

Similarities and Difference in the Nigerian Civil Service Reforms

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Abstract

The paper examined the various administrative reforms and identified the factors necessitating the reforms in Nigeria. It also examined the commonality and divergence in past and recent reforms; identified the factors affecting the implementation of reforms; and assessed the level of success in the implementation of administrative reforms in Nigeria. These were with a view to providing information on how the Nigerian society will avoid waste of resources and concentrate on well designed reforms. The results showed that twenty four administrative reforms such as the Hunt (1934); Elwood (1966); Udoji (1972); Obasanjo (1999); and the Jonathan (2011) reforms, to mention just a few, have been implemented in Nigeria-and were examined in this paper. The results also showed that socio-economic cum political factors such as the demand from workers for increased wages (95%) necessitated administrative reforms. Furthermore, the results showed that a significant relationship existed between past and recent administrative reforms in Nigeria ($x^2 = 25.66; P < 0.05$)

Keywords: Reforms, Nigeria, Civil Service, Administration, Past, recent.

Introduction

Reform refers to the process of aligning public service structures; systems and processes; human and material resources to government policies, targets and plans. The underlying principles require that it is only when comprehensive plans have been prepared that it will be possible to determine the appropriate configuration of public sector organizations to implement them. In other words, reform is essentially changing the way government does its work in view of current or anticipated reality or a desired state (National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy Manual, 2004). Reforms must be geared towards the achievement of national objectives. Many reforms have been carried out in the Nigerian Civil Service. However, it appears that not much has been achieved despite the amount of resources expended on the reforms. Conducting administrative reforms in any civil service is a common practice all over the world. Reform is really not about investing more resources, but building institutional capabilities and workforce capacity in the public service to mobilize and manage available resources to ensure increased investment results in better services and improved outcome (Olaopa, 2008). As a reform instrumentality, the Civil Service Commissions/Panels/Committees are utilized by the political leadership to evaluate the public service for a desired change, which may be comprehensive, radical or incremental. The final decision on the acceptance or rejection of recommendations in the form of a white paper is that of Government and therefore is political. If the political leadership is not committed, then, little or nothing will be achieved. The research concern is about how the desired changes have not been achieved despite the barrage of reforms conducted on different aspects of the service. Between 1934 and 2010, not less than twenty four reforms have been carried out in the Nigerian Civil Service. Administrative reforms have been carried out by successive governments to transform the public service into an instrument of modernization, with varying focuses and complexities of coverage, in terms of their attempts at installing more appropriate structures and conditions of service and the need to improve the efficiency of service delivery.

Literature Review

Existing literature and empirical studies on the subject matter of this research revealed that a lot of work has been done in the area of “conflict management in the state Civil Service in Nigeria” (Oyedotun, 2006), “A study of the Development and Performance of the Civil Service in Western Nigeria, 1954-1976” (Olaley, 1989).

“The Administration of Public Enterprises in Nigeria” (Oyewale, 2010), “A study of the Growth pattern of the Nigerian Civil Service, 1960-1993 (Sanni, 1999) and The Civil Service in Nigeria: Evolution and Challenges (Omoyele, 2012), “Theory and practice of Public Administration and Civil Service Reforms in Nigeria” (Olaopa, 2008). However, none of these empirical studies focused on the commonality and divergence in past and recent reforms. For a long time, Nigeria has tried to reform its civil service but it looks like it is not responding compared to other nations of the world. Meanwhile, reform of the civil service is inherent; it is an accepted practice all over the world. Many authors agreed that the solution to these inadequacies could be found in dealing with the following:

- i. lack of basis for operation;
- ii. uncertainties surrounding the distribution of responsibilities, especially, as between and within levels of government, as between professionals, as well as between the public and private sectors;
- iii. lack of established principles and procedures for the effective development of programme initiatives which entail inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral cooperation;
- iv. inadequate funding and inefficient resource management;
- v. problems in the area of legislation; and,
- vi. lack of appropriate research and data for effective planning and decision making and the importance of reforms by the policy makers and the public.

But this paper investigated the similarities and differences between the past and recent reforms in the civil service of Nigeria with a view to finding a nexus between the past and present. The deficiency in the transition process was, prior to the execution of the paper yet to be adequately researched into hence constituting the focus and gap in knowledge of this paper.

Past and Recent Administrative reforms

For better understanding of the focus of this paper, it is imperative that an account of the administrative reforms be given.

Past Administrative reforms

The Harragin Commission (1946) established the senior and junior services categories and set up terms and conditions of service for the two categories.

The Gorsuch Commission (1955) introduced the dichotomy in the civil service relating to the administrative and professional cadres. It also set up a five grade service structure which essentially constituted the basis of the Federal Civil Service. It further dealt with a revised salary structure scheme, organisation, methods and levels of authority. Its terms were:

- (a) To enquire into the structure and remuneration of the civil service with special references to problems arising from constitutional changes proposed at the conference of Nigeria’s constitution. The outcome of the commission was that the civil service was a stratified one with the fact that the top stratum was extensively occupied by Europeans while the bottom stratum was taken by Nigerians. The submission of the commission was that the structure of the organisation was not in harmony with normal organisation.
- (b) To establish another commission that will look into salary and wages review.

The Newns Report (1959) was primarily concerned with the administrative machinery for the control of government expenditure, including the role and function of permanent secretaries.

The Mbanefo Report (1959) reviewed salaries and wages and the effect of increase in the cost of living on salaries of public servants.

The Morgan Report (1963). Primarily examined wages, and salaries and conditions of service of junior employees, but recommended a regrading of all levels and a permanent body for the review of wages for future adjustments.

