

**PUBLIC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT PARADIGM ON PUBLIC SERVICE PERFORMANCE:
NIGERIAN PENDULUM**

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ABSTRACT

Public personnel administration draws heavily from private personnel administration and using such knowledge for successful management within the permanent bureaucracy. Professional management of people in government is fundamental towards public service performance and the public good. From the nineteenth century and now public sector human resource management continuous to move away from the traditional personnel management approach and heading towards the new public management paradigm for improving public service performance. With 219 participants and by the exploratory research design, the result of the study indicates strong positive correlation between public personnel administration and public service performance. The study suggests that further study could examine the relationship between law making and its interpretation on public sector human resource management. It recommends that public personnel administration should learn more from the new public management approach to enhance effectiveness.

Keywords: Permanent bureaucracy, New public administration, New public management, Law making and interpretation, The laboring class, Dynamics of public personnel management, Public interest, Career menopause, Public works department.

JEL: M10, M12,

1. INTRODUCTION

The origins of personnel administration, personnel management, public personnel administration, or public sector human resource management lie in the 19th century, and deriving from the efforts of great social reformers such as Lord Shaftesbury and Robert Owen. Their fierce criticisms of the free enterprise system and the hardship created by the exploitation of the laboring class by factory owners enabled the first group of personnel managers to be

appointed and thus provided the first frame of reference in which they worked to ameliorate their suffering. Such reports of employees, whether in the private or public domains being exploited by employers, flouting the law, and the problem of organizational distance between decision makers and those putting decisions into practice were common then. This remains a source of huge alienation, and employees vowing to protect themselves (Ogunyemi, 2020).

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, some of the larger employers with a paternalist approach began to appoint welfare officers to manage a series of new initiatives designed to make life less stressful for their employees (Torrington, et al, 2005). In the present century, many private and public sector employers are making frantic efforts either through the nomenclatures of personnel management, human resource management or what is termed public personnel administration or public sector human resource management to cater for the welfare of their employees.

While the motives are ostensibly charitable, it remains a business as usual because of the ethical challenge of not paying sincere attention to the welfare of the laboring class. In view of this brief historical perspective, it becomes clearer that both private and public sector personnel management have a common origin and concerned with recruiting, selecting, compensating, separating, training, and disciplining employees.

A significant difference in the concepts of public sector human resource management and private sector human resource management is that while the former operates within the political and government bureaucracy, the later follow the labour-management approach and also guided by corporate governance principles and the employers' associations. Also, the operation of public personnel administration tries to comply with public policy, to achieve certain goals, in the public interest.

It is concerned with employees in the public bureaucratic organizations like; ministries, parastatals, the military, police, and all government owned enterprises (GOEs). Personnel administration as a discipline is the process of obtaining, organizing and motivating the people required by either business or government organization, and developing a management style for effective service. The focus is on human beings and the conditions under which they work.

Therefore, a discussion on public personnel administration or public sector human resource management strictly relates to the management of human beings working in the government bureaucratic environment and characterized with both legal and political

considerations. Despite any discrepancies in definitions as regards public personnel administration or public sector human resource management, a major aim is to develop effective leadership in terms of personality, for necessary public service performance. This is important because leadership is central towards the successful implementation of public objectives, and also for the improvement of public service performance.

Leisink and Knies (2017) suggest that public sector human resource management contributes to a public service motivated workforce. They opine that a public service motivated workforce would also depend largely on the levels of management autonomy and flexibility characterized by such variables as performance related pay (PrP), performance management, and training and development (Andersen & Serritzlew, 2012, Andersen, 2009, Bach & Bordigna, 2013, Belle, 2013, Berg, 2006).

1.1. Research Problem

A fundamental challenge of public personnel management lies on its lack of identity arising from its original private sector perspective. This has led to the continuous usage of the terms public personnel administration; public personnel management and public sector human resource management, almost always interchangeably to mean the management of people working under the environment of government bureaucracy.

Compounding this issue is the political dimension in public sector management associated with pluralism in terms of tribes, languages, religions, and cultures as subsets of pluralism in some countries. For example, in Nigeria, the ambiguous implementation or interpretation of the federal character policy in employment and appointments often lend weight to this unfortunate situation.

