



Ethnic Diversity and Effectiveness Recruitment Exercise in Delta State Public Service

BENJAMIN ERHIRHIE, ONOFERE PRINCE WILL OKEREKA
Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

Abstract. The nature of contemporary democratic governments has evolved significantly. This transformation is attributed to the increasing responsibility placed on the government to ensure the well-being of a larger portion of the population. This characteristic of the constitution reflects the social contract theory, compelling the government to fulfill expectations by appointing qualified and competent individuals to public service roles. This paper explores the challenges arising from the influences of ethnic diversity, which tend to undermine the adherence to merit principles in the recruitment processes of the Delta State Public Service. The study is grounded in the Weberian bureaucratic model, offering recommendations to address the issues affecting the effectiveness of recruitment exercises in the Delta State Public Service due to primordial factors. One key recommendation is the implementation of measures that prioritize merit over traditional recruitment methods. Specifically, the paper suggests that the recruitment process should be based on the expertise of recognized professionals in the respective fields, aiming to hire the necessary staff while avoiding an excess of personnel in the system.

1. Introduction

The significance of ethnic diversity on the efficiency of recruitment processes within the Delta State Public Service is noteworthy. This is due to the fact that ethnic diversity is a prevalent natural occurrence in many nations (Rubinstein & Brenner, 2014). In Nigeria, ethnicity exerts a substantial influence on various aspects of society (Rindap and Mari, 2014). Ogunrotifa (2012) observed that in Nigeria, ethnicity has contributed to the prioritization of narrow and personal interests over national interests, leading to instances of violent agitations.

Nigeria boasts a population of approximately 183 million individuals distributed across 36 states and 774 local government areas (National Population Commission, 2017). The country is characterized by the presence of 371 distinct ethnicities (Nigeria Local, 2014; Online Nigeria, 2016). The multi-ethnic nature of Nigeria suggests a proclivity for exhibiting bias based on ethnicity (Adegami & Uche, 2015; Nnahuhe et al., 2014). Delta State, situated in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria and named after the Niger Delta, emerged on August 27, 1991, following the division of the former Bendel State. Delta State encompasses diverse ethnic groups, with the Urhobo people residing in the Delta Central Senatorial district, the Ukwuani, Ika, and Aniocha-Oshimili (Igbo) in the Delta North Senatorial district, and the Isokos, Ijaws, Itsekiris, and parts of Urhobos occupying the Delta South Senatorial district. Additionally, there are smaller tribes like the Olukumi and Igalas in the Delta North region, which have been largely assimilated by the larger Igbo group.

Entry into the Delta State Public Service for positions at salary grade level 06 and beyond is carried out under the authority and oversight of the Civil Service Commission. These appointments are formalized through either a written letter issued by the commission's director or through a formal agreement established between the officer and the Delta State Government, including its appointed representatives such as permanent secretaries and heads of extra-ministerial departments (Delta State Public Service Rules, 2009:8-9). Junior staff recruitment at salary grade levels 01-05 within each ministry is conducted with the aim of ensuring a geographic representation across the state.

Meanwhile, the Civil Service Commission is responsible for appointing individuals to Senior Cadres based on available vacancies after proper advertising as the need arises. Additionally, all individuals under consideration by the Civil

Service Commission are required to complete Form No. DSCSC 2, through which their backgrounds undergo thorough scrutiny (Delta State Public Service Rules, 2009:12). Despite the crucial role expected of public services in the socioeconomic and political development at international, national, state, and local government levels, it is surprising that the recruitment system and practices, which should ideally attract, secure, create, promote, and assemble a team of competent, professional, efficient, career-minded, and productive human resources, are hindered by external institutional and organizational factors.

These constraints undermine the effectiveness, utility, and applicability of the public institution, which is supposed to be a key participant in the comprehensive and diverse development process. The Delta State public service serves as a tangible illustration. The recruitment system and practices in the Delta State public service exhibit characteristics such as favoritism, nepotism, ethnicity, reliance on top governmental connections, involvement in institutional and state politics, and dysfunctionality. It is essential to highlight that, since the transition to a democratic system in 1999, the procedures within the Delta State public service have noticeably lacked scientific and professional rigor.

