

# Political Science

## Social, Economic and Political Implications of Nuclear Power Plant in Bangladesh

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### Abstract

Whether a global nuclear renaissance will usher or sustain, the affair hinges on a myriad of the socio-political and economic factors. In one hand, the consistent rise in the prices of oil, coal, fossil fuels and on the other, the lack of natural gas reserves has indicated the struggle of Bangladesh for energy demand, which is eventually going to persist in future. Consequently, due to the scarcity of oil and natural gas resource, nuclear energy surfaces as a palatable strategic option for Bangladesh's future development agenda. However, a successful nuclear power program entails an extensive infrastructure. The control of nuclear energy is one of the prime concerns of science, industry, and politics. Henceforth, emancipating these issues, the paper will analyse the social and political implications regarding the incorporation of nuclear power plant in Bangladesh. The study of this paper is based on secondary sources where a qualitative research is conducted to analyse the socio, political and economic issues relating to the nuclear energy generation in Bangladesh. The study combines doctrinal and comparative socio-legal analysis. Consequently, one of the prime researches of the paper will skirt around the topic related to the public awareness and embroilment of such nuclear energy development in Bangladesh. The paper recommends Bangladesh to adopt a comprehensive energy law that should be realigned to consider noteworthy emphasis on sustainability, developing technical, financial and institutional constraints, and promoting public awareness and involvement associated with the generation of nuclear energy.

**Keywords:** Reactor safety, Nuclear waste treatment, Nuclear Regulation, Public acceptance

### Introduction

Nuclear energy has emerged as an issue of global and local importance, propelled in large part by increased costs of fossil fuels, rising energy needs, concerns over inefficiencies in the energy mix, security of energy supply, climate change, its cleanness as less carbon polluting than fossil fuels, raw material availability, technicians and scientist's interests etc. Nuclear power supplies a large amount of the world's electricity needs. Likewise, the case Bangladesh is no exception.

The consistent rise in prices of oil, coal, fossil fuels and the lack of natural gas reserves has meant that Bangladesh's struggle for energy demand is going to persist in future. The environmental impact of this phenomenon should not be discounted either (Qvist & Brook, 2015). Under these circumstances, nuclear energy is an attractive strategic option for the Bangladesh government. This reflected in the government's decision to construct nuclear power plants to stimulate the ongoing economic growth and meet consumer and industry demands. Thus, Bangladesh has undertaken serious initiatives to commence nuclear power plants to mitigate the ever-surging power demands in one of the sprinting economies in the world.

The objective of the paper is to analyse the social, regulatory, economic and political practices of the countries which have a long experience in nuclear energy production and to recommend the government of Bangladesh to adopt some of them. The paper recommends Bangladesh to adopt a comprehensive energy law that should be realigned to consider more noteworthy

emphasis on sustainability. Bangladesh also needs such a comprehensive atomic energy law in order to strengthen nuclear safety laws. The nuclear energy production cannot bring development if government of Bangladesh cannot possess solid state inclusion in managing monetary advancement, centralization of national energy planning, efforts to connect innovative advance to a national rejuvenation, impact of technocratic philosophy on approach choices, subordination of difficulties to political hegemony, and paltry scale of civic activism in the country. In sum, it is high time for Bangladesh to take all necessary steps that can assure a safe, sustainable and efficient nuclear energy production.

### **Prospects and Challenges of Nuclear Energy in Bangladesh**

While Bangladesh has been known worldwide as an agriculture-based economy that frequently combats natural disasters, it has undergone significant industrialization in the past two decades. The proportion of heavy industries' contribution to the gross domestic product bears testimony to that. Thus, it is hardly surprising that Bangladesh's policy makers have connected the increase of power generation to raise the GDP growth. The greatest ratio behind the nuclear power production is the prospect of minuscule input to produce an immense amount of power. The first batch of these projects, Ruppur (located in Pabna district) (M. A. Haque & Rahman, 2010), is a joint collaborative effort with Russia's state-based Nuclear Energy Corporation (Rosatom).