To this extent, some appointments in the public sector are often done along these divides thereby eroding the power of public sector human resource management as instrument of improving public service performance. Recruitment in the public sector is usually a matter of political considerations and thus, making it very difficult to recruit the most effective and productive people. Public sector recruitment often underestimates the fact that beautiful curriculum vitae through professional employment consultants can be very misleading as mischievous referees are seldom willing to be frank.

The problem of pluralism also makes it possible for preselected candidates to be employed in the public sector at the detriment of qualified people and public service quality, and a tragedy of public personnel administration.

1.2. Research Objective

This study was designed to investigate the relationship between public personnel administration and public service performance.

1.3. Research Rationale

The result of this study is expected to be of immense benefit to students and scholars in the areas of management and business administration in particular, and other stakeholders interested in the efficient management of resources. It is no more in any doubt that the human being is the most important factor of production, but it is still in doubt whether the process of recruiting and selecting people in the public sector is appropriate to enhance public service performance. For example, the public sector is a very large scale organization, and to improve efficiency, will largely depend on the formation of its human capital.

Therefore, to assure the continuous upgrading of the public service, job security should depend on competitive recruitment, continued success in graded formal training period, performance evaluation, incentives for above-average achievement and competitive promotion or termination, if time limits for remaining in a position or grade are exhausted. Critical elements in public sector human resource management would also include training in organizing, controlling, accounting, auditing and accountability to improve performance (Boyne, et al, 1999, Giauque et al, 2012, Jacobsen, and Andersen, 2015, deLozada, 1999).

1.4. Research Questions

- i. Can the public service be used to solve social problems?
- ii. Is public personnel management influenced by political considerations?
- iii. Does a private employee operate under the same legal conditions with public sector employees?
- iv. Does private and public sector personnel administration adopt common operational techniques?
- v. Are lines of authority for public sector employees differ from those for private sector employees?

- vi. Is it true that the labour-management relations in the private sector differ from the rules in the public sector?
- vii. Is public personnel management exposed to public scrutiny?
- viii. Does private sector personnel management operate in the general public interest?
- ix. Is public personnel management concerned with how to hire and retain the best talent in the government bureaucracy?

1.5. Hypothesis

To achieve the objective of this study, the following hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho: There is no relationship between public personnel administration and public service performance.

Hi: There is a relationship between public personnel administration and public service performance.

1.6. Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is the structure of the study and reflects its relationship with the major variables of the research problem. This is always expressed as a model. A model is a reflection of reality, often used to define issues that would otherwise be lost in an excess of words. Thus, models help in improving the quality of research and also lead to theory building. The model for this original study is shown in figure 1.

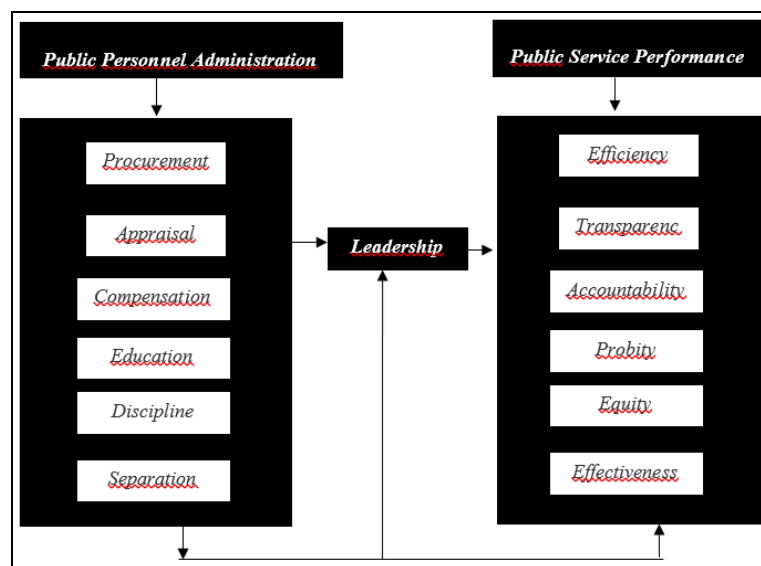


Figure 1: Public Personnel Administration and Public Service Performance Model

Public personnel administration process starts from the procurement stage involving recruitment and selection. Recruitment is concerned with developing a pool of job candidates in line with the human resource plan or strategy. The candidates are usually located through newspapers and professional journal advertisements, employment agencies, words-of-mouth and visits to colleges and university campuses.

