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E-GOVERNANCE AND E-ADMINISTRATION AS TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA'S PUBLIC SECTOR

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Abstract

Nowadays, there is a big question on how the public institution can achieve a progress in its performance through implementing new information technologies in its operations, which is known as e-administration. Governments are in hurry to issue development plans aiming social and economic developments. Due to that, the E-corporate governance is highlighted by academics and researchers in order to restructure the public institutions in a way of assure responsibility and transparency and after that the academicians and the searchers want to take the advantage of new technologies. The article highlights the major issues surrounding E-government and to identify the requirements and the ability of E-government besides highlighting its benefits. It further provides recommendations to government on ways to ensure better service delivery with e-governance and administration.

Keywords: *governance, e- governance, public service, ICT, service delivery*

1.0 Introduction

Technological advances have changed the way people go about their daily activities. Whether we are checking our e-mails or texting or sending messages with our phones, mobile communication is growing, and our ability to navigate the World Wide Web is improving dramatically. We use the internet to shop on-line, do banking transactions, book for our flight tickets and make payment on-line, check the weather, do research on any subject and connect with network. You may wonder what this has to do with public administration. As Internet usage grows, and the use of technology in general grows, so too does the use of technology and internet by government. E-governance is the general term used to describe the government's use of technology in performing its multiple responsibilities (Holzer and Schwester, 2011).

Electronic Governance and Administration is very relevant in the discourse on modern usage of technology in the world of public administration. Thus this paper focuses on the shifting paradigm in public service delivery via information and communication technology (ICT) in Nigeria. The shift is not only on service delivery but also on the way citizens participate in policy-making process through the tools of online engagement. The paper aimed at acquainting the reader with the knowledge in the world of electronic governance (e-governance) in the

public sector and particularly shows the role of e-administration in ensure effective public service delivery. The study is premised on the knowledge that technology and service levels are intimately interwoven factors in the emerging e-government services. To ensure that this aim is achieved, after the introduction, the paper briefly reviews relevant literature on e-governance, e-administration, service delivery and the theoretical framework adopted was presented, then attempt is made to presents the historical background of e-governance implementation in Nigeria and thereafter, the opportunities and importance of ICTs as a means of service delivery in public sector after which it examine the e-governance implementation and its administrative efficiency in the Nigerian civil service imperatives and ends with conclusion and recommendations.

E-governance and E-administration in the public sector make use of information and communication technologies with the aim of improving information and service delivery, encouraging citizen participation in the decision-making process and making government more accountable, transparent and effective. E-governance involves new styles of leadership, new ways of debating and deciding policy and investment, new ways of accessing education, new ways of listening to citizens and new ways of organizing and delivering information and services in the public sector and administration generally

2.0 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This section provides conceptual clarifications of e-governance, e-administration and its drivers as well as the domains of e-governance and e-administration. It also explains what public service delivery entails and types of public service delivery in e-governance and e-administration. The theoretical framework adopted for the study formed the last part of the section.

2.1 E-Governance

There are many common terms for E-government such as E-Business, E-Management, Digital Government, and others. Indeed, E-government is one shape of E-Business that refers to transactions and procedures that serve public electronic services. The relationship among the government and its citizens can be noticeable when E-government is applied; crowed lines and bureaucracy are reduced to acceptable limits. In the developed countries, the E-government has been processed and developed in such a way that services are provided for citizens 24/7 and the governmental expenses are reduces. In the light of that, the E-government presents the electronic application in services leading for collaboration among the government and its citizens, and assuring the internal productive relationship between government institutions. In the light of that, E-government is based on internal changes in the government to develop the interaction and the communication ways with citizens. That means the governmental making

decisions procedures, services and transactions should be reorganized electronically to eliminate handling time of citizens' transactions (Laudon, K & Laudon, J. 2004).

The importance of E-government becomes through achieving the real recognition about responsibility, transparency, and good justice. The appearance of E-government is considered as a part of the solution for the managerial and financial corruption in corporations and public institutions. Besides that, disclosure is an important principle for corporate governance and for E-government; the state is obligated to be transparency and to disclose important information that touch the life of its citizens. The direct service is a new important change in the whole reconstruction of delivering public information and services for governmental institutions in order to improve the services and information quality. Besides that, the E-government has an important role to relocate the extra finance in the public budget that means the expenditures are reduced and more dividends for new projects concerns on sustainability and development plans in accordance with the public interests (Lunnas 2000). The strategic objective of E-government is to support and simplify the governmental services for all stakeholders such as public institutions, citizens, corporations, and related firms, and that can be happen efficiently with adopting new information technologies.