### **Prospects**

Amidst the renewable sources of power, Nuclear energy turns out to be much of a lucrative pick within the wellspring of energy. And as we speak, this sheer power-source cater to 4.8% of this planet's call for energy and 9.7% of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OCED) energy requisite (Hariharan, 2011). Be that as it may, the quest persists on how reliable the nuclear energy is in contrast with the alternative wellsprings of energy, for instance, hydroelectric & photovoltaics pertain to environmental and safety matters, economic viability, and keeping the future frame of mind.

This comparison is difficult to make since an extensive number of variables are related with these energy technologies. To cite an instance, location is one such vital factor. To exemplify, wind turbines demand powerful gust of wind and vast flat stretches of land, photovoltaics operate in optimum within territories drawing sunlight year-round, and hydroelectric power needs huge fast-streaming water-ways (Nicholson, 2012). Again, to avail the supply of conventional fossil-fuel is a crucial factor as well since its transportation can be quite pricey. To exemplify, France generates 80% of their total electricity by using nuclear power plants as they virtually have zero natural fossil fuels (Olah, 2005).

Nonetheless, the cost of nuclear energy is critical to pin, which again relies on numerous factors. While putting coal, gas, and oil in comparison with nuclear energy, by and far, the former turns out to be an expensive alternative (Grübler, 2004). The strength of nuclear energy is its colossal steadfastness of 'Price' since fuel represents only 31 percent of production costs (Yetiv, 2004). Fuel costs soar up to 80 to 90 percent when electricity is generated by consuming coal or natural gas (Yetiv, 2004). This makes fossil-fuel plants electricity production exceedingly sensitive due to price-fluctuations in coal & gas.

Nuclear Energy's appeal sprawls in vast quantities, for example, its "cleanliness" (environment-friendly), enormous fuel energy density and inexpensive transportation. Moreover, the technology underpinning nuclear energy is highly- advanced than that of photovoltaics, for instance, the technology which is still a work in progress since energy efficiencies have improved. Consequently, a rapid increment in energy supplied was prompted by nuclear power plants since

the 1970s.

However, evolution has backed off because of escalating expenses from financing challenges, increased safety regulations, and prices of competitive technology. Many experts believe that nuclear energy's future growth is, and more importantly should be, limited (Lior, 2008). Countries tagged-developing (rapidly), such as India and China, where mounting expenses are not much of an issue since capital & financing costs are much lower than that of in the US. Therefore, as nuclear energy may have a stifled future in developed countries, it might have a market in less-developed countries (LDC).

In cases, where the energy management is not efficient and the lack of natural gas reserve is still an unresolved challenge, nuclear energy itself is a very prospective option for Bangladesh. Despite enthusiasm at the state's administrative level, some resistances exist in the implementation of nuclear power plants, especially in the form of negative perception and attitude held by certain quarters of the population and intellectual crowd. However, some experts contend that such negative mindset may be overcome in a relatively small amount of time once the public grows tired of the rising fuel cost (Sovacool & Valentine, 2010). This is bolstered by the fact that Bangladesh Government has been actively, on an incremental basis, raising the power prices since 2010-2011 (Kabir, 2011). However, for substantial progress to take place in the nuclear power attainment, many obstacles would have to be surmounted (Kessides, 2012). These barriers can be classified, in broad terms, based on technical, financial, and institutional constraints. It is also inevitable that amplifying nuclear power as a source of electricity is the optimal choice for the developing countries like Bangladesh.

### **Challenges**

One of the fundamental points concerning immediate interest for the nuclear energy-active countries will be the preparation and accessibility of qualified staff to meet the overwhelming needs of the proceeding and extending programs. In any case, the 'human resource advancement' needs to incorporate every one of the issues that influence human execution, for example, initiative, administration frameworks, working society, nuclear information administration, and individual states of mind. Specifically, for the Bangladeshi landscape, it is imperative that a fruitful atomic power program requires a broad framework. This incorporates nuclear establishments, facilities, investigate associations, administrative facilities, government divisions with atomic skill, and instructive organizations with the suitable nuclear preparing programs.

Moreover, political stability has been an ever-present predicament since Bangladesh's inception, which impedes not just the nuclear power plant projects but also economic development and industrialization process in general. In addition, the high initial costs of embarking a nuclear power plant project reverses the tepid public attitude towards nuclear energy, convincing them of safety of such projects, building a workable nuclear energy law, and developing capable human resources to operate such projects are matters of concern as well.

