

Engaging Nigerian Workers and Other Stakeholders as Strategic Partners in Driving the Process of Reforms in the Public Sector

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Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to examine the relationship between the engagement of Nigerian workers and other stakeholders as strategic partners in the nation's public sector reform process, and how the employees can become veritable tools for driving the process of change in the reforms. Unfortunately, the average worker in Nigeria, right from the colonial days, and to the present democratic dispensation, has not been adequately represented in the decision making organogram that should be able to drive the desired change in public sector reforms. This study finds that the neglect of Nigerian workers in virtually all public sector reform processes is evidently responsible for abysmal failure deliver on their mandates. This is because reforms architecture lacks the essential ingredients of democratization, interest aggregation and corporate governance. This paper is a theoretical exposition of works of renowned experts in the broader field of public sector administration. The work relies on secondary sources as method employed for research investigation. Among other things, the study recommends for adequate representation of the collective interests of Nigerian workers in the affairs of reforms, inclusion of employees in the process of design and implementation of public sector reforms stakeholders who unarguably constitute valuable resource base for the survival of the public policies. This way, the public sector will, no doubt, experience increasing progress and sustainability in relation to reforms in all its ramifications.

Keywords: Workers, Engaging, Reforms, Stakeholders, Strategic partners.

Introduction

The Nigerian workers are unarguably personnel of government engaged in services that serves the best interest of the nation. They are usually all persons who form part of the workforce of government either as civil or public servants. By all standards, Nigerian civil servants can be seen as part of the public policy implementation machinery of the state. This is the reason why Mahmud and Ogwuzebe (2019) alluded that civil servants, and by extension, Nigerian workers are more or less the nation's central processing unit, engine room and of course, the brain box within which the policy framework of the country rests squarely. The civil servants therefore, can be best be regarded as invaluable instrument in which the Nigerian state can develop or progress.

As spelt out in Section 6(2) of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999 as amended), Nigerian workers form the

bulk of the core public service bureaucracy. The public service here is used to refer to the service rendered to the federation in any capacity in respect of the offices of clerk or other staff of the National Assembly; members of staff of federal ministries and those of states; the jurisprudence, members of staff of any Commission or authority established for the federation or states, staff of any company or enterprises in which the government or its agencies hold a controlling shares or interest (1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic).

To be sure, the constitution has again clearly spelt out those who constitute an average Nigerian workers, to include personnel at the federal, state and local government civil service, statutory corporations of the federal and state governments, companies or enterprises with majority equity shares by either federal or state governments, educational institutions established and financed by federal or state

governments; the Nigerian police force, armed forces of the federation, among others. All of these categories of workforce define the extent to which the system is maintained and sustained in the administrative scheme of things.

To most critics, the extent of involvement of Nigerian workers and stakeholders such as academicians, non-governmental organizations, organized labour and private sectors, multilateral and bilateral agencies and other critical sectors of the Nigerian economy such as research institutions, among others. In the reform processes have been problematic. Right from the colonial period, the average Nigerian worker has been used as a stooge and subjected to all forms of manipulation and oppression. The duty of the public servants as facilitators, bridge builders, innovators and goal setters aimed at transforming the Nigerian state to an accountable, desirable, reasonable, efficient and effective system has largely been subverted due largely to the fact that public servants have not been sufficiently integrated in the planning process.

As a problematic, one of the major problems workers faced is the way and manner the service operates and how decisions that affect the generality of the workers are conceived. Voices from the service (2019) reports that the Nigerian Civil Service, which is the umbrella body that manages the affairs of workers, operate what is known as internal channel of communication in form of a pyramid. This means that certain decisions in ministries emanate from the head (top of pyramid) and ends at the bottom of the Schaller chain. At the top, there exists two (2) different officers – the political Head, otherwise known as the Minister, who plays the role of administrative officer. On the other hand is the permanent secretary, who performs the duty of an accounting officer in his ministry. From the US report (2019) claimed that:

Given the structure and pattern of information flow in the pyramid, it is pretty difficult to make valid input into major decisions taken by the elites at the top. When a civil servant speaks or writes, he or she is writing on behalf of the ministry as it were. They are simply writing on the authority of either the Honourable Minister

or better still, acting on the supreme powers and authority of the Director as the case may be (2019, n.p).

