The Reward System and Corruption Dimensions in the Nigerian Public Sector

Tunde A. Bakare-Aremu[1], Rakiyah Mamman[2], Saadatu Baba-Umar[3], B.O. Salisu[4]

[1] *Department of Economics, National Open University of Nigeria, Nigeria*
[2] *Department of Development Studies, National Open University of Nigeria, Nigeria*
[3] *Department of Geography, Kaduna State University, Nigeria*
[4] *Department of Economics, Lagos State University, Ojo, Nigeria*

Abstract

This study examines the possibility of establishing relationship between poor reward system in the Nigerian civil and public services (i.e. the civil and public servants) and the upsurge on the corruption level in the country. This is because the statutory minimum wage of thirty thousand naira (N30, 000) for the three tiers of government could hardly keep body and soul together, neither could this take-home monthly salary actually takes anyone home. In addition, the value of naira erodes with both inflation and depreciation (which I referred to as twin-arrow) which made an average Nigerian to be more vulnerable and socially insecure. Furthermore, the minimum wage could not last an average individual a fortnight for feeding and upkeep if one has to live slightly above the two dollar per day poverty line. Base on this argument this paper presents an empirical investigation to the aforementioned through a parametric research outlook, that is, an ex-ante research design that elucidates the behavioral disposition of target audience on the subject matter, which was thereafter analyzed with both descriptive and analytical tools of Chi-square to test the single hypothesis that Public reward system has nothing to do with the corruption level in Nigeria (H_0). The (H_0) was rejected at 0.05 level of statistical significance, and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1). The rejection of the null hypothesis indicates that to a large extent poor reward system in Nigerian civil and public services contribute to sharp practices or corrupt practices, it equally confirms existence of both greed, and need based corruption. Therefore, the reward system should be improved upon through systematic and strategic pay roll system that incorporate all essential macroeconomic indices, such as inflation, depreciation and general price level, that will automatically adjust itself (payment of wages and salaries) to the current yearnings of the economy. This to a large extent will not only leads to effective and efficient service delivery but will also minimizes or eradicates the level of corruption in Nigeria.

Introduction

Several studies have linked performance and excellent services delivery to rewards and reward system mechanism (Osawe, 2014; Esione, Osita & Ngige 2020). Rewards could be financial or non-financial, the financial rewards are cash award, bonuses, salary increment, profit sharing and other cash payment or incentives, while the non-financial rewards are promotion, on-job training, annual awards, paid traveling expenses, welfare packages, to mention a few. Reward can be literally seen as payment or incentive for a job done or service rendered, while reward systems consist of the interrelated processes and practices which are combined to ensure that reward management is carried out effectively to the benefit of the organization and the people who work there. This is based on the reward strategy which runs from the business or public services strategy (Armstrong, 2010). To validate the aforementioned, the proponent of motivational theory of equity sees performance as consequences of fair treatment of employees (i.e. rewards and incentives), therefore the place of rewards can never be overemphasized when job has to be done and service delivered in most efficient and effective manners.

The public reward system in Nigeria is control by federal government commission under the ministry of finance called the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission (NSIWC) which was established by an Act 99 of 1993. Its creation was based on the recommendations made at various times by ad-hoc Commissions or Panels set up by Government from time to time since 1960. The implementation of the recommendations of such ad-hoc bodies were never fully carried out to enable workers derive full benefits of their work (NSIWC, 2021)**.** Consequently, this led to the Udoji Commission on the review of the Public Service (1972–1974) who recommended that a permanent body be constituted to inter-alia, take care of annual reviews of wages and salaries in the Public Service. The commission was established essentially to deal with issues relating to salaries and wages of Nigerian workers. It is imperative to note that even after Udupi's Commission in 1972, there were a good number of other commissions established to still looked into public service reform in Nigeria, such commission were commissioned under Obasanjo regime in 2003; Goodluck Jonathan in 2011 to holistically venture into the problems of effective public service delivery and the likes and to forestall future crises management in public services. With the establishment of these various commission and their brilliant recommendations, the full

implementation of their recommendations have been major problem, for instance the NSIWC was to review salaries on annual basis in line with economic yearnings, this could take a decade or more to be done, and everyone knows that inflationary effect on fixed income earners is de-humane (NSIWC, 2021).

