THE CIVIL SERVICE AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA: ISSUES, PROSPECTS AND NEW HOPES

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Abstract
The civil service is the engine room of modern government. It comprises an assemblage of career officials, recruited in a civil capacity to serve the citizenry. By their training, they are equipped to champion the course of development by faithfully implementation and evaluation of government polices and programmes. They are expected to do this in a transparent and accountable manner. However, the British bequeathed civil service model in Nigeria has failed to meet the expectations of the people judging by the catalogue of dysfunctionalities in the polity. With the use of the elite model, the study submitted that the failure of the ruling elite to adhere to constitutive rules is at the heart of the present crisis plaguing the public sector. To come out of this contraption, the administrative and political elites should embrace the principles of good governance that includes: respect for institutionalism, public accountability, popular participation, equity, among others. Unless these steps are followed, the Nigerian civil service may remain a mere geographical expression with little or no growth and development.

Keywords: Civil Service, Development, Democratization, Good Governance, Nigeria

Introduction
The civil service model being operated in Nigeria has its origin in British colonial administration. Although, the British did not leave a large civil service system, it left a civil service that was efficient and effective. This tradition was carried on until few years after independence, when the creation of State and the great purge of 1976 in Nigeria depleted the service of its capable hands. In spite, of these developments, some scholars would argue that the civil service at the federal level managed to distinguish itself as it helped to keep the country together as one united entity.
However, certain political developments in the country soon rob-off on the civil service. The military coup of 1966 brought the civil service into political roles as civil servants began to abandon their professional duties for political roles. This brought about the infamous era of super-permanent secretaries and military – civil servants’ diarchy. Expectedly, their productivity and performance began to dwindle and this began to manifest itself in their delinking from the citizenry they swore to serve. Before long, members of the public in turn began to view civil servants as corrupt and unaccountable. Thus, rather than being servants of the State, they have become self-serving and promoters of self interests rather than the national interests.

A lot has happened in the global system that demands more transparency and accountability in the way the electorates and clientele of the civil and public services are served. A number of reforms have been made nationally to reposition the civil service for better service delivery. But these reforms have not translated into efficiency and effectiveness. In the context of a democratic system, how can the civil service be re-engineered to promote good governance that will stem the tide of socio-economic and political decline and bring the dividends of democratic governance to the door steps of the citizenry? Answers to this and other related issues in the paper will form the crux of this paper.

The paper is structured into the following sections. The first section aside introduction, indulged in conceptual and theoretical explorations of the central issues in this discourse. The second examined the nature of the civil service under democratic governance. The third analyzed efforts so far made to align the civil service with the core values of democratic governance, theoretically and practically. The fourth discussed the normative constraints to the civil service role in democratic governance. While the fifth made prescriptions on how identified challenges can be redressed for the good of the people.

Conceptual and Theoretical Discourse

Conceptualizing the civil service has not been an easy task. Section 318 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides a lead of what the civil service of the federation is. It conceives of it as:

Service of the federation in a civil capacity as staff of the office of the President, the Vice President, Ministry or Department of the government of the federation assigned with the responsibility for any business of the federation...

This definition of the civil service appears to center more on the structure of the civil service than how it carries out its responsibility. It may therefore, be seen as, an institution of government that is run by men and women employed in a civil capacity to carry out the responsibilities of government and enjoys security of tenure of office till retirement. For the purpose of achieving the goals of government, the civil service is expected to be an assemblage of well trained, knowledgeable, public spirited and incorruptible elite corps of men and women who are equipped to give effect to policies and programmes of government at less cost to the people.

Flowing from the above, all these values could be better achieved under a system of government where there is freedom of speech, liberty and fraternity. Hence, a democratic system that has
these features as some of its core values, present the best environment for the goals of the civil service to be realized. Democracy may be seen as government of the people through their elected representatives. Democracy itself may not achieve its core values unless it practically addresses the question or imperative of how resources of government are used to promote the welfare and well-being of the people. This brings to fore the concept of governance.

Governance became popular in the late eighties when it became apparent that resources of the State have to be judiciously used to fulfill the goals of development. Consequently, transparency and accountability in the use of power and resources of the State became prioritized. Thus, governance is viewed as the use of State resources and power in an accountable way to achieve and promote the well-being of the citizenry.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1997) asserts that governance is “the exercise of economic, political and administrative authorities to manage a country’s affairs at all levels”. No longer will the global system tolerate blatant abuse of State’s power, institutions and resources. Perhaps, this is what Hyden and Courts (2002) have in mind when they aver that: “governance refers to the formulation and stewardship of the formal and informal rules that regulate the public realm, the arena in which State as well as economic and societal actors interact to make decisions”. Here lies the imperative of popular participation.