The excerpts above shows the extent to which Nigerian employees or workers are being subsumed under the whims and caprices of the powers that be in their work place. The fact of the aforementioned is that it is a bit difficult for some of these workers to make independent contributions into the system. It is therefore a herculean task for those workers to on their own opinion with the latter being infiltrated by the offices and body language of the ministers or permanent secretaries or even Directors.

This explains why public sector reforms have over time suffered huge setback and, hence, some of those reforms have hardly achieved desired results. According to Drazen (2000 cited in Ake, 2015) public sector reforms at whatever level of analysis, would have little chance of being successfully sustained if those who manage the activities of government are sidelined such as the one experienced by Nigerian workers/public servants. Again, Wal, (1995) and UNDP (2009) have claimed that beyond the role of sustaining reforms in Nigeria, public servants and/or workers are engine or fulcrum upon which the whole machinery of the workings of government rotates. It is very difficult therefore to talk about reforms without integrating the wider spectrum of the Nigerian workers as think-tank in the administrative affairs of the reform process. This paper sets to interrogate and unravel some of these challenges with the aim of re-integrating the collective interests of the Nigerian workers. The work, among others, is subdivided into introduction, conceptual issues, and matters arising from public service reforms as well as conclusion and recommendations.

Research Objectives

The general objective of this study is to examine the nexus between the invaluable roles Nigerian workers can play in order to enhance efficiency of public sector reforms in Nigeria. However, in specific terms, the objective seeks to ascertain the extent to which the Nigerian labour force have been given a level-playing ground to initiate reforms in the public sector

domain. These objectives are important so as to be able to answer fundamental research questions in the study investigation.

Methodology

This study is a theoretical exploration of existing works of experts and intelligentsias in the broader field of public sector reforms in Nigeria. The work relies on secondary academic resource as method of data collection. Essentially, the study rests squarely on critical research materials, including, but not limited to internet sources, monographs, books, referred journals and several other materials from the Google marketplace

Conceptual Issues

Workers' Integration

The concept of workers' integration is varied, and hence depends on the ideological leaning of individual scholar in question. According to Center for Learning and Organizational Development (CLOD) (2016), define workers' integration as the basic steps involved in the recruitment, training and assimilation of workers in a workplace organization. When employees are newly recruited, there is need to properly integrate them into the mainstream workforce, provide them with support, discuss expectations and feedback; spell out in clear terms organizational and individual needs as well as engage in a well-defined professional development. It also involves adopting effective strategies for participation where every worker in a long run, becomes a potential stakeholders in critical decision as it affects the organization where they work. This decision largely shapes the direction, purpose, growth, development as well as development in its entirety.

Public Service and Public Sector Reforms

For the purpose of clearer understanding, the concept of public service and public sector reforms as well as Nigerian civil servants and workers will be applied and used interchangeably. The singular reason for this is because each of these concepts reinforce themselves, one after the other. The term public service is used to refer to all the activities that concern themselves with the management of government administration, and the way and manner such administrations are being run

(Ayeni & Okeke, n.d). This conception presupposes that people, and indeed, workers or the general workforce and public servants who man certain regular administrative responsibilities of government are actively involved in the day-to-day running of the business of government. This can be found in public settings like government ministries, Departments, Agencies and Parastatal. In Nigeria, for example, civil servants carry out their duties daily in ministries such as, Ministry of Budget and National Planning, Ministry of Finance, Health, Education, Industries, Internal Affairs, among others. The same thing applies to many other places such as Department of State Security Services, NAFDAC, NEMA and many other parastatal spread across ministries in the country. No doubt, the efficiency and sustenance of some of these organs of public service rests squarely on the commitment and dedication of able men and women who constitute the driving force for change, restructuring and reforms.

