

## Nigerian Federal Civil Service: Employee Recruitment, Retention and Performance

Daniel Esemé Gberevbíe<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract** · This study delved into the recruitment and retention of employees in the Nigerian Federal Civil Service (NFCS), to establish their impact on the effectiveness of the service. Data were collected through administration of questionnaires (to employees in the service) and structured interviews (with managers in the service). The findings were that employee recruitment into the civil service is based on federal character principle (i.e. equal representation of people from the geo-political zones of the country), merit and political considerations. In terms of employee retention, the study found that the service lagged behind in providing adequate incentives to retain its workforce for performance compared to what is obtainable from the private sector. Thus, the study recommends that, while the federal character principle is necessary (given the country's "multi-ethnic," religious and cultural diversity), its application should also pay attention to the merit of prospective employees. It is also recommended that the service raises its rewards to a level where they are competitive enough to attract and retain competent employees and enhance their performance.

**Keywords** · Employee Recruitment · Retention · Performance · Civil Service · Nigeria

**Le Service Civil dans l'Etat Fédéral du Nigeria: Recrutement, Rétention and Performance de l'Employé** · **Résumé** · Cette étude a examiné le recrutement ainsi que la rétention des employés dans le Service Civil de l'Etat Fédéral du Nigeria (SCEF) afin d'établir leur impact sur le rendement de ce service. Les données ont été collectées par le biais de questionnaires (pour les employés dans ce service) et d'interviews structurées (avec les gestionnaires dans ce service). Les résultats ont montré que le recrutement des employés dans le service civil reste basé sur le principe du caractère fédéral (i.e. une égale représentation du peuple selon les régions géopolitiques du pays), le mérite et les considérations politiques. Concernant la rétention des employés, l'étude a découvert que ce service restait moins avancé en ce qui concerne la provision adéquate des motivations afin de retenir ses employés pour une performance, en comparaison avec ce qui est obtenu dans le secteur privé. C'est pour cette raison que l'étude recommande qu'alors que le principe du caractère fédéral est nécessaire (vu la diversité « multi-ethnique », religieuse, et culturelle du pays), son application devra aussi faire attention au mérite d'employés prospectifs. Il est aussi recommandée que le service élève ses motivations à un niveau où ces dernières seront suffisamment compétitives afin d'attirer and retenir les employés compétents et affermir leur performance. **Mots Clé** · Recrutement d'employés · Rétention · Performance · Service Civil · Nigeria

### Introduction

The history of the NFCS can be understood from different perspectives: first, the one that supported the argument that the origin of the NFCS is traceable to 1900 when the colonial masters established

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<sup>1</sup> Covenant University, E-mail: dgbervbíe@yahoo.com



an institution to oversee the administration of the then southern and northern protectorates of Nigeria (Jaja, 2001). And the second was the one that traces the colonial civil service (NFCS) to the annexation of Lagos by the colonial masters in 1861 (Ogundiya, 2007). Whatever is the case, it is on record that the colonial civil service was a British creation for maintenance of law and order in Nigeria (Ogundiya, 2007).

At independence, however, the role of the NFCS changed from that of maintenance of law and order to infrastructural development and social service delivery for the enhancement of the living standard of the people. The post-1960 NFCS was essentially involved in setting and coordinating state policies and programmes in social and economic management and the establishment of public enterprises for the provision of social services. This development resulted in a more direct role of the NFCS in the infrastructural development of the country (Gberevbie, 2008).

In order to realize the goals of social service delivery and infrastructural development of government, capable employees are required. And these are products of employee recruitment and retention strategies of the civil service to achieve performance. According to Olowu and Adamolekun (2005), it is becoming more essential to secure and manage competent human resource as the most valuable resource of any organization, because of the need for effective and efficient delivery of goods and services by organizations. Therefore, for an organization to realize its goals, recruitment of competent employees and their successful retention in the organization is a *sine-qua-non* for enhanced performance.

Researchers have observed that one of the fundamental challenges facing organizations in the area of performance is their inability to put in place strategies capable of recruiting competent employees and retaining them to achieve organizational goals (Cascio, 2003; Heneman and Judge, 2003). The specific objectives of this study therefore are to empirically examine strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance of the NFCS.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses stated in null form were tested to achieve the objectives of the study:

**Ho<sub>A</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between respondents' annual income and their views on strategies for employee recruitment and performance of the NFCS.