Popular participation is key to the governance agenda in the public realm. The people ought to be part and parcel of government decisions, programmes and projects for them to contribute to their efficient and effective implementation. In other words, the people should be carried along if they are to be beneficiaries of these activities of government. It is clear from these assertions that not only are there rules to regulate the public realm; such rules must be accounted for by those who use them in the interest of the masses. Unless this is done, policies, plans and programmes of government may not benefit their intended targets. It would appear this was the case in the 70s and 80s that prompted the governance agenda.

The utilitarian theory with a sprinkling of the popular participation theory appears to us heuristic for analyzing the subject matter of this investigation. The essence of government everywhere is to promote the welfare and well-being of the people under its authority that will culminate in the greatest happiness for the greatest number of the people in the society. While this is assumed to be the popular motif of government, the reality often deviates from this norm. In most cases, the elite tend to dominate the masses leading to impoverishment and discontent.

The civil service can resolve this anomaly if it carries out its responsibilities with a high sense of patriotism, transparency and accountability to members of the public it is meant to serve. Connecting with the people at all levels to bring about a change in their material condition, is crucial to overall societal development as the people are empowered to contribute to the evolution of social change in the society.

Yet, formal organizations have to be structured in specific ways in order to achieve the goals of efficiency and effectiveness in administration. To this end, several models have been tried.
However, for modern public organizations, Max Weber’s model appears most valuable. What is the nature of this model? Answer to this question form the crux of the section that follows.

**The Nature of the Civil Service and Democratic Governance**

The West Minister model of the civil service is structured along the lines of Max Weber’s typification of formal bureaucracy. Weber in his articulation of bureaucracy came up with some major elements which he considered sacrosanct for the efficient functioning of any formal bureaucratic organization. Akhakpe (2007), Ekhator (2003); Mullins (1999); Olugbile (1997); and Nobbs (1984) summarized the main features of Weber’s ideal bureaucracy as follows: (1) appointment of officials according to technical qualifications and merit: officials are not elected; (2) rules and regulations govern official’s specialized work: officials work impersonally showing neither fear nor favour to anyone; (3) promotion allows efficient officials to climb higher in the hierarchical power structure: officials enter a career and do not expect preferential treatment, or property rights related to the office; (4) fulltime officials devote themselves to the work of the organization: officials are expected to carry out their duties impersonally and completely; (5) continuous business is carried on faithfully by the officials: the office does not come to an end with the death of the holder; (6) written documents are used to conduct official business: everyone is subject to formal equality before the rules; (7) public and private life are divided by the segregation of organizational activity from the official’s private life; public monies and property are separated from the official’s private property; (8) limited compulsion by officials is allowed but without hatred or passion, and hence without affection or enthusiasm; and (9) salaries of officials are fixed with right to pension. These impersonal rules suggest to us that there are ethical codes that guide the conduct of officials in the discharge of their official obligations. Indeed, ethics in administration could be conceptualized as rules and regulations officials are expected to conform to in the discharge of their official obligation. These rules according to Maduabum (2008) tend to ensure uniformity of operation.

It is important to note here that these features of formal bureaucracy theoretically could conduce for efficiency in administration which is essentially its aim. Yet, it would appear that there is nowhere in the world where this model has been fully operated. Besides, the Weberian administrative construct is culturally symptomatic in that it came from the study of a particular scenario and then generalized.

Similarly, the West Minister Model of the civil service inherited at independence in Nigeria, advances some principles that are aimed at making the service stable apolitical and efficient. These features include: Permanency, a point alluded to in the features of bureaucracy; non-partisanship that is, civil servants should not openly aligned to a political party; and anonymity, that is, officials are to be seen not heard-non prejudice to any policy issue or direction irrespective of the party in power. In the case of the principles of the civil service, little attempt has been made to apply its tenets universally, as some countries like France and the United States have deviated from this norm by allowing their civil servants to make foray into politics without losing their position in the service. Also, in the US, political appointees could be brought into the service as head of ministries that is, as Director General, as the situation demands.
But most ex-British dependencies like Nigeria still practice full-fledged British civil service model with all its trappings. All these have occurred, in spite, of apparent failure of the system to meet the exigencies of the time, that is, the socio-economic and political challenges facing developing countries like Nigeria. The problem according to Davidson (1993) is that, Africa was wrong in believing that the actual work of government and decisions depending on it, can only be exercised by a civil service trained and tested in authoritarian habit and practices. The outcome of this practice has been catastrophic for national development because the civil service has grown to be an institution that is unresponsive, unaccountable and alienated from the people it was meant to serve (Olugbemi, 1987, 1979).