From the classic works of Ehiyamen (2017) scholars within the broader discipline of development administration frantic attempts have been made to water down public sector reforms as it relates to the critical roles of the workforce in general. This is why most scholars such as Barins (1994), Bangura (2000), Ayeni (2002) have claimed that public sector management in developing countries (Nigeria inclusive) is one of the most essential and, hence a corner stone and catalyst for socio-economic development. It should however, be noted here that some of these structures do not exist in isolation. They are manned by human beings who, in themselves, constitute the workforce in these institutions. To these scholars, any level of reform which fails to identify with the workers at whatever level can hardly achieve much in terms of desired target goals. It goes without saying that any success envisaged in reform process should also encapsulate relevant stakeholders, which includes, but not limited to all ministries, Departments and Agencies, relevant Steering Committees on Reforms, Permanent Secretaries, Heads of parastatals as well as members of the Federal Civil Service Commission, respectively.

All of these form part of the critical stakeholders who should be mobilized,

consulted and sufficiently involved in the drive towards successful reforms in the public sector. From the foregoing, it can be said that public sector reform is all encompassing, as it is inclusive, and aims at harvesting wide array of knowledge think-tanks across the myriads of institutions who act as repository for the effective workings of the nation's public sector. On the one hand, reforms as a concept can be seen as the adjustment or changes that take place in an organization so as to enable it to effectively and efficiently meet the dynamics and challenges in relation to its operations. This means that as times change, the organizations also have need to shift from its status quo and embrace new global best practices to able to reposition itself for greater effectiveness. This is why ECA (2009) cited in Ake (2015) insists that the changes must require:

...a trajectory of movement from a present, but unfavourable state, and must be seen to pass through strategic, but yet, incremental institutional stages of deliberate change. This kind of change is essentially characterized by a gradual movement towards a more defined future marked by efficient and effective improvements leading to better and more enhanced performance (my emphasis added) (2009, p.1276).

The above extract shows that reforms do not just occur, they happen with goals in mind and the procedure for achieving such goals go with series of carefully planned policy objectives and applying sequential and systematic formula for implementation in a given time period.

On the other hand, public sector reform transcends those changes that occur at individual corporate levels. It relates to a range of reforms having to do with government institutions and structures within a given locale. According to African Development Bank (1995) what constitutes public sector reform finds expression in a range of reform measures which deals with core government functions such as civil service bureaucracy, financial institutions, issues on decentralization, fringe

benefits of workers, accountability, legal and judicial reforms, among others. The point of emphasis here is that reforms generally incorporate all public and/or private establishments alike, depending on the operational dynamics of government at a particular point in time.

Perspectives on the Nigerian Public Sector Reforms

The Nigerian public sector reform is as old as history itself. It dates back to the period before the nation's political independence in 1960. This portends that the colonial period also experimental on its own variant of reforms purportedly geared towards improving the welfare of Nigerian workers. The debate that has been raging on for some time now points to the fact that Africans, and indeed Nigerians inherited the character and content of colonial legacies of reforms in the public sector as it were. Though, while the colonial system was militaristic and restrictive in nature, the contemporary Nigerian public sector reform can be said to be elitist in outlook, with the latter having all the contraption of colonization in a more or less gentle or subtle, and yet acquiesce and disposed to all kinds of subordination and domination.

Ayeni and Okeke (n.d) have alluded that public sector reforms during the period of colonization wore the toga of what has been described as 'minimum government' but from all intents and purposes, the system was 'total' in its operations. Unarguably, Ayeni and Okene queried that the colonial administration of reform was total because the colonial bureaucracy monopolized the policy formulation, policy execution and policy adjudication roles, with a number of reasons accounting for their action. With the advent of the World War II, events and circumstances had started changing (though minimally), but the general perception this time was that the British technocrats basically dominated the administrative formations of the Nigerian public service much to the detriment of few Nigerians opportunities who were still being used as stooges to the British people.

From extant literature, the background to the Nigerian public reforms started with those of the British Governor-General, Lord Lugard.

This period can be traced to 1890 when the colonial administration got rid of equal opportunity for Africans and their European counterparts within Africa. As a corollary to this development, a more or less discriminatory tendencies infiltrated the public sector with high level of discrimination melted on African/Nigerian public servants. It can be said that, the colonial system since inception laid a background where all forms of discrimination have taken place against the Nigerian public servants. The multiplier effect of this singular inhumane attitude is that the average Nigerian worker is left completely disenfranchised, dehumanized and, hence, disenchanted in the public policy aggregation scheme of things.

