

Personnel Management, Motivation and Productivity in Nigeria's Public Service

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Abstract

It is often said that personnel management is the livewire of every organization. This assertion is evidently true and has full expression in the Nigeria's private sector that is structured for maximum productivity. This accounts for the massive improvement in the service delivery currently witnessed in the private sector. But unfortunately, the opposite is the case in the public sector where productivity and efficient service delivery is almost none existence. The reason for this abysmal performance of public servants is still a matter of scholarly debate. Some argue that the absence of employee motivation and poor personnel management were responsible for the deep-rooted unproductive and inefficiency evident in the public service. In order to provide satisfactory explanations to why most Nigerian public servants fail to bring innovation and creativity to their jobs, at least an understanding of their work condition and welfare packages is necessary. It has been acknowledged therefore that most workers in Nigeria only commits to their jobs just for their daily survival and never dedicated to making meaningful impact in the society. This is partly because of poor personnel management system and lack of motivation. Despite the fact that rewards and incentives are found to stimulate innovation, creativity and productivity amongst workers, however, it is regrettable that the management structures in the Nigerian workspace particularly in government establishments have not been able to integrate the employee motivation schemes into the public service. The paper therefore seeks to dialectically analyze the deficiencies inherent in Nigeria's public service, using the "university employees" as the basis for understanding the linkages between staff motivation and productivity. In addition, the paper argues that Nigeria's public service including the university system since inception is conspicuously underperforming in terms of quality service delivery, innovation and creativity. Drawing from the Vroom's Expectancy Theory of motivation and qualitative analytical techniques, the paper concludes that the university employees are highly unlikely to put in their best at work except the authorities adopts both the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches to personnel management, which could potentially motivate employees for outstanding creative performances.

Keywords: Motivation, Personnel Management, University Workers, Nigeria, Public Service.

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INTRODUCTION

When the Nigerian nationalists achieved self-rule in 1960, it was then the hope of many that such landmark event will eventually launch the country into prosperity and reposition its image that was already battered by both slavery and colonialism. However, that was not to be as the opposite has been the case in different sectors of our national life, thereby stunting economic growth and development. Various reason are often given as the cause of Nigeria's development

crisis, such factors include but not limited to corruption, economic, political instability occasioned by military interventions as well as policy inconsistency.

Aside corruption and instabilities that have contributed to undermine development in Nigeria, another important factor is the 'unproductivity' of the public service arising from incompetency and absence of employee motivation. These have also meted heinous consequences on Nigeria's economy. Nigeria's situation has further reinforced the fact that no nation will ever

be able to develop without effectively utilizing individual talents, which are harnessed through structured reward mechanism to motivate workers to perform maximally in their jobs. Such strategies are targeted at improving productivity and encourage healthy competition, creative and innovative approach to work among employees.

It is unfortunate therefore that the Nigeria's public service which ought to be one of the key drivers of the national development agenda have since independence proven to lack the capacity to transform the nation's economy, hence, the present economic predicaments. That was why in 1985, the then military government set up a panel to reform the federal civil service in a bid to revamp the sector and make it productive. At the time the panel concluded their report, they discovered that mismanagement of time, inadequate evaluation, lack of measurable objectives, inadequate facilities, and disorganization including over centralization were the main issues undermining the productivity of public servants [1] and the situation has remained so up until now.

Indeed, unproductivity in itself also demoralizes employees, and too, the unwillingness of many public servants to improve on their capacity and competences coupled with lack of training opportunities on the part of government have added to the already complex challenge of unproductivity. Similarly, the poor evaluation and monitoring mechanisms within the Nigerian workspace as well as the inadequacy or lack of personnel management skills on the part of people in the position of leadership also helped to exacerbate the productivity problem. Today, you can find many employees of government establishments who just go to work on daily basis without doing anything that worth the wages they earn. This could be blamed on the fact that Nigerian government and its various institutions most times do not monitor the performances of their employees and as such cannot measure their productivity level due partly for over centralization of authorities and over-dependent on oil revenue. For instance, virtually all Nigerian universities depend on government subventions to keep the institutions running instead of relying on its internally generated revenues.