Environmental experts also underline the need for emphasizing sustainability and safety regulations to prevent unwanted blowback in the event of disasters (Wildermuth, 2011). The safety and security of the new nuclear establishment specifically rely on how Bangladesh government manages to protect, exchange and further develop nuclear information and knowledge inherited from the countries which have experience in nuclear power plants, such as United States of America, Russia, China, and Japan. It is necessary for Bangladesh to broaden the discourse on two focal issues of nuclear education administration which are progression arranging and nuclear data conservation. The upcoming generation of operators, programmers,

physicists, engineers and other relevant work-personnel must be equipped for applying, controlling, and advance creating nuclear innovations in Bangladesh.

Scholars always contended that it's not the disastrous event, rather the regulatory ineptitude added to the most noticeably bad nuclear calamity since Chernobyl had clarified how the comfortable connection dispatch among the administration, controllers, and nuclear administrators is the prime explanation behind debacle (Wang, Chen, & Yi-chong, 2013). A successful nuclear power program requires an extensive infrastructure (Jewell, 2011). It is a question of fact that whether Bangladesh, still known as a developing country, can build the infrastructure which eventually secure the safety concern of the nuclear power plant. Building infrastructure includes nuclear installations (Jewell, 2011), facilities, research organizations (Yanev, 2013), regulatory agencies, government departments with nuclear expertise (Yanev, 2013), and educational institutions with the appropriate nuclear training programs.

### **Recommendations for Nuclear Power Plant in Bangladesh**

A gradually developing economy keen on procuring its first Nuclear Power Plant regularly does not have the vital legitimate and administrative structure to guarantee appropriate outline, development and safe operation of its nuclear workplace (Echavarri, 2007). The outcomes of failure of an atomic facility can go well past its national limits, one just can't let the administrator of such a facility to manage itself (La Porte & Thomas, 1995). Then again, it is not ingenious to request that an emerging nation set up an absolutely autonomous administrative body to screen its first NPP (M. M. Haque, Islam, & Zulquarnain, 2009). The trade-off, which is frequently made is to set up a different gathering inside the nuclear experts to execute the administrative viewpoints.

### **Creating a Comprehensive Legal and Regulatory System**

The only law regarding nuclear power project is the *Nuclear Power Plant Act 2015* which sets up the Nuclear Power Company of Bangladesh (NPCB) to run the plant, though the ownership remains with the Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC). However, the law does not contain any provisions for the consequences of any nuclear power plant disaster. Bangladesh needs a comprehensive law on nuclear power production which is necessary in order to guide the future safe energy production. The government should make clear policies to address the impact of nuclear safety regulations and liability rules. The liability rules must address channeling of liability through the nuclear plant operator, raise the general issue of the optimality of mandating or even allowing, transfers of liability from one agent to another as part of a set of liability rules.

At present, Nuclear Safety and Radiation Control Division (NSRCD) is working as the regulatory wing of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC). There is a plan to form an independent regulatory body. A new act has already been submitted to the Government entitled "Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority-06" with a view to establishing a suitable organization having the adequate independence to meet the IAEA/National obligations for ensuring nuclear safety and radiation control in the country. For the most part, the common law of torts decides the common risk for most accident related expenses (Trebilcock & Winter, 1997). Be that as it may, for accidents occurring at nuclear power plants, statutes in numerous nations extremely limit the utilization of tort law (Faure, 1995). In this way, we urge the Bangladeshi Government and the competent administration to assess the monetary impacts of these constraints, looking at the security motivating forces under the current laws to venture a realistic risk estimation. It cannot be denied that upgrading and strengthening a nuclear regulatory system is not optional but imperative to prevent any disaster relating to the nuclear power plant.