Whenever a recruitment process is set to begin, the prevalent practices disregard professionalism and resort to various unethical methods, leading to a scenario where merit is overlooked in favor of mediocrity. Notably, positions are allocated to politicians, including the governor, deputy governor, commissioners, members of the Delta State House of Assembly, chairpersons, and members of both statutory and non-statutory boards, judges, and other influential political figures. This results in a manipulation and orchestration of appointments within the state public service to primarily accommodate the nominees or candidates associated with the mentioned individuals. This observation is drawn from interviews with legislators, commissioners, board members, and personal experiences as a Banking Representative and consultant in Asaba from 2000 to 2007. While interviews with applicants might be conducted as a mere procedural formality, they are rarely utilized effectively. Consequently, the state public service, as the end-user institution, suffers from inefficiency, incompetence, poor organizational and work attitudes, conservatism, lack of innovation, apathy, lack of planning, overstaffing, insensitivity, rigidity, truancy, absenteeism, laziness, and malingering.

As a result, employment within the Delta State public service finds itself entangled in a dilemma between various external factors such as influential government connections, ethnic affiliations, and state politics on one side, and the principle of meritocracy on the other. The most influential among these factors is ethnicity, which not only distorts the principles of meritocracy but also poses a significant threat to the functionality, operability, and viability of the ostensibly well-designed recruitment system in Delta State. It is undeniable that the configuration of ethnic diversity and the efficacy of recruitment exercises in Delta State is such that the competitive short-term tactics and long-term strategies employed by the political and governmental class in Delta State dictate the outcomes of the decision-making process related to the recruitment of candidates for employment. For example, each sitting legislator will endeavor to effectively represent their constituency by recommending individuals from their respective areas.

Crucially, the chairman and commissioners of the civil service commission, being political appointees, align themselves with and adhere to the desires and influences of the political and governmental class. This alignment is due to the inherent connection between politics and administration, necessitating effective management of various external factors to mitigate their dysfunctional impacts in both the short and long term. White (1958) highlighted that the recruitment process reflects the tension between humanitarianism and the need for special competence. The inherent risks associated with ethnic diversity and the effectiveness of recruitment exercises in Delta State could be alleviated through a scientifically principled approach executed by an impartial agency. The Nigerian public service system, which serves as a model for the Delta State public service, underscores the importance of uniformity, standardization, and transparency in selecting competent employees (Okereka, 2015:10). Despite these emphases, it is widely recognized that the recruitment and selection process lacks equity and transparency, as commonly acknowledged (Babura, 2003:42).

1.1 Statement of Problem

A credible, competent, and efficient public service is one that fulfills its contractual commitments to the citizens. The efficiency and sustained ability to meet the needs of the people depend on the caliber of personnel employed and entrusted with significant responsibilities (Okereka, 2015:10). According to Tyagi (2004:397, cited in Okereka, 2015:10), the public services in France, Britain, and Canada have transcended biases by appointing

high-quality personnel, thereby aiding their political leadership in fulfilling their contractual obligations to the public. Consequently, the well-being experienced in these developed societies can be attributed to good governance supported by an efficient public service system. Unfortunately, the situation in Nigeria, particularly in the Delta State public service, contrasts with this exemplary model. The recruitment process in Delta State is observed to be fraught with criteria that undermine the effectiveness of the recruitment exercise.

The indiscriminate consideration of factors such as nepotism, ethnic or tribal sentiments, favoritism, influential government connections, institutional and state politics, corruption, adherence to the federal character principle, and other primordial elements has significantly undermined the pursuit of merit, making the achievement of an effective recruitment exercise challenging in the Delta State public service. Despite being modeled after the Nigeria federal service system, which emphasizes uniformity, standardization, transparency, and merit (FGPSR, 2008:020102), the Delta State public service's recruitment process evidently lacks merit. This deficiency hinders the recruitment of the most qualified individuals for available positions within the service. Over the past decade of democratic rule, both Nigeria and Delta State have faced various policy failures leading to inadequate execution and project abandonment. The underlying issue lies in the need to reassess these identified factors to understand why recruitment bodies struggle to resist primordial tendencies such as ethnicity, adherence to the federal character principle, religious influence, and party loyalty, all of which have significantly compromised the recruitment process in Nigeria and, specifically, in Delta State (Al-Gazah 2006:15).