On the other hand, selection involves evaluating and choosing from among job candidates after interviews, employment and skill tests, and reference checks. Regular appraisal of employees' performance is important in the public employment process to ensure that the government bureaucracy at all times has qualified manpower that is properly motivated. Performance management is now introduced as the cornerstone of people management, resulting from a multifunctional, high level working arrangements and decision-making process in public sector human resource management.

Performance appraisal is an organized, formalized, systematic process of assessing or evaluating job related strengths and weaknesses of an individual employee with the ultimate aim that if he performs well, such strengths are encouraged and reinforced and if he performs marginally, his work habits can easily be identified and redirected in a manner conducive to the set objectives. High performers are often compensated through promotions, pay increases and positions of responsibility, directed at achieving predetermined public goals.

In the public personnel management perspective, employees are encouraged to overcome weaknesses identified during performance appraisal through education, training and development. Employee education mostly involves sending them to formal tertiary institutions; like polytechnics and universities or colleges to improve on their academic qualifications so as to enhance performance and capacity for higher responsibilities in the future.

On the other hand, training and development as part of employee education aim at removing performance deficiencies and improving performance on the job. Due to rapid technological changes, training and development is increasingly recognized as a most important activity in the public sector human resource management process. The need for experience in terms of management and leadership development cannot be overemphasized because although training is good to improve performance on the job, but it is not true that training can entirely substitute for experience required for higher-level performance.

Performance requires discipline which is crucial in public personnel management, and without it the permanent bureaucracy runs the risk of not achieving its goals. Public sector employees are required to work towards the public interest and require discipline, in terms of integrity, self-control and sensitivity to the concerns of others. To this extent, governments at all levels provide code of ethics, financial regulations or instructions for the guidance of public employees, and it is under the purview of public personnel management to discipline any employee who flouts the rules of engagement.

However, the issue of indiscipline cannot be ruled out in any human organization, therefore, discipline is an action taken against an employee for violating established rules and to redirect attention towards institutional goals. Public personnel management recognizes the necessity for separation or what is generally regarded as retirement. The word retirement often frightens employees as if they would never change employment or there would be no public sector reforms.

But the reality is that most candidates running for public political offices often identify downsizing or rightsizing the public workforce as a measure to reduce public corruption and simultaneously improve public service performance. Separation is also important in good public personnel management agenda so as to allow people who have reached their career menopause or perpetual nonperformers to go and make way for others who are fit, competent and ready to work so as to pursue public goals of accountability, transparency, and performance (Steen & Rutgers, 2011; Steijn, 2008; Vandervoct, et al, 2014; VanLoon, 2015; VanLoon et al, 2015; Mostafa, et al, 2015).

This conceptual framework stresses that public personnel management characterized by procurement, appraisal, compensation, education, discipline and separation has the great potential of resulting to effective leadership to drive public service performance. According to Goleman (1998) leadership is associated with the emotional competence of inspiring and guiding individuals and groups towards high performance while holding them accountable. He emphasizes that emotional competence is particularly central to leadership, a role whose essence is getting others to do their jobs more effectively. On the contrary, interpersonal ineptitude in leaders lowers everyone's performance; it wastes time, creates acrimony, corrodes motivation and commitment, builds hostility and apathy (Vandenabeele, 2014; Vandenabeele, et al, 2014; Vermeeren, et al, 2014; Weibel, et al, 2010).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW



Like public administration which is broadly defined as the management of all government affairs, public personnel management also involves all public sector human resource management in a manner that guarantees the best result with the least possible cost, and also protecting and enhancing the welfare of the employees (Rourke, 1984).

At the most general level, public personnel administration involves the establishment and application of policies and procedures for the procurement, deployment and maintenance of a public sector workforce. In other words, it means acquiring the best people available, paying them the least amount possible and matching the strongest skills to public organization's priorities (McGurk, 2010; Lodge & Hood, 2012).