**Ho<sub>B</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between respondents' job status and their views on strategies for employee retention and performance of the NFCS.

### **Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study covers strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance of the NFCS between 1999 and 2005. The rationale for this case study is based on the fact that NFCS provides general and specialized services to the largest number of people in the Nigerian federation - 140,003,542 million (National Population Commission (NPC), 2007). The period between 1999 and 2005 was the first six years of Nigeria's democratic governance after 15 years of uninterrupted military governments in the country.

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it will help to educate human resource practitioners in the public sector of a "multi-ethnic" society like Nigeria about the need to give consideration to employee recruitment strategy that focuses on merit - appropriate educational qualifications, skills and experience within the principle of federal character as basis for organizational performance; and also to enlighten public sector managers about the importance of providing appropriate employee retention incentives capable of motivating and retaining competent employees for enhanced performance.

### **Concept of Employee Recruitment**

According to Banjoko (2003), employee recruitment is the process of reaching out, searching for and attracting a large supply of people or a large pool of interested applicants from which the organization can choose those it considers competent or most qualified for the job. Studies have shown that the human resource is the most valuable asset in any organization whether in the public or private sector (Adebayo, 2001; Ejiofor and Mbachu, 2001; Olowu and Adamolekun, 2005). The human factor is therefore fundamental to the achievement of organizational goals. As a result, the need to put in place appropriate strategy for employee recruitment of organizational workforce cannot be overemphasized. The above implies that appropriate strategy to attract the right workforce is necessary for the achievement of organizational goals.

### **Concept of Strategy**

Strategy could refer to the manner an organization use resources which are expected to provide enhanced results. Thompson, Gamble and Strickland (2004), see strategy as a game plan which management of an organization adopts to stake out market position, attract competent employees and please customers, compete successfully, conduct operations and achieve organizational goals. Strategy therefore could refer to a means by which a particular goal of an organization is attained. What the above implies is that for any organization to achieve its goals there is the need to devise certain strategies including the one involving employee recruitment of competent workforce and their retention for organizational performance.

### **Performance Criteria in Public Organizations**

Performance evaluation enables an organization to adjust with a view to improving on its services for the enhancement of its survival and growth. Furthermore, it helps management to ascertain whether their organizations are improving, deteriorating or stagnant (Boyne, Farrell, Law, Powell and Walker, 2003).

In this study, performance is judged in terms of infrastructural development put in place such as agricultural development, transportation, development in the educational sector, and electricity supply undertaken by the NFCS in the years under review.

In measuring efficiency in the public sector, the study adopts the local approach: self-evaluation technique. Gaster (2001) posits that the local approach: self-evaluation technique puts considerable emphasis on the workforce/organization to measure their work and the opportunity to reflect and learn from it. The justification for this approach is based on the fact that data on public sector performance in developing nations like Nigeria are difficult to come by compared to that of the private organizations. This may not be unconnected with the fact that public administrators at all levels are averse to external evaluation of their performance.

According to Egonmwan (1991), public officials withhold relevant data when outsiders come to evaluate their performance to ascertain the extent to which they have been able to meet the actual responsibilities assigned to them. As a result, performance in the NFCS is measured by efficiency based on the self-evaluation criterion - comparing their performance in the years under review in terms of their social service delivery and infrastructural development. Efficiency is measured using the following formula (Boyne et al, 2003):

$$\text{Efficiency} = \frac{\text{Goal Accomplished (Output)}}{\text{Public Welfare or Capital and Labour (Input)}}$$

Criteria of life expectancy, infant mortality rate and Human Development Index (HDI) would be the basis for measuring whether the NFCS has performed well or not in their service delivery and infrastructural development for the enhancement of the living standard of the people.

## **Employee Recruitment and Organizational Performance**

In a study on organizational behaviour, Ofoegbu (1985) and McOliver (2005) established a relationship between employee recruitment and performance in an organization. The studies identified problems such as nepotism, favouritism, political consideration and federal character principle (equal representation of people from different sections of the country) in employee recruitment as basis for poor performance of public sector workers in Nigeria. However, considering the “multi-ethnic,” religious and cultural nature of the Nigerian society; is it possible to totally neglect the federal character principle in the recruitment of employees into the NFCS?