The internal effects of E-government is touchable even it is not seeable for other stakeholders such as citizens such as a quick making-decision, transparency, responsibility, efficiently and productively. Consequently, the citizens are more satisfied on the governmental performance especially the information productivity is increased and the information cost is reduced besides the easy-access to information. Accordingly, the E-government establish a new form of collaboration among governmental institutions concerning on many sides and especially on exchanging information. Overall, E-government attract more national and international investors since creating an investment atmosphere is an important for governance and any government, in addition, the government is able to use the national resources wisely.

The e-Governance has become an accepted methodology involving the use of Information Technology in improving transparency, providing information speedily to all citizens, improving administration efficiency, improving public services such as transportation, power, health, water, security and municipal services. Governance has always been dependent upon technology, in the broadest sense of knowledge, skills, techniques and epistemological strategies, as well as devices, hardware, software and power circuits. As the reach of governance has spread into new areas of the globe as well as new aspects of hitherto personal relationships, it has come to rely upon more complex assemblages of technically stored and disseminated knowledge (Coleman, 2008).

E-Government: the use of information and communication technologies in the public sector. E-government drives the New Public Management (NPM) which adopts private sector techniques.

Nevertheless, as a refinement of NPM, Digital Era Governance (DEG) offers future public management which involves flexible principles, i.e. reintegration, holism and digitalization (Dunleavy et al 2006). The main aim is to enhance better public management.

E-governance is the public sector's use of information and communication technologies with the aim of improving information and service delivery, encouraging citizen participation in the decision-making process and making government more accountable, transparent and effective. E-governance involves new styles of leadership, new ways of debating and deciding policy and investment, new ways of accessing education, new ways of listening to citizens and new ways of organizing and delivering information and services. E-governance is generally considered as a wider concept than e-government, since it can bring about a change in the way citizens relate to governments and to each other. E-governance can bring forth new concepts of citizenship, both in terms of citizen needs and responsibilities. Its objective is to engage, enable and empower the citizen (www.unesco.org).

E-governance entails the digitized coding, processing, storage and distribution of data relating to three key aspects of governing societies: the representation and regulation of social actors; the delivery of public services; and the generation and circulation of official information (Coleman, 2008). E-governance is more than just a government website on the Internet. The strategic objective of e-governance is to support and simplify governance for all parties; government, citizens and businesses. The use of ICTs can connect all three parties and support processes and activities. In other words, in e-governance electronic means support and stimulate good governance. However, considering all the above premises, the fact must not be over emphasized that E-governance is basically the shift from being regimented, analogue and conservative to a digital way of delivering services in the public sector and administration in general.

2.2 E-Administration

E-Administration is a part of e-Government which handles internal administration within government instead of external users such as citizens and businesses. European Commission (2007b) defines e-administration as an application using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to support back-office administrative tasks. Sánchez (2006) pointed out that e-administration is the use of communication technology to support information flow either in or outside the public authority. Heeks (2010) describes that e-Administration covers G2G relation to improve administrative processes in hierarchical organisation.

According to Wikipedia (2014) e-Administration, or electronic administration, refers to any of a number of mechanisms which convert what in a traditional office are paper processes into electronic processes, with the goal being to create a paperless office. This is an ICT tool, with the goal being to improve productivity and performance. E-Administration can encompass both

intra-office and inter-office communication for any organization. Its objective is to introduce total transparency and accountability leading to better e-Governance within any organization. In Germany, this initiative is especially targeted at government organizations, where public accountability is of special concern. Similar processes are being developed in many American corporations to aid compliance with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

The implementation of any e-administration solution should be customer centric rather than organization centric, should remove dependence on specific individuals, and should introduce transparent systems of working. Examples of e-administration include online timesheets and expense account. These can be used to help reduce costs to an organization.