In modern public personnel management, the process is often preceded by job description. In order to determine whether the characteristics of an applicant will meet the requirements of a job, it becomes necessary to provide an accurate reflection of what the job holder will be called upon to do. This means that job description states what is to be done, and how it is to be done. This is done through job analysis, by observations, interviews and questionnaire.

As the design of the job starts with tasks to be accomplished, it is also made broad enough to accommodate people's needs and desires. Before advertising vacancies, time is spent reviewing the actual need for the appointment. From job description, a position is classified in terms of its duties and responsibilities, but not in terms of the person filling the position. Position classification is the clustering of government jobs according to their nature, qualifications required, as well as duties and responsibilities. Position classification is used to provide equal pay for equal work for public employees (Gould-Williams, et al, 2014; Rosenbloom, 1982; Thompson, 1983; Leisink & Steijn, 2008; Leisink & Bach, 2014; Kim & Kellough, 2014).

Human resource from the national perspective encompasses the knowledge, skills, creative abilities, talents and attributes obtained in the population, while from the view point of individual organizations; it represents the totality of the inherent abilities acquired in managing the organization. The management of people in a private organization is known as manpower planning, human resource management or personnel management. while the management of people in the public sector is also known as public sector human resource management, public personnel administration or public sector manpower administration or

management. Personnel management is that part of management that deals with the activities of personnel in the organization from recruitment to retirement.

It is typically concerned with people at work and their relationships with the organization. The term personnel administration therefore, refers to creating, developing and utilizing a work group and involves all types of interpersonal relationships between superiors and subordinates (Nwizu, 2002; Sission & Storen, 2000; Sparrow & Cooper, 2003).

2.1. Early Public Personnel Management in Nigeria

Before 1900, the administration of the entity now known as Nigeria was by the British Government through the United African Company (UAC) and the Royal Niger Company (RNC). They were granted powers to monitor all trading activities ranging from the Niger Basin to the hinterland up North. As would be expected, it was difficult for the trading companies to handle activities ranging from military, administration, judicial and diplomatic control in the territory. Perhaps, on account of this, the British colonial administration had to take over on 1st January, 1900.

During this period, and before the country gained political independence in 1960, it went through many constitutional conferences until the Macpherson 1954 Constitution with its major features of devolution to the Regional Assemblies, some legislative and financial powers over a specified group of subjects; associated with social services, with limited powers of taxation as well. The approach was praised as forming the watershed between British rule and indigenous public administration in Nigeria. Thus, the civil or public service in Nigeria and by implication, public personnel administration had its origin in the creation of machinery by the British colonial government to consolidate her administration in Nigeria.

This was of huge political necessity because the political component of government is usually short-termed and politicians leave at the expiration of at most a second term. According to Udeze (2000) the life of a Nigerian administration like its American counterpart is four years. The civil service on the other hand, remains to serve subsequent governments. It is the reservoir of administrative, professional, technical, clerical and other rank and file personnel, upon which rests the huge responsibility of implementing government policies and programmes.

This is in agreement with the philosophy of modern public administration with its major activity being the implementation of public policy. Basically, the civil service as part of the executive arm of the government comprises all servants of the state other than holders of

political and judicial offices who are employed in a civil capacity and whose remuneration is paid wholly and entirely out of monies voted by parliament. It does not include armed forces personnel, police, and judicial officers who are categorized as public officers.

Accordingly, the British colonial administration first introduced paid public employment in Nigeria, with the corresponding style of public personnel administration, and public departments, like the public works department (PWD) were also the first beneficiaries of the civil or public servants as they were all collectively called in the beginning. Based on the foundation laid by the British colonial administration, at political independence in 1960, Nigerians who took over the realms of political and administrative activities, placed emphasis on economic, political, and social development.

However, despite the elegant public administration cum public personnel management mechanisms put in place by the colonialists, one major criticism was the denial of key and policy making positions to Nigerians on the basis of no experience and not qualified decision used by the colonial masters to deny Nigerians jobs in the public sector. Because of this situation, the few early indigenous public officers grew out of discharged military personnel placed in lower positions, mainly as store keepers, messengers, security men, chief clerks, among others. Since governments come and go, the need to maintain an administrative structure to provide top flight support for executive policy makers sustains the concept of permanent secretary and its permanence in the permanent bureaucracy (Awolowo, 1988; Ejimofe, 1987; Nicolson, 1969; Olaopa, 2020; Maduabum, 2006).