## **Federal Character Principle, Employee Recruitment and Organizational Performance**

During the post-independence era, the Nigerian state found itself in a dilemma whereby the political setting was dominated by northern executive leaving its administrative functions to a southern dominated bureaucracy (Ayoade, 2000). For the political executive to successfully carry out its policies and programmes, it required a facilitator in the bureaucracy, which the north was unable to provide in terms of people with required skills, educational qualifications and experience. In this regard, the south with more qualified manpower dominated the public bureaucracy. This meant that while the north dominated the political executive, the south, on the other hand dominated the bureaucracy. It was the fear of domination of one section of the country by the other in the political and administrative affairs that led to the adoption of the principle of federal character in Nigeria (equal representation of people from different geo-political zones or regions of the country in the public bureaucracies).

The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria recognized the imperative of federal character to Nigeria’s administrative system, hence section 14 (3) states that:

The composition of the government of the federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies.

It was in a bid to resolve the dilemma of the problem of northern political domination and southern dominated bureaucracy in the country that led to the introduction of representative bureaucracy in Nigeria (Ayoade, 2000). According to Bodunrin (1989), federal character principle is a political settlement that enables every section of the Nigerian society to be represented in government. He argues that the phrase “federal character” in its application and implementation is a mere euphemism for ethnic balancing” which has the potential of solving the problem and fear of domination and bring about stability that is needed for development to take place in the country.

Scholars have identified some advantages of representative bureaucracy to include its ability to create support for government policies, include people who are local and indigenous to the environment in the implementation of government policies and programmes in that particular area and its ability to serve as mechanism for the government party to distribute patronage to its supporters (Bodunrin, 1989; Ayoade, 2000). However, there are contradictions in the application of federal character principle in the civil service particularly in the area of employee recruitment and promotion. According to Ayoade (2000), subjecting recruitment/appointment and/or promotion to federal character discriminates against merit and is therefore unfair to certain sections of the country to the advantage of others. The outcome is that of acquisition of incompetent workforce into the public service and the result is that of poor performance.

It has however been recognized that predicating employee recruitment on federal character does not mean that such an employee cannot contribute meaningfully towards the enhancement of the goals of the organization (Gberevbie, 2008). This is particularly so where appropriate recruitment strategies involving the screening of potential employees based on relevant skills, experience and educational qualifications are adopted. What is important therefore is the ability of the individual employed and his/her willingness to work for the enhancement of the organization. In addition,

through proper staff training and development by organizations of their workforce, organizational productivity is enhanced even where incompetent employees would have been employed through inappropriate recruitment strategies (Okoh, 1998).

Aside from being an administrative mechanism, federal character principle in Nigeria has come to represent a political necessity to further integrate the diverse elements of over 250 ethnic groups that comprise the nation. Given the “multi-ethnic,” religious and cultural diversity of the country, it is clear that merit as an exclusive principle for recruitment will negate the desire for equal representation of all sections of the country in the NFCS. Consequently, the place of federal character in the country’s geo-administrative and political equation cannot be over-emphasized.

### **Employee Retention Strategies and Organizational Performance**

Employee retention strategies refer to the means, plan or set of decision-making behaviour put in place by organizations to retain their competent workforce for performance (Gberevbie, 2008). Researchers have found that employees are more likely to remain and work for the successful achievement of organizational goals when appropriate employee retention strategies are adopted and implemented by organizations whether in public or the private sector (Amadasu, 2003; Taplin, Winterton and Winterton, 2003).

Studies have also shown that appropriate employee retention strategies such as job satisfaction arising from appropriate rewards (Gomez-Mejia and Balkin, 1992; Heneman and Judge, 2003), performance pay (Bates, 2004; Griffeth, Hom and Gaertner, 2000), employee training and career development (Okoh, 1998; Scala Associate, 2006), creation of social community in the workplace that enhances social ties such as encouraging employee marriages and siblings employment (Ayagi, 2001), job security (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2006), high level of wage rate and organization’s image (Taplin, Winterton and Winterton (2003), and participative decision making and information sharing (Jike, 2003; Riordan, Vandenberg and Richardson, 2005) serve as catalyst in retaining employees for organizational performance.