Democratic governance is meant to give more effect to the role of the civil service in promoting the welfare and well-being of the people. Democratic governance requires that public officials and elected representatives of the people carry out their responsibilities to generate transparency, particularly in the flow of information from government to the people and vis-à-vis. The activities of the government and its officials should be open to public scrutiny thereby availing the people the opportunity to understand government policies meant for them and how they can affect their lives in positive ways.

Another key feature of democratic governance is accountability and responsibility of public institutions. Public servants should be accountable to one another and members of the public for actions and decisions made and carried out in the socio-economic and political sphere. This is particularly the case when it comes to the use of power and resources exercised and used by public office holders on behalf of the electorates. Hitherto, power and resources of government were used without much accountability to the people. But this is expected to change under democratic rule because information flow is better, elections are periodic and the possibility for a day in court for any one is ever present.

The rule of law further strengthens these mechanisms put in place to checkmate abuse of power and resources of the government. Promotion and protection of the fundamental human rights of the people are put in the fore-burner! There is freedom of association and expression, right to fair hearing, freedom of information, independence of the judiciary and its workers, among others, are to be in operation and prioritized where there is democratic governance. However, socio-economic rights are still not justifiable under the constitution of Nigeria.

Again, democratic governance requires that there is equal participation by all stakeholders in policy initiation, formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. It gives groups or communities opportunities to make important inputs to decision and policy making, based on the understanding of their environment, culture and socio-economic values. This is in consonance with the bottom-up, people-centric approach to development. This is particularly the case where interest groups are crucial actors in policy making, implementation and evaluation. The failure rate of plans and programmes is high in Nigeria, one could argue due to exclusion of stakeholders in these processes. This civil service can facilitate this process by mobilizing interest groups and other stakeholders in its activities.
Democratic governance requires that socio-economic and political institutions should have legitimacy that will give both the people and those working within government ministries, the latitude to carry out programmes for the people. Unless these institutions have legitimacy and autonomy they cannot have the crucial support they need from the people to carry out their work efficiency and effectiveness. Legitimacy and autonomy require that stakeholders accept that the existing rules and regulations and actions of these institutions are carried out to meet their interests and give their support to the process.

Has the civil service been able to put these core values of democratic governance into practice, in the discharge of its responsibilities, particularly in the context of the Fourth Republic in Nigeria? To answer this question, there is the imperative need to examine their interface with democratic governance in the course of this Republic.

The Civil Service and Democratic Governance in Nigeria

The civil service is said to have certain characteristics that stands it out in relation to other State institutions. These include: an abundant supply of technical skills, a capacity for large scale management, a disposition to accept and try new ideas, a time sense that makes it more interested in the present and the future than in the past, better sense of punctuality and a greater concern for planning, organization and efficiency, the tendency to see the world as a calculable, faith in science and technology and belief in distributive justice as the ultimate goal of the State (Olugbemi, 1979). These are very flattering qualities supposedly possessed by the civil service. But the reality actually deviates from these norms. In Nigeria it would seem that the reverse is actually the case as would be clear shortly.

Meanwhile, the Fourth Republic like its predecessors, inherited a civil service that is weaned in authoritarian culture and has had a good romance with military rule perhaps due to some features they shared such as: hierarchy of command, centralized authority, pan Nigerian values and emphasis on training and corporate identity (Olugbemi, 1979). In spite, of this communality of interests, the civil service has not been able to fast-track national development and improved or provide for higher standard of living for the people who expect more from their indigenous leaders after many years of deprivation under colonial and authoritarian rules.