2.2. Dynamics of Public Personnel Management

Public personnel management is suffocated in several areas because of the dynamism of the operating environment. Some of these can be identified as contradictions and paradoxes.

- | | |
|------|---|
| i. | There is always power tussle among people in the permanent bureaucracy. Recruitment in the public service is often subjected to manipulation by political office holders that seem to jeopardize the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector human resource management. |
| ii. | Interpretation and implementation of laws and regulations have different meanings from different top public officers. There are cases where one public officer will make an appointment in an official capacity only for such to be reversed by another officer, thus, tossing the personnel management process back and forth, with its attendant cost and time wastage. (Nigro, and Kellough, 2000) |
| iii. | In a federation like Nigeria, the issue of pay in states differs from one state to another. There is no uniformity or consistency and this makes it cumbersome for public personnel management for people who migrate from one state to another on account of interstate transfer of service to settle down. |
| iv. | Inconsistencies in retirement age of some categories of public officers remain a source of confusion in the process of public personnel management. A situation where some people in the public service retire at say, |

60 years, and others between 65 and 70 years, does not allow for motivation across board. It is also a source of constant agitation among public and civil servants, in Nigeria.

v. Personal interest of big men who are corrupt sometime work against public interest and sound public sector human resource management. These people whether in or out of the corridors of power, seek to undermine the permanent bureaucracy through corrupt practices to influence public personnel management to the detriment of the public good. There has been bad news of cash-for-employment in the public service of countries like Nigeria.

vi. Weak labour-management relations cripple effective public sector human resource management. Government is often not willing to honour agreements with employees thus forcing the labour unions to call them out on strike. This is imperative because collective agreement would be useless if the union has no right to pursue employees' demands to the point of insistence and the last resort, which is strike. Strike is concerned with withholding of labour supply in order to bring economic pressure to bear on the employer to cause him to grant employees the union demands. In effective labour-government relations, a failure of public personnel management provides the opportunity for the union to emphasize that the employees' have the fundamental right to withdraw their labour otherwise they become slaves (Abimbola, 2020, Adesina, 2020a, 2020b, Adewusi, 2020).

These contradictions are unique to the architecture of public sector management, but fall within the purview of public personnel management. The political executives have control over the permanent bureaucracy, with regard to public policy implementation.

After a law is formulated by the legislature and signed by the President or Governor, then the next step is for the various administrative departments to begin the process of implementation with a window of opportunity to advise the political executive to correct any obvious contradictions not in the public interest.

Such advice from the personnel department is necessary because the legislature is typically concerned with the formulation of public policy, and the political executive primarily responsible for implementation may be unable, incapable, or unwilling to develop precise guidelines for the subordinate departments because of the complexity, lack of time, interest, or the information on the issue under consideration.

Contradictions in public personnel management always occur because chief executives like Presidents and Governors often find themselves competing with other political factors to influence administrators and the permanent bureaucracy by using various tools such as executive orders, in attempts to undermine the architecture of public personnel management. In most cases, the political executive seeks to set aside public policy or the appointment of heads of executive departments, who bring their values, beliefs, and pressures to their decisions and actions (Spitzer, 1987; Gossett, 2002; Condrey, 2002; Hamilton, 2002).

Obviously, the function of public personnel administration in recent history has continued to grow in strength and not only includes the recruitment, selection and placement

of employees, but also attempts to improve relationships between the permanent bureaucracy, the political executive, employees, and employees unions or representatives by promoting the general well-being of the employees (Horton, 2006; Jacobsen, et al, 2014; Kjeldsen & Jacobsen, 2013; Kjeldsen, 2013; Knies & Leisink, 2014; Njoku, 2017; Jeannot, 2006; Sabharwal, 2013).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A combination of the quantitative and qualitative techniques of the exploratory research design was used for the study (Cresswell, 2009). This method is historical in nature and does not often require a large sample or a structured questionnaire. Abebrese and Smith (2014) state that the strength of the qualitative research technique lies in its capacity to provide insights, rich details and thick descriptions. They emphasize that richness is provided by paying very close attention to both concept, context, and process.