## **Methodology**

### **Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

The study is based on a sample size of 120 respondents. The study adopts the systematic random sampling technique. The justification for this technique is based on the fact that it enables every subject in the sampling frame to have equal opportunity to be selected without bias in a systematic manner (Ogbeide, 1997). The sampling frame of the study is drawn from the staff list of 254 civil servants at the Office of the Head of Service of the NFCS. In addition, structured interview was carried out with civil servants at the NFCS, Abuja. These units were selected for the study because they handle the implementation of employee policies and practice of the NFCS.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

The study adopts five-point Likert-style rating scale method of questionnaire to obtain information from respondents. The Likert-style rating method of questionnaire design enable researchers to ask respondents on how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement or series of statements on a five point scale, e.g. 5 – Strongly Agree, 4 - Agree, 3 – Undecided, 2 - Disagree, 1 – Strongly Disagree. In addition, data for the study was obtained through structured interview carried with 50 senior civil servants at the Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC) (Abuja) with a view to obtaining information on strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance of the NFCS. The results of the interview formed part of the basis for the study. Four structured questions were used as interview guide. The questions asked the respondents are: *(a) what are the strategies put in place by your organization for employee recruitment? (b) What are the advantages and disadvantages of these employee recruitment strategies of your organization on the employees and*

*the organization in terms of performance? (c) What are the strategies put in place by your organization to retain employees for performance? (d) What are the advantages and disadvantages of these employee retention strategies of your organization in the retention of its workforce for performance?* Furthermore, the study applied secondary data obtained from relevant books, journals and the internet for the section on performance of NFCS.

### **Response Rate**

Out of the 120 questionnaires administered to respondents at the Office of the Head of Service of the NFCS, 112 were retrieved, which represents 93.33 percent of the total copies of administered questionnaire. However, out of the 112 questionnaires returned, four copies or 3.57 percent were not analyzed due to improper completion. Consequently, data analysis for the study is based on 108 copies or 90 percent of the questionnaires administered.

### **Data Presentation**

Sixty percent of respondents in the study were male, while 40 percent were female. On the other hand, 50 percent of the respondents had WASC/OND/NCE, 40 percent had HND/B.Sc Degrees, 7 percent had Masters Degree and 3 percent had professional certificate. Also 55 percent of the respondents earned between NGN 500,000 and below per annum, while 45 percent earned between NGN 501,000 and above per annum. Furthermore, 52 percent of the respondents are those who served the organization between 10 years and below, 40 percent served between 11 and 20 years and 8 percent served for 21 years and above. Sixty-six percent of the respondents were senior staff.

### **Instrument for Data Analysis**

The chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) analytical technique is used to test for significant relationship between variables.

$$\text{Chi-square } (\chi^2) \text{ formula: } \chi^2 = \frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$$

Where  $f_o$  = observed frequencies  
 $f_e$  = expected frequencies

### **Employee Recruitment Strategies**

The strategies put in place for employee recruitment into the NFCS is based on federal character principle, merit and political consideration. Political consideration refers to staffing the public service or bureaucracy on the basis of political connection or affiliation, which was very prominent under President Andrew Jackson following his elections in 1823 (Edosa, 1994).

Employee recruitment is an ongoing process because of the unique role of the civil service at meeting the ever-increasing social needs of the people, developmental drive of the Federal Government and the need to create job opportunities for the citizenry. As a result, anyone wishing to pick-up employment with the NFCS, particularly at the senior category, goes to the FCSC to obtain an unsolicited job application form designed for that purpose, and same is expected to be completed and returned within a specified time. And once there is a vacant position, those that have indicated their interest to work with the NFCS and have completed the job application form are invited for interview, and if found qualified at the interview stage, such persons are given employment into the civil service (interview, 2006). Viewed from this process, merit plays a vital role in employee recruitment into the NFCS. According to Babura (2003):

The FCSC is a constitutional body, established under section 153 (1) D of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Paragraph 11b of Third Schedule of the constitution vests the commission with powers: (a) to appoint persons to offices in the NFCS and (b) to dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding such offices.

Due to government desire to satisfy the employment need and aspirations of Nigerians from various parts of the country in their quest to work in the NFCS, merit alone could not be used as the basis for employee recruitment. This development made it possible for vacancies at the NFCS to be filled through pattern of employee recruitment other than merit - federal character principle and political consideration (staffing the public bureaucracy on the basis of political connection). It is important to note that advertisement in newspapers; radio and television as a way of attracting potential employees into the NFCS exist as it is in the private organizations (interview, 2006).