Available statistics show that from Lord Lugard, Hugh Clifford, Harragin reforms of 1946, the Foot Commission of the 1930s, Gorsuch and Newns reforms around the late 1950s, all have the same spell cast on the Nigerian workers with unimaginable consequences on the self-esteem of the Nigerian public servants. The shortfalls associated with the colonial reforms in the public later snowballed into the nation's independence in 1960, where a number of reforms were carried out so as to correct the anomalies that characterized the colonial administration.

Thus, the new government of the nation's Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa upon assumption of office, established a commission on review of wages and salaries as well as other conditions of service for junior employees of the public and private sectors of the Nigerian economy. This commission was later called the Morgan Commission. The Morgan Commission carried out a rather ambitious programme of reforms to be able to pacify the many agitations of workers ranging from wage structure adjustment, conditions of service and minimum wage. The later was generally referred to as 'living wage', the aimed of which was to create a new minimum wage system high enough to enable a wage earner who is doing a full day's work to support himself and the immediate family out of what he or she earns as wages (Ayeni & Okeke, n.d). To be sure, these wages were to take into account essential areas of needs of the employees such as rent, transportation, cost of prices of consumable goods, among others.

Investigations from various sources show that the projected annual salary scale for workers was put at £318 pounds, with a graduated income of £36 pounds. This arrangement however, was later truncated when government issued its white paper calling for the scaling down of the figure initially agreed to by government and the employees. This action eventually led to a nation-wide industrial action by various Trade Unions in 1964, with devastating socio-economic effects on the nation's economy.

As a result of the consideration and acceptance of the Morgan Commission Report by the government in the First Republic, the government assigned another commission to steer the affairs of the Nigerian workers through the Elwood reforms. As a matter of responsibility, the Elwood Team was mandated to enquire into the irregularities that marred the grading system as well as other conditions of service of public servants in public post. This was meant to affect all employees of the federal government with the view of determining appropriate uniformity in the grading system of salaries of officers performing the same functions. Consequently, the outcome of the Elwood Report found that the requirements regarding educational qualifications for workers coming through direct entry at designated levels in the nation's public service has been less in terms of standard requirements. From all intents and purposes, it can be said that the last two reforms – Morgan and Elwood, though bedeviled by its peculiar problematic, gave the Nigerian workers a beacon of hope in their agitation for better condition of service.

The collapse of the First Republic brought about the incursion of the military into the Nigerian system. Several reasons and theoretical postulations have been adduced for this. Some of the reasons advanced includes corruption by previous administrations, ineptitude and the tendency of the military to want to salvage the ailing socio-economic and political conditions of the Nigerian people. Be that as it may, the military came with its templates for operation as regards public service reforms. Therefore, from what has been documented by scholars and critics, the military regime was characterized by the integration and co-optation of civilian patriots as partners in the

affairs of reform governance. This is why some of the commissions that were established encapsulated civilian bureaucrats who formed the basis for the elaborate reforms. For example, there was the Adebo Salary and wages commission, Udoji Public Service Review Commission; Dotun Philips study team, the Ayida Review Panel on the civil service, among others.

For want of time and space, these may not be fully discussed. However, it goes without saying that the military just like other reform programmes initiated by their predecessors, had its fair share of problems and challenges that have basically impacted, at least negatively on the plight of Nigerian workers.

Public Sector Reforms in Nigeria: Matters Arising

From the documented evidence of works of experts on Nigeria's public sector reforms carried out so far, it does appear that a lot have been done by successive government in order to transform the public sector. Thus from pre-colonial epoch to the post-independence era up to the period of transition to democracy in 1999 to the present, government has taken very bold steps to address the quagmire confronting the public sector in relation to the working conditions of workers generally.