Accordingly, Bangladesh also needs a comprehensive "Atomic Energy Law" (Cohen, 1979) to strengthen nuclear safety laws and to establish a nuclear safety fund in order to provide adequate compensation during the event of an accident. Such laws should also provide optimal liability scheme for the Government of Bangladesh which expounds the following topical challenges: full strict liability for the operator; (Trebilcock & Winter, 1997) joint and several liabilities with upstream suppliers (Trebilcock & Winter, 1997), the upstream suppliers' liability (Hewitt, 2008) being restricted to a negligence standard; (Hariharan, 2011) mandatory liability insurance (Hariharan, 2011) to be provided by the market to some extent, and above this amount by the government. As the tort law does not exist in a legal form in Bangladesh, such regulations must also describe the role played by criminal law in ascribing meaning to people's actions on and after the events of any disaster which might happen due to the negligence of the government or the operator.

### **Need for Public Awareness & Involvement**

Moreover, the Government of Bangladesh ought to likewise clarify explanations on their methodologies towards the most imperative focuses identifying with the nuclear power plant, for example, radiological assurance of laborers, radiological insurance of open, radioactive waste administration and ecological radiological examination. Open mindfulness and contribution are likewise rudimentary before setting up the nuclear power plant. Though exceptionally progressed and refined new reactors may decrease perils in light of "characteristic" security features, for instance, "latently sheltered" measures made by the era III reactor, we assume that any country that does not give genuine straightforwardness and enable open commitment with respect to atomic issues ought to never use atomic vitality. Along these lines, the Government of Bangladesh should contribute convincing consideration work to keep up open responsibility. It should be yielded that atomic expert expansion is in the meantime social, political, and financial, and along these lines, the Government of Bangladesh should take the perspectives of masters in different fields before totally chipping away at the nuclear power era.

In spite of satisfactory access to assets, able labor and coordination, developed (affluent) nations like Germany, Switzerland, and Italy have understood that atomic power era dangers are inadmissibly high. In this manner, it is not legitimate to proceed with the atomic vitality alternative in spite of its indicated benefits. Moreover, other vitality sources like sustainable sources posture less threat and look good for these progressed countries— both physically and in addition financially. Besides, as of late, two planned atomic power plants with help from Russia and Japan have been rejected by Vietnam and the prime reason referred to the cancelation is vital threat to the earth. Despite the fact that the two plants guaranteed to slake the vitality emergency that Vietnam confronts, it was in the long run chosen that the cons far exceed the masters. The cancelation of these two plants supported by Russian state-claimed ROSATOM and a Japanese consortium should be fit for producing 4000MW worth of energy. Had they been introduced, they would have been the biggest atomic power plants in South East Asia. In any case, atomic power alternative is one the best activity to take care of the vast energy demand for any monetarily creating nation like Bangladesh. Subsequently, it is the perfect time for the administration of Bangladesh to make all the vital strides in setting up the atomic power plant securely and proficiently.

Moreover, other than these huge steps, the organization of Bangladesh ought to moreover have strong state commitment in controlling fiscal change, centralization of national vitality masterminding, endeavours to interface imaginative advances to a national restoration, effect of technocratic conviction framework on course of action decisions, subordination of troubles to

political administration, and low levels of urban activism which are convincing components in supporting the augmentation of atomic power. The article recognizes that a level of unsteadiness weaving machines whether these propositions are followed in bracing legitimate and administrative structure in Bangladesh for the atomic power plant.

### **Conclusion**

Bangladesh has distinguished atomic power as a piece of sustainable energy framework. Usage of Ruppur NPP is a piece of energy security plan of Bangladesh and development of 2000 MW atomic limit has turned into an integral piece of the 'Vision 2021' (Akbar, 2012) of Bangladesh Government. Pragmatic strides towards setting up national atomic power framework for building "Ruppur NPP" by 2020 have as of now been taken and along these lines, the government ought to consider for building up an instrument of coordination among Bangladesh, the recognized enterprises, and IAEA (Akbar, 2012). After a large portion of a century of fruitful advancement, experiencing superb achievement and eagerness and indistinct feedback, nuclear power has made a substantial commitment to human advancement. No other energy innovation has such an across the board widespread demand, spanning from nuclear material science, physical sciences, chemistry, biology, medicine, and other disciplines like software engineering, psychiatry, or pharmacy. The education to utilize atomic innovation has been aggregated amid the most recent fifty years and must be managed promote irrespective of the part nuclear energy will play in the 21st century onwards. The safety and security of the presently existing nuclear establishments and particularly the new ones that are being manufactured and anticipated that would be inherent in the creating scene, which will frankly rely on how countries, governments, and regional powers learn to implement, design, safeguard, exchange and further develop nuclear learning and talent around the world.

