

## **SERVICE COMPACT AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study analysed the role of Service Compact (SERVICOM) on service delivery in selected federal parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria and examined the strategies adopted by SERVICOM in realising its objectives. It also examined the extent of implementation of SERVICOM policy in the study area and analysed the challenges facing SERVICOM in the discharge of its functions in the selected parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria. These were with a view to providing information on the effect of SERVICOM as one of the variants of New Public Management (NPM) on service delivery of federal parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria. Primary data used for analysis included questionnaire and interviews while secondary data also included journals and extracts from the internet sources on service compact and service delivery. The results showed that SERVICOM played significant roles in service delivery and impacted positively on citizens in Southwestern Nigeria. The results also revealed that the strategies adopted by SERVICOM in realising its objectives enhanced service delivery in Southwestern Nigeria. Furthermore, the results showed that the extent of implementation of SERVICOM influenced positively service delivery in the Southwestern Nigeria. Finally, the study identified some of the challenges facing SERVICOM in the discharge of its functions which incapacitated SERVICOM, the performance of its functions in Southwestern Nigeria.

The study concluded that inadequacy of human and material resources led to poor implementation of service compact policy in Southwestern Nigeria.

**Key Words:** Service Compact, Service Delivery, Public Service, New Public Management

## **Introduction**

Issues of bureaucratic corruption, inefficiency and ineffectiveness have become part and parcel of the larger socio-economic and political maladies that have inundated the Nigerian state and society. This worrisome phenomenon has elicited debate at various fora, seminar or symposia where the problems of corruption, inefficiency and ineffectiveness at both the bureaucratic and political levels have been discussed. But the identification of the problem could not have doused the exponential growth of this phenomenon. Not even the perennial complaints of military coup perpetrators and political jobbers have made any appreciable impact on the pervasive nature of bureaucratic corruption in Nigeria (Akhakpe, 2001).

At independence, Nigeria inherited a technically competent civil service which concentrated on giving practical expression to government policies and programmes and the provision of goods and services to the people. The years immediately after independence, particularly with the incursion of the military into politics, saw the top civil servants moving from traditional role of policy advisers and executors into decision makers by playing visible roles in the highest decision making bodies, the Supreme Military Council (SMC) and the state executive council. All these took place at a time when government activities were being stretched into other areas far beyond its watchman role of maintaining law and order (Akhakpe, 2001).

Reform stands for initiatives directed towards the eradication of abuses or distortions in the existing system (Olaleye, 2001). For all practical purposes, these entail restructuring, reorganisation or renovation. These activities in turn, entail structural realignment of the existing system in the light of the current needs and new demands of change to suit the ideological or socio-economic environment. Such changes could also assume dimensions that are much more deep-seated entailing the reconstruction of existing system in the light of the current needs and demands (Igbokwe, 2014).

However, the continued poverty and economic crises in developing countries led to a realization that such a dismal state of affairs was largely related to poor public policies, which produced a large public sector, widespread nationalization and excessive controls over the economy. The

state and its public sector undertakings had expanded beyond their capacity. Mismanagement, nepotism, political patronage, large and rigid bureaucracy, and widespread corruption became the features of public administration machinery (Omoleke, 2004).

Public sector reform initiatives in Commonwealth countries up till 2002 included decentralization, commercialization, privatization, benchmarking, organisational methods, the fight against corruption, good governance, accountability, public financial management reform programmes, public sector incomes policy and administration, functional reviews, job evaluation and salary review, training, information technology, one-stop-shops, codes of ethics for public officers, strengthening management capacity, service delivery improvement, ICT, computerization of human resources information, performance management system and restructuring ministries and parastatals (Ayeni, 2002).

From the inception of the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo in May 1999 till his exit in May 2007, a lot of reforms were initiated to ameliorate the socio-political, economic and institutional decay that the nation had witnessed over the years. Given that the sustainability or otherwise of any government policy depends largely on those who implement it and because the success or failure of such policy depends on how favourably disposed the public servants are to determine its workability. Administration, therefore, deemed it necessary to introduce reforms that would revitalize the public sector with a view to adequately empowering it to sustain the reforms (Ugwu-Olo, 2007:56).

The public service is an indispensable instrument through which government implements its policies and programmes. It is through its instrumentality that government policies are translated into services for the people. The public service is made up of the employees of government. They are those responsible for the functioning of government through the implementation of government policies. The main functions of the public service are essentially to help formulate and implement the policies of government and to render related services to the public. The public service which consists of workers in government ministries, parastatals and other agencies are further expected to provide continuity in governance, and to serve as a repository of knowledge

and experience of the practices and procedures of governance, and to protect public interest (National Political Reform Conference, 2005).