The population of the study composed of the people in Nigeria, and data were generated from both primary and secondary sources like personal interviews, journals, books, newspapers, government records, labour bulletins, and other relevant sources of data. The sample was selected through the judgmental method while the sample size of 219 respondents was determined by the sample ratio concept. Data were analyzed using descriptive and Ordinary Least Square (OLS) statistical techniques. The OLS regression analysis was based on a unique model specification.

3.1. Model Specification

Model specification is the expression of a relationship into precise mathematical form. According to Koutsoyiannis (1977) economic theory does not state whether a relationship will be expressed in linear form, quadratic form, or in a cubic form. On the strength of this, it was decided to specify the relationship between public service performance (PSP) and public personnel administration (PPA) as follows:

Where:

PSP	=	Public service performance
PRO	=	Procurement
APP	=	Appraisal
COM	=	Compensation

- SEP = Separation
- b₀ = Constant term
- b_i, b₂, b₃, b₄ = Coefficient attached
- t = Time period
- u = Stochastic error term

4. PRESENTATION OF RESULT

Table 1: Profile of Respondents (n=219)

	Description	Category	Total	Percentage
i	Gender	a) Female	75	34.25
		b) Male	144	65.75
ii	Education	a) Certificates	65	29.68
		b) Diplomas	95	43.38
		c) Degrees	59	26.94
iii	Age	a) 18 – 35 years	80	36.53
		b) 36 – 60 years	101	46.12
		c) 61 – 75 years	38	17.35
iv	Experience	a) Below 10 years	60	27.40
		b) 11 – 30 years	120	54.79
		c) 31 and above	39	17.81
v	Status	a) Low	50	22.83
		b) Middle	90	41.10
		c) High	79	36.07

Table 2: Analysis of Responses by Mean

S/ N	Restatement of Research Questions	Scores					Row scores	Sample size	Mean	Decision mean @ 3 points	Grand mean
		SA	A	N	D	SD					
		5	4	3	2	1					
i	Good public service can solve social problems	70	80	1	2	46	823	219	3.76	True	
ii	Public personnel administration is influenced by politics	100	75	2	2	40	850	219	3.88	True	
iii	Private sector employees have no different operating conditions	30	20	4	1	164	408	219	1.86	False	
iv	Private and public sector personnel management do not use the same techniques	40	35	2	5	137	493	219	2.25	False	
v	Lines of authority differs in private and public sectors	95	60	1	3	60	784	219	3.58	True	
vi	Labour-management relations in the private and public sectors are the same.	20	30	5	2	162	401	219	1.83	False	
vii	Public personnel management is not exposed to public scrutiny	15	45	4	1	154	423	219	1.93	False	
viii	The permanent bureaucracy influences public personnel administration.	110	50	2	2	55	815	219	3.72	True	
ix	Private personnel administration does not operate in public interest	85	95	3	1	35	851	219	3.89	True	

x	Public personnel management is not concerned with having the best talents	78	98	2	2	39	831	219	3.79	True	3.14
Xi	Public personnel management suffers from inconsistent interpretation of legal frameworks.	120	60	1	2	36	883	219	4.03	True	

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Variables	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	2440.274	2520.807	0.980741	0.4780
PRO	0.006570	1.711772	2.012412	0.0110
APP	78.62103	12.53817	6.751329	0.0000
COM	4.309640	20.35705	0.175060	0.7710
SEP	-62.34861	65.75041	-1.206520	0.3450
R.squared	0.910241	Mean dependent var.	23622.41	
Adjusted R-squared	0.836101	S.D. dependent var.	26418.20	
S.E. of regression	8240.641	Akaike info criterion	2.210370	
Sum squared resid.	1.02E+08	Schwarz criterion	20.45105	
Log likelihood	-316.5089	F-Statistic	44.87174	
Durbin-Watson stat.	2.364510	Prob(F-Statistic)	0.000000	

Source: E-View Statistical Package.