The Elwood Report (1966) attempted a nationalization of posts within the Gorsuch structure, but pointed out the disparity of wages within the public service as a whole.

The advent of the military regime in Nigeria on January 15, 1966, saw the end of the “old federalism” and the shaky beginning of a new one. The enactment of Decree No. 34 of May 24, 1966, which was directed towards the unification of the Nigerian civil service, implied centralized political authority and a return to the pre-1954 unitary civil service. The reaction to this act was immediate and violent. It triggered a chain of events that not only threatened the territorial integrity of the country, but also plunged Nigeria into a three-year bloody civil war.

The “New Federalism” was therefore marked by a number of factors which included: increased centralization of political authority; ascendancy of federating forces; greater structural differentiation of the constituent States; increases in the Federal Government largesse and increases in the functions of the Federal Civil Service. Perhaps, the most remarkable feature of the new federalism in Nigeria was the substantial expansion in the policy making and execution functions of the federal civil service. The centralizing tendency, which national development planning set in motion in 1962 (Allen, 1985), was greatly affected by prolonged military incursion into governance up to 1999. The sharing of federal revenue had been an issue, which was later to inspire the creation of the Distributable Pool Account by the Raisman and Tress Commission in 1958. The Commission gave considerable weight to the principle of derivation, while allocating to the Central Government a significant share of the revenue collected by it. As a result, federal civil servants acquired wide policy making functions. They played a major part in the formulation of social, economic, educational and political objectives of the government. They were able to perform this function because of the unique positions they occupied in the hierarchy of the ministries and the departments. The most well-placed amongst them, such as the permanent secretaries, their deputies and the under-secretaries, made claims to wealth of experience, just as they had access to information and data necessary for policy proposals, with their vintage positions, they made policy proposals, spelt out all possible consequences and even indicated their policy preference (Fabian, 1964). The same top federal civil servants saw themselves as equal partners in policy-making with their politically appointed commissioners, (ministers). The latter initiated policies, but much depended on their educational and professional training and knowledge of the complex activities of government. As the Federal Government retained more national resources, and as the expectations of the Nigerian public on the provision of economic goods and services rose, the federal civil service increasingly came to be looked upon in the new federation to bring about speedy realization of government’s economic and social programmes.

The 1971 Civil Service Reform

At the end of the Nigerian Civil War of (1967-70) by January 1970, there was intense agitation mounted by workers, particularly those in the public sector, against the high cost of living being experienced and the demand for increase in their wages and salaries to meet the challenges of the high cost of living. The last increase they had received was in 1964 and they had made so many sacrifices during the war.

Government reacted positively to the demand. Thus, in July 1970 the Gowon Administration appointed the Adebo Salaries and Wages Commission to look into the issue of salaries and wages with the following terms of reference:

- i. to review the existing wages and salaries at all levels in the Public Corporations and state – owned companies;
- ii. to examine areas in which rationalization and harmonization of wages, salaries and other remunerations and conditions of employment are desirable and feasible as between the public and private sectors of the national economy;
- iii. to consider the need to establish a system for ensuring the remuneration in the public services, the statutory corporations and the public services, the statutory corporations and the state – owned companies is periodically reviewed and kept in proper national balance; and to make recommendations to the Federal Military Government, including, if necessary, the need for any appropriate interim measures pending final recommendations. The Commission submitted its Report in two parts: Interim Report and Final Report. Its interim report was submitted on 21st December 1970 in it, it recommended that certain measures be taken to correct or curb the extraordinary inflationary situation being experienced. For the same reason, it recommended an interim monetary award, in the nature of the cost of living allowance, to release workers of the intolerable sufferings. The private sector was advised to take similar action. The second and final Report covering all the items of the Commission’s terms of reference was submitted in August 1971. The report touched on a number of issues among which were the harmonization of conditions of service in the Public Sector with those of the Private Sector, national productivity, prices and incomes policy; future machinery for reviews; industrial relations; and final general award on wages and salaries. The Report also made a number of suggestions in the improvements of the Civil Service, such as the review of the organisational structure, developing new grading structure and regarding post. To give effects to these suggestions, it recommended the setting up of a single body to be called The Public Service Review Commission.

The 1974 Civil Service Reforms

The Udoji Commission was the direct outcome of the Adebo Salaries and Wages Commission. It was set up in September 1972 with the following terms of reference which were to:

- a. examine the organisation, structure and management of the Public Service and recommend reforms where desirable;
- b. investigate and evaluate the methods of recruitment and conditions of employment and staff development programmes of the Public Services, and recommend such change as may be necessary;
- c. examine all legislations relating to pensions as well as the various superannuation schemes in the Public Services and suggest such changes as may be appropriate with a view to facilitating mobility within the Public Services, and also between these services on the one hand and the private sector on the other, while at the same time providing for the retention in the Public Services of qualified and efficient personnel.
- d. undertake with the aid of appropriate grading teams, the regrading of all posts in the Public Services, establish scales of salaries corresponding to such grades and, as a result of job evaluation of posts, recommend salary scales to be applicable to each post in the Services.
- e. evaluate into and make recommendations on any other matters which in the opinion of the commissions appear to be relevant in the foregoing and therefore ought, in the public interest, to be inquired into. The Commission submitted its report on the 25th September 1975. As generally agreed, the Commission provided a far-reaching and comprehensive review of all aspects of the Civil Service into 17 salary grade levels (01-17) and 17 corresponding salary ranges. It established the unified Civil Service Structure whereby all officers irrespective of discipline, have the chance, after attaining GL.16, to rise to the post of Permanent Secretary. The Commission also recommended, for the first time, the adoption of the Open Reporting System as against the confidential report hitherto in operation. It recognized the importance of personnel to efficient performance, and recommended appropriate recruitment and training.