The objective of this study is to offer comprehensive insights into the aforementioned issues, serving as a resource for the selection of qualified personnel for the public service. The goal is to overcome challenges related to ethnic diversities and other primordial factors that impede the effective implementation of recruitment exercises within the Delta State public service.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The overarching goal of this study is to thoroughly investigate the primordial factors that hinder the seamless application of the effectiveness recruitment principle in managing personnel within the Delta State public service. The specific objectives of this study revolve around the following considerations;

That an efficient and adequate implementation of the recruitment exercise principle would serve as an instrument for the Delta State recruitment body to fulfill its constitutional mandate to the people.

That the right applicability and strictly adherent to the principles of recruitment policy would serve as potent factor for the relevant authority to employ and retain competent officers in the public service. Recommend a veritable template that would improve recruitment exercise in the Delta State public service.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is presented as follows:

- The study will present a better way forward for the public service to embark on a credible and effective recruitment exercise.
- The study will contribute to existing literature in the field of personnel management.
- The study will become more relevant in the sense that the general public will become passive player and beneficiary of government policies and programmes through adequate implementation by capable officers.
- The study will become significant to scholars and practitioners because it will present a roadmap or channel for managing employees.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the above stated problems and objectives, the following research questions have been raised which this study provide relevant answers:

- Has ethnic diversity in recruitment have any direct relationship with the current status of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the Delta State public service?
- Will the Delta state public service keep to merit in its recruitment exercise despite these primordial factors of ethnicity, nepotism and others?
- Is there a possible way of implementing a credible recruitment policy that would be differentiated from these aforementioned problems?

2. Definition of Concepts

In this study, we have included definitions for specific concepts to ensure clarity and understanding among our readers. This step is essential to prevent potential confusion and

misunderstandings regarding our intended meanings (Okereka 2015:2). Consequently, the subsequent terms have been clarified in the context of this study.

Ethnic Diversity: Ethnic diversity refers to the presence of people from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds or identities. It is the cultural diversity you find within a single entity. This entity can be as small as a business or community, or as large as a country or nation.

Ethnicity: Is the cultural agent that includes beliefs, nationality, language or ancestry that give a person a distinct sense of belongingness amongst a group.

Diversity: Means including or acknowledging people from a wide range of backgrounds that include race, ethnicity and gender.

Effective Recruitment: Means more than hiring the right person for the job. A fast and efficient recruitment process can reduce costs, enhance a company's reputation both from a market and candidate perspective and ensure that the very best talent is identified.

Public Service: A public service or service of general interest is any service intended to address specific needs pertaining to the aggregate members of a community. In Nigeria, public service encompasses agencies of government, civil service, the legislature and judiciary.

3. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

3.1 Literature Review

An examination of the extensive factors contributing to a stagnant public service due to questionable recruitment practices necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the conceptual and environmental elements influencing recruitment components, leading to a decline in effectiveness. In Nigeria, specifically in Delta State, the efficiency of recruitment processes is closely linked to the characteristics of the Nigerian environment, giving rise to challenges in managing ethnic diversity in public sectors and fostering forced unity. Despite these issues, relevant literature has been reviewed along this thematic line.

Examining the place of ethnic diversity as factors inhabited the implementation of effectiveness recruitment exercise in the Delta State Public Service

Human resources are regarded as the most crucial, valuable, complex, and unpredictable assets. This resource is responsible for processing other resources, ensuring that the outcomes contribute to the organization's goals (Mukoro, 2005).