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## Public sector governance and service delivery in Nigeria: Issues and challenges

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### Abstract

This paper explore the propensity of the Nigerian public service to adequately manage public affairs. The paper focus on the significance of public service delivery to the citizens in a manner that will enhance or improve service delivery to the generality of the masses, in a civilian administration in Nigeria. The paper uncovered that government reform introduced to improve service delivery have not been yielding any positive result. Why this persistence failure is as a result of reform of public service delivery called SERVICOM to achieve its objectives. This is can be traceable to lack of political will on the part of government and the governed. Therefore, limiting its operations. The paper advocate that SERVICOM should gained a wide publicity, proper coordination, given it a "legal backing" to make it efficient and effective.

**Keywords:** service delivery, servicom, military regime, public service reform, civilian administration

### Introduction

There is no doubt that the public service of any country be it developing or developed country serve as an avenue where government policies and programmes are articulated. Meaning that it is the machinery through which public policies are formulated and implemented. The primary motive of a public bureaucracy is the concerned with public administration, therefore the management of public affairs rests on it (Oyedele, 2015). However, public service aid in transformation of both social and economic development.

The major problem confronting government of a developing country, Nigeria inclusive is hinged on the ability of the public service to properly improve the welfare of its citizens. This happens as a result of government trying to fulfil her social responsibility by delivery of public goods at a reduce cost, through public service, most especially in this era of economy crisis and globalization (Woods, 2006) in his book titled the globalisers opined that "IMF, the World Bank, and their borrowers, were presenting globalization as a panacea to the problem of public service delivery in the Third World countries. Again, it was said that they were doing that not out of pure economic motive rather it was politically influenced (p.3). Notwithstanding, the effort of public service of Nigeria collaborating with NGOs in terms of resources utilization and to ensure prompt and quality service delivery had always been worrisome over the years. This persistence increase in number of far-reaching reforms on repositioning the public service and aimed at improving its performance has become a mere dream without actualization since the inception of civilian administration in Nigeria.

At this point, it is pertinent to bring to bear that Nigeria public service is the engine room of government and the most critical instrument of the modern state and its profitability has been put to test by series of governmental policies such as socio-economic, structural and political transformation, reference to the previous leadership in this country. To be factual, during the military regime the country embarked on series of reforms yet the efficient and effective service delivery is challenged (Anazodo, Okoye and Chukwuemeka, 2012). Again, under this present administration a number of strategies and measures has been put in place to improve the delivery of the services to the people. However, it is not glaring if this effort at reforming the service can translate into a meaniful development. One aspect of the strategies aiming at improving service delivery is SERVICOM.



The main thrust of this paper is on SERVICOM and public service delivery in Nigeria. The first section deals with the significances of Public Service Delivery to the citizens of any country. The second section looked at the public service reforms in Nigeria, considering the military regime and the civilian administration. The third section reviews the state of public service delivery in Nigeria. Lastly, the conclusion.

### **The Significance of Public Service Delivery**

Going by the recent economy situation of Nigeria and other developing countries of the world, the government is under obligation for the maintenance of stability and promotion of economic and social development. More so, Nigerians are faced with high cost of living and other economic conditions that made the citizens to be too demanding, government agencies are been mandated to the realization of this goals. With this, the public service of any country is regarded as the engine room, and life-wire of the state.

Ademolekun (1983) sees civil service as “the body of permanent officials appointed to assist the political executive in formulating and implementing governmental policies.” In the same vein, civil service is an avenue through which government of both the federal, state or local government are administered (Agbodike & Osawe, 2015).

Looking at the public service worldwide the functions cannot be underestimated this includes; Provision of social amenities to the people. A good example of such services are education, health, supply of water, housing, transport and communications and so on. As stated above, the public service is the veritable instrument of government use for the implementation of both the policies and decisions making of government either in a developed or developing nations. It must be recognized by the ruling authority that the primary motive of government is to deliver prompt service, and efficient and quality services to its citizens at a reduced cost.