However, in an interview with civil servants on the outcome of employee recruitment strategies and performance of the NFCS, the respondents attributed the poor performance of the civil service to the current employee recruitment strategies which emphasizes political consideration and federal character principle. Commenting on the shortcomings of employee recruitment strategies and performance of the NFCS, some senior employees of FCSC observe that:

If the NFCS is to achieve its goals of quality service delivery, then it must adopt the business strategies of the private sector organizations in terms of employee recruitment, remuneration, provision of appropriate incentives and strict business discipline of the 21<sup>st</sup> century private sector business organizations.

The above goes to support the argument that the poor performance of the civil servants in their assigned role of social service delivery and infrastructural development could be attributed to inappropriate employee recruitment strategies of federal character principle to the detriment of merit within the principle, political consideration and non-adherence to strict business discipline and practice as compared to what is obtainable in private organizations.

### **Staff Retention Strategies**

In order to retain employees for performance, the NFCS puts in place various strategies in form of incentives and rewards. These retention strategies include: payment of regular monthly salaries to employees; provision of car, housing and furniture loan facilities; health insurance scheme; job security; regular promotion; health care services to employees' families; maternity leave with full pay for female employees; and regular training of employees (interview, 2006).

### **Employees' Remuneration**

Table 1 shows the remuneration paid to employees at the NFCS from salary grade level 01– 17.

**Table 1: Gross Salaries per annum for Nigerian Federal Civil Servants - Grade Level 01 – 17**

| S/n. | Grade Level | Salary Range (₦ '000) |
|------|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1.   | 01          | 133,584 – 174,380     |
| 2.   | 02          | 135,754 – 189,094     |
| 3.   | 03          | 137,607 – 203,169     |
| 4.   | 04          | 144,143 – 222,907     |
| 5.   | 05          | 163,329 – 254,833     |
| 6.   | 06          | 199,145 – 310,683     |
| 7.   | 07          | 330,681 – 501,859     |
| 8.   | 08          | 427,322 – 631,064     |
| 9.   | 09          | 501,960 – 744,538     |
| 10.  | 10          | 589,236 – 855,992     |
| 11.  | 12          | 679,669 – 975,219     |
| 12.  | 13          | 758,579 – 1,071,039   |
| 13.  | 14          | 837,855 – 1,174,235   |
| 14.  | 15          | 1,152,648 – 1,533,768 |
| 15.  | 16          | 1,425,883 – 1,883,923 |
| 16.  | 17          | 1,741,808 – 2,271,280 |

Source: National Wages and Salaries Commission (2006)

A closer look at the table shows that the least paid Federal Civil Servant on salary grade level 01 earns a gross maximum monthly pay of NGN 14, 531.166, senior officer on salary grade level 08

earns gross maximum monthly pay of NGN 52,588.67, while the highest paid civil servant at the federal level – Permanent Secretary on salary grade level 17 earns gross maximum monthly pay of NGN 189,273.33 or USA \$1,455.95 (NWSC, 2006).

When we compare the salaries paid to employees in the private organizations such as Nestle Nigeria, Nigerian Breweries and Zenith Bank and that of the NFCS, it is obvious that the salaries paid to employees at the private organizations are far higher than that paid to employees at the NFCS. For instance, a senior civil servant on salary grade level 08 with the NFCS earns NGN 52,588.67 per month, while the counterpart at the private sector with Nestle Nigeria earns NGN 150,000 per month, the same employee with Nigerian Breweries earns NGN 132,000 per month, and that of Zenith Bank earns NGN 125,000 per month. At the highest salary grade level at the NFCS for instance, employee on salary grade level 17 earns NGN 189,273.33, while the counterpart with Nestle Nigeria earns NGN 416,666.67, Nigerian Breweries earns NGN 833,333, and Zenith Bank earns NGN 600,000 (NARA, 2005; NBFRA, 2005; ZBAR, 2005; NWSC, 2006).

In spite of the differentials in salaries in the public and private sector, labour turnover at the NFCS has been observed to be low. In an interview with a group of senior officers with the FCSC on employee retention, they agree thus:

...it is important to note that even though the salaries paid to employees at the NFCS is small compared to that paid to employees at the private organizations; the fact that the service guarantees job security makes many civil servants want to remain in the employment of the NFCS.