In autonomy era, decentralisation divides government into two level organisations, i.e. central and local government (Bache and Flinders, 2005). Each level has different authorities. Nevertheless, they are interconnected (House of Commons 2009). They have strong coordination to deliver national development goals. However, both levels consist of many departments those are divided into minor jobs in certain areas. These hierarchical structures typically lead to complexity of administration and specific duties within the organization (Niskanen 2007).

There are many drivers of e-Administration towards Change. They include:

Economic factors cost savings, increase efficiency of work processes, the overall benefit and cost impact can be measured not only from government side, but also by user side, such as better service quality and savings of user time.

Organisational issue organisational cost reduction, it cuts bureaucratic within government by breaking down organisational boundaries (Fang 2002), modern bureaucracy (Dunleavy et al, 2006), streamline processes, reduce duplication and inconsistencies.

Political driver for example, it stimulates implementation of health management in Ecuador (Salazar, 2001). Despite focus on central operation, the Ministry of Public Health of Ecuador also enforced local level by central diktat.

Technological driver electronic networks allow cross-matching and integration of data in different places and different departments. They also enable flexibility and connectivity to acquire much more autonomy which can be break down as e-organisations or e-agencies (Fang 2002).

Domains of e-governance and e-administration

There are three main domains of e-governance:

- i. E-administration: improving government processes
- ii. E-services: connecting individual citizens with their government
- iii. E-society: building interactions with and within civil society.

E-administration – the main purpose of e-administration is to improve the internal working of the public sector by cutting process costs, managing process performance, creating strategic connections within government bodies, and creating empowerment.

Shortening the lead time for passport application from two weeks to one day is an example of e-administration.

E-service initiative focus mainly on improving the relationship between the government and its citizens by increasing the information flow between them – which notably, involves two- way communication – and improving the service levels of government towards its citizens. Public service institutes offering citizens the opportunity to apply example of e-services.

2.3 Service Delivery

Service delivery simply means the extent to which an individual, unit or department of an organization discharge their assigned or statutory responsibilities. It is also a means by which an organization evaluates an individual employee or unit input and output level especially in the area of attaining set goals or task assigned. In the view of Byars and Rue (2006), service delivery is the degree to which an employee accomplished the tasks that made his or her job.

El-Rufai (2006), summarizes service delivery as the degree of an organization and/or employee performance, output and productivity in the discharge of their responsibilities within the available time, money and other resources, towards the achievement of overall goals, of the organization. The spate of service delivery is determined by the performance of employees in achieving, organizational goals and satisfying the public. However, for purpose of this study, the researcher views service delivery as the achievement of targets (performance/output/productivity) of the tasks assigned to organizations or employees“ within particular period of time. It involves the execution of duties and responsibilities assigned by constituted authorities which one have promised to do, so as to achieve set goals of an organization. Therefore, the degree to which an organization or employees performs its duties and functions towards achieving set goals determines the spate of service delivery-whether it is efficient or inefficient, effective or ineffective, economical or not economical, productive or not productive (Ezekwesili, 2010). Conclusively, Richardo (2001), contends that employee performance is the successful completion of tasks by a selected individual or individual, as set and measured by a supervisor or organization, to predefined acceptable standards while efficiently and effectively utilizing available resources within changing objectives. Thus, ensuring high employee job

performance will lead to achieving organizational goals and objectives, which is organizational performance.

2.3.1 Types of Service Delivery in e-governance and e-administration

The quest to improve service delivery through the use of ICTs in governments typically focuses on four main dimensions. These are:

G2C (Government-to-Citizens): This focuses primarily on developing user-friendly one-stop centers of service for easy access to high quality government services and information. Factually, every responsible government is responsible directly and indirectly to its citizens and would do all it can in all possible way to meet up with the needs of its citizens. In otherwords, this type of service delivery explains the relevance of the strong bondage between the government and the citizens and the relevance of attaching importance to the methods of service delivery.

G2B (Government-to-Business): This aims to facilitate and enhance the capability of business transactions between the government and the private sector by Improving communications and connectivity between the two parties. In essence there is no doubt that no government can exit in isolation and most importantly, no government can excel without financial stability and freedom. This type of service delivery also makes it important for every government to strengthen its bondage with other sectors be it national or international for the sake of having an effective service delivery.

G2G (Government-to-Government): This is an inter-governmental effort that aims to improve communication and effectiveness of services between federal, state and local governments in the running of day-to-day administration. It generally aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of overall government operations. Just like it has been rightly observed in the above, the need for every government to have synergy with its counterparts at various level is very important and makes service delivery more effective.