There is no doubt that the Nigerian public service has been afflicted over the years with series of problems, among which are poor performance, corruption, absenteeism and the ghost workers syndrome. Considering these malaise that have characterized the public service as well as the need to reposition it to make it people-oriented and compatible with the reality of global standard, President Olusegun Obasanjo approved the establishment of Bureau for Public Service Reforms (BPSR). The bureau was mandated to streamline and standardize the public service at the federal level, including setting minimum standards to be met by each Ministry or Agencies. The task was “to build a civil service that is performance and result oriented, professional and technologically sensitive, and committed to a continuous improvement in the conduct of government business and the enhancement of national productivity” (Ajayi, 2006: 4). The thrust of the Federal Government position, Ajayi (2006) explains further was to reposition and re-professionalise the public service for greater efficiency, effectiveness in service delivery, accountability, transparency, and overall national productivity.

Civil service reform activities of the Federal Government in the fourth democratic dispensation were to focus on the core functions of government namely, policy making, service delivery, value orientation and accountability. These were targeted by a number of reform programmes, one of which was service delivery reform tagged SERVICOM, that seeks to introduce “Customer Orientation” through a “Service Compact with all Nigerians”. The crisis of corruption and mismanagement cum attendant ineffectiveness in the Nigerian Public Service propelled the federal government to introduce Service Compact (SERVICOM) as part of the reform process in the bureaucracy.

It is in the light of the foregoing that a study of this nature becomes expedient, to investigate empirically the prospects of successful service compact implementation in Nigeria and the challenges facing it.

### **Statement of Problem**

Arising from the background to the study, the essence of governance in any given society is the delivery of public services. This has, for long time, been a serious issue of discussion, particularly the question of how to guarantee effective and efficient delivery of such public services to the people. Service Compact (SERVICOM) is one of the elements of New Public Management (NPM) different in many ways from traditional public administration. Despite its tremendous appeal, traditional public administration all over the world failed to take cognizance of some vital environmental forces. Nigeria is wonderfully endowed by Almighty God with human and other resources, but regrettably it has failed to manage resources for quick improvement in the quality of life of the people. Instead of progress and development, what Nigerians experienced in the last two decades and particularly during the military regime is deterioration in the quality of governance, leading to instability and the weakening of all public institutions (Abdullah, 2008).

Consequently, the citizens were frustrated hence developed distrust in government; furthermore the promises made for the improvement of the conditions of the people were not fulfilled and all their promises by the government met with cynicism. Government officials became progressively indifferent to propriety of conduct and showed little commitment to promoting the general welfare of the people and public good. Government and its agencies became thoroughly corrupt and reckless in spending public funds. The impact of official corruption is rampant and retrogressed development ensued. Public and private organizations have struggled to achieve a balanced approach performance-based management which provides a strategic and comprehensive context for decision-making (Olaopa, 2008).

Existing literature and empirical studies available 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 Services in Nigeria” (Oyedokun, 2006). A Study of the Development and Performance of the Civil Service in Western Nigeria, 1954 -1976” (Olaleye, 1989), The Administration of Public Enterprises in Nigeria” (Omoleke, 2010), “A Study of the Growth Pattern of the Nigerian Civil Service 1960 – 1993 (Sanni, 1999) and The Civil Service in Nigeria: Evaluation 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 challenges faced in the implementation of the approved white papers on the Reports submitted by the Reform Commission/Panels/Committees, hence the necessity for this study. 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 (Igbokwe, 2014).

### **Research Questions**

Four major research questions were designed to provide answers to the issue raised in the work; they are as follows:

- (i) What are the roles of SERVICOM on service delivery in the selected Federal Parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria?
- (ii) What are the strategies adopted by SERVICOM in realising its objectives?
- (iii) To what extent is implementation of SERVICOM on service delivery?
- (iv) What are the challenges of SERVICOM in the discharge of its functions?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of the study are to

- (i) analyse the role of Service Compact (SERVICOM) on service delivery in the selected Federal Parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria;
- (ii) examine the strategies adopted by SERVICOM to realise its objectives;
- (iii) examine the extent of implementation of SERVICOM on service delivery in the selected Federal Parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria; and
- (iv) analyse the challenges facing SERVICOM in the discharge of its functions in the selected federal parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria.

### **Research Propositions**

- (i) The roles of SERVICOM were effective in promoting good service delivery in the Federal Parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria.
- (ii). The strategies adopted by SERVICOM in realising its objectives in terms of service delivery.

- (iii). The extent of implementation of SERVICOM policy significantly produced the expected benefits in term of effective service delivery to the people in the study area.
- (iv). SERVICOM is constrained by some challenges in influencing service delivery in the selected federal parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria.