The subventions however, are released from the monthly allocations of the federal government, mostly generated from oil. With this free cash arrangement that guarantees payment of salaries, the management of these institutions are so relaxed that they fail to create other streams of income, which could have been made possible by providing enabling environment, adequate facilities, quality training and above all set realistic targets that if met by staff could be rewarded as a way of motivating them for maximum productivity.

One would ask if there are solutions to these complex issues of unproductivity in the public service. The answer would be yes, if it is approached holistically through reforms that will modify the general perception of people about work, an average Nigerian employee particularly in the public sector do not believe that he/she should work hard for any institution of government. In fact, any zealous staff often receives such mockery statement such as (*take it easy, this is government work, don't carry it on your head*) from colleagues - a demoralizing comments of this nature stems from the perception that public servants should work within a certain performance limit. Many public servants take this position because, the government institutions do not reward hard work and in most cases, the welfare of the workers is grievously neglected, which accounts for low performances of workers in most public institutions. And too, the problem of unproductivity can be solved, if the people in the position of authority will adopt a transformational leadership style, which are necessary for motivating employees. It is therefore important to note that employees' motivation can only achieve its objectives when applied in a broader and inclusive perspective— which implies that a leader must remain resolute and assertive in all his decisions and should be willing at all times to punish offences, promptly. Rather than from a narrowly constructed approach which focuses mainly on rewarding hard work alone.

Survey on available literature indicates that workers motivation stimulates creativity and innovative ideas which leads to productivity. To ensure that Nigerian public servants perform maximally, it is crucial to change the way their welfares are managed by innovatively creating incentives that will motivate them to work without reservation. Part of these changes would mean that leaders should stop their command and control leadership style to adopt leadership by example approach.

It is against the forgoing analysis that the paper seeks to highlight some of the challenges impeding public service productivity in Nigeria's public service with the aim of using the Vroom's Expectancy Theory to explain the connections between employees' motivation and productivity from the developing context. The paper adopts a qualitative analytical technique as the overarching research method. It concludes by subscribing to the school of thought who argues that the development of any nation is predicated upon the ability of the government to harness and utilize individual talents.

Contextualizing Employee Motivation and Productivity in Nigeria

Some development experts such as Amataya Sen and K. J. Ekuma have tried to understand the causes of the persisting developmental challenges confronting most African nations including Nigeria

where anti-development syndromes such as bad governance, corruption, political instability, external influences, and high cost of governance and insecurity have dominated every academic discourse since independence in 1960 [2]. On the other hand, they were also scholars who have investigated the gaps inherent in the public service; they approached these gaps from the employee motivation and productivity perspective, each providing useful frameworks for explaining the unproductive lifestyle of public workers and its link to the underdevelopment in Africa.

Nevertheless, only few of these scholars explored the correlation between staff motivation and productivity among Nigeria's public servants and how it can stimulate economic growth and development. It is on this note that the present study seeks to analytically underscore the fact that motivation can stimulate productivity which can potentially lead to development if goals are set for employees by management and progress measured to ensure that organizational objectives are always on track. This important practice is regrettably missing in Nigeria's public service and would require an immediate redress to improve employees' productivity. The onus then falls on the leadership at all levels to promote work ethics and societal values that guarantees high performance, innovation and creative ideas

As the Eurocentric development theorists would argue, that the development crisis in Africa and indeed Nigeria is the outcome of leadership failures and their inability to adopt certain western values such as good governance, strong democratic practices and capitalist economic principles. To them, development is all about westernization and modernization – a position that many Africans hold so closely. Without much contest, some western values such as good governance, strong democratic institutions, and promotion of indigenous technology through research funds could be regarded as the motivations that stimulated individuals to engage in massive inventions that accelerated development in Europe. Such values should be adopted in Nigeria, because productivity in the contemporary context is driven by technology, information and access to quality education. The idea is that trainings, exchange programs, scholarship awards, provision of research funds are also aspects of motivation that when applied in the case of Nigerian universities will improve productivity.