What the above means is that job security or the feeling of it by employees, adequate incentives in terms of good and regular monthly salaries serve as motivating factors for the continuous stay of employees in the employment of an organization to achieve its goals of enhanced performance.

### **Performance of the NFCS**

The NFCS is an institution established for the implementation of policies of the Federal Government in its quest to enhance the living standard of Nigerians in terms of quality social service delivery and infrastructural development. What this means is that the poor performance of the NFCS does affect negatively the realization of the goals of government. The enhanced performance of the civil servants on the other hand affects positively the goals of government, which could be measured by the level of the living standard of the people in terms of life expectancy, infant mortality rate, and Human Development Index (HDI). In this study, performance of the NFCS is discussed under the following: agriculture and crude petroleum, transportation, education and electricity power supply.

#### **Agriculture and Crude Petroleum**

In the area of agriculture, there was a substantial growth in the years under review. Agriculture accounted for nearly one-third of Nigeria's GDP in 2004. There was also substantial growth in the crude petroleum sector of the Nigerian economy. For instance, crude oil accounted for 36 percent of the nation's GDP in 2005. Crude petroleum production was 2.5 million barrel per day and of this production capacity, 2.05 million barrels per day were exported at an estimated average price of \$55 per barrel in 2005 (ADB/OECD, 2006).

#### **Transportation**

The transportation sector in Nigeria – road, air and maritime contributed about 2.4 percent to the nation's real GDP in 2004, with road transport alone accounting for about 86 percent of transport sector output. In the road sector for instance, the number of vehicles increased on the average annual rate of 17 percent from 1.3 million in year 2000 to 2.2 million in the year 2004. In the case of air transportation, there was an improvement of 54 percent freight tonnage and 9.4 percent in



passenger traffic per annum between 2000 and 2005. As for the maritime sector, merchandise shipments increased at average of 14.2 percent and passenger traffic increased at average annual rates of 5.4 percent between 2000 and 2005 (ADB/OECD, 2006).

### **Education**

The education sector in Nigeria has suffered from neglect by past governments. Total expenditure for education in the country was very low. For instance, total expenditure on education in the year 2004/2005 was less than 1 percent of Gross National Income (GDI), far below the continental average of 4.71 percent. This development has led to decline of standards and facilities in the education sector (ADB/OECD, 2006). The introduction of the Universal Basic Education by the Olusegun Obasanjo's government (1999 – 2003) is a welcome development at encouraging school enrolment particularly at the primary school level. For instance, the total gross primary-school enrolment rate increased from 98 percent in 2000 to 120 percent in 2005, while the total secondary-school enrolment rate rose from 34 percent to 36 percent during the same period (ADB/OECD, 2006).

### **Electricity Power Supply**

To improve electricity supply in Nigeria, the Federal Government through the Ministry of Power and Steel entered into an agreement with Lahmeyer International GmbH (L1) of Germany for the management and supervision of rehabilitation works at thermal power stations located at Afam. The station has 18 gas turbines with a total electricity power generation capacity of 710 Megawatts (MW), Delta power station – Ughelli that has 20 gas turbines with a total capacity of 912 MW, Sapele power station that has 6 stream turbines and 4 gas turbines with a total capacity of 720 MW and 300 MW respectively and Lagos power station – Egbin that has 6 stream turbines with a total capacity of 1,320 MW (Lahmeyer Int., 2004).

The transmission consists of 22 projects including the erection of 17 new substations and the expansion of 32 existing substations. The identified 250 distribution projects cover the entire country. Villages with 5 km radius of the plants are to be connected to the stations directly. The main data for the NIPP include: 21 Gas turbines, PG 9171E – 2,444 MWel, 3 Stream turbines – 300 MWel, Transmission line (330kv, 132kv – 3,000km, Add. capacity (330kv, 132kv) – 8,903 MVA, Substation autotransformer, 60 – 300 MVA, Distribution – 3,540 MVA and new distribution transformers – 22,600 Pcs (Lahmeyer Int., 2004).

### **Comments on the Performance of the NFCS**

Data presented above seems to be a positive indication of performance of the NFCS at implementing the policies and programmes of the Federal Government when viewed from their face value. But the issue is on whether these performances have actually helped in the enhancement of the living standard of the people in terms of quality social service delivery and infrastructural development. The yardstick to measure the performance of the NFCS at proper implementation of government policies to achieve its goals therefore is to find out the current level of the living standard of the people in terms of infant mortality rate, Human Development Index (HDI) and life expectancy in the country.