On other hand, corruption has received a lot of attention from notable researchers and policy makers across the globe with robust results, sophisticated and requisite policy recommendation in the last couple of years (Bakare-Aremu & Adebanwa, 20013).   That is, researches have been conducted on the causes, effects, impacts or consequences and in fact; determinants of corruption just mention a few, though not exhaustive. According to Folorunso (2007) corruptions is pandemic and its endemic nature cut across all facets and fabrics of the society including highly placed and lowly ones. This, however suggest that the problem of corruption and the way forward in its eradication goes beyond the present level of intervention. The systemic level of corruption is somewhat undermined but has eaten deep into the fabric of this nation's civil and public services, hardly could anyone do anything within government establishment without "dolling" out something (i.e. cash or kind). The big question is then, why? To answer this recurring rhetoric question, one should first take a look at the social status of public servants in Nigeria, it is obvious that the poorest and the richest worker in Nigeria would be found among the public or civil servants. The poorest worker is among the lower cadre public/civil servants which are the most vulnerable, because they don't involve in any decision making, even those that concern them, and they do not occupy any position of trust, therefore, they are vulnerable because their take-home was decided by other group without their representative, so they are left with options of corruption as a coping strategy, which includes, stealing, begging, bribing, graft or involve in petty corrupt practices to augment the penurious salary. On the other hand the richest public servant who is well-read, occupy juicy position such as director, accountant general, bursar, permanent secretary, rector, provost, vice chancellor, etc. who also has opportunity to involves in decision making process, entrusted with public properties and finances, though receives relatively fat salary yet not contented perhaps because his social level surpasses the take-home income, therefore he indulges in corrupt practices to augment the income gap created by poor rewards system. The corruption dimensions in Nigeria is almost being institutionalized, or seen as norms.

To this end, this paper is poised to elucidate the behavioural attitude of civil and public servants towards the rewards system being operationalized in Nigeria in line with the level and dimension of corruption in the public system.

Literature Review

There is a growing empirical literature which analyzes how reward system influences corruption in civil service in developing and developed countries. One of the main arguments on the link between reward system and corruption is that for civil servants with low salaries, corruption becomes a coping strategy to compensate for economic hardship. This "need based" arguments focus on the situation in which an underpaid official accepts bribes for basic necessities (Pilapitiya 2014), as opposed to greed-based corruption, which is more apparent in cases of well-paid officials in higher level positions (Wraith and Simpkins 1963).

Poor reward system and low remuneration for public servants and greed according to Promise (2011) account for corruption related behaviour or actions. According to him, the reward system in Nigeria is, perhaps, the poorest in World. Some states in the Federation owed workers between two–six months salaries. A related study at almost same time, in Latin America and the Caribbean by Panizza (2011) finds no significant correlation between corruption and the public-private wage differential. But when dis-aggregated to low education income level and high education income level, the study, he reveals a significant positive correlation between corruption and the public-private wage differential for formal sector workers with low education, this agrees with need-based but not with greed based corruption.

A study by Gagliarducci and Nannicini (2011) applied efficiency wage theories to the public sector, and argued that paying political class more could improve their performance for a number of reasons. Firstly, the morale of public office holder could be boosted as their wages rise (sociological models). Secondly, paying them better salaries may increase their performance because of their need to hold office (shirking model). Finally, higher wages will attract more quality citizens into politics (selection model). Their argument for high remuneration for public servants around the aforementioned three models does not halt the greedy public office holder from being corrupt, most especially in Nigeria. A seemingly related research report by Chen and Sandino (2012) complement the efficiency wages theories as argued by the duo above, they examined the impact of relative wages on employee theft. Thereby predict that relatively higher wages will discourage a non-greedy employee theft for two reasons: first, employees receiving relatively higher wages are less inclined to commit theft as they attempt to reciprocate positively to their employers and/or to retain their high-paying jobs (motivation mechanism); second, firms that offer relatively higher wages may attract a higher proportion of honest workers (selection mechanism).

A study by Osawe (2014) examine the existence of Professionalism in the Service delivery in the Nigeria Public Service using theory of efficiency and effectiveness while adopting a review method (content analysis). The paper however, argued that there is absence of Professionalism in service delivery in the Nigeria Public Service. He suggested frantic and pragmatics efforts from the fiat on re-engineering and instilling professionalism in Public Service in Nigeria. A closely related study by Igbokwe (2017) compares the various administrative reforms in Nigeria and identified the factors necessitating the reforms in Nigeria. The paper equally noted that there are points of convergence as well as divergent in previous administrative policy reforms. The result indicates that so far twenty-four (24) administrative reforms has taken place from Hunt (1934) to Jonathan (2011) and that the basis for reforms ranges from socio-economic factors to political issues such as demand for wage increase and better condition of services, to mention a few.

In a seemly related study by the trio, Esione, Osita, and Ngige (2020) they examine the effect of reward system on the performance of workers in the Nigeria Public Sector, taking Oyo State Public Services as 'micro picture' of Nigeria. The theoretical background upon which their study rested was motivational theory of equity that sees performance as consequences of fair treatment of employees. The study however revealed that significantly financial and non-financial rewards impact on workers performance, and categorically non-financial rewards impact better. Thus, the governments were encourage to use the reward mechanism to boost workforce performance in Nigeria. Similarly, Murana, Salahu, and Ibrahim (2016) examine impact of Civil Service reforms on effective service delivery the study reveal that the reforms has failed to reposition the Nigerian Civil Service for effective and efficient service delivery. Therefore, the study recommended that the government should embark on strictly pragmatic approach to this issue rather them cosmetic approach as being adopted.