The Udoji Commission was widely acknowledged at that time as the most comprehensible Public Service Review Commission in Nigeria after the attainment of National Independence in October 1960, there were serious reactions against some of the recommendations contained in its Report and the Government White Paper on it by workers in the Public Sector. To meet this challenge, the Federal Ministry of Establishments earlier set up to deal with complaints in the Report, into a Review Panel. It enlarged its membership by appointing six additional members with Chief Akintola Williams as the chairman. The Panel's terms of reference were:

- a. to examine expeditiously the large number of petitions submitted to the Review unit,
- b. to receive and examine petitions and complaints against the gradings and salary scales which were approved in the white paper on the Udoji Report, and
- c. to submit appropriate recommendations.

The Panel submitted its Report to the government and a white paper was issued. Most of the recommendations contained in the Report were accepted by the Government. Consequently the threatening industrial unrest by the time the Panel was appointed, was averted.

The 1974 Udoji Reform

By 1970, when the second National Development plan had declared "that the Federal Government will occupy the commanding heights in the quest for national development and provide the leadership and administration necessary to achieve national objectives" (FGN-Udoji Report, 1974), the capacity of the inherited Weberian public administration system to deliver services that matched the level of public expectation was already a subject of debate in Britain especially (Jaja, 1996). The point was that the public service was heavily bureaucratic and unadventurous on account of its reluctance to transit from an "administrative to the managerial culture". At the heat of the discourse were the generalist tradition and the issue of professionalism in the British-type civil service. There was increasing criticism that the civil service was amateurish and incapable of dealing with the problems of an increasingly complex and technologically advanced society (Drewery, 1999). This debate reached its height with the release of the Report of the Fulton Committee in 1968. Dealing a blow on the "cult of generalists", the Fulton Report decried the tendency of the higher civil service to think of themselves as advisers on policy to people above them, rather than as managers of the administrative machine below them (Fulton Report, vol.1 Para 18).

A little over a decade before Fulton, the world war management challenge had inspired the American Department of Defence under McNamara to introduce the Programme Planning and Budgeting System (PPBS), which together with Peter Ducker's earlier invention, Management by Objective (MBO), were fads for public sector reforms at that time. However, the Fulton Report became the "high water mark of managerialism". Managerialism refers to a virtual preference for business management philosophy and techniques which subsequently became an anti-bureaucratic movement that reached its apogee in the 1970. Another parallel movement had however been unleashed earlier by Ronald Coase's theory of the firm published in 1937. This theory "established the basic distinction between markets and hierarchies and argued that certain resource allocation decisions were made within hierarchical organisations because of a need to economize on transaction costs" (Griffiths, 2005). When, in 1971, the Adebo commission concluded its second and final report of the Wages and Salaries Review Commission (1970-71), it captured the elements of the crisis that the civil service of the time faced in the light of the expanded national expectation. In so doing, it pointed out the limitation of its terms of reference, arguing that the question of pay was intimately bound up with that of organisation and structure. It therefore, recommended the setting up of a public service review commission with expanded terms of reference. The Udoji Commission, which was consequently set up on 13th September, 1972, defined its responsibilities and the requirements "for it to become a more effective tool to achieve results in (its) newer, more demanding roles as agents for development" (Udoji Report, *ibid*). Inspired by the UK Fulton Report, the Udoji Report advanced a number of principles and processes in recommending "a new style public service," with a results-oriented management system operated by professionals and specialists in particular fields, who keep themselves abreast of advances in their fields, join professional associations, subscribe to journals, attend seminars; constantly learning, and who know that in this technological age, one must run fast in order to keep up (Udoji Report, *ibid*). It also recommended the adoption of a new set of management techniques, namely, project management approaches as distinct from the known traditional, hierarchical and bureaucratic system. It hoped to achieve a result-oriented system through the adoption of a mix of Management by Objectives (MBO) with strong emphasis on the definition of managerial responsibility in terms of expected results, and rigorous measurement of performances against projected plans and standards. Adoption of a Programme and Performance Budgeting System (PPBS) will in turn focus budgeting on outputs and results, rather than on outputs or activities. The Commission also recommended higher remuneration packages comparable with those obtainable in the nation's private sector, with a minimum public service wage pegged at N100 per month or (about N1,200 per annum) and a two-installment payment mechanism.

The Federal Government chose to implement the compensation component of the reform without the other components, thus disconnecting wages in Nigeria irredeemably from productivity improvement levels in the national economy. Also, whereas the Commission recommended payment of arrears in two instalments, the government released the arrears all at once, provoking, as it were, high inflationary trends in the national economy. By 1983, according to research findings (Salisu, 2001), real wages, for "highly skilled" civil servants in Nigeria were 30% of what they were in the mid-1970s. Although perks and non-wage benefits tended to rise to compensate partly for this decline, government salary levels as at the late 1990s had gone well below living wage (Robinson, 1990 and Berg, 1993). In addition, Minogue (1997) have found that by the mid-1980s, the salary of the top civil servants was less than ten times the lowest paid rank in Nigeria. The Obasanjo Administration Pay Review of May 2000 raised maximum wage considerably. Nonetheless, the pay level remained too low to serve as appropriate incentive for the desired level of work performance in the federal public service. Finally, whereas the MBO, PPBS, and project management approaches that the 1974 reform recommended had already been discredited as reform solution as of 1974 when they were introduced, their underlying logic presented a prime opportunity for Nigeria to lay the basic management infrastructure for adopting the new public administration system that the nation is still struggling to put in place under ongoing reform initiatives.