Studies have shown that more effort is required in terms of quality provision of social amenities and infrastructural development if the living standard of Nigerians is to improve. For instance, social indicators have improved only marginally between 2000 and 2005. Nigeria ranked 158 out of 177 countries in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) in 2005. The country's HDI, at 0.453, is lower than the average HDI for sub-Saharan African countries (0.515) and marginally above the average for countries in the ECOWAS (0.434) (ADB/OECD, 2006).

In the area of transportation, Nigeria's transportation-infrastructure services are inadequate, and in deplorable condition. For instance, Nigeria has a total of 193,200 Km of roads, 3,775 Km of rail

and currently the rail system is in a total mess in terms of performance, there are also 19 airports, 62 airstrips, 13 major ports and 3,000 Km of navigable waterways. Of the number of roads, only 15 percent of roads are paved, and about 23 percent of the paved roads are in bad conditions. This development led to road accidents, which reached an average of 3.1 percent per annum between 2000 and 2005, rising from 12,705 in 2000 to 14,279 in 2005 (ADB/OECD, 2006).

Nigeria's welfare system is in a sorry state to the extent that life expectancy is as low as 43.3 years between 2000 and 2005, infant mortality at 101 per 1,000 live births, illiteracy rate as at 2005 of 29.2 percent, and per capita, purchasing-power parity (PPP) valuation as at 2005 of \$1,776. In the area of health the statistics is the same in terms of poor performance. For instance, public-health expenditure accounted for only 1.2 percent of GDP in 2004. Per capita health expenditure in 2004 was about \$50, compared with nearly \$700 for South Africa, \$400 for Botswana and \$110 for Corte devoir.

Similarly, the number of physicians per 100,000 people in Nigeria in 1990-2004 was just 27, lower than that for comparable countries such as Egypt (212), Tunisia (70) and South Africa (69). These figures represent some of the worst in Africa according to recent studies (ADB/OECD, 2006).

The sorry state of welfare system and social service delivery presented above is in spite of the huge revenue that accrued to the Federal Government in the past decades. For instance, studies have shown that in a space of 20 years alone of Nigeria's independence, the country realized a total sum of \$300 billion from the sale of crude petroleum in the world market (Gberevbie and Arowosegbe, 2006).

With huge amount of financial resources available to the Federal Government, and little development, means that there is a problem of performance in social service delivery and development. This problem could be attributed to either of two major factors or both. These factors are poor performance of the NFCS in its assigned role of social service delivery and infrastructural development arising from incompetent employees and/or corruption on the part of public officials. To overcome the problem of corruption in the public service, the Federal Government established anti-corruption agencies like Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

### Testing of Hypotheses

Two hypotheses earlier stated in the work are tested to achieve the objectives of the study. The objectives of the study are to find out the relationship between the views of respondents on the strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance of the NFCS.

**Hypothesis (A). Ho:** There is no significant relationship between respondents' annual income and their views on strategies for employee recruitment and performance of the NFCS.

**Table 2: Annual income (₦) and Strategies for Employee Recruitment and Performance**

| Recruitment based on federal character principle and political consideration affects the calibre of employees and performance of NFCS: | 500,000 & Below | 501,000 & Above | Total      |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree   | 41              | 30              | 71         |
| Agree  | 17              | 12              | 29         |
| Undecided  | 1               | 1               | 2          |
| Disagree   | 1               | 2               | 3          |
| Strongly Disagree  | 1               | 2               | 3          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>61</b>       | <b>47</b>       | <b>108</b> |
| Calculated value of $\chi^2$   | 1.60            |                 |            |
| Critical value of $\chi^2$   | 7.78            |                 |            |
| df   | 4               |                 |            |
| $\alpha$   | .05             |                 |            |

*Research Result:* Calculated  $\chi^2$  of 1.60 is less than the critical or table  $\chi^2$  of 7.78 at alpha ( $\alpha$ ) level of 0.05 percent. This means that data are not statistically significant. The result is to reject the research hypothesis (Hr) and accept the null hypothesis (Ho.), which states that there is no significant relationship between respondents' annual income and their views on strategies for employee recruitment and performance of the NFCS.