On the contrary, most African dependency theorists believe that the underdevelopment of Africa was caused by western imperialistic adventures, slavery and colonialism. While to a reasonable extent, this is true, however, Africa had to have overcome these negative colonial legacies and forge on like the other former colonies, namely China, Malaysia, Singapore, India and Brazil, who have moved their economies forward regardless of the fact that they were previously

colonized. These countries rose above the damaging effects of imperialist activities by investing heavily on human capital development, particularly in the areas of engineering and technological innovations. Motivations like trainings and exchange programs have proven to be effective tool for driving development in Malaysia where the government trains young graduates within and outside the country on specific need areas and at the end provide the trainees with the requisite employment opportunities.

In Nigeria, such training and scholarship programs rarely yield any positive result, if and when initiated. For example, in 2009, the Nigerian government in a bid to quell the Niger Delta uprising, declared an amnesty, which provided scholarship and training opportunities to the ex-militants, but unfortunately, many of these trainees completed their training without a place to practice what they have learnt. In frustration, many of the ex-militants had to join the arm struggle again. Many at times, Nigerian government and institutions may award scholarships to citizens without a plan to utilize the skills acquired to improve productivity in the country. People having noticed the demoralizing trends, turns to quick cash antics that is presently destroying the virtue of hard work, innovation and creativity in the country.

Public servants on their own have resorted to bribery or what is otherwise known as (PR) as a means to reward themselves for the little efforts they put to work, there is also a high level of indolence and task avoidance among workers. The positive energy that would have helped for creativity are now converted to negative vibes that only seek to manipulate the system rather than focusing on how to diligently discharge their duties with the expectation of rewards from the management. All of these indicate that Nigeria is yet to come to the understanding of the efficacy of employee motivation and the enormous roles it can play in actualizing national development goals. Low performance of employees is unarguably one of the reasons for the present economic woes. This is because of how development and employee motivation are viewed by different stakeholders.

In fact, development and employee motivation are off course narrowly conceptualized. A typical Nigerian leader sees development only from the prism of road construction, dams, houses etc, he perceives motivation as either material gifts or days off work by declaring multiple public holidays. It is not to say that social infrastructures are not part of development or that gifts and holidays cannot motivate employees but then the argument here is that these priorities are often times misplaced because the efforts are never targeted at achieving a particular set goal. Instead, the leader constructs roads and gives gifts not to improve lives or motivate the people but to impress them so he/she can gain the peoples' solidarity and political support. Such

wrong motive simply invalidates the efforts and turns every developmental stride into a business venture.

Indeed, the idea of leaders using public resources to pursue personal interest is peculiar to developing nations and it is almost becoming an institutionalized practice – hence, the emergence of the “national cake” mentality, a situation where employees perceive any gift given to them by the management as their own share of the “cake” rather than an incentive or appreciation for hard work. Arguably, it was this ill-conceived idea that destroyed the sense of competition, innovative and productive performances amongst public servants as individual employees strive only for the cake and not for the common goal of developing the nation. It is therefore the position of this paper, that development may never be in view should this “cake sharing” attitude continue among leaders and public servants. Leaders at all level, should start setting clear-cut goals that are in line with national development objectives and pursue it without allowing personal interests to interfere. Too, they must begin to work towards the reorientation of the public servants by providing exemplary leadership that is devoid of parochial tendencies and promote creativity in public service through genuine motivations like promotions, prompt salary payment or allowances. It is only then will Nigerian employees be motivated for high performances at work and their general productivity enhanced.

Locke and Latham added that productivity and high performance begin with employees being faced with challenging tasks that requires creative solution. They opine that high performance or productivity is achieved through four mechanisms, namely: direction of attention and action, effort, persistence, and the development of strategies and plans [3]. The understanding and application of these mechanisms will help stimulate high performance, which can lead to productivity as in the example of China. While, its misapplication results to underperformance of employees and the general outcome would be the unproductivity that pervades Nigeria’s public service and the attendant underdevelopment. It can be reiterated here that the unproductive nature of Nigeria’s public servants is directly linked to their lack of commitment to national development goals, which is caused by the failures of leaders to motivate the employees for high performance. As Locke and Latham would argue, high performance, if rewarded, leads to employees’ job satisfaction, which in return facilitates their commitment towards achieving organizational objectives [4].