## **Literature Review**

### **Review of Relevant Concepts**

#### **Service Compact**

Here various attempts at defining service compact are examined with a view to identifying their divergences and convergences. Existing literatures have identified quality potentials of SERVICOM for operational efficiency and improved quality of services in the public sector. Compact is a formal agreement between two or more people. In this case, SERVICOM is a Service Compact (Agreement) between the Federal Government including all its organs and the Nigerian people. Olaopa (2008) discusses SERVICOM as seeking to introduce the “Customer Orientation” through “service compact with all Nigerians”. The citizen’s charter is the relationship between public service providers and the users. The charter put public organizations in the shoes of the recipient of services and asks, “What can I, as an individual, expect from this organization”? According to Egbewole (2011) service compact is the fundamental principle of citizen/public service charter including principle of equality of treatment, rules governing relations between the public service and the users, accessibility of services, effectiveness and efficiency, evaluation of services, transparency and information.

Abdullah (2008) simply defines service compact as a way of organising public management in order to increase efficiency, transparent, accessibility and responsiveness to citizens through intensive and strategic information and communication in the inner management of the public sector as well as in its daily relations with citizens.

Drawing from various definitions of SERVICOM, Egbewole (2011) identifies fundamental principles of transformation of public service delivery. The principle of equality of treatment, that refers to the citizens’ rights and entitlements to good service delivery.

Nigerians have for too long been feeling short-changed by the quality of public service. Our public offices have for too long been showcased for the combined evils of inefficiency and corruption, whilst being impediments to effective implementation of government policies. Nigerians deserve better. We will ensure they get what is better.

Rules governing relations between the public service and the users – SERVICOM is a public service charter that is a straightforward contract between the service and its customers, staff and stakeholders which should be in plain language devoid of legal terminology and straight to the point. The adoption of SERVICOM may enable fundamental changes in the relationship between the citizens and the government. A service improvement plan contains the details of all activities to be carried out, by indicating time and resources required in order to achieve new levels of performance and progress in line with mission and the vision of the organisation.

SERVICOM is the engine for effective and efficient service delivery. It is mounted on the imperative to change the system of service delivery. It is driven by government's commitment to deliver service and citizens' expectations of service delivery. Evaluation of services, transparency and information - SERVICOM opens up new possibilities for governments to be more transparent to citizens, given access to a greater range of information collected and generated by government. SERVICOM also creates opportunities for effective public service delivery to citizens (Egbewole, 2011).

### **Service Delivery**

Service delivery is a concept that has an elegant word for getting goods and services to people in a way that meets their expectations. Service delivery is crucial for the public sector too, as part of government social contract with citizens. Service delivery priorities in development include material infrastructure like roads, power grids, health care, education, water systems, and social protection (Kim, 2013).

The concept of service delivery and its application to development is a dynamic one. Scholars link service delivery with socio-economic performance and others emphasise the political dimension of service delivery. According to World Bank definition



Service delivery is the manner in which business service functions to perform besides profit-making. Business is a vehicle through which man serves society (World Bank, 2010).

The concept of service to customers and society rests on the ethical view of business practice. However, since the World Bank is usually concerned with the prosecution of economic and social projects, it is rational to emphasise the sound development management and the quality of service delivery action. These criteria go hand in hand because of the disposition of the beneficiaries of any World Bank programme matters in contributing to the success of whatever programme that is being executed.

Fagbemi (2006) suggests a list of activities, which will result in effective service delivery culture. They include reviewing of the past performances of the factors in the near and far of environment which impact upon service quality delivered by the public sectors and closing the lacuna between citizen expectations and their actual experience. They are to connect people to the service, accessing the service and delivering the service.

Scholars have agreed on the truism that the improvement of service delivery in the public service is not a one-day affair, but a continuous process that involves reinforcing both personal and material service delivery processes. Afegbua (2011) suggests some possible approaches. These according to him;

Establishment of customer-service task forces; having regular meetings with customers and employees regular information through news letters or other publications, creating a good reward system; applying problem-solving approaches, and employing quality management strategies (Afegbua,2011).

The experience so far shows that the foregoing accountable relationship between citizens and the public and private sector institutions has often proved elusive.

### **New Public Management (NPM)**

New Public Management is a dynamic approach adopted by governments to restructure their bureaucracies supposedly in order to better provide services to the citizenry. NPM incorporated

the free market into the public domain, believing that the private sector can more efficiently produce outcomes desirable to the populace. The theory advocates for fewer public resources, more technological reliance, fewer government expenditures and more private involvement, all leading to performance targets that can better serve those utilising the services and the clients (Olowu; 2002).

