11 (20%)	55 (100%)	**ACCEPT**
NEW RECRUITS	-	11 (20%)	3 (5%)	19 (35%)	22 (40%)	55 (100%)	**ACCEPT**
POLITICAL INTERFERENCE	11 (20%)	11 (20%)	-	11 (20%)	22 (40%)	55 (100%)	**ACCEPT**
SKILLED	20 (36%)	22 (40%)	2 (4%)	5 (9%)	6 (11%)	55 (100%)	**REJECT**
TRAINING	11 (20%)	28 (51%)	-	11 (20%)	5 (9%)	55 (100%)	REJECT

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 2 depicts the prevalence of manpower supply in Taraba State civil service commission. 55% of the respondents have agreed and strongly agreed that there is adequate supply of manpower and 75% of the respondents also agreed that frequent recruitment to fill the available vacancies exist in Taraba state civil service. However,

60% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the incident of political interference in the selection process. 76% opined that must of the staff in the civil service were unskilled and 71% of the respondents suggest effective training to meet up with contemporary challenges in the civil service.

The finding that there is frequent recruitment that provide adequate supply of manpower in Taraba state civil service is identical with the finding of Broking Institution (2024) which found that job advertisements positively and significantly affect manpower resourcing, suggesting that effective recruitment strategies can enhance manpower adequacy in the public sector. Similarly, the finding that selection process in Nigerian civil service is anchored with political interference underscore the finding of National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), revealed that only about 40% of public sector workers were recruited through proper channels. The remaining 60% secured their positions via nepotism, bribery, or both. Specifically, 27% admitted to using bribery, 13% to nepotism, and 19% to a combination of both methods (NBS & UNODC, 2023).

The finding that there are unskilled workers that required effective training in the civil service is identical with the submission of Adewalale and Yusuf (2024) which confirms the prevalence of unskilled workers and the need for effective training strategies to enhance their competencies and performance. Similarly, the findings of Jibril et al (2024) indicate that while recruitment advertisement and guidelines exist, they are often not followed, highlighting issues such as undue influence, job racketeering, nepotism, and tribalism, which hinder the selection of the most qualified candidates. This view is corroborated by the views of respondents from the interview session which stated that:

> "Recruitment in the civil service were often advertised in the media just to attract large number of applicants and coverup their responsibilities, but the selection is based on connection and political godfatherism. In some cases, vacancies were shared among the political office holders which undermines the merit-based system and consequently resulted to the employment of incompetent staff that lack the required skill. Such category of unskilled and incompetent staff requires effective training to improve their deficiencies".

Table 3: Service Delivery in Nigerian Civil Service:

QUESTIONS	SD 1	D 2	NO 3	A 4	SA 5	TOTAL	REMARK
SERVICE FAIRNESS	15 (27%)	10 (18%)	-	11 (20%)	19 (35%)	55 (100%)	**ACCEPT**
RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	12 (22%)	19 (35%)	3 (5%)	11 (20%)	10 (18%)	55 (100%)	**REJECT**
INCOMPETENCE	11 (20%)	11 (20%)	-	22 (40%)	11 (20%)	55 (100%)	**ACCEPT**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 depicts the nature of service delivery in Taraba State civil service. 55% of the respondents have agreed and strongly agreed that there is fairness in the service delivery but 57% of the respondents opined that there is mismanagement of resources in the civil service. 60% of the respondents have agreed and strongly agreed that there are some incompetent staff that contributed to inefficiency and ineffectiveness of service in the civil service.

The finding that incompetent staff and mismanagement of government resources affects service delivery is in concomitant with the finding of Brookings Institution (2024), It highlighted procurement capacity challenges in Nigeria, emphasizing the need for a competent procurement workforce at federal and state levels. The institute recommended conducting needs assessments for procurement professionals and expanding training opportunities to address these gaps. Furthermore, a 2024 report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) revealed that corruption remains a significant issue in Nigeria, ranking fourth among the most important problems affecting Nigerians. This pervasive corruption contributes to the mismanagement of government resources and undermines public trust in the civil service (UNODC, 2024). Public services in Nigeria are often characterized by delays, inefficiencies, and a general lack of responsiveness to the needs of citizens (Nwosu & Eze, 2022). Those findings were identical with the views of respondents from the interview session which stated that:

> "Public services, such as provision of portable water, electricity, health management and good roads were inadequate in supply. The respondents opined that nonchalant attitude and corruption in the civil service are some of the reasons for poor service delivery in the Nigerian civil service"

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the findings, it is concluded that there is frequent recruitment that provide adequate supply of manpower in Taraba state civil service but the selection process is anchored with political interference, nepotism and favoritism. Such interference in the selection process has paralyzed the merit-based approach and contributed to the employment of unqualified and unskilled staff that required effective training to meet up with contemporary challenges in the civil service. Furthermore, corruption has engulfed the civil service and it paved way to mismanagement of government resources.

Therefore, based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were suggested.

i. *Independent and Automated recruitment System***:** Introduce independent and automated recruitment technology free from political interference, nepotism, and favoritism. To promote transparency and reduce human bias.
ii. *Sanctions for Corrupt Behaviors***:** Promote ethical training and enforcement of sanctions for corrupt behaviors in the civil service.
iii. *Invest in Staff Training and Development***:** Partner with professional institutions to develop comprehensive training programs to upskill unqualified and unskilled staff to meet the evolving demands of contemporary civil service challenges.
iv. *Enhance Accountability and Resource Management***:** Introduce tracking mechanisms for auditing government resources to prevent mismanagement and Implement performance evaluation systems that hold employees accountable for their roles and contributions.
v. *Legislative and Policy Reforms***:** Enact and enforce laws that prohibit political interference in selection processes and strengthen civil service regulations to prioritize professionalism and integrity in human resource management.
vi. *Promote Transparency in Recruitment***:** Develop a clear framework for accessing candidates and publish the step-by-step process of job openings, recruitment processes, and selection outcomes to the public to ensure accountability.

By addressing these issues, the civil service can become more efficient, reduce corruption, eradicate interference in the selection process and ensure the effective utilization of government resources.

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