Intra-government: This aims to leverage ICT to reduce costs and improve the quality of administration and management within government organization (Islam and Ahmed, 2007). Within a particular government, there is the need for effective communication in the areas of data and information sharing, this makes the government to be go at what is dose and in the most efficient way.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

There are several theories that explains the operation of technology within public and private sectors, they include, Innovation Diffusion theory, Human capital theory and Modernization

theory, etc. This study will therefore be anchored on innovation diffusion theory which explains the reasons for the adoption and ways to introduce new technology to users (public and private users).

This theory developed by Roger in 1983 explains individuals' intention to adopt a technology as a modality to perform a traditional activity (Isibor et al, 2018). The theory asserts that the critical factors that determine the adoption of an innovation at the general level are the following:

Relative advantage, Compatibility, Complexity, and Observability.

From this theory, technological innovation is transmitted through specific channels among the members of a social scheme.

The levels of transmission are:

- a. Knowledge (knowing its existence and understanding its roles);
- b. Persuasion (showing favorable attitude to the technology);
- c. Decision (adopting the technology);
- d. Implementation (using it); and
- e. Confirmation (benefits based on positive use of it).

This theory offers a different approach to our understanding of what drives a person or organization to adopt a new innovation. In regards to this study we can conveniently state that innovative information technology like new voting system (PVC) and card reader, electronic complaint registration, e-meeting platforms and social media have been able to meet all or some of the four factors listed above. And in respect to the level of transmission government have clearly adopted and transferred technological innovation through the available levels stated earlier.

Despite the criticisms, Rogers' diffusion theory remains a central basis for much research effort in ICT innovation and adoption as its terminology (innovators, early adopters, laggards etc.) and assumptions (segment sizes, segment profiles, adoption determinants) (Roger, 2004), still provide a popular framework in media and communication studies as well as in the domain of business, management and marketing.

The framework shows two major areas of technology adoption in governance they are the reasons for adoption and how such technology will be introduced to the people. In this case the

introduction of e-governance and administration applies this same reasons and process of dissemination to the public.

2.5 E-Governance Implementation in Nigeria

Though e-governance implementation in Nigeria varies from level to level of government as well as agency to agency, there was actually an attempt at providing a unified, national framework of ICT adoption in governance. According to Olatokun and Adebayo (2012), the federal government of Nigeria, in 2001, announced ICT as a policy of national importance. This further culminated in the creation of a policy on information technology in the same year. The need for adopting ICT in governance, that is, e-governance, came as an awareness that no country or its government can function properly in the information or digital age without the use of the web and other mobile internet technologies.

Seeing the importance of ICT in governance, the Nigerian Federal Government deemed it necessary for the country to have a national policy on ICT. Hence, in 2007, the enabling Act - the National Information Technology Development Act - was enacted by the National Assembly with an Agency established along with the Act, which was empowered to “plan, develop and promote the use of information technology in Nigeria” (Olatokun and Adebayo, 2012).

With the enabling act, various government agencies embarked on the implementation of ICTs in their operations. However, in 2011, the Federal Government created a new Ministry called the Ministry of Communications Technology which was saddled with the mandate of streamlining ICT development and progress in line with the nation’s plan for e-governance (Omerie and Omeire, 2014).

In 2012, a National ICT draft policy was presented by the ministerial committee on ICT policy harmonization which included several policy recommendations and reports. The following are the policy thrust of the National ICT draft policy of 2012, as it pertains to e-governance:

- To facilitate the implementation of e-government initiatives;
- To develop frameworks and guidelines, including interoperability and e-government framework for the enhanced development and use of ICT in the government;
- To develop and implement ICT training programs for public sector employees, in connection with introduction of e-government and other digital functions within government offices;
- To coordinate the integration of national e-government network infrastructure and services; and

- To promote e-government and other e-services that would foster broadband usages (National ICT Policy, 2012).