Taking a look at cause and effect of previous public service reforms in Nigeria, Usman (2016) examines the implementation of 1972 Udoji and 2003 Obasanjo public service reforms in Nigeria to establish a new public service reform management paradigm. The main objective of his study was to compare between the 1970 public service reforms (Udoji) and 2003 public service reforms (Obasanjo) in Nigeria with aim of bring out what is new or know if there is any repetition. the study reveal that the 1972 Udeoji's public service reforms commission was an old system when compare to Obasanjo 2003 public service reform which is more pragmatic and close to private business style of service delivery. The author also noted that there are good numbers of repetition in the two commissions' recommendations, which he

noted to be a result of non-implementation of the 1972 public service reforms commission's recommendation

It should be noted that income from the crude oil have been on the high side in the last decades. Despite this, the standard of living has been on decline with high inflation and naira depreciation in an import dependent economy, cum high wave of corruption. Comparatively, the literacy rate and life expectancy level in 1977 were 55%, and 53 years respectively, with marginal increase to 62.02%, and 55.44 years in 2022 (four and a-half decades after) are both reflection of the fact that Nigerians is sluggish in term of economic growth, which is not unconnected to high profile of corruption and corrupt practices in public places. A good example of this, is the current fraud case with accountant general of the federation (AGF), who took advantage of loopholes in payment system of IPPIS and TSA to defraud his country a whooping amount of one hundred and six billion (N106 billion)- a betrayal of trust and greed.
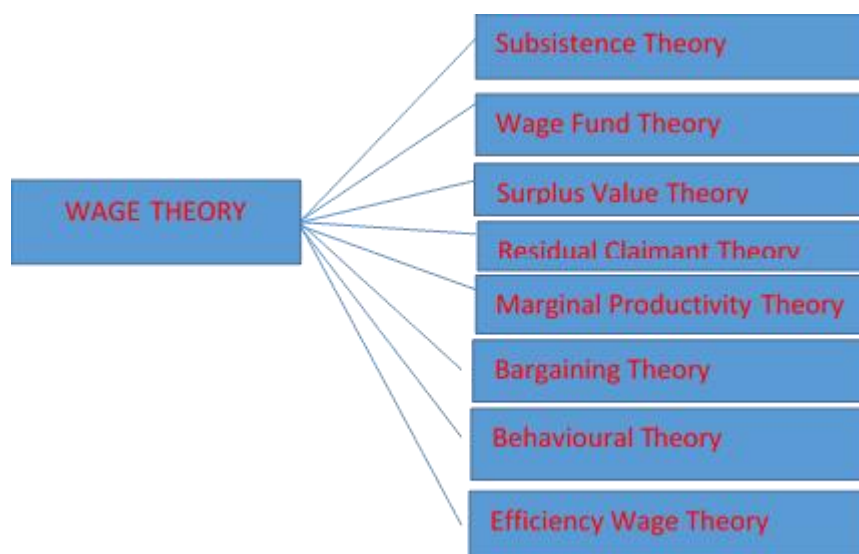
Figure 1: Theoretical Literature
Source: Authors' Design

Subsistence Theory
Subsistence wage theory originated by classical economists, particularly David Ricardo, which he referred to as an "iron law wages." According to this theory, the labor is paid the minimum amount of wage that is sufficient to subsist and perpetuate their race without either increase or decrease. The assumption of the law of diminishing returns applies to the industry, as the population tends to increase. For instance, if the labours are paid below the subsistence level, they will die out of malnutrition, disease or hunger and

therefore, the number of workers gets reduced. On the other hand, if the wage increases above the subsistence level, the number of workers will get attracted to procreate and thus, with the increase in labors the wage rate comes down below subsistence level.

Wage Fund Theory
Adam Smith propounded the wage fund theory based on the assumption that the wage is paid out of the pre-determined wealth or fund available, which lays surplus with the wealthy persons, as a result of savings. However, the amount of wage to be paid to the worker depends on the size of the fund. Larger the fund, more labor would be employed and given higher wages, but in the case of less funds, the wage would reduce to the subsistence level. Another classical economist, known as Mill, expounded this theory by given further explanation that the wage fund is fixed, and the wages can be determined on the basis of supply of and demand for labour, thus, the fund size decides the demand for the labor

Surplus Value Theory
Karl Marx propounded surplus value theory in light with other articles most especially the subsistence wage theory. According to him, labor is considered as an article of trade and could be purchased by paying a subsistence price. The price of a product is then determined by the amount of time a labour devotes for its production. And the proportion of time spent by the labor on work is much less and, therefore, paid a minimum price and the surplus amount is utilized for the other expenses.