It was against this background that the Fourth Republic took off with new hopes for rapid socio-economic and political development and consequently, better life for the people. Olusegun Obasanjo administration recognized the sorry state of the public service and the people’s discontent and disenchantment with it, when he, Obasanjo (2004) observed that:

Public officers are the shopping floors of government business. Regrettably, Nigerians have for too long been feeling short changed by the quality of public service delivery by which decisions are not made without undue outside influence, and files do not move without being pushed with inducements. Our public officers have for long been show cases for the combined evils of inefficiency and corruption, whilst being impediments to the effective implementation of government policies, Nigerians deserve better.
The catalogue of ills plaguing the civil and public services as articulated above, may not have done justice to the litany of crises in this sector. It only scratches the surface of what has been endemic maladies well documented by previous public service reform commissions. As has been noted, efforts at reforming the civil service has taken two forms: the first group of public service reforms is aimed at reviewing the salaries and other benefits of public servants. While the second group of reforms is directed at restructuring the service for better performance; efficiently and effectively. Interestingly, the formal group of reforms has been more successful than the latter from the point of view of their implementations because it touches the very interests of public servants, in a country where distributive justice is asymmetrical.

Be that as it may, successive governments have not failed to tinker with the public service with a view to making it more responsive and accountable to the people. Overtime, however, members of the public have developed reservations and sometimes disdain over civil servants inefficiency and ineffectiveness in service delivery. Some of the mind burgling revelations of financial waste, mal-administration and corruption in the polity could not have taken place without the express or tacit support of civil servants in the various ministries where they are recorded. The pension scam, the inflated two BMW cars in the aviation ministry, the kerosene and fuel subsidies scandals, the hiring of aircraft by public officeholders at exorbitant rates among many others, are some of these misdemeanors by politicians and civil servants. Surely, the citizenry and country have been worst for it.

Again, the President Jonathan’s administration has sought to bring sanity to the civil and public services through the Steve Oronsanya committee on public service reform (The Punch, 3/3/2012). The committee recognized the fact that the public sector is too large and over-bloated to be efficient and effective. It therefore, recommended merger and or scrapping of some agencies and parastatals by government. Perhaps, due to the sensitive nature of these recommendations, the federal government has decided to soft peddle on the recommendations of the committee, particularly in view of the forthcoming general elections in early 2015. In the words of President Jonathan (2010) inter alia:

It has been hoped that significant servings would be made from the implementation of government white paper on rationalizing public agencies. Unfortunately, very little ...saving are likely to be made from the implementation of government white paper on rationalizing public agencies due to the fact that some of them are underpinned by law which cannot be repealed in the short-run.

On a prima facie basis, this may sound wise but the issue about performance of the civil service cannot be reduced to reduction of cost of running them but the ability to deliver quality services to the people. In this regard, it is still business as usual in virtually all federal ministries. Public service delivery has not improved in spite, of billions of Naira injected into them. Some would argue that it is still early days to assess the government holistically. But from the benefit of hindsight, it may be much of the same thing or business as usual for a long time to come, if no real changes take place in how government conduct affairs of the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).
The Civil service and Democratic Governance: Prospects and New Hopes

Whereas administration in the developed West is meant to maintain an already acquired and satisfactory level of socio-economic development, the same administrative mechanism copied by developing Africa is intended to be catalyst for development. In other words, whereas the former concerns pattern maintenance, the later (administration in developing areas of the world) entails system adaptation, if not system restructuring (Amuwo, 1997).

The rider to this section clearly demonstrates the dilemma the civil service inherited from Western Europe is facing in Nigeria. Perhaps, the pattern, character, structure and roles of the civil service in the country are not in line with the exigent conditions in the environment of operation. While the values of the civil service may be universal, the condition under which it operates in Africa differs from its homologue in Europe and North America.

Most African States, while in a hurry to develop, embraced the Western model of the civil service which might not have fitted well with the demands and conditions of the continent. There is so much poverty, deprivation and marginalization of the people that the civil service needs to address frontierly instead of hiding behind the iron curtain of anonymity and non partisanship to maintain the status quo. The realities in the continent of Africa require a civil service that is proactive and feels the pulse of the people. However, the social distance that currently exist between the people and civil servants partly accounts for the failure of many policies and programmes of government that are targeted at alleviating the level of poverty among the majority in the society.

Expectedly, participation of the populace in governmental affairs is low. Yet, without the citizens’ participation in matters that affect their lives, accountability and distributive justice are difficult to achieve. It leaves civil servants stranded in the middle of its plans and programmes because the populace are isolated from policy initiations, formulation, implementation and evaluation. Once this vacuum is created, it is almost always the case that governance issues become neglected.