The significance of public service delivery to the citizens of any country, and the need to effectively deliver this kind of service cannot be overlooked. That is why the need to access this service by the citizens of a particular country is demanding. Therefore, government is faced with the challenges of providing basic public services to the people as at when due. However, over time the menace of service failure surfaced especially within the developing countries of the world. Nevertheless, this has become the concern of many developing countries of the world, Nigeria inclusive. How to effectively address this challenge, in light of this, it has become the necessity of government of every developing nations to involve citizens participation in decision making on how public services are provided (Oluwu, 2008).

### **A Comparative Study of Public Service Reforms under the Military Regime and Civilian Administration in Nigeria**

Comparing the reforms of public service carried out during the military regime and that of civilian administration in Nigeria. The civilian administration witnessed comprehensive reforms of public service because reforms made were subjected to legislative proceeding of the national assembly and coupled with the directives from the office of the president. Also, within this period a lot of committees were constituted and most of the committee were named after the person that brought them a good example of such committee Oransaye's and Fike reports and others (Okorie & Stella, 2014).

In military regime, most of the reforms carryout were characterised with the capitalist whose interest is in what they can gain rather than to provide for the citizens. According to Cornelius, Okorie and Sunday (2014) opined that reforms in civilian administration in Nigeria has been influenced by the workers or the representatives. In most cases, the reforms done attract in peace-meal, not without criticism and political interference (Finer, 1941; in Ademolekun 1993; Eme, Innocent & Ugwu 2011). But Debie (2003) and Ademolekun (1993) are of the same view that during the military regime, public service reforms were being described as ineffective and possess low morale. While the civilian administration was characterised by ethnicity and wrong application of the Federal character principle.

More so, from 1999-2009 civilian administration reforms undertaken were pass through the legislative process in reformation. A good example, the first reform with legal proceedings was entrenched in the decree no 43 of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1988 under General Ibrahim Babaginda, from 1999 most of the reforms followed the procedure of legislative rule.

Conclusively, reform of civilian administration in Nigeria, is seen from the legality and the rule of law or the constituted authority, where the National Assembly have to legislate on the bill before passing it into law. While in military regime, reforms are carried out without reference to the constitution. The military rules with the decree, authoritative, pronouncement, order, and hierarchy.

### **The Government Programmes and Service Delivery (1999-2009)**

This is a high level commitment on the part of government at reforming the public service in Nigeria. The reform is to address the problem affecting the management of public service which later metamorphosed into low quality service brought about by prolong military rule. However, on assumption of office to be specific may 29, 1999, the then president in his inaugural speech identified areas of inefficiency in terms of provision of social services to the people inherited from his predecessor, the president speech reads “that Nigeria’s are in fact being “deprived”. “Our public offices have for too long been a showcase for the combined evils of inefficiency and corruption, whilst being impediments to effective implementations of government policies. Nigerians desire better. We will ensure that they get what is better”. Part of the inaugural speech on reforming the public sector are;

- i. Public Service Reforms; public service reform encompassing the implementation of the general staff audit and pay roll clean up; restructuring of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies/Parastatals of government.
- ii. Pay Reform- The reform of pay roll is aimed at improving the public sector governance most especially in the area of wage increment from N 2,500 per month to N5, 500 per month taking effect from 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2000.
- iii. Restructuring of ministries, departments, and agencies MDAs- The restructuring of MDAs and Parastatals is one of the major policy of civil service reforms because it emphasized on reorganization of MDAs for improved service delivery. (El Rufai, 2011).

Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS). IPPIS came into existence after the discovering of 20% of the civil service staff as ghost workers, by the Minister of Federal capital territory (FCT). El- Rufai, disclosing this abnormally at the Federal executive council and FEC approved the commencement of IPPIS within the MDAs. This to serve as an alternating measure where a computerised and biometric database would be capture during the headcount exercise as a way of eliminating payroll fraud (El-Rufai, 2011).