Residual Claimant Theory
Francis Walker propounded residual claimant theory, the theory placed worker as the last recipient of reward, amongst the four factors of production viz. Land, labor, capital and entrepreneurship. According to him, the wage is the amount given in return for the amount of production and thus is paid after the payment of all other factors. Thus, the wage is considered to be a residual claimant, and is computed as; Wage= Whole production- (Rent+ Interest+ Profit)

Marginal Productivity Theory
Wicksteed, and Clark, propounded marginal productivity theory which was based on the assumption that wage is determined on the basis of last worker's contribution to the production level i.e. the marginal production. This theory assumes that wage depends on demand for and supply of labor, and that, as far as, the marginal productivity is equal to the wages paid, a firm will continue employing more labour.

Bargaining Theory
Davidson, introduced the bargaining theory, he explained that wages are determined on the basis of a bargaining capacity of workers or their unions and employers. If the trade union is stronger, then the wages will be high, and if the employer is powerful, the wages tend to be low.

Behavioural Theory
Several behavioral scientists such as March and Simon, Robert Dubin, Eliot Jacques, etc. have presented their research on the wage determination. According to them, there are various factors such as employer's concern for the workers, the strength of unions, size and prestige of company, etc. that determines the amount of wage to be disbursed among the workers. Thus, the firm can adopt either of the wage methods depending on the nature of a job and the worker's contribution towards the accomplishment of a work or production level.

Efficient Wage Theory
Efficiency wage theory advocates paying employees higher than the equilibrium market wage for their effort, this is not for generosity and consideration, but through cold hard desire for profit maximization. The logic behind the theory is simple because paying the employees above what economists call 'market equilibrium' wage levels will impact how much employees are motivated to work. Furthermore, efficiency wage theory posits that an employer must pay its workers high enough so that workers are incentivized to be productive and that highly skilled workers do not quit. In addition, efficiency Wage theory can be explained in four ways that paying a higher wage can improve the organization's productivity. These are: decreased shirking, increased retention, higher quality recruits, and healthier employees.

Research Methodology
Research Design
This study adopted ex-post research design which consist of both qualitative and quantitate analytical method. This method includes descriptive analyses and analytical method of Chi-square which was used to test the aforementioned hypothesis that poor reward system in the public sector has nothing to do with the high wave of corruption in the public sector operation.

The population of this study comprises of randomly selected staffs of three (3) federal ministries in Abuja. A population of 375 staffers were selected from these ministries with equal number of questionnaires to each ministry, which was randomly but carefully distributed among high, middle, and low level cadre of each of the ministry. Emphasis was placed on the respondent's

educational level so as to have a wider coverage regarding the subject matter of the study. It is pertinent to note that out of the three hundred and seventy five questionnaires distributed only three hundred and thirty were returned, representing 88%, after smoothening of the returned questionnaires, five were found invalid remaining three hundred and twenty five valid questionnaires, representing 86.7%, while the remaining 13.3% were the addition of both unreturned and invalid questionnaires. This is depicted in Figure 2
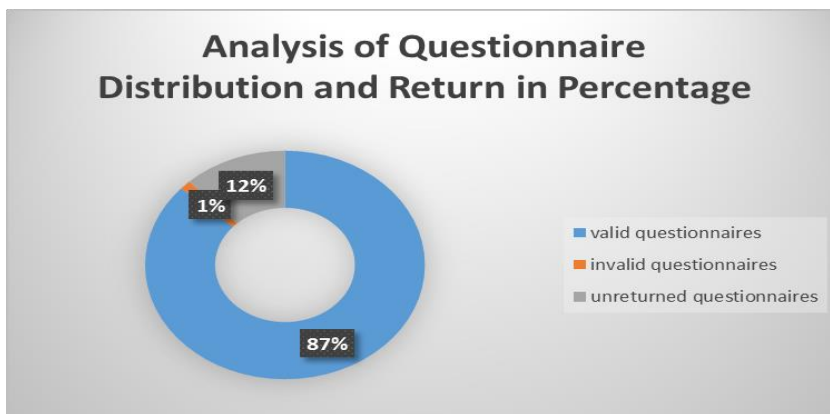
Figure 2: Questionnaire Analysis
Source: Authors' Design via survey

Sampling and Sample Techniques
The probability or representative sampling which is the one where the chance of each case being selected from the population is known and is usually equal for all cases. During the study, a probability sampling procedure was used, in specific, purposive sampling was used in order to obtain a sample which was a true representative of the population and usually tried to ensure that a range from one extreme to the other was included as explained earlier. This method was chosen because it gives the subjects in the population equal chance of being selected. A sample size of three hundred (375) respondents was used from randomly selected three ministries with each ministry having one hundred and twenty-five (125) questionnaires. Therefore, it is obvious that the source and method of data collection were purely primary and the instrument (or tool) of collection was structured questionnaire, administered by the researcher and analysed carefully using the method earlier discussed.