The 1988 Civil Service Reform

Early in 1985, the Federal Military Government of General Buhari constituted a study group, led by Professor Dotun Philips, to assess the effectiveness of the federal civil service and make recommendations that would lead to the reduction of personnel along with desirable organisational changes (Phillips, 1992 and Olowu, 1996). Though the team submitted its report in September 1985 a successful coup had in August 1985 brought General Babangida to Government as a Head of State.

The new government inherited the 1985 study group report and “attempted to synchronise the management of the civil service with the government perception of the requirements of the presidential system of government adopted in the 1979 constitution” (Olowu, *ibid*). A presidential task force on its implementation, popularly called the Koshoni Committee, reworked the team’s report into a white paper, which informed the promulgation of the April 1988 implementation guidelines on the civil service reforms. This was given the force of law by Decree No. 43 of 1988. The main elements of the reforms included the following:

- Ministers (and no longer permanent secretaries) were to be the Chief Executive and Accounting Officers of their respective ministries.
- Permanent secretaries, who were renamed Directors-General, enjoyed tenure similar to those of ministers as political appointees whose tenures coincided with that of the administration which appointed them.
- The civil service was also “professionalized.” This meant deployment and utilization of staff in accordance with their profession or specialization, with the condition that they spend their entire-career in one ministry, in order to acquire life-long expertise in the business of that ministry. The practice of pooling officers and deploying them centrally thus ceased, with each ministry taking up responsibility of employing, promoting and disciplining its staff in accordance with uniform guidelines provided by the civil service commission, which monitored to ensure compliance and it treated any appeals against the decisions of the ministers in the area of personnel management.
- The office of the Head of the civil service of the federation was abolished and its function shared between the secretary to Government and the civil service commission.

The 1988 reform was undoubtedly comprehensive and well-thought-out like the 1974 reform before it. However, it suffered a conception –reality gap in many senses. Its concept of professionalism was the first evidence of that gap. The assumption that professionalism would derive primarily from the location of an officer within the service was a strange conception of professionalism. In the large body of literature on the subject of professionalism, a profession is better characterized by measures like a scientific body of knowledge which is regulated and imparted over a fairly lengthy period of training. The Udoji Report acknowledged this. This report suggested that training should be utilized to create a corps of professional managers at the higher levels from among those with generalist and professional backgrounds.

Furthermore, it was, perhaps, too ambitious for the reform of 1988 to hope to make a “professional” out of everyone. Professionals are required in the public service but so also are the other groups (politicians, administrators and scientists) to assist in helping government to balance the search for truth, respect for governance norms and the exercise of political power. In the end, the 1988 reforms, rather than professionalise the elites of the federal civil service, politicized them and systematically induced their wastage. In fact, the politicization of the position of permanent secretary increased the turnover rate of strong officers in whom a lot of training investment had been made. This eroded professionalism through skills depletion, without a commensurate policy of training and human capital investment to make up for it. The decentralization of personnel management to line ministers also led to arbitrariness in the exercise of delegated authority. This allowed the unplanned influx of personnel that distorted the service’s skills mix and its structure. This poor structure also had to do with the non-alignment of structure with the changing role of the State since 1985 when the deregulation of the economy took a systematic turn. The Phillips framework subsisted all through the tenure of president Babangida until 1994, when the Abacha regime set up the Ayida Review Committee.

The Ayida Reform of 1995

Here, by 1994, it was already obvious, in spite of the spirited attempt by Professor Philips’ seminar reviews to redress the gaps in the 1988 reform, that the reform had not brought the required change in the administrative system. In inaugurating a seven-man Review Panel on the Civil Service Reforms on 10th November, 1994 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Allison Ayida, the Head of State, General Sani Abacha, expressed the popular sentiment that:... in spite of the earlier review, the civil service of today still remains a shadow of what it should be. All the lofty ideals of efficiency, professionalism and accountability which the 1988 Reforms intended to bring into the service has not been achieved. (FGN, 2003).

The Ayida Review Panel was to examine the service as the 1988 reform restructured it, and to restore the civil service of the glorious past by reinventing those factors that facilitated its effective performance. It was a reform to redress the negative forces in the service, including the low morale in the service, the problem of coordination and accountability and the abolition of the post of the Head of the Civil Service and the pooling system.

Objectives of the Study

- i. examine the various administrative reforms in the country;
- ii. identify the factors necessitating administrative reforms in Nigeria;
- iii. examine commonality and divergence in past and recent reforms in Nigeria.

Methodology**Area of Study**

The study covers the whole of Nigeria. However, data for the study was subsequently collected from the selected ministries in Abuja, which is the capital of the country Nigeria. Panel data from the government gazettes and publication from Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) including other relevant government publications assisted in the execution of this study.

The Research Design

The study adopts the descriptive methodology which is the main procedure used. This is supplemented by the structured and unstructured questionnaire as a research instrument as well as in-depth interviews. The methodology entails the analysis of the textual materials available on the subject of the study.

Study Population

The universe of the study is the serving federal civil servants from the Office of the Head of Service and three selected Ministries in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) namely: Federal Ministries of Information, Internal Affairs and Finance. The reason for the choice of these three key Ministries is because they are directly involved with the civil service. The Federal Ministry of Finance is one of the three principal government agencies which also operate within the civil service system. It deals with financial management and control. The Ministry of Information is very vital for the flow of communication within the MDAs, officials and finally the public. The Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs amongst other functions is directly involved with the issue of security which is very crucial to the success or failure of any reform implementation. The office of the Head of Service was selected because it is the office where all the activities of the Civil Service are coordinated.