Monetization of Fringe Benefit: Monetization is one of the crucial factor in reform of civil service that enable the government to know the cost of running and maintenance of government positions. However, in 2002, the new monetization policy was enacted and it was implicitly stated that monetization of workers’ salaries and other benefits of federal civil servants that were initially paid in kids be converted to cash by the salary and wage commission (Stephen, 2011).

Pension Reform: In 2004, General Olusegun Obansajo regime introduced a law to privatized pension administration in Nigeria through the pension Act 2004. The national pension commission (PENCOM) was established as a body to monitor and control the activities of 25 registered pension fund administrators. However, the pension reform aimed at reducing the problems associated with the scheme. It is a contributory scheme funded by both the employer and the employee.

Anti- Corruption: This is a fight against corrupt practices on the part of public officials that led to establishment of Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and other measures to checkmate the activities of public officials in respect of

management of finance.

Going by the monthly publication of SERVICOM, and government reacting to poor quality of service delivery and coupled with the inefficiency and the corrupt tendencies of public officials which serve as a cog to the wheel of effective implementation of government policy, government has shown a concern by coming out with the following measures; sorting people's views and experience of service, designing a programme for service delivery, and creating an institutional environment for service delivery.

### **Understanding the term Servicom**

SERVICOM: Talks about public service delivery, which is the focus of this paper. This service delivery reform originated from British Government through a body called the Department for International Development (DFID) in Britain to the federal Government of Nigeria (Olaopa, 2008). However, the origin of SERVICOM in Nigerian Federal Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Parastatals. This can be traced to Kuru conference held in February 2001 in Accra Ghana. The conference marked the beginning of SERVICOM orientation and awareness among Nigerians. Referenced to the paper delivered by Abdullah (2008) quoting Ad'Obe's speech the SERVICOM national coordinator "no reform by the government would succeed unless it brings about improved service delivery in a specific aspect of the life of the people. "Therefore, whatever reform embarked upon, service delivery is both the subject and the object of the reform. Therefore, SERVICOM is the mother of all reforms" (p.11).

Notwithstanding, SERVICOM reform process started in June 2003, at the swearing in of the new elected National Assembly members. President Obansajo drew attention of the people to the poor quality of civil service delivery in Nigeria, declaring that Nigeria's are in fact being "deprived". "Our public offices have for too long been a showcase for the combined evils of inefficiency and corruption, whilst being impediments to effective implementations of government policies. Nigerians desire better. We will ensure that they get what is better" (p.11).

More so, the actual SERVICOM with all Nigerians was officially launched in Abuja on the 21<sup>st</sup> march 2004, in collaboration with the special presidential retreat on service delivery. SERVICOM is embedded in Government service initiatives. For MDAs to be efficient and effective in their day-to-day administration.

### **The Objectives of Servicom**

The major objective of SERVICOM is to meet the challenge of service failure nationwide. However, as the engine room of government service delivery initiatives was to:

Make the MDAs more customer focused in their service delivery procedures and processes;  
Create public awareness in terms of the damage effects of service failure to the Nigerian society;  
Instigate the general public of the need to recognize and challenge service failure as their civic right as well as their civic responsibility.

SERVICOM is all about provision of service to citizens which is their entitlement. Its implementation has involved series of training and re-training, workshops/seminars, and retreats for senior officers in public service in order to create awareness in this category of staff to the new orientation for the civil service.

In a nut shell, SERVICOM has provides opportunities for the civil service and the public servants in the following categories. (i) It is an opportunity for public servants in Nigeria to become customers friendly. (ii) Since the general public has been aware of their right to insist on quality service, and complain where necessary, public servants will be conscious of public rating especially as it has to do with their performance. (iii) It create room for restructuring and repositioning the public service for effective service delivery.

### **Assessment of Nigeria's Public Service Delivery**

Looking at public service delivery in Nigeria, record in the past have shown that it is a wasteless

effort, especially in the area of management of public enterprises. A good example are; NIPOST, NNPC, NRC, NITEL, and Power Holding Company and so on (Okon, 2008). In the same vein Emeh (2012) observed that public enterprise have several problems which affect the quality of their goods and services they rendered. In fact, most of them cannot compete with their private counterpart who are in the same line of business. And are such affect their performance level. Another striking issue, is the view of Anyadike (2013) that since the public enterprise are governed by government they are not exempted from political interference such as employing the candidate that is not qualified to do the job of the enterprise, even carryout project that have no value to the organization, and donating money to political party in power and other purpose, such political interference from the officials of government affect the efficiency of the organization and the overall service delivery to the people. Nevertheless, the Nigeria civil service have been criticized for impartiality, indiscipline, transparency, accountability, loyalty, integrity, professionalism, and so on (Magbedelo,2016).