The lesson for Nigeria should be drawn from the experiences of the emerging economies like China, India and Brazil where employee motivation of various kinds have stimulated growth and development. According to C.C. Ome, productivity can be achieved if

the employees’ interests are integrated into the organizational needs. She maintained that, if organizational goals and those of individuals are harmonious, the resultant behavior is often co-operation and improved productivity [5]. In addition, Ome believed that ‘to motivate an employee, the management must create a real or imagined need for the employee to aspire to. A real need, in her opinion, could be a desire to achieve promotion or increase in remuneration. On the other hand, imagined need could be an aspiration to have coffee at a particular time, which is the entitlement of successful executives [6]. These approaches have been adopted by many organizations across the globe with evidences of good success. For instance, the Royal Bank of Scotland and Natwest Bank after the 2007–2008 global economic meltdowns introduced an employee motivation mechanism that rewarded employees with “cash bonuses” which increased productivity by more than 11% bringing in a huge turnover for the banks.

In order to establish efficiency and productivity in Nigeria’s public service, the management of every government establishment including the universities must emulate the innovative strides of both the developed and emerging economies which cashed in on employee motivation to stimulate high performance that repositioned them for prosperity. Nigerian employees on their own should be self-motivated by working with a nationalist spirit that selflessly pursues the interest of the state rather than individual goals. With this, development will be a realistic objective.

The Nature of Nigeria’s Public Service

The Nigeria’s public service is laden with so many problems ranging from poor infrastructural facilities, lack of trainings to absence of employee motivations. Other issues affecting the productivity of public servants are low and irregular wages, delay or complete denial of staff promotions as well as lack of clear-cut organizational goals. Wherever this magnitude of social challenges exists, there is bound to be inefficiency and low productivity.

To address these problems, successive governments in Nigeria both military and civilian administrations have tried to improve public service productivity through several policies. The implementation of these policies was widely faulted because it concerned itself with only the negative aspect of motivation thereby attracting public criticism. Negative motivation involves disciplinary measures designed to punish any wrong doing of employees. For instance, an employee may receive a quarry, suspension or outright dismissal for offences like absenteeism, task avoidance, corrupt practices or insubordination to the management which are all regarded as negative motivation. A typical example was the 1975 purge of the public service by the Murtala Mohammed-led

administration where about 10,000 employees of various public establishments were disengaged from public service [7].

Again, in the Second Republic, Alhaji Shehu Shagari also embarked on what he termed Ethnic Re-orientation Program that was designed to motivate government employees to change their attitude towards work, which they often referred to as “government work” thereby regarding it as nobody’s business [8]. In the same vein, the Buhari-Idiagbon War Against Indiscipline (WAI) of 1983 was designed to bring public order as well as to stimulate serious mindedness to public service. Other administrations also followed the trend. President Babangida adopted certain aspects of the WAI initiative but he was relatively more persuasive in implementing the policy than the Buhari’s coercive approach.

While the reforms aimed at repositioning the Nigeria’s society by cultivating the culture of diligence, orderliness and serious mindedness on public servants, as a measure to achieve productivity, however, the programs failed and were largely unattainable because the reforms merely focused on negative motivation (punishment) for any act of indiscipline and ignored other aspects of motivation such as reward for efficiency and high performance. It has been acknowledged therefore, that both negative (punishment) and positive (reward) motivation are altogether reinforcing in enhancing employee productivity. In fact the two goes together in order to get a desired outcome. On the contrary, if the management of any establishment chooses either in isolation, the end results are usually counterproductive as in the case of WAI, where the people only received punishment for wrongdoings without efforts to reward exceptional performances.

Regrettably, where the government attempts to apply the positive motivation technique, the management usually presents it in the form of fringe benefits and wage increment which have not been able to improve productivity. It then means that government should look more critically into what actually motivates Nigerian workers as it has been proven that what motivates people differ because of choices and personal interests. The way public servants are motivated in Nigeria are sometimes questionable, which partly explains why if employees are rewarded, they still do not get motivated. First, is that the Nigerian society is highly politicized and polarized to an extent that workers promotions or any other entitlements could be influenced by external forces and powerful individuals who would want to favor their own political associates, religious or ethnic affiliates that may not have the requisite qualification or competence for such positions. The implication is that such unjust treatment will arouse internal dispute within the organization, this can

potentially destroy team-spirit which is an important tool for actualizing organizational goals.