Sampling Procedure

The selected sample will comprise the staff of the Office of the Head of Service, Federal Secretariat, Abuja and officers of the 3 selected ministries in the FCT, Abuja. At the end of the study the entire population of the staff of the Office of the Head of Service and the three selected Ministries was fairly large; The total population of staff of the selected Ministries stood at 32,045 that is (Information-7,629, Finance-9,358, Internal Affairs-8840 and Office of head of Service-6,218). Using 95% confidence level, a total of 1,430 workers served as the target respondents. In order to determine the population of respondents from each of the four units of government, a Population Proportion to Size (PPS) was employed. This resulted in 317,384,367 and 259 for Information, Finance, Internal, Internal Affairs and Office of the Head of Service respectively. In order to ensure adequate representation of the different groups within each Ministry, the target respondents were stratified into middle level staff characterized by Grade levels 06-11 and Management staff characterized by Grade levels 12-15. Consequently, questionnaire was administered to 1,430 officers while information elicited from questionnaire was beefed up with interviews conducted with 4 Permanent Secretaries, 12 Directors, and 20 Heads of Department of the Selected Ministries in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. The sample size of the study was drawn through the purposive sampling procedure because the study addressed the administrative reforms and the management staff were in charge. To that extent we believe that purposive sampling procedure would be more relevant for the study. This was supported by a random selection of some senior civil servants and retired civil servants in Nigeria for interview.

Instruments of Collecting Data

Primary data were collected through questionnaire and in-depth interview. In order to complement the data to be collected, non-civil servants and people in the private sector were interviewed as external assessors of the administrative reforms and their implementation. The secondary data were sourced from current and old journal articles on the Nigerian and foreign civil services, theses and dissertations, books, periodicals, archival records as well as government publications. These sources provided the major background to the literature review and main materials for textual analysis.

Personal Interview

Personal interviews enhance indepth research. The researcher personally interviewed some respondents to complement the information already supplied in the questionnaire. This method of data collection allows for controversial issues to be clarified and records set straight. Though slow, time consuming and financially tasking, personal interview remains one of the most reliable data collection methods.

Secondary Data

These are data derived from the expressed opinions and views of professionals and scholars that are obtained from the related literature, text books on Civil Service reforms, internet source, relevant classified government publications and Journals principally to complement the primary data for the enrichment of this work.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

The validity of an instrument is the ability of the instrument to measure what it purports to measure. A valid instrument must elicit information that is relevant to the research. If it fails to do this, then the instrument cannot be regarded as 'valid'. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, a pretest of the research instrument was carried out as a preliminary enquiry before a full scale field survey was conducted. The research instruments of this study are the questionnaire, and in-depth interview schedules. The instruments were first pre-tested on a handful of civil servants, public officers and the general public in Osun State with a view to determining the validity and reliability of the research methods and instruments of gathering data for the study.

Methods of Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed through the use of descriptive such as frequency distribution and percentage analysis and inferential statistics. In the analysis, those who agreed and the strongly agreed respondents were merged together while those that disagreed and strongly disagreed were merged together. This was done purely to ease the percentage calculations. The responses to the questionnaire were coded and analysed using simple percentages and factor analysis.

Method of Data Analysis and Presentation

The data collected were analysed through the use of descriptive, interpretive and simple statistical approaches. The approach entails detailed analysis and argumentation on the study. In other words, the analyses were facilitated by the availability of both primary and secondary data. The data collected from the field were collated and edited, after returning from the field. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution tables, percentages, arithmetic means and charts. Inferential statistical tools were used to determine the relationship between the selected variables. The observations made in the course of survey and notes and voice recording taken during interviews were logically presented and evaluated. The analyses of the data were subjected to rigorous descriptive analyses based on the logical rules of deductive reasoning.