Recruitment holds significant importance for any organization throughout its entire existence. It involves the process of actively seeking, contacting, and evaluating potential employees to determine their appropriateness for appointment. Recruitment encompasses a series of activities aimed at acquiring a sufficient number of suitable individuals from the right places at the right time. Its purpose is to select individuals who best align with the workplace's needs, fostering the development and maintenance of a qualified and adequate workforce that enables the organization to fulfill its human resource plan. Despite these considerations, it is widely acknowledged that the recruitment and selection exercises in the Nigerian public service have been politicized, leading to consequential and dysfunctional effects on institutional and employee productivity, decision-making quality, program execution, and the delivery of quality public services (Ejumudo, 2011)..

The presence of a skilled and efficient workforce is not a random occurrence but is achieved through a deliberate job analysis and recruitment process. The individuals hired in an organization function as the central element around which other resources orbit. This enables the organizational machinery to operate smoothly, promoting greater effectiveness, efficiency, and economic performance. This underscores the importance of structuring the personnel in any organization, as they play dual roles as providers for their families and agents of progress for society as a whole (Vicker-staff in Mukoro, 2005). Recruitment is a series of activities designed to secure an adequate number of qualified individuals at the right time and from appropriate sources (Nickels et al., 2007). Its objective is to identify and place those who best align with the workplace's needs and to cultivate and retain a competent and sufficient workforce, enabling the organization to realize its human resource plan.

According to Okereka (2015), advanced societies utilize vital statistics as a means to continuously update census data. Such registration data serve as a valuable tool for both the government and the public in executing effective and comprehensive national development plans. However, since gaining independence, Nigeria has struggled to establish a dependable registration system. The National Population Commission initiated a program to implement successful vital registration centers in all local government areas of the country, making it imperative to assess the processes involved. Consequently, this study aims to scrutinize these processes and highlight factors that hinder the national vital registration exercise in Nigeria, primarily influenced by the country's ethnic diversity.

The few definitions provided above clearly showed what an effective and efficient recruitment exercise must entail.

3.2 Ethnic Diversity

Ethnic diversity refers to the variety of cultures coexisting within a singular entity, which can range in size from a small business or community to a larger entity such as a country or nation. This diversity results from the combination of two key terms. The first is a person's ethnicity, which serves as the cultural identifier encompassing beliefs, nationality, language, or ancestry, providing individuals with a distinct sense of belonging within a particular group. The second term, diversity, involves recognizing individuals from a broad spectrum of backgrounds, encompassing factors like race, ethnicity, and gender. Essentially, ethnic diversity involves categorizing individuals based on cultural, tribal, linguistic, or other distinguishing factors (Parboteeah, Seriki & Hoegl, 2014).

Among various factors, ethnicity stands out as a significant influence contributing to the ongoing reduction in the independence of recruiting bodies. It is an undeniable reality that every leader is a product of a specific ethnic group. However, it has been convincingly demonstrated that genuine development can only be attained by fostering a civic identity, a concept at odds with ethnic distinctions. Our focused group discussions conducted between 1999 and 2023 have uncovered that lists of applicants based on ethnicity are compiled by honorable members representing diverse constituencies and submitted to the commission for employment. Civil commissioners, directors in ministries, advisers, special advisers, as well as various local government chairpersons affiliated with the ruling Peoples Democratic Party and Board Executives also submit candidate lists to the commission for employment (Okereka, 2015).

It is evident that the primary criterion for compiling these lists is ethnic diversity. These candidates are selected or employed without undergoing the thorough selection process. While it may be reasonable to manage the diversity of ethnic representation in the state through a balanced recruitment approach, the problematic aspect arises from the executive's undue pressure to recruit every candidate submitted to them without proper scrutiny. The detrimental consequence of this flawed recruitment practice is the placement of incompetent employees, leading to inefficiency (Okereka 2015:16). The aforementioned situation prompted Epelle (2006:16) to assert that some of these employees lack basic memo-writing skills and cannot be reprimanded due to influential