Presentation of Data and Discussion of Results
Bio-Data and Social Statistics

Table 1: Gender of Respondents

Variable	Characteristics	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	175		53.84%
	Female	150	325	46.16%
	Total	**325**		**100%**

Source: Authors' Survey (2021)

The Table 1 presents gender statistics of respondents which depicts two main gender composition (i.e. male, female) and revealed that 175 respondents representing 53.84% are male, while 150 respondents representing 46.16% are female, this indicates that more male responded and returned their questionnaire or could mean that there are more male in public service. These were therefore captured and descriptively represented in Figure 3.
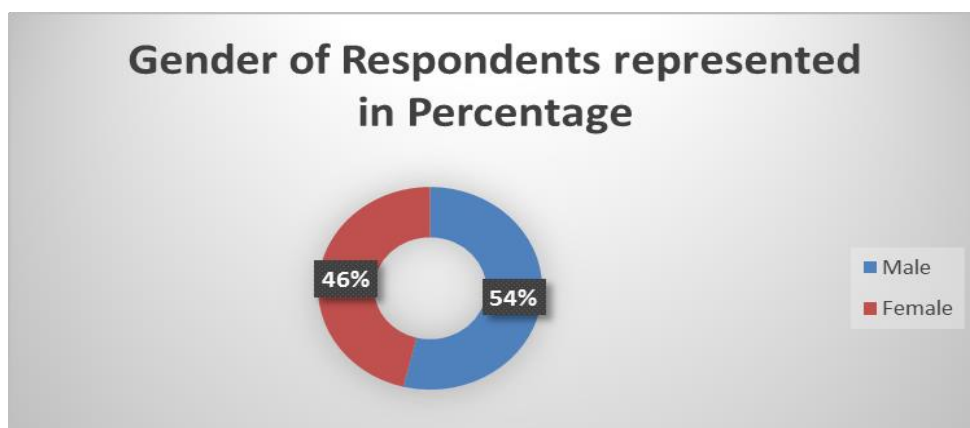
Figure 3: Gender Distribution
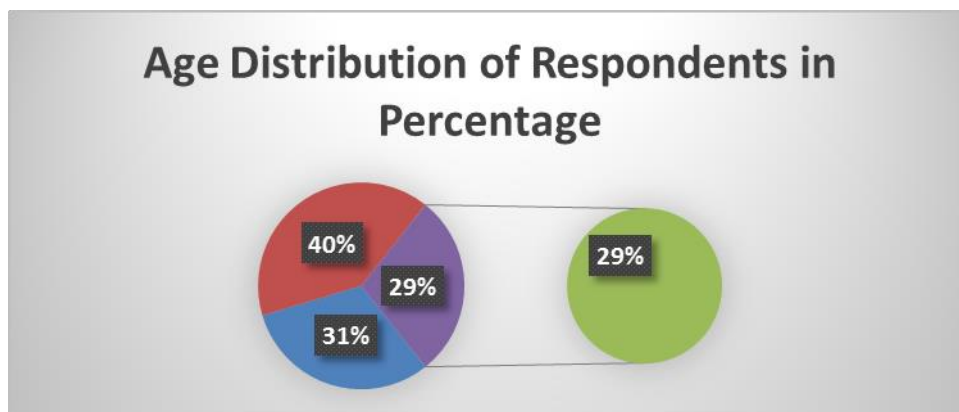*Source: Authors' Design via survey (2021)*

Table 2: Age of Respondents

Variable	Age Class	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Percentage
Respondents' Age	21-30	101		31.08%
	31-40	131	232	40.31%
	41 and above	93	325	28.61%
	Total	**325**		**100%**

Source: Authors' Computation (2021)

The Table 2 shows that 101 (31.08%) of the respondents are within the ages of 21-30years, while 131 respondents representing approximately 40% are within the ages of 31-40years, the highest in the classification, and an indication that majority of the work force are youth. The remaining 93 respondents stands for