Scholars widely agreed that NPM exists; it is also an attempt to develop an analytic framework with which to explain the key constituent parts of the NPM agenda in terms of the systems, policy-making implications and assumptions about implementation. According to the OCED (2000)

a new paradigm for public management has emerged,  
aiming at fostering a performance-oriented culture  
in a less centralised public sector (quoted in Kickert;1997:175).

This “performance-based management” paradigm which combines managerialism and decentralisation is at the heart of the NPM. Expressing the aims of this paradigm into a short definition is not so easy even when such aims are commonly stated:

New Public Management is an international or even global phenomenon, that represents an attempt to correct the shortcomings of traditional public organization in efficiency and service-delivery to citizens, and that one of its central themes is to stress the importance of public managers’ discretionary space or freedom to manage. At least, statements to that effect are so commonplace that it seems everyone knows they are true. But “truths universally acknowledged” usually merit closer examination (Hood; 2000: 1).

Even when a concept is commonplace, then, definitions of such concepts are generally an artificial way of drawing a distinction between factors to be included and those to be excluded in some analysis. However, in an assessment of NPM, it is perhaps important to separate the many different and apparently conflicting elements because the term has become so wide as to almost lose meaning. For this reason it is important to present an analytical framework to consider the factors that are required to perform the closer examination that Hood alludes to above. To perform this task, three approaches to NPM will be considered, each of which emphasises a

different aspect of the NPM structure. The approaches considered here are those of Christopher Hood, Michael Barzelay and Jonathon Boston. This triangulated construction of an analytic framework will enable a clearer and more sophisticated definition of NPM to emerge. This discussion begins with the implementation factors as described in the work of Christopher Hood partly because these factors have had a big influence informing policy and partly because Hood's description was amongst the first systematic accounts of NPM practices (Hood; 1991).

### **Public/CivilService**

Public/civil service as a concept, although commonly used, is usually misunderstood and so often misused as it really has no standard definition. Domestic laws, practices and conventions, influence its definition considerably. The term service connotes a profession; a group of civil servants having common recruitment conditions and prospects as well as a "career" in an acceptable lifetime employment under the government. In most countries, the idea of public service means more than the civil service. This is so because many economic functions performed by most governments make it necessary to distinguish between the civilian corps and the industrial or commercial corps. Besides these categories of public servants have different rates of pay, different approaches to labour relations, and are usually empowered and controlled by different statutory provisions (Olaopa; 2008).

The definitions of the concepts "Civil Service" and "Public Service" as established by the Nigerian Constitution are provided for in Sections 169, 171, 206, 208 and 318 and in Section 10 of the Third Schedule of the 1999 Constitution. These constitutional provisions do not recognize the term "The Nigerian Public Service". They only recognize the Public service of the Federation at the federal level and the state levels, and the Public Service of the States of the Federation, which includes the Local Government Council Services. The Constitution also provides for the Civil Service of the Federation, and separates from it the personal staff of the President Section 318 of the Constitution defines the civil service of the Federation as:

Service of the Federation in a civil capacity as staff of the Office of the President, Vice-President, Ministry or department of the Government of the Federation assigned with the responsibility for any business of the Government of the Federation.

This definition of the federal civil service is clearly spelt out in Sections 169, 170 and 171, and in the provisions establishing the powers of the Federal Civil Service Commission in Section 10 of the Third Schedule of the Constitution. This section states that the Federal Civil Service Commission shall have power to appoint persons to office in the federal civil service and to dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding such offices. The definition of the federal civil service distinguishes it from the Public Service of the Federation that is made up of all officials of government, at the Federal, State and Local Government levels in the Ministries, Parastatals, Extra-Ministerial Departments and the paramilitary organizations. It should be noted that the focus of this thesis is on Federal Civil Service, which means service of the federation rendered in a civil capacity involving staff of the office of the President, the Vice-President, ministries or department of the Government of the Federation charged with the responsibility of executing the business of the Government of the Federation (Olaopa; 2008).

## **Empirical Review**

### **The Obasanjo Public Service Renewal Programme, 1999-2007**

One of the crucial challenges faced by the Obasanjo administration, on assuming office on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 1999, had to do with the issues of how to address the crisis in public management, which was a key aspect in deterioration of quality in the country governance that prolong military rule that induced and sustained. Aspect of this crisis, as identified by President Olusegun Obasanjo in his inauguration address (1999), include:

- (i) Inefficiency in the delivery of social services
- (ii) Insensitivity to general welfare
- (iii) Indifference to the norms guiding the conduct of public officials
- (iv) Rampant corruption

These lapses had led to a situation defined by the weakening of public institutions, distrust of government by the citizens, collapse of infrastructures, and the development of a sense of despair

among the people. This scenario posed a crucial challenge to the Obasanjo administration, namely, that of how to transform the country from a state of chaos and hopelessness to one of order and promise, thereby laying the foundation for, in the words of President Olusegun Obasanjo, “the beginning of a Renaissance” (Olaopa, 2008).