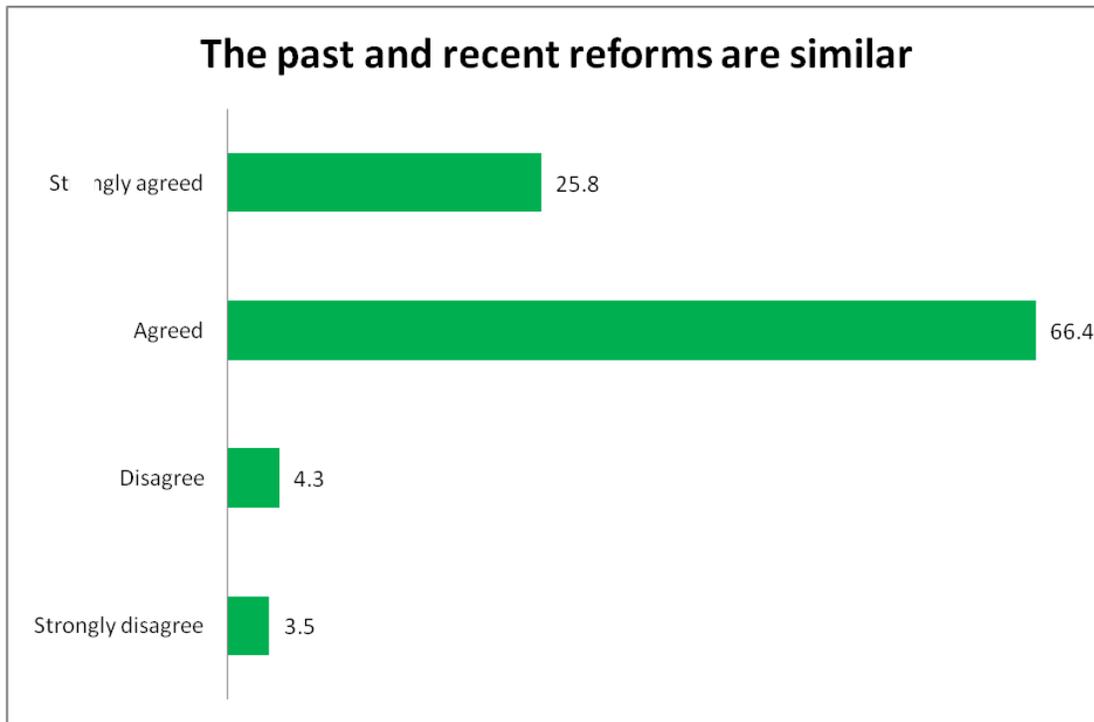
Findings of Study

One thousand two hundred and sixty five (1265) respondents which amount to 95.4 percent agree with the assertion that socio-economic cum political factors necessitates administrative reforms in Nigeria Sixty two (62) respondents representing 4.7 percent disagreed. The study confirmed that the factors necessitating administrative reforms in Nigeria were mainly socio-economic and political in nature.

Commonality and Divergence in Past and Recent Reforms in Nigeria

One thousand two hundred and twenty three (1223) respondents representing 92.2 percent agreed that the past and recent reforms were similar in nature, while one hundred and four (104) respondents representing 7.8 percent disagreed. The outcome of this depicts that 1223 (92.2%) of the sampled respondents affirmed that the past and recent reforms were similar.

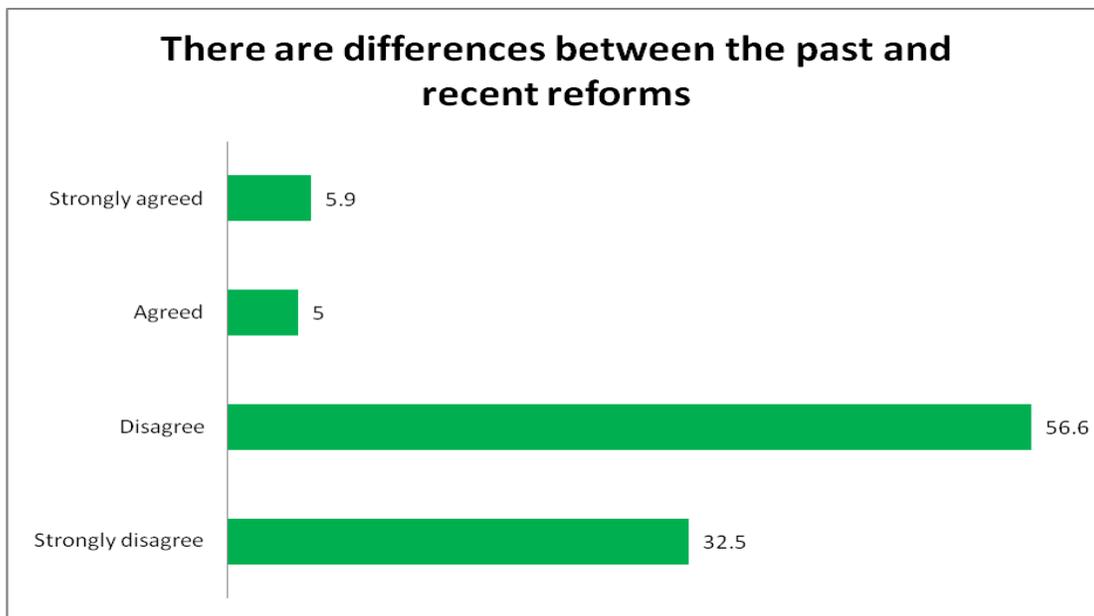
Fig. 1.1: Showing the frequency and percentage distributions on whether the past and recent reforms are similar.



Source: Fieldwork 2014

Similarly, the statement on whether there are differences between the past and recent reforms met with the same patterns of responses from the respondents. The respondents confirmed their earlier assertion by maintaining that there was hardly any difference between the past and the recent reforms. This is seen from the presentation in Fig. 12 One thousand one hundred and eighty two (1182) respondents representing 89.1 percent disagreed while one hundred and forty five (145) respondents representing 10.9 percent agreed.

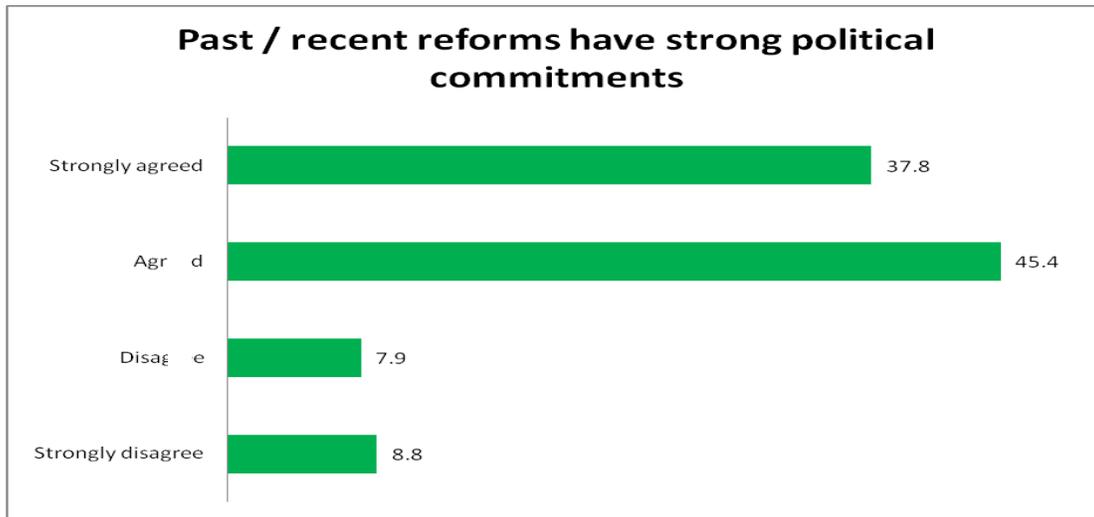
Fig 1.2: Showing the Frequency and percentage distributions on whether there are differences between the past and recent reforms.