approximately 28%, are within the ages of 41years and above. Hence, the categories of people that majorly responded falls within the age of 21 and 40 years. Meaning that the youth responded to the issues, responses are therefore regarded being worthy and depicted in Figure 4.
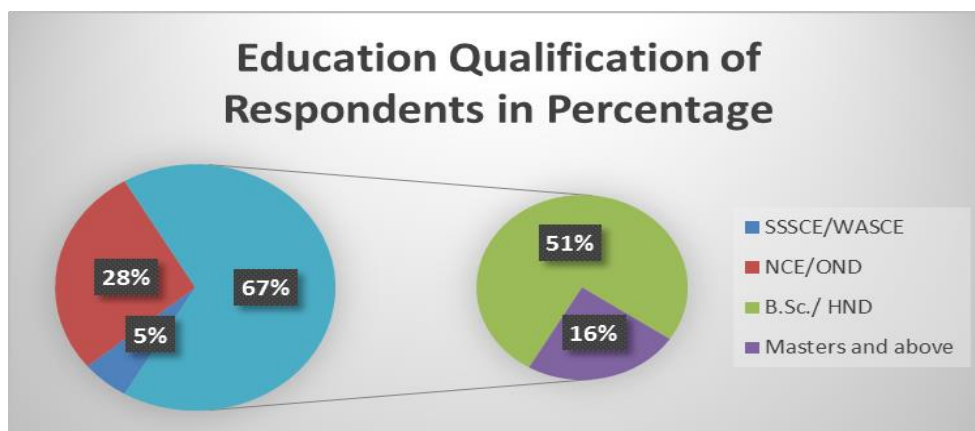

Figure 4: Age Distribution
Source: Authors' Design via survey (2021)

Table 3: Education Qualifications of Respondents

Variable	Education Classification	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Percentage
Highest Educational Qualification	SSSCE/WASCE	18		5.54%
	NCE/OND	90	108	27.69%
	B.Sc./ HND	165	273	50.77%
	Masters and above	52	325	16.00%
	Total	**325**		**100%**

Source: Author's Design and Survey (2021)

On the issue of education attainment of the respondents in Table 3, it shows that 18 respondents (representing approximately 6 per cent) have senior secondary school certificate examination or its equivalent, while 90 respondents (representing approximately 28%) hold either NCE or OND certificates. Furthermore, 165 respondents depicting approximately 51% are either first degree holders or higher national diploma holders, while the remaining 42respondents representing 16% of total valid respondents hold either Master degrees or PhD degrees.

Figure 5: Education Classification
Source: Authors' Design via survey (2021)

Hence, majority of the respondents are graduates, which imply that the quality of the valid questionnaire returned is guarantee and reliable. These graduates are the 67% on the larger pie chart and are analyzed in the smaller pie chart by decomposing the 67% into 51% and 16% for first degree and master and PhD degrees holders respectively in Figure 5.

Table 4: Respondents' Years of Experience

Options	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5 years	46		14.15%
Less than 10 but more than 5 years	96	142	29.54%
Less than 15 but more than 10 years	108	250	33.23%
15 years and above	75	325	23.08%
Total	**325**		**100%**

Source: Author's Survey (2021)

The analysis of data in Table 4 relates to the number of years respondent has spent within the work environment. It was gathered that 14% of the respondents are new staffs, they have spent between (0-4) years, furthermore, 96 staffs representing approximately 30% had spent more than 5year but less than ten (10) years in-service (that is, between zero (0) and (9) years. The third category of year in- service was those that have spent more than ten (10) years but less than fifteen (15) years which represented approximately 33% of the total respondents.

Figure 6: Years of Experience Distribution
Source: Authors' Design via survey (2021)

Finally, 75 respondents, representing approximately 23% had spent fifteen (15) years and above, the implication is that more experience staffs were contacted, which could make the quality of responses more valid.

Table 5: The Respondents Cadre

Options	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Percentage
Lower Cadre	75		23.07%
Middle Cadre	135	210	41.54%
Higher Cadre	80	290	24.62%
Management Cadre	35	325	10.77%
Total	**325**		**100%**

Source: Author's Survey (2021)

The representation in Table 5 depicts structure of staff level in term of experience, education attainment and year of service, which is often regarded as cadre. Generally, there are four structured cadre which are as classified in the Table 5, the lower cadre are those public servants with little or no education, while the middle cadre those above lower cadre, they are mostly holders of national diploma (ND) or Nigerian certificate of education (NCE), or its equivalent. The higher cadre, and the management cadre are the holders of higher national diploma (HND), bachelor degrees and above, however, movement is allowed from lower cadre through the ladder to management cadre through promotion or re-appointment or with training and upgrade, though with some restriction.

Accordingly, 65% of respondents constitute the combination of lower and middle cadres with approximately 23% and 42% respectively, while the remaining 35% jointly stands for higher, and management cadres, these compositions will allow to test for both "need based" corruption and "greed based" corruption.

Intent Responses and Analytical Tools

The data collected base on the subject from the respondents are presented and analyzed in this section using Likert's 5 point rating scale and working out the mean and standard deviation from the responses to each research question. The summary of the results in respect of the only hypothesis tested using chi square analysis is also presented in this section.