The need for social transformation became more pressing in the light of the fact that the Obasanjo administration inherited an economy that had been stagnant and uncompetitive. The average GDP growth rate of 2.8% at the time this administration assumed power made it one of the slowest growing economies in the world on a per capita basis. It will puzzle any development observer that a country that earned about US \$11 billion annually from oil and gas in the last 20 years, and which had appropriated about US \$500 billion as federal government expenditure alone over the period, could still be ranked as the 20<sup>th</sup> poorest country in the world. Indeed, the UNDP Human Development Report has, since 1998, ranked Nigeria as one of the poorest countries with respect to Human Poverty Index (HPI), while it occupies 40<sup>th</sup> position from below in its Human Development Index (HDI). Besides, its aggregate external and domestic debt per head of the population (with the scheduled debt service due in 2003 of \$3.67 billion and arrears as at the end of December, 2002 amounting to \$2.078 billion; a total of \$4.99 billion) remains sustainably high (DMO: 2003).

Its capacity to finance investment from domestic saving is also indescribably low. Indeed, aggregate production is still dominated by the primary sector-oil (13%), and subsistence agriculture (41%) (NEEDS Document: 2004). The secondary sectors, especially manufacturing was stagnant (6% of GDP), thereby making Nigeria one of the least industrialised countries in the world. Also, there was general insecurity of life compounded by worsening inequality and unemployment rate that threatened social cohesion. Finally, there was the HIV/AIDs pandemic, a socio-economic time bomb waiting to explode unless effectively dealt with (Igbokwe, 2014).

According to President Olusegun Obasanjo on the administrative challenges before his administration at its inception, he stated that, Nigeria is wonderfully endowed by Almighty with human and other resources, that it does no credit to us or the entire black race if we fail in managing our resources for quick improvement in the quality of life of our people. Of course

given the level of the poverty in the country and the amount of waste in the public sector, one can understand his concern. Obasanjo further said that instead of progress and development which we are entitled to expect from those who governed us, we experienced, in the last decade and a half and particularly in the last regime one persistent deterioration in the quality of governance, leading to instability and the weakening of all public institutions and the distrust of government by the citizens can be said to be the bane of the collapse of infrastructures in Nigeria. Examples of such infrastructures are PHCN, NITEL, roads, railways, education, housing and other social services which were allowed to decay and collapse (Igbokwe, 2014).

The other issues addressed in the inauguration speech of President Obasanjo are the exemption of good people from government, while involving people who should be kept away. He also expressed his pain over the destruction of relationships between friends and communities due to the actions or inactions of the government, the level of distrust by the citizens because the promises made by the government for the improvement of the conditions of the people were not kept.

Reform stands for initiative directed towards the eradication of abuses or distortions in existing system. On assuming office on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 1999, Obasanjo talked about the twin issues of bribery and corruption. He said that the government officials had become progressively indifferent to propriety of conduct and showed little commitment to promoting the general welfare of the people and public good, that government and all its agencies had become thoroughly corrupt and reckless. He was frank enough to admit that the members of the public had to bribe their way through in ministries and parastatals to get attention that one government agency had to bribe another government agency to obtain the release of their statutory allocation of funds. As observed by Obasanjo, the impact of official corruption was so rampant and had earned Nigeria a very bad image at home and abroad. Besides, it has distorted and retrogressed development (Igbokwe, 2014).

The first step towards the implementation of the reform was to expose the implementers or would be implementers to some form of trainings. Retreats were organised for Ministries, Presidential Advisers and Permanent Secretaries. This was followed by a series of two-week re-

orientation programme for about 1,900 staff at the directorate-level. There were also in-country and overseas short-term training programmes together with diagnostic study of the condition of the Federation for senior managers including Permanent Secretaries.

The exercise was accompanied by study tours to some countries in Africa: Botswana, Ghana, Morocco, Uganda, South Africa and Zambia. The United States and Brazil were also visited. These tours were necessary because the domestic factors necessitating reforms were overwhelming, just as the global environment for it was auspicious. It has also benefited from best practices and public services innovations in other countries, both in Africa and outside Africa (FGN, 2003)

### **SERVICOM and Service Delivery Reform**

On July 1, 2004, the Federal Government launched SERVICOM. The Government entered into service compact with all Nigerians for improved, efficient, transparent, timely and quality service delivery. SERVICOM is the service compact with Nigerian citizens whereby, the larger interest of the society must be the focus of government officials rather than the officials creating bottlenecks to force citizens to offer gratifications before performing their duties.