Source: Fieldwork 2014

On whether past/recent reforms had strong political commitments. Fig. 5.8 shows that one thousand one hundred and five (1105) respondents which accounted for 83.2 percent agreed, that the past/recent reforms had strong political commitments while two hundred and twenty two (222) respondents which accounted for 16.7 percent disagreed. The implication of the analysis above is that the bulk of the respondents administered testified in support of the statement administered in the field that there was concurrence of opinion across the selected units of government that there was strong political commitments from the governments in the past/recent administrative reforms in Nigeria.

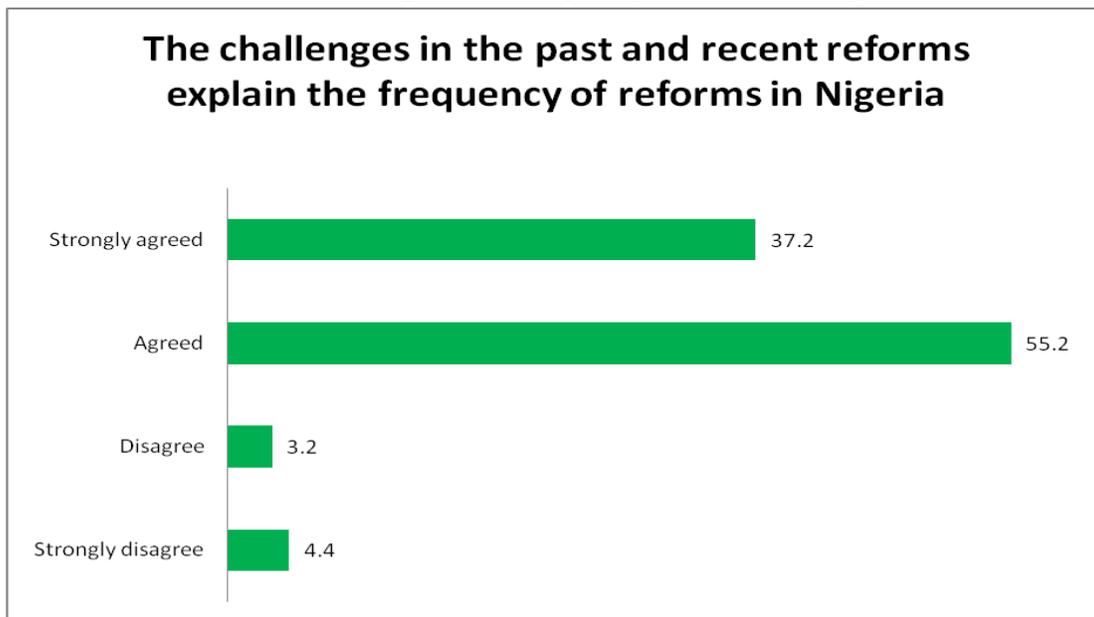
Fig. 1.3: Showing the frequency and percentage distributions on whether the past/recent reforms have strong political commitments.



Source: Fieldwork 2014

Fig. 1.4 indicates respondents' attitude when asked whether the challenges in the past and recent reforms explained the frequency of reforms in Nigeria. To this, one thousand two hundred and twenty six (1,226) respondents representing 92.4 percent agreed that the above assertion was the factor responsible for the frequency of reforms in Nigeria. One hundred and one (101) respondents representing 7.6 percent differed by disagreeing on the above assertion.

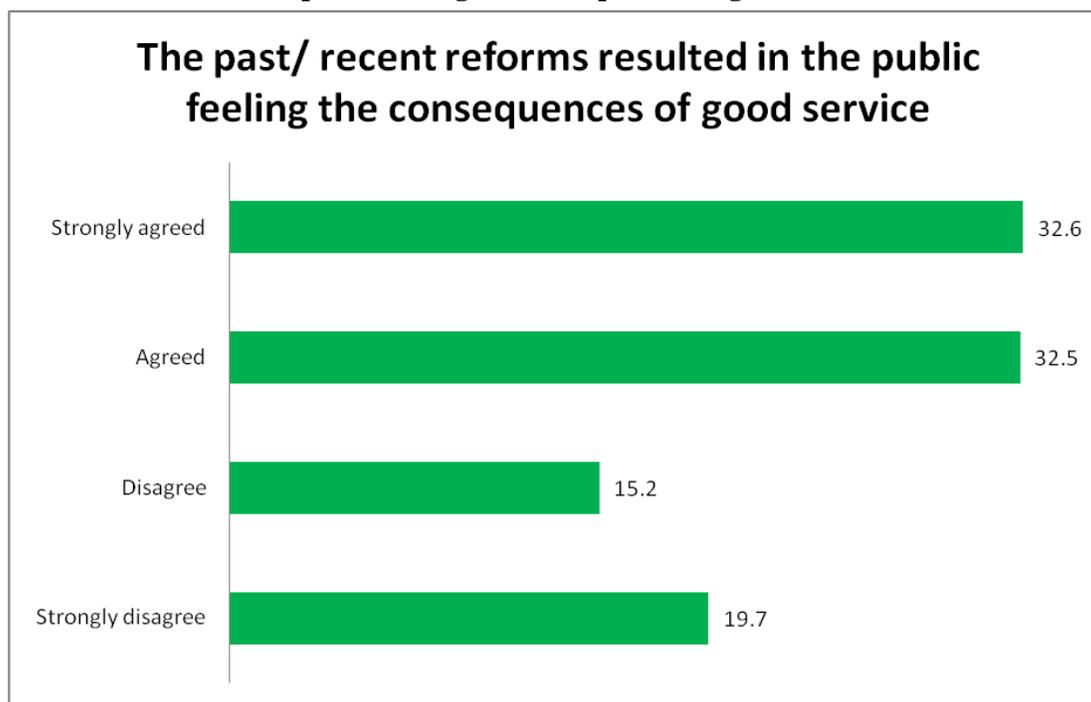
Fig. 1.4: Showing the frequency and percentage distributions on whether the challenges in the past and recent reforms explain the frequency of reforms in Nigeria.