Table 6: Summary of the impact of ICT on job losses in the banking sector in Nigeria

S/N	Variables	Mean (%)	Standard Deviation
1	There are different dimensions of corruption and corrupt practices in the Nigerian public and civil services sector	4.44(88.8)	1.1
2	The corruption level in the public service is endemic and could be seen as tradition	3.83(76.6)	1.1
3	The corruption dimension is systemic and run through the ranks and files in the public service system	3.80(76.0)	1.2
4	Virtually no public servant is absolutely free from a kind of corrupt practice or the other	3.50(69.0)	1.2
5	The reward system in the Nigerian public service is too poor	4.32(86.4)	1.3
6	The minimum wage legislation in Nigeria does not place an average civil or public servant above poverty line of 2 USD per day	3.60(72.0)	1.1
7	Many public servants in Nigeria are in one debt or the other to sustain livelihood	4.02(80.4)	1.2
8	Welfare packages that supposed to augment poor salary are either non-existence or insufficient in the public service sector.	3.80(76.0)	1.1
9	In the face of poor reward system in the Nigerian public service, corruption or corrupt practices become a coping strategy	4.00(80.0)	1.1
10	Expenditure-gap and (or) welfare-gap created as a result of poor 'take home' could only be bridged through involvement in corrupt practices	2.95(59.0)	1.1
11	Involvement in corrupt practices or corruption in the Nigerian public service is to satisfy basic needs of life. (need based corruption)	3.05(61.0)	1.3
12	Sometimes, some public servants in Nigeria involved in corruption, and corrupt practices due to greed, and massification of wealth (greed based)	3.70(74.0)	1.1
13	Corruption at any level is a violation of trust and Law	4.36(87.20)	1.3
14	Corruption in the public sector in Nigeria is a cankerworm that deterred growth of the economy.	4.37(87.40)	1.2
15	Corruption in the Nigerian public sector is responsible for the death of millions of Nigerians	3.56(71.20)	1.2
16	Public servant salary should be improved upon to remove the welfare gap being created, thereafter corruption should be jointly fought by all and sundry	4.23(84.60)	1.1

Source: Authors Survey and computation (2021)

The mean of means scores of the five rating 16 questions, which responses were analyzed in Table 6 is 3.85, this implies that on average the responses on those intent administered questions were affirmative, this is because it was above 3 points, which stands for indifference on the Likert scale. On the individual variable analysis, this trend was still followed for us to have a clearer understanding of the intent-content analysis and interpretation of each variable as relates to the subject matter.

There are four variables captured in the questionnaire, each of these variables was explained with four well-structured questions of intent which has direct linkage with the subject matter. They are; the existence of corruption or corrupt practices in the Nigerian public sector; existence of poor reward system in the public service (poor remuneration); poor reward system is the bane of corruption and corrupt practices; and finally, that corruption retard growth and could be minimized or eradicated. As discussed earlier, the formation of these four variables lies respectively on the following categories of questions, Q_1-Q_4 produced variable one, Q_5-Q_8 gives variable two, while variable three was coined out of Q_9-Q_{12}, lastly, the fourth variable was from the last four questions (Q_{13}-Q_{16}).

However, variable one was tested affirmative with average mean of 3.9 and a percentage of 78%, this confirmed the existence of corruption and corrupt practices in the Nigerian public service. The second variable was equally affirmative with the mean of 3.94, and approximately 79%, this gives evidence of existence of poor remuneration system in the Nigerian public service, the take home is often less than the subsistence level of income, which therefore creates expenditure-gap among the recipient of the income. The third variable was also attested to be affirmative, because the mean value was 3.45, and approximately 69%, it was affirmed that poor rewards system was responsible for corruption and corrupt practices in the Nigerian public services, it confirmed both 'need based' and 'greed based' corruption models. Lastly, the fourth variable was equally confirmed affirmative, it was shown that corruption is endemic in Nigerian public service system and thus retard the growth of the economy, and that it could be minimised through proper reward system and unpublicized anti-graft policy.

The study presented single hypothesis which is to be tested using the third variable that answered the research questions on whether or not the reward system was responsible for corruption in the Nigerian public (civil) service. This is done analytically using the chi-square technique of analysis, and its summary is presented in the Table 7.

Table 7: Summary of Chi-Square Result Testing the Hypothesis that Poor Reward System in the Public Service is not liable for Corruption and Corrupt Practices in the Nigerian Public Sector

Items	X^2 Calculated	X^2 Tabulated	Decision
Nigerian rewards system corruption in public services	13.34	5.49	H$_0$ rejected

DF = 4 **α**= 0.05 **N**=325**Probability**= 0.191
Source: Authors' computation (2021)

In order to empirically determine the relationship between the Nigeria public rewards system and corruption dimensions in the public service, this study in addition to the descriptive analysis takes a further step to adopt a non-parametric approach to analyses the subject matter using Chi-square technique to test the single hypothesis of the study.

From the Chi-square results summary in Table 7, the study rejects the null hypothesis and therefore accepts the alternative hypothesis that poor reward system in the public service is liable for corruption and corrupt practices in the Nigerian public sector among others. This is because the chi-square calculated was greater than the critical value of chi-square at 5 per cent statistical significant level (i.e. 13.24 > 5.49), for the study to have 95% confidence interval. In addition, the probability value of 19.1% is equally greater than the minimum acceptable statistical significant level of 0.05 (i.e. 5%), therefore H$_0$ is rejected while H$_1$ is accepted at 0.05 (5%) level of significant.