The initiative emanated from a technical assistance provided by the British Government. At the Presidential Retreat which took place on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2004, service delivery in the public service of which the civil service is the inner core was carefully and thoroughly discussed. The Retreat came to a conclusion that there was a total service delivery failure in the country. Consequently SERVICOM office was established to co-ordinate the activities aimed at stemming the decay in the nation's civil service (Olaopa, 2008).

Under the initiative, all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) were mandated by the Federal Executive Council (FEC) to set up their SERVICOM Units to oversee the implementation of the initiative in their respective organisations. Each unit was to be made up of four key positions: the Nodal officer who is the head of the team; the Charter Desk officer; the Customer Relation and Complain Desk officer; and the Service improvement Desk officer. The SERVICOM office interacts with the MDAs through these officers in all aspects of the initiative.

The operational tools for the day-to-day implementation of service compact with Nigerian citizens in general are embodied in the SERVICOM Charter (FGN, 2004).

### **Methodology**

The study comprised study area, research design, study population, sampling techniques and sample size, research tools. It presents the procedure for data collection and the validity of the data collected.

### **Research Design**

The study adopted descriptive design, which involved a systematic collection, presentation and analysis of data on service compact and service delivery in Southwestern Nigeria. It is a case study of an in-depth investigation aimed at providing a clear picture of the situation of service compact application to delivery of public services in Southwestern Nigeria.

### **Area of the Study**

The study basically covered the Southwest geo-political zone of Nigeria, which comprises six states: Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti. Three States, namely, Lagos, Ekiti and Osun were selected out of the six states as sample for the study. The selection of these states was premised on the fact that they have introduced Service Compact (SERVICOM) as one of the elements of New Public Management (NPM) since 2004. The research study area covered three federal parastatals in the three purposively selected Southwestern states namely: Lagos, Ekiti and Osun, representing 50% of the states in the geo-political zone.

### **Study Population.**

The population for this study consisted of the following: senior staff in Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and Federal Road Service Commission (FRSC) and in medical and non-medical of selected teaching hospitals in the three states. The study population is six thousand, two hundred and ninety-one respondents (6,291).



### **Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

In administering the questionnaire for the study, combination of stratified and simple random sampling techniques were adopted to determine the targeted respondents. The stratified sampling techniques were applied among the various staff members of parastatals, SERVICOM staff and customers that patronized the three selected parastatals in the three selected states of Southwestern Nigeria. The selection of respondents was strictly based on the available members of the various staff and customers in the selected states of Nigeria. The senior staff in Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), and medical and non-medical staff in teaching hospitals in the three states constituted the population of the study. Judgemental sampling techniques were used in selecting a total number of 77 from FIRS, 385 from Teaching Hospitals and 104 from FRSC totaling 566 representing a sample fraction of 10% of total population of 5,660. The respondents were spread across the parastatals in the following order: LUTH, 141; FRSC Lagos, 39; FIRS Lagos, 31; FMC Ekiti, 107, FRSC Ekiti, 30; FIRS Ekiti, 20; OAUTHC, 137; FRSC Osun, 35; and FIRS Osun, 26. Then, the population of SERVICOM staff in the selected parastatals in the three states was 181, a total of 136 representing a sample fraction of 75% of SERVICOM's staff using the following distribution order: LUTH, 20; FRSC Lagos, 18; FIRS Lagos, 15; FMC, 20; FRSC Ekiti, 11; FIRS Ekiti, 10; OAUTHC, 20; FRSC Osun, 11; and FIRS Osun, 11. The 75% sample size was premised on the small size of SERVICOM's staff in the parastatals. Systematic sampling techniques were used in selecting every other customer that visited each of the three parastatals in each of the three selected states until 50 customers were chosen from each to make up a total of 450.

### **Research Tools**

The data for the study were collected from primary and secondary sources

#### **Primary Data**

Primary data were collected with the use of questionnaire and structured interview. 1152 copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents, who were drawn from senior staff of the selected parastatals and the selected customers, who constituted the study population. Structured interviews were conducted with the 9 Nodal officers, 9 senior officers from selected parastatals and 9 customers that patronised the parastatals.

### **Secondary Data**

Secondary data were collected from information already recorded and arranged in published and unpublished materials such as textbooks, newspapers, articles, publications and research reports.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

Structured and semi-structured questionnaires were used as the instrument for the collection of data.

### **Response**

All the questions were asked on four objectives. The respondents' are summarised as in Table 1 below. The role of SERICOM and service delivery

Table 1: presented below show that the linear relationship between SERVICOM's roles and effective service delivery is positive (.92) and based on the t-value (97.8) and p-value (0.000). It was then concluded that this relationship is statistically significant. Hence, the result shows that there is a statistically significant positive linear relationship between the role of SERVICOM and effective service delivery.