backers. Some individuals may also neglect their duties without seeking permission. Consequently, the commission becomes constrained due to the perceived superiority of political leaders over administrative leaders. At times, the concept of ethnicity is intertwined with the material influence of the recruiting officers. It has been disclosed that prospective applicants, depending on the officer involved, pay amounts ranging from One hundred thousand naira (N100,000.00) to Four hundred thousand naira (N400,000.00) to secure positions. Once they fulfill this financial requirement, their appointment is assured, even without the presentation of original credentials. Employees securing positions after making such substantial payments often attempt to influence their placement in desirable ministries or offices where contracts are awarded (Sanusi 2006:4-5). It would be unprofessional to argue that these individuals will be focused, dedicated, and efficient. This is because, from the outset, they view their recruitment as an investment. Instead of prioritizing merit in their service, their primary focus tends to be on financial gains

As per Laxmikanth (2008:299), recruitment holds paramount significance in both public and private personnel administration. The efficiency of governmental and non-governmental operations, as well as the quality of services they provide, largely relies on the effectiveness of their recruitment systems. It stands out as a pivotal responsibility of modern governments and is central to the challenges faced in personnel administration (Basu, 2007:161). According to Certo (2007:234), recruitment is the initial screening of the overall pool of potential human resources available to fill a position. Stahl (2007) emphasizes that recruitment forms the foundation of the entire public personnel structure. It is crucial to recognize that efficiency in the public service can only be achieved when recruitment and selection prioritize the development of public identity in the employed staff. Therefore, there is a need to implement a recruitment policy that eliminates considerations based on ethnicity, monetary inducements, party loyalty, and religious biases. These factors often compromise the independence of the public service commission and other recruiting bodies in fulfilling their statutory role of recruiting competent staff for the public service (P. 28).

3.3 The Federal Character Principle

The diverse ethnic composition of Nigeria has compelled the government to establish the Federal Character Commission. This commission is tasked with developing a fair formula for the distribution of all levels of positions within the public service, both at the federal and state levels. In Nigeria, the

application of the federal character principle and quota system serves as a mechanism for recruitment across federal, state, and local government levels. The primary concern lies in the equitable sharing of resources among the different federal units, both horizontally and vertically. When the resource-sharing arrangements function effectively, there is reduced agitation, and citizens feel a sense of belonging and fairness. Conversely, when the sharing principles break down, citizens often demand a national conference, as observed by Elaigwu (2006).

The primary issue with the federal character principle is that it prioritizes quota over merit, potentially leading to disappointment and risking damage to the country's image if not confined to minimum acceptable standards. Oladosu and Okofu (2014) uncovered that merit often takes a backseat to ethnicity and religion in public service recruitment in Nigeria. One argument favoring the principle over merit is that political leaders, particularly from disadvantaged areas like the Northern parts, hold significant influence in the federal public service. Olowu (1997:32) contends that these leaders leverage ethnic and religious sentiments to protect their regions through the federal character principle. A notable example is the Northern Governors Forum (NGF) in 2007, where Governor Muazu Babangida Alliu of Niger State emphasized the educational backwardness of the northern region. Despite this, individuals from the north hold prominent positions in the federal public service due to the federal character principle and quota system.

Since 1999, a similar situation has permeated the Delta State public service, where recruiting bodies consistently advocate for an even distribution in their recruitment exercises. This approach has consistently fostered mediocrity within the public service. Consequently, this study asserts that if the federal character principle and quota system persist without more stringent controls, they will continue to nurture mediocrity, lethargy, and inefficiency within the public service. Akinola (2013), as cited in Okereka (2020), affirms this perspective, arguing that the ethno-religious diversity of the groups comprising modern-day Nigeria was not adequately considered by British colonizers before the amalgamation of the southern and northern protectorates into the entity known as Nigeria. Akinola links the occasional political rivalry and disunity among the ethnic groups in the country to the unification of the protectorates of Nigeria

As per Yaro (2014), it was found that sentiments and other primordial factors such as ethnicity, nepotism, and favoritism carry more weight than merit in employment decisions. This has resulted in

increased labor turnover and elevated governance costs. Yaro concluded that to restore integrity to the process, the Nigerian public service should prioritize meritocracy, regardless of an applicant's background or affiliations, and address the issue of political interference. Candidates being considered for recruitment should possess not only skills but also good moral attitudes. Recruiters should be granted the necessary independence and freedom to use appropriate methods in conducting the exercise effectively. Hence, it is crucial to emphasize the establishment of multiple selection criteria to ensure the right individuals are selected for the appropriate positions.