Source: Fieldwork 2014

Fig. 1.5 shows the responses on the efficacy of the administrative reforms, with respect to the assertion that the past/recent reforms resulted in the public feeling the consequences of good service. Eight hundred and sixty three (863) respondents representing 65.1 percent agreed with the above assertion while four hundred and sixty four (464) respondents representing 34.9 percent disagreed. The implication of this for the study is that although 60 percent of the total respondents agreed that the reforms resulted in the public feeling the consequences of good services, a large number of respondents are of the opinion that the public is not feeling the consequences of good service which is bad news for administrative reforms.

Fig. 1.5: Showing the frequency and percentage distributions on whether the past/recent reforms resulted in the public feeling the consequences of good service.



Source: Fieldwork 2014

Contingency Frequency for Section B

By the presentation on table 1.4, evidence from the analysis depicts that out of the five questions asked on the commonality and divergence in past and recent reforms. The preponderance of the respondents (i.e. over 80 percent in each of the four variables) agreed that past and recent reforms were similar and that there was hardly any difference between the past and recent reforms. The implication of this study helps us to understand that without the support of the government, that is the political commitment, that however well planned a reform may be that the reform would not succeed except there is political commitment. One other subject of great concern addressed by this study is the frequency of reforms in Nigeria. It was revealed that the reason for the frequency was because of the challenges faced in the implementation of administrative reforms. The outcome of the response from the respondents confirmed this revelation. As part of the investigation on the efficacy of the reforms in resulting to the public feeling the consequences of good service, majority of the respondents confirmed that the reforms resulted in the public feeling the consequence of good service delivery. Finally, the summary of opinion is that majority of the selected respondents from the four units of government representing the country believed that the past and recent reforms were actually similar, and that if implementation was religiously enforced the frequency of reforms in Nigeria would become a thing of the past.

Table 1.0: Showing the Contingency Frequency for the Commonality and Divergence in Past and Recent Reforms.

Commonality and Divergence in Past and Recent Reforms	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The past and recent reforms are similar	47	57	881	342
There are differences between the past and recent reforms	431	751	67	78
past/recent reforms have strong political commitments	117	105	603	502
The challenges in the past and recent reforms explain the frequency of reforms in Nigeria	59	42	733	493
The past/ recent reforms resulted in the public feeling the consequences of good service	262	202	431	432
Sum	916	1157	2715	1847
Mean	183.2	231.4	543	369.4

Source: Fieldwork 2014

Discussion on oral interview

The need and the beauty of Oral Interview cannot be quantified. The interviews (in-depth interview) conducted among the selected respondents (such as retired civil servants, senior civil servants, non-civil servants and some top administrators in the private sector) in and outside the sampled units of government (Head of Service, Information, Finance and Internal Affairs). The interviews revealed much information about administrative reforms and the challenges of implementation. It must be stated that while the respondents were very accommodating especially the retired civil servants, accessing official documents met with very stiff resistance in most cases. The respondents listed many factors that necessitated administrative reforms but they generally agreed on the fact that the world is dynamic which means that Nigeria as a country must continue to improve. Government in Nigeria is responsible for service delivery, we do not have much of the private sector impact in Nigeria. Therefore, in order for the civil servants to deliver on the government promises there is a need for regular check on the system. Therefore government may identify some loop-holes in the existing system or some problems which would need to be addressed.

At other times, the demand may come from workers for increase in their wages and salaries to meet the challenges of the high cost of living or better conditions of service. Even within the system, workers sometimes ask questions on why certain things happen, say for example in 1975 the Udoji reform established the unified civil service structure whereby all officers irrespective of discipline, have the chance, after attaining GL. 16, can rise to the post of Permanent Secretary. Again the agitation may also come from the general public, after all the administrative reforms are generally geared towards the achievement of national objective.

Majority of the respondents insisted that the past and recent reforms had so much in common. They said that administrative reforms emanate from the political authority trying to satisfy the yearnings of the people, since the challenges in the past and recent reforms explain the frequency of the reforms in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This paper looked at the similarities and differences between the past and recent administrative reforms in the Nigerian Civil Service. At the end of the study, it was discovered that the real issue was no longer the unavailability of workable prescriptions but the absence of the required political will and appropriate political environment to implement existing policies. Therefore, there is significant relationship between the past and recent administrative reforms in Nigeria.

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