Conclusion and Recommendation
From the foregoing, this study unveils that public rewards system in Nigeria is poor and practically below the subsistence-income level and had stirred corruption as a coping strategy or income gap bridging strategy, this was in consonance with Promise (2011) who noted that the reward system in Nigeria is, perhaps, the poorest in World. Worst still, some states in the Federation besides paying penurious salaries, they still owed workers between two– nine month salaries. Also in the Latin America and Caribbean, Panizza (2011) equally filed similar report on the issue of public-private wage differential and corruption in the public system, however, he noted that it was prevalence among low education income level (a confirmation of needs based corruption model). Lastly, it is noteworthy that if workers are paid efficiently, there is possibility of minimizing corruption and other corrupts practices in the Nigerian public sector and still save a lot of money and properties.
This study therefore recommends that:
i. Political and more importantly economic situation in the country should always be considered in fixing wages and salaries of public

workers. For instance, currently in Nigeria there is existence of both inflation, and depreciation of naira resulting to high cost of both local and foreign goods (both consumer and capital goods), this results to a huge welfare loss which should be cushion by a responsive and responsible government through wage hike.

ii. Employment in public service should not be politicised, in order not to over blown the work-space, which eventually leads to underemployment of workforce, and higher wage bill for the fiat.

iii. An automated system could be built, that will have in-built mechanism for proper remuneration of workers, adjusting itself to any economic circumstances

Reference

An, W., & Kweon, Y. (2017). Do higher government wages induce less corruption" Cross country panel evidence. *Journal of Policy Modeling, 3*(9), 809–826.

Bakare-Aremu, T. A., & Adebanwa, A. A. (2014) An empirical examination of destructive impact of unemployment and corruption in a poverty ridden economy - The Nigerian experience, *Yaba Journal of Management Science, 9*(2), 24-33.

Bond, P. (2016). Persistent court corruption. *Economic Journal*, 118, 1333-1353.

Chen, C.X., & Sandino, T. (2012). Can wages buy honesty: The relationship between relative wages and employee theft. *Journal of Accounting Research, 50*(4), 967-1000.

Esione, U.O, Osita, F.C, & Chigbo D.N. (2020). Effect of reward on performance of workers in Nigeria public sector. *International Journal of trend in scientific Research and Development,* 4(2), 409-424.

Folorunso, B. A. (2007). Determinants and effects of corruption on investment, general price level and sustainable economic growth in Nigeria. *International Journal of Semantic Research, 2*(7), 123-134.

Gagliarducci, S., & Nannicini. T. (2011). Do better paid politicians perform better? Disentangling Incentives from Selection. *Journal of the European Economic Association, 11* (2), 369-398.

Igbokwe, P.I. (2017). Similarities and difference in the Nigeria civil service reforms. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 7*(6), 158-170.

Michael, S.A., Hassan, A., Chukwurah, D.C.J., & Joy, U.A. (2019). Reward system in the Nigerian political and public sector: The call for a paradigm shift in the 21st century. *International Journal of Learning & Development*, 2(5), 154-166.

Murana, A.O., Salahu, M.O., & Ibrahim, B.O. (2016). The impact of the Nigeria civil service reforms on effective service delivery. *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance,* 1(7), 1 – 20.

NSIWC, (2021). National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission (NSIWC) Annual Publication.

Osawe, C.O. (2014). Reengineering professionalism in Nigeria public service toward service delivery. *Review of Public Administration and Management,* 3(6), 63-75.

Panizza, U. (2001). Public sector wages and bureaucratic quality: Evidence from Latin America. *Economía,* 2(5), 97–151.

Pilapitiya, T. (2014). The impact of corruption on the human rights based approach to development. *United Nations Development Programme Oslo Governance Centre*, The Democratic Governance Fellowship Programme.

Promise, A.K.A. (2011). Minimum wage in Nigeria: Challenges and human resources practitioners intervention. *NJLIR,* 5(3), 1-7.

Tella, R., & Savedoff, W.D. (2011). Diagnosis corruption: Fraud in Latin America's Public Hospitals. *Inter-American Development Bank*: Washington, DC.

Treisman, D. (2017). What have we learned about the causes *of* corruption from ten years of cross-national empirical research. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9(10), 211-244.

Usman, D.U. (2016). Assessment of the implementation of 1972 Udoji's and 2003 Obasanjo's public service reforms in Nigeria: A neo–public management paradigm. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 1(10), 178 – 187.

Wraith, R., & Simpkins, E. (1963). *Corruption in developing countries*. London: Allen and Unwin.