4.1. Discussion

A discussion on public personnel administration, relates typically to how human resource managers handle the issues of recruitment, selection, evaluation, promotion, education, discipline, and separation of employees in the government bureaucracy; its ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs), public enterprises (PEs), the police and the military. However, public personnel management draws certain practices from the private sector and uses such knowledge to promote public service performance in line with the new public service movement (NPS) (Light, 1999).

The NPS movement focuses on democratic public governance and re-imagining the accountability of public administrators towards citizens' comfort, with the ultimate agenda of increasing efficiency and improving public service performance. The conceptual framework as in figure 1 argues that good public personnel management will lead to quality public leadership that would not compromise the values and interests of the citizens and the general public in personnel decisions. It must also recognize the new public administration (NPA) paradigm, to the extent that decent pay and job security are no longer the only measures potential public employees seek.

They now want work flexibility, interesting work life, and the opportunity for professional development and personal fulfillment with regard to work-family balance. Respondents selected for this study were qualified and experienced to make meaningful

contributions to enhance the academic potency of the study. Their profile is shown in table 1, and the analysis of responses also shown in table 2. The respondents were of the view that good public service can solve social problems, and that public personnel administration is often influenced by political considerations. It was revealed that private and public sector personnel administration do not use the same functional techniques and that line of authority differ in private and public sectors.

They rejected the notion that labour-management relations in the private and public sectors are the same, and also that public personnel management is not exposed to public scrutiny. They agreed that private sector personnel management does not always operate in the public interest, and that public sector personnel management is not always concerned with having the best talents due to political considerations. It was the opinion of the respondents that public personnel management suffers from inconsistent interpretation of laws, rules, regulations, and procedures with regard to procurement in the public sector.

For example, in Nigeria, the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) and the Police Service Commission (PSC) are locked in a tussle as regards the correct interpretation of the relevant sections of the country's Constitution to determine the right authority to recruit constables into the Nigeria Police Force (Kalu, 2020). At a grand mean of 3.14, over the decision mean of 3.00, the analysis proved that there is positive association among the variables of interest. The regression analysis in table 3 was used to complement the analysis in table 2, and also to determine the degree of relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study. In regression analysis, R^2 , shows the highest percentage value that the independent variable explains in the dependent variable.

In this original study, the R^2 , value of 0.91 means that about 91 percent variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable. The goodness-of-fit test of the model is also very good at the adjusted R^2 , value of 0.84. The value of Durbin-Watson is 2.4 that lies within the range between 1.5 and 2.5. Therefore, it can be stated that there is no autocorrelation among the independent variables of interest. The F-test and t-test were significant at 0.05 level. What this technically means is that there is strong positive correlation between public personnel management and public service performance. This result is splendid and supports the earlier finding of Leisink and Knies (2017) that ongoing public sector personnel reforms and policies in Europe aim at increasing efficiency and public service performance. This is the objective of the study.

4.2. Scope for Further Study.

The problem of inconsistencies in legal interpretations of rules impedes speedy public decision-making. Therefore, further study could examine the relationship between law making and its interpretation to improve harmony so as to improve public service performance.

4.3. Recommendations

- i. Public personnel administration should learn more from the NPA paradigm to enhance effectiveness.
- ii. Public personnel management should always try to emphasize meritocracy despite pressures from the political class. This is the only way to improve service quality.
- iii. The permanent bureaucracy should support the institutionalization of credible public personnel management mechanism to preserve the integrity of governance.
- iv. The National Assembly (NASS) should take a stand on what is the retirement age of all civil / public servants in Nigeria to avoid discrimination in public employment on the basis of age.

5. CONCLUSION

Private personnel management involves the employment process in business organizations, while public personnel administration relates to the same process in the government bureaucracy. Public personnel administration is escaping from the traditional approach and trending towards the NPA and aiming at efficiency and improving public service performance. 219 respondents participated in the study based on the exploratory research design and the result showed strong positive relationship between public personnel administration and public service performance.

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7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

This author declares no conflict of interest in respect of the authorship and/or the publication of this paper.

8. FUNDING

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9. ORIGINALITY

Although literature on public personnel administration is extensive, there are no sufficient reports on it and public service performance in Nigeria. This is one of the new works in recent years emphasizing the originality of public personnel management in Nigeria to establish a correlation between it and public service performance.

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