**Table 1: Summary of Analysis of Variance for the Role of SERVICOM on the Effective Service Delivery**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>1</b>	Regression	51.409	1	51.409	9.567	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	4.557	1063	.004		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>55.965</b>	<b>1064</b>			

a. Predictors: (Constant), SERVICOM's role

b. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery

### **Hypothesis Two**

Strategies adopted by SERVICOM towards realising its core objective do not have positive effect on efficient service delivery.”

The p-value for each term tests the null hypothesis that the coefficient is equal to zero (no effect). A low p-value (< 0.05) indicates that we can conclude the study by rejecting the null hypothesis. In other words, a predictor that has a low p-value is likely to be a meaningful addition to

regression model because changes in the predictor's value are related to changes in the response variable.

The hypothesis two which states that “Strategies adopted by SERVICOM towards realising its core objective do not have positive effect on efficient service delivery” was rejected at  $R=.75$ ,  $R^2=.904$ ,  $F(1, 1063) = 2264.57$ ;  $p<.05$ . This implies that strategies adopted by SERVICOM towards realising its core objectives have positive effects on efficient service delivery in the selected ministries.

**Table 2: Summary of Analysis of Variance for the Strategies Adopted by SERVICOM on Efficient Service Delivery**

ANOVA <sup>b</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	377.278	1	377.278	2264.57	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	177.104	1063	0.1666		
	Total	554.382	1064			

a. Predictors: (Constant), SERVICOM's Strategies

b. Dependent Variable: Efficient service delivery

### Hypothesis 3

Although the correlation between the implementation of SERVICOM's policy with effective service delivery translates into a relatively strong positive relationship, it is nevertheless statistically significant at the 0.05 level. That is, the probability of realising that no relationship exists between these two variables in the population from which the sample was drawn is 5% or less. It may therefore be concluded that effective service delivery depends on the strict implementation of SERVICOM's policy.

It would thus appear that higher correlations with respect to any one of these various SERVICOM's implementation policies is likely to translate into higher levels of effective service delivery.

**Table 3: Pearson Correlation Matrix for the Dimensions of SERVICOM Implementation of Policy**

S/N	Variables	r	p-value
1	SERVICOM trained members	0.714	0.032
2	SERVICOM delegated powers appropriately.	0.832	0.0104
3	SERVICOM assessed the current state of service provision and delivery	0.782	0.012
4	SERVICOM assessed resources needed to implement the activities and actions needed	0.805	0.323
5	SERVICOM assessed the timeframe needed to achieve improvements	0.888	0.302
6	SERVICOM set standards of service provisions and delivery	0.695	0.043
7	SERVICOM is effective in service	0.938	0.500
8	Citizens of selected states have already begun to see changes due to reforms in NPM system	0.773	0.055

**Source: Field survey, (November, 2014).**

Hypothesis 4: Challenges facing SERVICOM on service delivery.

The analysis below shows the relative impact of the variables considered to measure and analyse the challenges facing SERVICOM in the discharge of its functions in the selected parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria. The outcome of the survey revealed that inadequate knowledge about provision of the service compact initiatives was responsible for inefficiency in public service. Constraints or circumstances beyond the control of the service provider which seriously limit performance in the short-term and the inclusion of SERVICOM may be necessary to dampen unrealistic expectations are the most challenges facing SERVICOM to effective service delivery in the selected study area. Clear indication and explanation of how existing limitations and constraints affect the achievement and inadequate manpower in SERVICOM hinders proficiency and are also major challenges affecting effective service delivery in the selected government agencies and parastatals at less or magnitude.

**Table 4: Relative Impact Analyses (RIA) of the Selected Challenges Facing SERVICOM**

Factors Influencing the Interface	Rating and Weighted Value					Relative Impact Analysis		
	SA (5)	A (4)	U (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	SWV	RII	(RII- $\overline{RII}$ )
Lack of complaints procedure	417	386	38	131	92	4097	3.85	<b>-0.04</b>
Inadequate knowledge about provisions of the service compact	397	491	54	71	51	4304	4.05	<b>+0.16</b>
Lack of courteous treatment	375	426	63	123	77	4091	3.84	<b>-0.05</b>
Clear indication and explanation affect the achievement	347	459	81	83	94	4094	3.85	<b>-0.04</b>
Constraints or circumstances beyond the control of the service provider	410	425	103	86	40	4271	4.01	<b>+0.12</b>
SERVICOM's inclusion dampened unrealistic expectations	477	324	67	116	80	4194	3.94	<b>+0.05</b>
Inadequate Manpower in SERVICOM hindered proficiency	347	399	97	119	102	3962	3.72	<b>-0.17</b>
Total							<b>27.26</b>	

$$RII = \frac{SWV}{1,064}$$

$$\overline{RII} = \sum \frac{RII}{N} = \frac{27.26}{7} = 3.89$$

### Discussion of Results

The work investigated service compact and service delivery in the Southwestern Nigeria. The investigation carried out in this study revealed that effective service delivery is very important to the people of Nigerian. It affects national existence, individual, communities and personal lives. The members of staff of federal parastatals had the duties of service delivery to the people of Nigeria. The study revealed that the federal parastatals have performed below expectation.