*Interpretation:* What the above result means is that there is no evidence to prove that respondents' annual income category affect their views on strategies for employee recruitment and performance of the NFCS. However, out of the 108 respondents sampled in the study, 100 respondents or 92.59 percent agree that strategies for employee recruitment based on federal character principle and political consideration negatively affected the calibre of employees and performance of the NFCS.

**Hypothesis (B). Ho** There is no significant relationship between respondents' job status and their views on strategies for employee retention and performance of the NFCS.

**Table 3: Job status and views on Strategies for Employee Retention and Performance**

| Employee retention strategies of the NFCS are inadequate to retain a competent workforce for enhanced performance | Junior Employees | Senior Employees | Total      |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree  | 32               | 50               | 82         |
| Agree   | 7                | 8                | 15         |
| Undecided   | 2                | 3                | 5          |
| Disagree  | 1                | 2                | 3          |
| Strongly Disagree   | 1                | 2                | 3          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>43</b>        | <b>65</b>        | <b>108</b> |
| Calculated value of $\chi^2$  | 0.36             |                  |            |
| Critical value of $\chi^2$  | 7.78             |                  |            |
| df  | 4                |                  |            |
| $\alpha$  | .05              |                  |            |

*Research Result:* Calculated  $\chi^2$  of 0.36 is less than the critical or table  $\chi^2$  of 7.78 at alpha ( $\alpha$ ) level of 0.05 percent. This means that data are not statistically significant. The result is to reject the research hypothesis (Hr) and accept the null hypothesis (Ho.), which states that there is no significant relationship between respondents' job status and their views on strategies for employee retention and performance of the NFCS.

*Interpretation:* What the above result means is that there is no evidence to prove that respondents' job status affected their views on strategies for employee retention and performance of the NFCS. However, out of the 108 respondents sampled in this study, 97 respondents or 89.81 percent agree that strategies for employee retention of the NFCS are inadequate to retain competent workforce for enhanced performance.

## Discussion

To achieve the purpose of the study, two hypotheses were formulated and tested using the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) analytical technique. The result of the first test shows that there is no significant relationship between respondents' annual income category and their views on strategies for employee recruitment and performance of the NFCS. However, out of the 108 respondents sampled, 100 respondents or 92.59 percent agree that strategies for employee recruitment based on federal character principle and political consideration negatively affected the calibre of employees and performance of the NFCS.

Also the second test carried out shows that there is no significant relationship between respondents' job status and their views on strategies for employee retention and performance of the NFCS. However, out of the 108 respondents sampled, 97 respondents or 89.81 percent agree that

strategies for employee retention of the NFCS are inadequate to retain competent workforce for enhanced performance.

## Conclusion

The study examines employee recruitment, retention and performance of the NFCS. Based on the findings, it recommends that while federal character principle and political consideration may be necessary as strategies for employee recruitment into the NFCS particularly because of “Nigeria’s multi-ethnic,” religious and cultural diversity; its application should however be carried out to reflect merit within the principle in terms of appropriate educational qualifications, skills and experience.

In addition, appropriate incentives to retain competent employees for performance should also be put in place. These incentives could include good and regular monthly salaries; outstanding performance awards to employees; education scholarship scheme to children of employees; proper working environment and good condition of service; prompt payment of gratuity and pension to disengaged employees; provision of housing and car loan facilities; performance pay and policies that favour job security. These the study believes could bring into the employment of NFCS motivated and capable workforce to achieve enhanced performance in its goals of social service delivery and infrastructural development

## Limitations and Further Studies

The study has some limitations, they are: (1) in the area of number of organizations. This study focused on the NFCS; however it has made it possible for proper analysis of how recruitment and retention of employees negatively affected performance of the NFCS. Further studies in this area could look at the NFCS and any of the States Civil Service in Nigeria on a comparative basis; (2) the sample size is small, however, it has enhanced the understanding of how inadequate provision of retention incentives could hinder organizations from retaining competent workforce for enhanced performance. Further studies could increase the sample size to ascertain the respondents’ view on employee recruitment, retention and performance of the NFCS; and (3) this study adopted the chi-square statistical technique for data analysis. Future studies could adopt more modern and sophisticated statistical techniques for data analysis to enhance easy generalization of results.

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### **Author Biography**

Doctor Daniel Esemé Gberevbie is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Political Science and International Relations, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria. He is a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria, Nigerian Institute of Management and Nigerian Political Science Association.