From the point of view of Ake (2015) insisted that;

These reforms, beginning from the colonial period, across the military rule up to the democratic transition period, the story line is obviously the same. Some of the reforms have tried quite a lot at improving the public service in Nigeria. However, what is not clear is that the future of the Nigerian workforce is hardly discussed or put into serious consideration, which is why the actual drivers of reform are now conditioned to the back seat, while those who have little or nothing to contribute are now the ones on the driver's seat. This scenario clearly tells what kind of people we are, and, exactly what

direction we intend to navigate in the administrative sense of it as a nation (my emphasis added).

From the above excerpts, it can be deduced that several factors interplay to remove the average Nigerian worker from the centre of operations of public sector reforms and transformation. There appears to be other factors such as the political, social, economic, structural and even institutional, each of which weights down heavily on the sensibilities and emotions of the Nigerian worker in the general scheme of things.

It was Olaopa (2009) who earlier alluded that some of the reforms have consistently failed in Nigeria because of lack of attention to individual worker's incentives, most especially the take home pay of civil servants, contribution of expert and/or professional ideas into the mainstream public service cadre, the adoption of top-down approach in framing major policy issues in government ministries, agencies and parastatal.

The lack of discipline in public sector management and other strands of challenges that greeted the previous reforms account for why the former president, chief Olusegun Obasanjo, upon assumption of office as president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, established the Bureau for Public Service Reform. From documented evidence in the Guideline for public service reform in Nigeria (1999-2014), the objective of government was to change the structure of government, as it relates to pension reforms, integrated payroll and personnel information system, public procurement, privatization and commercialization, monetization, transparency and accountability, anti-corruption; justice system reform, electoral reforms, office of the Head of Service, health, education, women, youth and social development, information, creative industries; the banking industry reforms, agriculture, solid minerals, among others. These reforms, with its carefully crafted objectives and target goals for execution and implementation, appears to have had insignificant contributions to the working class of the nation's public sector.

Thus, from the public survey carried out by the office of Head of Service of the Federation

in 2011, quite a number of alarming revelations were made. Thus, evidence presented by the office of Head of Service shows that of the 6000 respondents across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria cutting across 100 selected organizations, the inferences were staggering.

First, the survey indicates that majority of Nigerian workers, especially those in the public sector are frustrated and sidelined in terms of when and how reforms are designed and implemented (OHSF, 2011). Arguing further, the survey report lamented that:

The service, and indeed, Nigerian workers are passionate about putting in their best, but feel constrained in doing so because of their conditions of work and coupled with the environment they find themselves.

From the excerpts above, it can be seen that the disturbing issues and challenges faced by the workers are manifold. It does appear that even though there is public sector reforms designed supposedly for the interest of the employees, there is scarcely any meaningful impact on the target population.

As shown in the survey response, one peculiar problem that stare the workers in the face is the way and manner politics has infiltrated the service generally. To the respondents, the political class is at the heart of some of these challenges. The political class, it is said, have deviated from the standard bureaucratic practice and principles of corporate governance as the core public sector workers have been subjected into all forms of subservience and, hence, some of the critical decisions in the service lacks the basic ingredient of consultation and inputs required for the sector to thrive. Consequently, most of the decisions that affects the workers are shrouded in secrecy contrary to what government have claimed. This situation negates what has been said about the urgent need for the workers and stakeholders to get involved in the reform process. From the point raised by Jonathan (2015) claimed that:

... reforms under my administration have focused on tangible improvement to the

citizen's namely, workers experience of their government. Besides this, we have consulted widely and listened intently, and have had the courage to put the interests of the Nigerian man, woman and sundry persons beyond any other consideration (2015:22).

Over and above these arguments, the Nigerian workers have criticized the policy makers on the non-inclusion of stakeholders in the public sector. One of the reasons is that the political class takes pleasure in creating 'service delivery champions' who have little or no ideas how the vast majority of the workers and other stakeholders feel about the reforms.

Again, the character of information dissemination is quite problematic. Information management between and among the workers and policy makers do not flow easily. In many cases, the employees do not know their schedule of duties, or their schedule is clearly not related to their institutional mandate and strategy for their various places of primary assignment. Apart from the free flow of information resources, the issue of programme evaluation remains a huge albatross. For instance, officers and employees, most of the times, are very keen to evaluate the impacts of training as well as share best practice. This tasks, however, have become particularly impossible due to the fact that performance are rarely tracked or evaluated to determine 'best brains' in services and reward those who have performed beyond average.

