

HISTORY OF NIGERIA'S CIVIL SERVICE

PRESENTATION BY

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Nigeria's Civil Service – pre independence (before 1960)

Key Issues/features:

- Low wages and lack of inclusion of Nigerians in the senior cadre of the civil service under the British colonial government.
- Decentralization of administrative authorities – central/subnational/regional dimensions
- Distinctive hierarchies
- Harmonization of wages

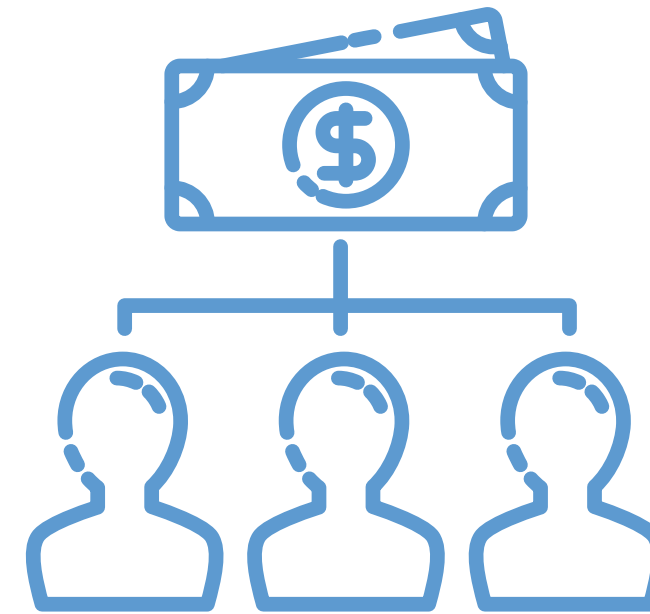


Low wages and Lack of Inclusion of Nigerians



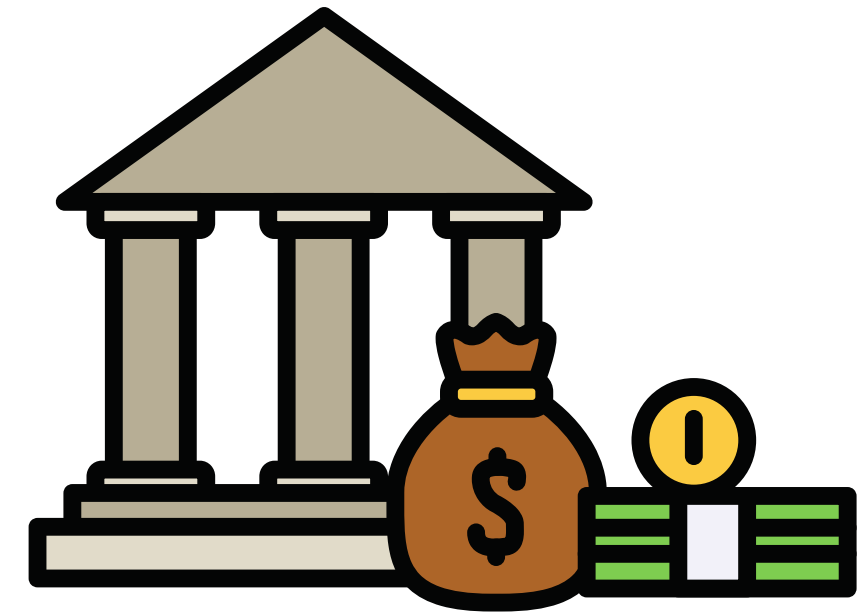
HUNT
COMMISSION
(1934)

Reviewing the wages of unskilled workers and to determine reasonable standard of living for labour



THE BRIDGES
COMMITTEE
(1941)

Reviewed wages of African government workers in Lagos and recommended compensatory increase subsequently, called cost-of-living awards



THE
PHILLIPSON-ADEBO
COMMISSION (1953)

To draw a framework for the attainment of Nigeriaization status: increase the number of senior cadres of Nigerians as civil servants

Decentralization and Hierarchies

Key reforms:

Tudor-Davies Commission (1945)

Demanded for inclusion of Nigerians into the senior cadre and the decentralization of administrative authorities and powers.