Following the observable weaknesses of the entire public service in Nigeria, several numbers of public service reforms were introduced start from the colonial, post-colonial or military regimes to the present civilian administration. In assessing the public service delivery of Nigeria, the focus of this paper is on the reformation of the civil service under the civilian administration. However, the SERVICOM reform is a programme designed for the disposition of the Nigerians citizens in terms service delivery and asserted on the client's perspective but its success in transformation of citizen's lives is in jeopardy.

### **Challenges of Servicom**

It is glaring that SERVICOM itself is not devoid of challenges, although the idea of SERVICOM was a welcome development as a way of making the civil service to be efficient and effective and be commitment to serving the people. However, one of the major obstacle to its success is the issue of implementation, this boiled down to lack of public awareness. They should be massive mobilization and sensitization of the people on the need to demand for quality service, and to be serve better. SERVICOM provides an opportunities of the right of the citizens to be serve in an on timely manner but such opportunity was not known to the citizens. Today, majority of Nigerians citizens in both ministries, departments, and agencies do not even know the message of SERVICOM. This is because SERVICOM is limited in scope. Again, while the citizens do not know is due to the fact that SERVICOM do not spread to all tiers of government instead to ministries, departments, agencies, and parastatals. This has cumulated to the reason why quality service implementation cannot be demanded by the citizens.

More so, SERVICOM programme is been delayed due to lack of continuity and budget implementation. Notwithstanding, the programmes requires close monitoring and supervision of Ministries, departments, and agencies, and parastatals, and people should make sure that they are serve rightly as it their right to be serve right. Also, the body concern do not receive their allocation on time.

Another area of challenges of reforms is effective implementation of SERVICOM programme, low level of compliance with rules and regulations guiding service delivery reform, the public servants even though they do not act according to the lay down rules hardly they go on punishment. To be factual, there are no laws to enforce its workability and prosecution of an official that fails to complied with SERVICOM charter.

At this juncture, it will be interesting to note that SERVICOM was not established by any laws that include punishment of the offender, making the reform to remain inefficient and ineffective. To this extend this national issue has not been properly addressed since the inception of the civilian administration in Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

This paper explored the significance of public service delivery to the Nigerian citizens. The paper

found that public service delivery has not been translated into a meaningful development during the long term of military ruled in Nigeria. In order to address this menace, the civilian administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo initiated a reform programme among others service delivery or SERVICOM reform with the mandate of "service compact with all Nigerians".

Again, as mentioned earlier, the good intention of the SERVICOM reform effort has been thwarted as the service delivery is ineffective and inefficient. In fact, the mandate of the service delivery reform was to serve as the strategy for monitoring government policies and programme, and its implementation within the arms of government has remained a mere dream. This issue could be attributed to constraints of implementation of the reform. Apart from SERVICOM reform, some reforms are still facing problem of continuity and are such required a proactive approach on the part of government for them to realize their core objectives. The critics of reforms implementation has attested that reform has strong political will but still suffered inconsistency and sabotage (Olaopa, 2008). Be it as it is, recommendations suggested that, for reform to be effective the government in power must ensure continuity in our reform process by following the SERVICOM charter, principles and objectives to the later.

Meanwhile, government should make sure that SERVICOM reform should be implemented in order to make it effective. Civil servants who violate the rules and regulations of SERVICOM should be punished accordingly. As a matter of urgent the National Assembly should enact law in this regard that will punish the violators of rules and regulations guiding service delivery reform or SERVICOM.

More importantly, for government to react to the issue of implementation of service delivery reform, the citizens who are the direct beneficiary of this programme must be demanding for quality service. Measures should be taken to ensure that the interest group or pressure group are involved in the formulation and implementation of the policies and programme of service delivery (Ademolekun, 2002).

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