The aforementioned issues established about non-engagement of Nigerian workers and stakeholders as partners in driving the process of reforms does not, however, suggest that nothing has been done by government to embrace their ideas in the reforms that have been carried out in Nigeria.

Oke (2015) reported that in one interview conducted on the public sector reforms between 1999-2007, a lot of workers have attested to the efficacy of reforms of government as it affects them (the employees directly). The survey cuts across 7,637 federal workers and civil servants in 6 states of the federation. The two federal ministries selected were stratified into: (1) senior (2) intermediate and, (3) junior staff

cadre respectively. Each of these cadres showed greater satisfaction with some of the reforms and how their material wellbeing have been taken care of by the reforms.

Asked if the monetization reform policy of the federal government during the administration of former president Olusegun Obasanjo had the interest of employees and other stakeholders, the respondents were quick to give positive light about the policy. Majority of the federal workers who undertook the survey showed widespread satisfaction with the increase in remuneration (pay reform). The justification for this development was that the welfare of workers would have been the first necessary step ever contemplated by the government to effectively partner with its employees as a precursor to the betterment of their living standard.

In the same vein, during the period under consideration, some of the workers who benefited from the monetization exercise, (as it relates to housing) expressed satisfaction on the activities of the government in this direction. For example, the occupants of the properties and users of government vehicles were given the option of purchasing such properties (in which many workers did). The same benevolence can be seen around the gesture of government to ensure that retiring persons get paid, and on time, too with the contributory pension reform scheme. Though the scheme currently has its peculiar challenges with several allegations and counter allegations about billions of tax payers' monies being siphoned into private pockets. It is in this direction that Ugwu-Oloto (2007) claimed that at no time in Nigeria's history has the country fundamental transformation in the most critical facet of our national life where indeed, Nigerians, under the Obasanjo administration, and by extension, public sector employees, have witnessed increasing changes in their socio-economic well being. It goes without saying that the foundation of reforms laid by the administration during the inception of democratic dispensation in 1999 is what has given rise to other expanded reforms to date. Though, the seeming benefits to employees are mixed. It is still not clear whether the intentions of the initiators of the reforms have long term benefits. Or better still, whether the corporate

interests of those who are supposed to be the target of the reforms have been adequately captured in the public policy scheme of things.

Conclusion

This study addressed itself to the strategic importance of Nigerian works and other stakeholders as partners in the process of reforms in the public sector in the country. What the research has investigated is to be able to demonstrate that the policy makers can hardly achieve much in terms of implementation and outcomes if the employees who are supposed to be partners in progress are not adequately represented in the reforms action plan.

The work has established that for Nigeria to grow economically, socially, morally, politically and even technologically, and in tune with global best practices, there is the critical need to carry out reforms in every facet of our national life. This tradition, no doubt, will ensure efficiency, probity, accountability and effectiveness of the public sector bureaucracy. To a greater extent, the researcher has noted that the reforms that have taken place in Nigeria right from the precolonial times are confronted with monumental deficiencies. The tendency is for the initiators of some of these reforms to simply wish away the critical roles of the Nigerian workers in the consolidation and sustenance of the reform process. The study has indicated that virtually all the reforms enunciated in Nigeria have failed to deliver merely because there has been top-down approach in the way and manner the elite have gone about the reform procedures. Thus the indispensability of the employees and/or workers have not been fully recognized and their contributions to economic development well articulated in the overall policy environments in the country. The multiplier effect is that most policies in Nigeria begin and end with the people at top echelon of power.

From some of the scholarly works consulted in the course of this study, the research discovered that the average Nigerian worker is unarguably the central processing unit of any public sector administration, just the same way he or she is in the engine room and repository of government policies at whatever dimension. It is therefore unthinkable to contemplate isolating this all-important variant (the civil

servant) in the administrative and reform process of the nation.