Motivation produces maximally if rewards are fairly and justly distributed among employees based on their capacity and performance. Nothing about employee motivation should suggest that a particular group or individual is enjoying undue reward; anything on the contrary will hamper the organizational growth. For instance, when management of any institution decides to promote employees based on ethnic background, faith or political affiliation without recourse to merit, due process and equity, the outcome is often employee de-motivation. Caution should be applied in Nigeria when motivating employees and ensure that the process is transparently conducted and abide by the principle of equity to ensure that every worker is carried along.

The importance of employee motivation cannot be overemphasized, given that the public servants provide the labor upon which the government depends on to deliver products and services to the people. This however, makes labor productivity a fundamental factor of production. Every other productivity measures rest on labor which determines the living standard of any nation. Studies indicate that productivity of any organization or state can be measured using “minimal strategy” i.e. minimum inputs, maximum outputs, the excess of which represents profit. C. C. Ome adds that profit can be used as a quantifiable measurement of efficiency and productivity [9] particularly in the private sector due to the tangible and quantifiable nature of goods utilized in the process of production and distribution of services.

Similarly, in the public sector, scholars have argued that productivity management may pose some difficulty especially in some sectors of public establishment where services rendered to the public are not directly charged. However, they are two distinct approaches that help in measuring public sector outputs, namely: activity measures – it involves direct service units or work units [10] such as the Doctors available per 1500 people or the Lecturers/Students’ ratio in the university. Other method of measuring public service productivity is ‘result measures – i.e. tracing the direct impacts linked to the activities identified as direct output of any work unit, e.g. the increase or decrease in literacy rate in Nigeria can be attributed to be an indicator of the productivity of teachers.

The productivity nature of the Nigeria’s public service is indicative of the fact that employees of must public establishments are only concerned with service delivery which makes it difficult to quantify or measure their productivity. But there are contemporary mechanisms available for measuring outputs such as the Key Performance Indicators (KPI), the Nigerian government can adopt the KPI tools in all public offices

and use it to monitor staff performances on monthly or quarterly basis. The KPI tools can be meaningful if the management of different establishments of government can set clear-cut goals for employees and ensure that adequate monitoring and evaluation processes are effectively followed.

Innovative ideas like goal setting, quality and satisfactory service delivery have worked elsewhere to improve high performance and productivity. It is therefore recommendable for Nigeria's public sector as it will replace the parochial performance appraisal systems that are based on proxy measurements which emphasizes on employees' character rather than achievements.

Strategies for Achieving High Performance in Nigeria's Public Service

Like every other sector of Nigeria's economy, the public service evidently requires a holistic reform in order to aid the revamping of the economy – positioning it viably. The challenge in Nigeria has never been lack of well-articulated policies, but poor implementation on the part of government as well as the unwillingness of employees to apply the rules accurately and consistently. Decades of both academic and policy discourses have in the past suggested various ways the underperformance of Nigeria's public servants can be addressed. Majority believed that there is a need for attitudinal change amongst Nigerian leaders and employees respectively. Other groups as well argue that the responsibility of improving productivity rests in the hands of government because they have the monopoly over the instrumentality of force, resource control and they are influential enough to persuade or force individuals to comply accordingly.

The third group is those who think that the unproductive nature of Nigeria's public service is a direct consequence for the weak institutions which paved the way for systemic corruption, and provided certain individuals with the opportunity of amassing wealth and wield powers that are beyond the control of the state. It is on this backdrop, that the third school suggests decentralization or devolution of power, in that it will help checkmate the excesses of these powerful individuals at the center and bring leadership closer to the people. It is also their assumption that decentralization of power will reduce the dependency syndrome and compel the people (states inclusive) to think of alternative measures of increasing their wealth generating capacity and resources that can help them meet their needs rather than depending on allocation from the center.