Theoretical framework

According to Awamber and Ijeoma (1998: 18), applying a theoretical framework is essential in analyzing any phenomenon, whether it is social, political, or related to development, in research endeavors. This framework acts as a filter to organize the study's variables and facilitate meaningful comparisons. In this study, the Marx Weber bureaucratic model will be employed to elucidate ethnic diversity and the effectiveness of recruitment exercises. The intention is to leverage the model's characteristic recommendations to assess the factors identified within the public service recruitment process. This approach aims to provide a more lucid understanding of the content presented in this paper.

According to Thompson (1983: 28), the Weberian ideal bureaucratic theory thrives on the concept of legal rational authority and has become a predominant practice in modern societal institutions. This authority structure is termed "legal" because authority is exercised through a system of rules and procedures. Therefore, to uphold all the prescribed features of bureaucracy, as proposed by Weber, staff must be selected based on merit and adhere to regulatory frameworks. The fundamental assumptions of Weber's ideal bureaucratic theory are well ingrained in its characteristics, including labor specialization, a defined hierarchical structure, clear responsibilities and authority, a system of rules and procedures, and impersonality in reactions. It is our argument in this study that employees recruited based on merit are likely to exhibit specialization, maintain impersonality, and keep good official records, in contrast to those appointed based on patronage.

Over the years, the Civil Service Commission in Delta State has faced criticism for implementing its recruitment and selection policy based on patronage. It has been observed that factors such as ethnicity, nepotism, diversity, party loyalty, and other primordial considerations consistently influence the autonomy of these boards,

commissions, and other recruiting bodies. Since the productivity or output of any bureaucracy is fundamentally shaped by its personnel, despite criticisms of the ideal bureaucratic theory, its universal applicability is steadily increasing as more developing nations recognize its usefulness.

While acknowledging Mouzelis's caution (1968: 28) about the careful application of the ideal bureaucratic theory's utility and universality, its critical features are widely accepted globally as essential for achieving order, efficiency, and development in modern and emerging societies. Therefore, in this study, we aim to contextualize the persistent allegations of poor recruitment and selection practices in the public service by examining the non-strict application of the characteristics of the ideal type bureaucratic theory.

In particular, fostering a culture of recruiting personnel based on merit can only be achieved when recruitment bodies actively embrace the Weberian recommendations pertaining to recruitment and selection. Therefore, we posit that steadfastly adhering to the recommendations of the Weberian ideal bureaucratic theory in the implementation of recruitment policies will contribute to addressing the issues of indolence, incompetence, and declining efficiency in the public service, specifically in Nigeria, and more so in Delta State.

From Weber's point of view, an organization is efficient in achieving objectives such as service delivery if and only if it is bureaucratic, that is:

- It has a legal rational leader;
- Positions are hierarchically organized;
- Division of labour and specialization is emphasized;
- Tasks assigned to employees are on merit based on knowledge;

Tasks are performed in accordance with laid down rules, regulations, procedures and methods (Alornyeku, 2011).

This model is relevant to the present study because it provides the ideal principles for consideration in the Delta State public service which will help in the evaluation of how such principles are applied in the recruitment exercise of public service in Nigeria.

4. Empirical Review

In this study, we aim to compare our research with other related studies, highlighting both their commonalities and distinctions. The role of ethnic diversity in recruitment exercises is a subject of debate in Nigeria, given the country's multi-ethnic and heterogeneous nature, encompassing 371

ethnicities (Nigeria Local, 2014; Online Nigeria, 2016). This indicates that ethnic diversity influences the recruitment processes in Nigeria. The country's diverse ethnicity led to the adoption of the federal character principle by the government, aiming for an equitable distribution of all levels of positions in the public service at both federal and state levels (Elaigwu, 2006). However, this principle tends to prioritize ethnicity over merit. As highlighted by Yaro (2014), sentiments and factors such as ethnicity, nepotism, and favoritism often take precedence over merit in employment decisions. This underscores the significant role played by ethnic diversity in the recruitment processes of the Delta State public service, making it a pressing issue that requires immediate attention.

5. Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative approach, relying on secondary sources such as journals and online literature. The focus is on Delta State, which comprises twenty-five local governments and is divided into three senatorial districts: Delta Central, Delta North, and Delta South. Being a multilingual and multicultural state, Delta State is home to various ethnic groups, with prominent languages including Urhobo, Isoko, Ijaw, and Igbo, while other languages and ethnicities are considered minority groups. The state's ethnic diversity has sparked various agitations, a topic of particular interest in this study. The literature review delves into existing works by other scholars on ethnic diversity and the effectiveness of recruitment exercises, encompassing themes such as ethnic diversity and the federal character principle.

6. Result and Discussion

Discoveries from diverse literature reviews indicate that ethnicity, among other factors, has been recognized as a significant influence on the continued decline in the autonomy of recruitment bodies. It is a crucial reality that each leader emerges from a specific ethnic group. Consequently, it can be asserted that ethnic diversity bears a direct connection to the prevailing state of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the Delta State public service.

It was also disclosed that, for an organization to adhere to merit, entities such as the Delta State public service must uphold all the prescribed features of bureaucracy as outlined by Weber. The personnel should be chosen based on merit and receive regular training according to regulations. Consequently, it can be asserted that the Delta State public service can uphold merit in its recruitment

processes if the Weberian theory is fully implemented.

The research also highlighted the recruitment of personnel based on recommendations concerning recruitment and selection. Consequently, we posit that the strict adherence to the recommendations of the Weberian ideal bureaucratic theory in implementing recruitment policies will contribute to addressing the issues of indolence, incompetence, and declining efficiency in the public service, specifically in Nigeria, and more so in Delta State.

7. Conclusion

Recognizing that the responsibilities of modern democratic governance extend beyond the conventional role of maintaining stability, peace, and order, encompassing the provision of improved goods and services for the social, political, and economic well-being of the general public, it becomes evident that a deficient recruitment process hinders this realization. It is crucial to emphasize that the responsible government recruitment body should employ standardized methods to select the most qualified individuals for public service, disregarding environmental factors such as ethnicity, nepotism, federal character, favoritism, corruption, etc. These competent individuals would contribute to enhancing the development and execution of government programs and policies, ensuring public satisfaction and garnering mass support for government initiatives.

Even though the Weberian ideal bureaucratic theory, which is anchored on the notion of legal rational authority, may face challenges in a sub-state like Delta State with a multi-ethnic population, it remains the most suitable theory for gauging institutional capacity building and progress. Therefore, its principles, emphasizing competence and qualifications required for standardizing recruitment procedures, should not be underestimated. What is crucial is a rigorous and complete de-emphasis on prevailing principles that prioritize environmental factors over the long-standing criteria of excellence and qualification. Furthermore, the issues associated with the recruitment process in Delta State can be addressed if the approach is based on scientific principles and executed through an independent and impartial body.

8. Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusion, the paper recommend the following strategies for improving on the recruitment exercise to ensure merit in the

midst of ethnic diversity influences identified in the study:

- The relevant authority of both the federal, state and local government to make a law that must ensure that recruitments into the public service is done by an experience expert independent personnel, this will be quite neutral to the applicants.
- The recruitment body should be allowed to take its full course or follow its entire cycle by adhering to the principles of systematic planning, scientific execution, objectivity and merit, even where there is the need to satisfy such demands for gender or ethnic balancing.

Consequently, the recruitment process in the Delta State public service should be oriented towards performance, merit, and action, possessing the capability to generate and maintain the necessary skilled, knowledgeable, and developed human resources grounded in accepted public service performance values, norms, culture, and standards.

Recruitment process should be carried out based on the finding of well known job expert. This will help hire needed staff and avoid excess staff in the system.