The investigation has also reckoned with other critical partners in Nigeria reforms and development endeavours. They include, but not limited to the various ministries, parastatals, Departments, Agencies and Committees which have been set up as appendages and support base for government policies overtime. Some of these structures and institutions needs to be carefully partnered, integrated and their views and opinions aggregated so as to achieve greater measure of success. When this is achieved, we can be sure that the nation's public sector will become the pride of not the Nigerian state, but also a reference point for the rest of the world to imbibe as necessary template for administrative efficiency at whatever level of reform practices.

Recommendations

Arising from the above evidence generated in the course of this paper about the inadequacies that have characterized the Nigerian public sector reforms in relation to the abject neglect of the essential roles of the workers as strategic partners in progress, the researcher has opted for the following set of recommendations as panacea for effective public sector reforms in Nigeria.

Firstly, the Nigerian constitution (1999 as amended) should be adequately reviewed to encapsulate the strategic roles of the workers as partners in the reform process. This means that the constitution should be able to recognize the fact that workers or employees can make scientific inputs based on expert knowledge into reforms documents, and such views should be considered sacrosanct enough to validate a position of authority. When this happens, we can have assurances that informed decisions of the employees becomes part and parcel of the decision making machinery.

Secondly, the current conditions of service should be reviewed so that the workers can put in their very best in their work place environment. This means that all other administrative bottle-neck and constraints should be dismantled.

From the survey responses investigated in the course of this paper, it was observed that most civil servants have expressed worries about the failing of the civil service. This they

attributed to the inadequacies associated with the actions and inactions of the political class in Nigeria. Policy makers should look into this complaints, set up committees for investigation to identify those lapses and move towards correcting them.

Again, the Nigerian civil service rules should be properly reviewed to accommodate the critical roles of stakeholders such as seasoned academics, organized private sector, non-governmental organizations, multilateral and bilateral agencies and corporations and the public sector workers. All of these categories of workers should be seen as a unique system of operation where knowledge is share and principles of cooperation is enhanced so as to build an administrative synergy capable of transforming not only the works, but the Nigerian socio-economic life at large. Nigerian workers should be seen and made to be part of the day-to-day activities and routine exercise of where they serve in their various distinguished capacities and expertise. This means workers should be adequately represented in decision pyramid as it relates to the formulation and implementation of government policies on reforms. Moreover, a system of checks and balances should be allowed to thrive so as to be able to guide against misapplication of powers by top managers of ministries.

The fact that the civil service bureaucracy where workers find themselves run a polling system where individuals move from one ministry, agencies or departments into other places. There is need to ensure that technical work groups who are engaged in the drafting or development of policy guidelines be allowed adequate enabling environment to work. Too much unnecessary transfers of technical committees from one place to another to another show that workers can hardly understand the trend of policy outcomes in such ministries.

As part of the strategic plans for successful reforms, government should integrate stakeholders such as academics from higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. This includes universities and other relevant institutions engaged in research. Scientific works such as thesis and dissertations as well as other results of investigation can be of great help to policy makers.

As a result of the complex nature of public

sector reforms, it is important that other stakeholders such as multilateral agencies, foreign investors, NGOs and the international communities with relevant expertise for workable reforms be integrated into the system. This way, policy makers would have generated sufficient grounds to share in the experiences of other nations or other climes around the world.

Besides, there is need for proper information management between the top echelon of the public sector bureaucracy and those at the bottom. No doubt, scarcity of information creates room for manipulation. On the other hand, availability of information brings about mutual trust, harmony and a high sense of responsibility. This can lead to efficiency and transparency in the work place.

The survival of the Nigerian state is contingent on the effective repositioning and stability of the public sector. This is because the latter is at the core of development. It is only incumbent on us a people to do our very best to sustain the culture of equality, accountability and a fair degree of responsibility and responsiveness in our dealings with what affects us and precisely the average worker who is the custodian of the nation's development agenda. We can do this bidding when we identify and recognize the Nigerian worker stands out as one who should steer the ship of reforms in all its ramifications. Apply a different formula for the reform will amount to throwing the baby with the bath water, best of itself in this era of global competitiveness and survival in the 21st century and beyond.

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