This paper, therefore, aligns with the argument that the low performances in the Nigeria's public service is directly rooted in poorly implemented reforms over the years which need to be re-evaluated to ensure that platforms for competitiveness, innovative and

productivity among employees are created. Studies however revealed that productive workers are highly likely to have job satisfaction which makes them more committed to the long-term goals of the organization and are happy to undertake new tasks. This stimulates productivity cycle, i.e. the happier a worker is, and the more productive he/she becomes, vice-versa. In Cropazano and Wright's article on the relationship between happiness and productivity, they concluded that happiness promotes high job performance and that one "is less likely to take risks when something precious is in short supply. For this reason, unhappy people (a) are sensitive to threats in their work environment, (b) are defensive and cautious around their coworkers, and (c) are less optimistic and confident" [12].

On the other hand, they added that happy people have a more plentiful stock of a valuable resource which is not the same for unhappy people. When at work, happy employees can be more afford to take risks that could potentially increase their productivity. For this reason, happy people (a) are more sensitive to opportunities in their work environments, and they explore it with open and creative mind (b) they are more outgoing and helpful to their coworkers, which promotes team-work and high performance [13].

Cropazano and Wright's argument supports the ideas presented by Locke and Latham in their work entitled, *Work Motivation and Satisfaction: Light at the End of the Tunnel*. They opined that, after an employee has attained certain level of performance, there are certain consequences that may follow; this may come in form of rewards or punishments. Using the goal theory, attribution theory, equity theory, and job characteristics theory, Locke and Latham tried to account for affective reactions to (consequences) rewards and punishments. According to Locke and Latham, the consequences that corresponds to what employees want or values they hold dear to are highly likely to produce satisfaction (motivation for high performance) with their job; while those that do not correspond to what they wanted may produce dissatisfaction (de-motivation for low performance) hence, reducing their productivity [11].

Generally, rewards administered by management following employee performance can be categorized into two sub-segments. The first category refers to those that are non-contingent in nature which is not awarded based on how well an employee has performed, while the second category involves those that are contingent in that they are given in proportion to how well one has performed. A non-contingent rewards may include: "fringe benefits, base pay, seniority awards, job security, flexible hours, good equipment, congenial coworkers, pleasant surroundings, and association with a competent, respected organization. However, contingent rewards, under a merit system, typically involve: pay raises, promotions,

and recognition” [11]. Contingent and non-contingent rewards have effectively improved employee motivation and productivity in places like Japan. Therefore, Nigeria should integrate a merit system into their policy framework to ensure that employees are rewarded on the ground of merit, fairness and equity. Considering the high level of injustices in the Nigerian public service, unmerited rewards, and the dilapidated conditions of some facilities, equipment and unpleasant environment, it will not be out of place to assert that meritorious awards, job security, good environment, quality and functional equipment in the workplaces can produce a huge motivation for Nigerian public servants, thereby increasing their productivity.

The assertion that unmerited or inequitable reward of employees potentially demoralizes and reduces productivity is a well-known phenomenon in Nigeria’s public service which should be critically addressed with respect to both categories of rewards (contingent and non-contingent), that emphasizes on equity theory. Equity theory argues that people appraise rewards in terms of their fairness. ‘Equity is calculated by an individual comparing his or her outputs (rewards) in relation to inputs (seniority, performance) to the output-input ratio of other people with similar tasks or jobs, inside and/or outside the organization. Studies however, indicate that inequitable rewards leads to dissatisfaction and attempts to restore equity through such means as modifying performance quantity or quality or direct protest. In order to effectively apply the equity norms in Nigeria’s public service, the employees of various cadres should be allowed to express their views at any given time and set their aesthetic standards as to what rewards are desirable and appropriate [11].

Such standards produce job satisfaction and improve employees’ commitment to future goals. Nevertheless, one of the fundamental questions that both policy experts and indeed, industrial-organizational psychologists are yet to find the answer is - what actually occurs as a result of the employee being satisfied or dissatisfied? Given that satisfaction is relative, it is difficult to understand what brings job satisfaction to individuals particularly when examined from the developing context like in Nigeria where an employee job satisfaction may be derived from an expectation that his/her job should provide the resources necessary for training his/her siblings in school which in most cases are unrealistic especially when considering the size of an average family in the country. In this case, the employee may decide not to perform maximally knowing that the job he/she is doing cannot meet their personal goals.