There is need to ascertain the extant expectation of the public so as to determine areas that require urgent attention.

Reference

- Adegbami, A. & Uche, C. I. N. (2015). Ethnicity and Ethnic Politics: An Impediment to Political Development in Nigeria. *Public Administration Research*, 4 (1), 59-67.
- Al-Grazali, A. (2006). Understanding the Basic Civil Service Rules and Regulations in Nigeria's Technical and Corps: Issues and Perspectives. *Ibadan: Dokun Publishing House*.
- Babura, A. S. M. (2003). Leading Public Innovation: The Case of the Nigerian Civil Service and Federal Civil Service Commission: Paper Presented at the Commonwealth Workshops on Leading Public Service Innovation – Newze – land Agency for International Development (NEAID) Programme. Wellington, February 24th – 6th March.
- Basu, R. (2007). *Public Administration: Concepts and Theories*. New York: *Sterling Publishers*.
- Delta State Government (2009). *Public Service Rules*. *Asaba: Government House Publishers*.

- Ejumudo, K. B. O. (2011). Constraints in Staff Recruitment and Selection System of Delta State Civil Service. Department of Political Science, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria.
- Federal Government of Nigeria (2008). Civil Service Companion: Public Service Rules, Abuja. Office of the Head of Service of Federation.
- Laxmikanth, M. (2008). Public Administration. New Delhi: McGraw – Hill Company.
- Mauzelis, N. P. (1968). Organization and Bureaucracy: An Analysis of Modern Theories, Chicago. Aldimie Publishing Company.
- Mukoro, A. (2005). The Ecology of Recruitment and Selection of Personnel in the Federal Civil Services of Nigeria. *Article in Journal of Human Ecology (Delhi, India)*, p. 32.
- National Population Commission (2017). Nigeria’s Population Now 182 Million – NPC. Retrieved from <http://www.population.gov.ng>.
- Ogunrotifa, A. B. (2012). Federal Civil Service Reform in Nigeria: The Case of Democratic Centralization. *Radix International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 1. 1-45. Retrieved from <https://www.academia.edu>.
- Okereka, O.P, Oluka N.L & Igbini M.D (2020) colonialism and Amalgamation of southern and northern protectorates: Analysis of emerging issues in Nigeria. *Journal of Political Science and Leadership Research* 6 (1) 49 – 64,
- Okereka, O.P. (2015). Vital Civic registration System as a tool for development planning in Nigeria: An examination of the major challenges. *Journal of Culture, Society and Development* 11 (6),36-42.
- Okereka, O. P. (2015). The Ecology of Recruitment and Selection of Personnel and the quest for Efficiency in the Delta State Civil Service. *Global Journal of Political Science and Administration*, Vol. 3, pp. 10, September 2015.
- Online Nigeria (2016). Nigerian Languages. Retrieved from <http://www.onlinenigeria.com/government/edu.asp?blurb=143>.
- Parboteeah, K. P., Seriki, H. T. and Hoegl, M. (2014). Ethnic Diversity, Corruption and Ethical Climates in Sub-Saharan Africa: Recognizing the Significance of Human Resources Management. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25, 979-1001.
- Rindap, M. R. & Mari, I. M. A. (2014). Ethnic Minorities and the Nigerian State. *An International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 3, 89-101.
- Rubinstein, Y. & Brenner, D. (2014). Pride and prejudice: using Ethnic-Sounding names and Inter-ethnic Marriages to Identify Labour Market Discrimination. *Review of Economic Studies*, 81, 389-425.
- Sanusi, M. R. (2006). Operational Inefficiency and Poor Service Delivery in Public Service, Nigerian Service News, *Quarterly Federal Civil Service Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 3 January – March.
- Thompson, D. F. (1983). Bureaucracy and Democracy in G. Duncan (ed). *Democratic Theory and Practice, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press*.
- Tyagi, A. R. (2004). Public Administrative Principles and Practice; New Delhi: Arharan and Shaw.
- White, L. D. (1958). Introduction to the Study of Public. *York: Harper and Row*.