Moreover, some of the reasons for the members of staff of federal parastatal's failure include corruption, acute shortage of work force, poor conditions of service, poor and inadequate logistics, mismanagement, poor policy decision, identity problem, impartiality among others. The study observed that the aforementioned has made the people to see the staffs of federal parastatals as enemies rather than friends.

### **Conclusion**

This study argues that corruption, inefficiency and ineffectiveness in whatever form they take are ill winds that portend evil for any nation. Although, there are socio-economic and contextual factors that contribute to bureaucratic corruption, the most fundamental variable remain a weak and ineffective state which, rather than transform the oppressive state structures it inherited from colonialist, has only succeeded in perfecting its strategies for exploiting and oppressing the people.

It is the position of the present study that until the state is transformed to make it people centered, responsible and accountable to them, it will continue to slip deeper into the crisis of legitimacy and management. Poverty is the major obstacle to development. Transparency and accountability will remain elusive unless the economy is rescued from its dangerous slide to total collapse. The ultimate checks against corruption rest with the civil society which must be energized to act as a bulwark against unaccountability in government and other forms of official misconduct. A vibrant and economically viable civil society has the ability to check "blatant and pervasive political and bureaucratic corruption, particularly during periods of painful economic restructuring".

### **Recommendations:**

After a thorough study of service compact and service delivery in Southwestern Nigeria, the following recommendations were made:

(a)

The roles of SERVICOM on service delivery in selected federal parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria must include improving the staff attitude to work. This is because customers place

importance on how they are received and treated by staff. The organisation must put in place a customer care policy, published and displayed. This policy must take into account the needs of all staff to receive customer care training with emphasis on written guidance for staff on aspects of customer care. The staff has to be polite, friendly and attentive to customers. The customers placed importance on well trained staff. In this regard, there is a return to issues of a public orientation where shared or common interests of citizens are the compass, rather than a philosophy dominated by private and individual interests.

(b)

The strategies adopted by SERVICOM to realise its objectives must be on centrality of citizens and the change of ways of working in a greater direct accountability to citizens, more opportunity for participation and direct involvement in the delivery process. The initiative is clearly aimed at making a correction in the distribution of power between officials and citizens and mobilizing the citizenry in the fight against corruption. Through its emphasis on openness, information sharing, accountability and so on, the long term spin-off of SERVICOM initiative will improve service delivery.

(c)

The extent of implementation of SERVICOM on service delivery in the selected federal parastatals in the Southwestern Nigeria should manage the authority in the public service as well as establish written complaints or grievance procedure which should be easily accessible and easy to use. This procedure must also guarantee investigation and resolution with time limits for response, and identify to whom complaints should be sent. There is also the need to keep customer/patients informed and ensure that information on the full range of services provided by the organization is published, given details of where and when services are provided. This information must be available to all by using a variety of information means

(d)

All necessary legal backing should be given to SERVICOM policy implementation to ensure its success. Privacy policy statements were not available on the Ministries and Agencies websites. Government also needs to show a high level of sincerity, transparency and accountability in governance if SERVICOM's policy implementation is to be successful. This is because citizens' acceptance and cooperation are essential for the implementation. A situation in which they do

not have confidence in the government will not ensure their support and cooperation, which may prevent a successful implementation.

(e)

The challenges facing SERVICOM in the discharge of its functions in the selected federal parastatals in Southwestern Nigeria includes need for proper accountability. This will help in curbing corruption and boost confidence in the service compact initiative policy. Also, it will help to convince stakeholders that everybody will ultimately gain if the SERVICOM's policy is properly implemented. The absence of transparency and accountability was manifest in the important information relating to government activities that were expected to be displayed online.

(f)

Government needs to show more convincing commitment to the implementation of the policies by providing sufficient funding and ensuring greater and easier access to government information by the public. This will promote transparency and accountability. Poor funding and absence of access to government information were part of the serious challenges to which respondents agreed were militating against service compact policy implementation in Nigeria.

Therefore, for a successful implementation of SERVICOM's policy for attainment of national development, the civil servants, general public and government must work together as partners in progress.



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