A study conducted by (Fisher & Locke) has revealed that being satisfied or dissatisfied with the job can lead to a variety of different actions depending on other variables. They argue that employees who are satisfied are more likely to stay on the job and to engage

in citizenship behaviors such as helping coworkers or customers and doing extra work, while those who are dissatisfied are more likely to quit the job, be absent, file grievances, join unions, go on strike, protest to higher management, engage in substance abuse and illegal acts, and put forth less effort [3]. Evidently, Nigerian employees apparently ranked highest in the world for work related strikes, absent from work and engage in petty corrupt practices.

These are indications of dissatisfaction among workers and can be addressed through already established mechanisms as well as extant laws such as the implementation of bilateral agreements reached with union leaders by the government as in the case of Association of Senior Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the effective use of trade union laws which contains employee entitlements. For instance, the Nigerian labor law stipulates that staff salaries shall be reviewed periodically but unfortunately, that has never happened as and when due except the Nigerian Labor Congress embarked on series of strikes and negotiations with the government before the review is made (e.g. the recent N30, 000 minimum wage increments). There is a need to drastically reduce the frequency of strikes in Nigeria by ensuring that workers are motivated at all times through equitable and effective distribution of their entitlements. Strikes all over the world are known to destabilize the economy and causes huge losses for government which is not good for a developing nation like Nigeria.

It explains why many public servants show no commitment to work, neither are they patriotic enough to commit themselves to the long-term goals of developing Nigeria. Virtually every employee in Nigeria’s public service pursues their personal interests because they perceive the government as insincere and unwilling to build a progressive nation with the labor of the human resource within its employ. Findings of a recent survey show that ‘satisfaction promotes commitment, it revealed that satisfied people are more likely than dissatisfied people to both remain committed with organizational goals and to accept any new challenges that it might offer’ [3]. Nigerians are resilient in nature and are widely known for their creativity which is important tools for national development. The onus now rests on government to create the enabling environment that will allow Nigerians to express their innovative and creative abilities thereby enhance the overall productivity of the nation.

CONCLUSION

While leaders may play important roles in motivating employees for maximum productivity, however, the paper did not explicitly analysis leadership as part of the high performance cycle but as Locke and Latham will argue, ‘leaders play a major role in creating and maintaining the cycle [14]. According to a recent

survey, the role of effective leaders and senior managers is to develop a vision or set goals for their organizations and ensure that the goals are actualized following designed strategies. Another important function of effective leaders is that they reward those who help the organization to attain its goals and punish those who do not.

It is therefore argued here that to keep the motivation cycle going in Nigeria, the employees (public servants) will also need to compliment the efforts of their leaders by adopting the self-management procedures which involve setting a goal for what one wants to accomplish in his task, measuring progress toward the goal, developing strategies to attain it, and rewarding oneself for success. Employee satisfaction and self-efficacy increase as one succeeds in attaining proximal goals and this in turn increases commitment to the programme [5].

In the process of this research a deliberate efforts were made to ensure that findings are presented objectively so that the conclusions would reflect the state of affairs in the Nigerian public service. Hence, the paper makes some general remarks in the form of conclusion. Generally, Nigerian public service like any other, has been programmed to implement government policies and provide varied of services. And in order to achieve greater high performance and productivity, it has to improve on the already recognized employees' needs such as improving on the manpower training, financial incentives and judicious applications of both positive and negative motivational strategies [5].

It is the position of the paper that performance evaluations have to be taken more seriously should Nigeria wish to improve the productivity of its workers, which will help in fostering more serious-mindedness into the public service. As it stands, a new condition of service is not needed in Nigeria to motivate public servants. What is required is for government to improve on the already existing condition of service of the public servants especially in the area of financial incentives, promotions and regular review of entitlements. According to C.C. Ome, these financial incentives should be combined alongside with stringent measures

such as binding rules and regulations which must be enforced. Unarguably, promotions in the Nigerian public service are unnecessarily delayed. Ome suggests that promotions should be effected as and when due and should be strictly based on performance rather than on seniority as is the case with private organizations [15]. It then becomes necessary for management to conduct annual performance evaluation of employees more carefully with emphasis on measurable achievements within the period under review.

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