This is the case in most Africa countries where until recently; many of them were under authoritarian rule that did not give much room for democratic values of freedom of expression, association and participation to determine who should govern them. In most of these countries, extra-bureaucratic forces were not effectively in place. By this we mean, political parties, elected legislature, among others. These counter-veiling forces could actually checkmate the bureaucracies in order for them to deliver to the people. Already, we are beginning to see traces of democratic reversal in some countries in the continent that might prospon the gains of democratic governance in these countries.

One of the consequences of the absence of these counter-veiling forces in government is that the civil servants could dominate the policy making cycle with little or no check from their relatively inexperienced political office-holders. This was the case in Nigeria in the late 60s and 70s when the military held sway due to the absence of democratic structures suspended in the wake of the 1966 military coup. The civil service as a result, assumed a larger than life image, as a result of
this; administrative corruption and bad governance became the order of the day. This however, has not abated after a decade and a half of civilian rule in Nigeria.

Yet, this development did not go unnoticed by successive governments in the country that had in response, carried out one form of civil service reform or the other. But, the status quo remains. The litany of failure of successive public sectors reforms prompted Das (1998) to admonish that:

*There are indeed, good reasons why civil service reforms should go beyond the obsession with sheer head counts. It should aim at not merely cutting the flab from an obese civil service but also, building enough capacity in the civil service by assuring that services such as education, health, poverty alleviation, security and infrastructure are provided efficiently and at affordable cost.*

The fact that these defaults in our national lives are still glaring, means that all is not well with the civil service. To make matter worst, there is a large lacuna between the higher civil servants who are influential in policy making and the ordinary people on the street they (civil servants) are expected to serve. Indeed, there are other administrative and procedural infractions that diminish the ability of the civil service to deliver democratic governance. These include: administrative corruption, rudeness, absenteeism, inefficiency, aiding and abetting, political corruption, inability to apply modern technology to the socio-economic and political development of the country, among others.

One of the daunting challenges facing the present civilian dispensation in the country is the perennial problem of corruption. Like its predecessors, there has been tales of mind burgling profligacy and outright pillage of the national wealth by the combined efforts of political and administrative classes in the country. Can political office-holders carryout their nefarious acts without the connivance of the administrative executives or higher civil servants? The answer is definitely in the negative. Their failure to perform oversight function against criminal abuse of political offices has feather the nest of perpetrators of corrupt practices in the public domain. Perhaps, they are incapacitated in playing this role because they are path and parcel of the conspitorial ploy by the ruling elite to pillage the State.

As care-takers of the public trust and conscience, civil servants ought to constantly be in the know and lookout for acts that compromise the public interests and bring them to public glear and auditing. They ought to use their creative talents and abilities to unearth acts of official misdemeanor, even as they continue to give credible advice to their political masters. How can this be done? This is the focus of discussion in the next part of the paper.

**The Civil Service and Democratic Governance: The New Hope**

Challenges of the civil service identified in the preceding section are enormous and weighty but they are not insurmountable. It only takes concerted, continuous and consistent attack on these challenges to overcome them. It is now abundantly clear to all that a development conscious civil service must of necessity put off the tag of anonymity and non-partisanship. It must come out of its administrative cocoon to “take the bull by the horn” in promoting administrative and political accountability. Surely, administrative principles meant for operating a developed society is definitely different from those required for administering developing societies. In other words,
some elements of modifications of administrative principles of the civil service are required if it is to help resolve challenges of development administration (Riggs, 1971).

However, civil servants cannot do this if they lack the requisite skills, knowledge and experience for engendering social change in non-Western and developing societies. These societies have certain specificities and peculiarities that only specialized skills can promote. This is not to suggest that knowledge, values and ideas gotten from elsewhere will not be needed but they need to be adapted to the environment of use for them to be effective. This is where training and retraining of civil servants is crucial. Specific training should however be prioritized, to meet the specific needs of members of the society.

The behavioural and attitudinal elements of public servants in general cannot be overemphasized. The fatalistic and hazardous behaviour of public servants should be jettisoned for a more patriotic and nationalistic ones. Perhaps, this will take longer time to realize. Yet, it is worth working on if the much needed changes in the civil service are to be harvested. One of the ways of getting this on track is, by respecting professional ethics and values of the civil service. This should be constantly emphasized through orientation and re-orientation of the public workforce in general.

Strengthening existing institutions of public accountability will help to bring these values to the front-burners. So many of these mechanisms of accountability are in existence but they need to be empowered and given autonomy to work in the public interests. The political authorities should muster the political will to allow them function efficiently and effectively. The whistle blower should be able to blow the whistle against corrupt acts at all times irrespective of whose “ox is gored”. Also, members of the public have to play their watch dog role particularly the mass media and civil society organizations. It is commonly said that every society deserved the kind of leaders they have because certain acts of misconducts or unethical practices flourish due to the fact that they are consoled by the society where they operate.