The Hugh Foot Commission (1948)

Recommended for the establishment of central and regional public service boards in the regions.

Gorsuch Commission (1954)

restructured civil service into two broad groups "professionals" and "generalists".



Harmonization of Wages

Lidbury Commission (1954)

Grading and salary scales should be based on responsibility and not race.

Mbanefo Commission (1959)

To ensure uniformity in pay and condition of service for all cadres and groups across the country



Nigeria's Civil Service at Independence

At the independence in 1960, the British government bequeathed a parliamentary government and a regionally decentralized civil service: Western, Eastern, and Northern Region.

Key features/Issues:

- Regionally decentralized administrative authorities and powers
 - Apolitical in operations
 - Hiring and promotions were largely through competitive examinations.
 - Norms of impersonality and hierarchical authority were well entrenched
 - The need to increase wages
 - Grading and uniformity issues
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Civil Service reforms: 1960s and 1970s: Upward Review of wages and grading systems

Key reforms:

Morgan Commission (1964)

Revised salaries and wages of junior staff of the federal government, and introduced minimum wage package for each region of the country.

Elwood Commission (1966)

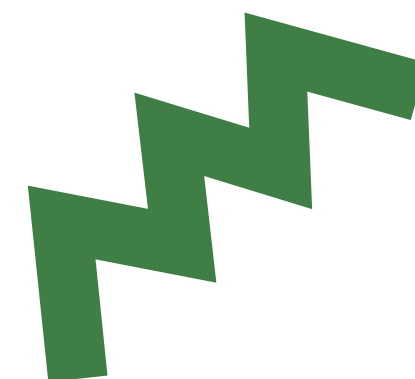
To determine an appropriate grading system and achieve uniformity in the salaries of officers performing identical duties

Adebo Commission (1971)

Reconciliatory mechanisms after the civil war - recommended 30% and 12% increase for junior and senior staff respectively

Udoji Commission (1972)

Review and over-haul of the entire public service and promote efficiency & effectiveness. Recommended a Unified Grading and Salary structure



Civil Service in Military era

However, decades of military rule (1966 to 1999) politicised and degraded the civil service which mostly manifested in the 1980s and 1990s. More specifically, political factors rather than merit played a major role in the civil service as seen in key changes including:

Key features:

- The introduction of the quota system of recruitment and promotion – regional representation
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- Hiring was based on federal character principle rather than merit and competitive examinations
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- Huge expansion of the civil service – personnel increase
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- Frequent changes in top officials and terminations



Civil Service reforms under military governments: Introduction of federal character and quota system and dismissal of civil servants

Key Reforms:

Gowon Regime 1966

Introduced the quota system in recruitment civil servants.

Murtala/Obasanjo Regime 1975

The regime ushered in the federal character principle in civil service recruitment. Massive dismissal of civil servants without following legal procedures.

Buhari/Idiagbon Regime 1983-1985

Dismissed top civil servants who were perceived to be corrupt without constitutional backing. Appointed their trusted executive roles in the civil service.

Babangida Regim 1988

Dismissal of top civil servants of the previous regime.



Civil Service reforms: 1980s and 1990s

Improving salary structure and working conditions

Key Reforms:

Dotun Philip (1985)

To review the structure, composition, and methods of operation to meet the demands of government in the 1980s and beyond.

Ayida Review Panel (1994)

Improved emoluments of civil servants and salary adjustment to reflect the general price movement with a view of discouraging corruption.

The Longe Commission (1991)

Focused on some aspects of the problems of civil service, such as funding, salaries, conditions of service. Recommended a general salary increase of 30%.

The 1988 Civil Service Reorganization Decree

The commission focused was to enhance professionalism, decentralization and delegation of functions; Institute checks and balances.