One other way of improving the performance of the civil service is by ensuring that the right calibers of persons are recruited into the civil service. One of the ways to ensure that this happens is by applying transparency in the recruitment and selection of personnel into the service. According to the chairman of the Federal Civil Service Commission, Joan Ayo, the commission has “put in place some strong measures to ensure that transparency is exhibited in the way it conducts “recruitment examinations” (The Guardian, 25/03/2014). This however should be done in accordance with the highest level of sincerity and integrity.

For some time now, questions have been asked of the relevance of trainings civil servants are given in Nigeria. Better understanding of the demands of a developing society like Nigeria is required in determining the type of training civil servants undertake. There appears to be too much reliance on training based on routine rules and regulations in an era where the country needs technology driven training programmes. Likewise the educational system from the primary to tertiary levels. The civil service should come out from its law and order strait-jacket, to embrace more proactive interface with the people it serves. It must come out of the veil of
anonymity to intervene concretely in the life of the people to improve their welfare and wellbeing.

The latest rebasing of the Nigerian Economy made it the largest economy in Africa. While this is good news for the Nation, it should be translated into better standard of living for the people (The Economy, 2013). Here again, the civil servants have crucial roles to play in ensuring that economic advantages of the country are exploited for the benefit of the generality of Nigerians. This is the area where civil servants are much needed, to bring their wealth of experience to the door steps of all Nigerians. Its core value of distributive justice must be registered in the lives of all the citizenry of the country.

Public-private sector partnership has become the vogue in both developed and developing countries, and Nigeria is not an exception. But this process would demand that the civil service step up its managerial capabilities in order for it to be able to moderate the activities of the private sector whose main concern is to make profit with little or no consideration for the general good. Therefore, to prevent rip-off of Nigerians, the civil service must rise up to the occasion by developing strategies to checkmate the profit maximizing instinct of private sector investors and their low service delivery tendencies. This has been abundantly demonstrated by the mobile telephone and electricity generation and distribution companies. Since their privatization, Nigerians have had to pay increasingly more tariffs in the face of poor services delivery from these companies. However, the energy crisis in the country is at the center of it all. The earlier it is fixed the better for all in the country.

Also, the rate of poverty and unemployment in the land speak volume of the level of creative managerial abilities in the civil service. While the civil service may not take all blames for the poor state of things in these sub-sectors, they should take a large chunk of them. This is moreso, given the enormous resources at their disposal. Unless the situation is arrested through more creative managerial styles by the civil service, we as a people may be caught in deeper crises than is presently being experienced. Already, the security situation in Nigeria has worsened with some parts of the country under the control of the insurgent group called Boko Haram. Meanwhile, the Nigerian military has shown it is not on top of the situation, hence calls for help from the developed countries.

A demoralized, wobbly and ill-equipped civil service cannot drive the transformation agenda of the present administration. Although issues of this nature are hardly put in the public domain, it is crucially important to inject more funds into the service through the annual budget so that the service could play its managerial and administrative roles in these unusual times. At a time like this, the New Public Management (NPM) requires proper funding to enable the civil service take up new roles it is expected to play under this dispensation. But this has to be done in line with a high sense of financial propriety and transparency and other forms of international best practices. For democratic governance to thrive, the civil service is required to be institutionalized. This will ensure that the service will be flexible and they are able to adjust to changing times. The pattern and structure of the civil service inherited at independence need to change to conform to the exigencies of the time. It must be proactive and aligned with the trend in democratic governance (Ayeni, 1990).
Conclusion
The civil service of the Fourth Republic has unique roles to play in order to meet the expectations of Nigerians. The citizenry, expect the dividends of democracy to be brought to their door steps. It is only the civil service that can ensure that this is realized. But the civil service as presently structured and operated cannot deliver to the people their expectations from government unless it embraces democratic governance measures such as; transparency and accountability, equity, distributive justice, the rule of law, citizen participation in the affairs of government, electoral integrity, among other measures. In the past, efforts were made to re-engineer and reposition the civil service for better service delivery to the people but many of them ended up mere official window dressing. The transformation agenda of President Jonathan could go the right way and confront head long the multifarious challenges besetting the Nigerian State and society if remedies suggested in this paper are faithfully implemented.

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