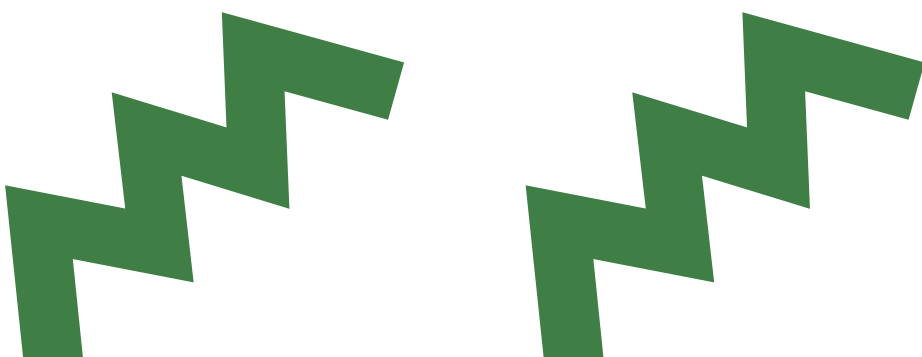
The 1988 Civil Service Reorganization

Decree Improvement and harmonization of compensation packages for civil servants.

Civil Service in Democratic Rule

Key features:

- De-militarization of the Civil Service by ensuring that the system is guided by the constitution
- Re-introduction of the Pooling System to ensure that officers are posted to where they will maintain and develop their professional skills, thereby promoting professionalism
- The restoration of the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation to provide political neutrality and cohesiveness
- The institution of centralized coherent and systematic training throughout the Civil Service to de-militarize the mentality of civil servants
- Other restructuring include:
 - Separation of the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation from that of the Secretary to Government of the Federation
 - Return to the restrict applications of extent rules and regulations concerning recruitment and due process
 - Revisiting the structure and functions of strategic public service departments such as National Planning Commission and other professional departments



Civil Service reforms: 2000s and 2010s

Downsizing of the civil service and emphasis on efficiency and productivity

Key Reforms:

Obasanjo Reform (2004)

Restructuring of Pilot Ministries, Departments and Agencies, payroll reform and the Review of Public Service Rules and Financial Regulation

Yar'adua Reform (2009)

The main thrust of the reform include civil service organizational efficiency; professional ethical and accountable workforce with improved competence of civil servants.

Steve Oronsaye Committee (2012)

The reform centers on the disbandment of 102 agencies from the present 263; abolition of 38 agencies; merging of 52 agencies and reversal of 14 agencies to departments.



Present Day Civil Service: Issues

- **Poor remuneration package of civil servants:** In mid-2000, senior level officials were earning less than US\$200 monthly, while entry level pays the equivalent of US\$100 monthly (NGN50,000). Also, the gap in salaries between the public and private sector is 300 – 500%
- **Low qualification and limited relevant experience:** Despite establishing training institutions such as Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, National Institute for policy and strategic Studies, and the Civil Service Institute, civil servants remain largely unqualified and inexperienced. 70 percent of workers in the ministry of finance were low-level staff clerks, cleaners and administrative staffs with a secondary school education or equivalent, 13 percent were university graduates and only 8 percent had degrees related to economics or accounting
- **Widespread corruption:** Civil servants in Nigeria are likely to “achieve their pockets” and promote corruption owing to the lack of financial accountability
- **Ethnicism/tribalism**
- **Poor/negative attitude to work:** Prevalence of weak work ethic and poor service delivery by several government ministries



Present Day Civil Service: Way Forward

- E-governance: According to the United Nations E-Government Development Index, Nigeria is ranked 141 out of 193 countries, performing worse than other African countries such as Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa that rank 63, 76, 78 respectively. It is important to employ ICT in managing revenue collection, maintaining government's accounts, ensuring that payment of pensions and other benefits are made to the right beneficiaries, and securing the identity of citizens
- Improved performance management to remove incompetent staff and downsize the civil service
- **More rigorous selection process for top and mid-level officers:** Increased attention should be paid to basic competences needed to occupy a civil servant position particularly for senior roles; applications should be made through electronic means; candidates should take a psychometric test followed by an interview with a consultative committee for senior civil servants' appointment
- **Mid-career training to develop the needs of public officers at all levels**



THANK YOU!