The Nigerian legal framework covering the use of ICT in governance is not based on an integrated system but on various policies. They include: the Information Policy, which is supervised by the National Media Commission; the Telecommunications Policy, which is regulated by the National Communications Commission (NCC); and the ICT policy which is overseen by NITDA which stands for the National Information Technology Development Agency (Fraser-Moleketi, G. and Senghor, D. 2011). The private sector was not left out of the drive for implementing ICTs in the business of governance in Nigeria. In 2007, the National Information Technology Development Act also provided for the avenue of public-private partnership in the adoption and management of ICTs in Nigeria by establishing the National e-Government Strategies limited (NeGST) (Fatile, 2012). The NeGST was more or less a tripartite joint venture, that is, a platform involving three parties, namely the government (which is represented by NITDA), private and financial investors, and technology partners, for which their share ownership in the joint venture is 5%, 15% and 80% respectively (Omeire and Omeire, 2014). The essence of this strategic three-partner alliance called the NeGST was to create a viable unified national framework for the adoption and implementation of ICTs in and across government agencies and their customers. As stated in the website of NeGST the purpose of its creation is “to facilitate drive, and the Nigerian e-government programme under a public-private partnership model” (NeGST, www.negst.com.ng/index/php/about-us). Following the creation of the NeGST in 2007, there was an initiative to establish an online database for teachers in Nigeria via e-registration (Omeire and Omerie, 2014).

2.6 The opportunities and importance of ICTs as a means of Service delivery in Public Sector

Service delivery in the Nigeria Public sector with the help of Information and Communication Technologies is no doubt a great opportunity for Nigeria and indeed all developing countries vis-à-vis public service delivery, and citizen's satisfaction. This accounts for the link between ICTs applications, optimization of government operations and achievement of important social development goals which is even a very convincing argument for the continued utilization of ICTs in the country's civil service. This is why Gupta and Jana (2003), argued that the application of ICTs in government is no longer seen as an option but as a necessity for all countries aiming at having better and efficient governance. This shows that there is a strong linkage between ICTs application and efficient service delivery. In a study carried out in 2003, the European Commission observed that ICTs application enables the public sector to maintain and strengthen good governance in the knowledge society, create a public sector that is open and transparent, governments that are understandable and accountable to the citizens and open to democratic involvement and scrutiny. It also ensures that the public sector is at the service of all, promotes a productive public sector that delivers maximum value for tax payers' money, less

time is wasted standing in queues, errors are drastically reduced, more ties are available for professional face-to-face service and the jobs of the civil servants becomes rewarding in the process (Nweke, 2007a; 2007b). Indeed, extant literature is replete with the great opportunities of ICTs as an efficient and effective means of public service delivery. ICTs innovation and revolution has no doubt brought considerable potential to initiatives aimed at fighting corruption and increasing the participation of citizens in the institutions of government. To be specific, ICTs have opened a new e-governance space or route that has huge potential for improving opportunities for the participation of citizens in governmental affairs. This type of setting enhances equity, transparency, accountability, responsiveness, responsibility, effectiveness and efficiency in the manifold transactions that link service suppliers and service recipients (Muchie, 2011). It has also been argued that the application of ICTs in the civil service can lead to the following outcomes: saving costs while improving quality, response times and access to services (ADB, 2003); improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration (Pacific Council, 2002); increasing transparency in administration, reducing corruption and increasing political participation (Seifert and Bonham, 2003), and; making governments more competitive (OECD 2003).

Below, we examine in details the foregoing opportunities or benefits of ICTs application. We decided to summarize them under five headings.

a. Reduced Cost of Administration The implementation of ICTs in the Federal Civil Service allows for a significant reduction in information handling cost. This process enables faster sharing of information thereby reducing the frequency with which data is collected when it is handled manually. Obviously, data collected manually costs more due to travel costs and other allowances and expenses.

According to Ndou (2004), if developing countries appropriately apply e-government initiatives, it will reduce the number of inefficiencies in processes by allowing file and data sharing across government departments, thereby contributing to the elimination of mistakes from manual procedures and reducing the required time for transactions. It is painful to observe that the cost of running governmental affairs in Nigeria has been on the rise hence the application of e-initiatives in the Federal Civil Service has the capacity of providing cheaper administrative cost due to the digitalization of public service delivery. By this practice according to Nweke (2007b:166), ICTs application in public service delivery reforms public administrative process by streamlining internal processes which enables faster, speedy and more informed decision making and transaction process.

Nigeria is a nation of about 150 million people distributed over a territory of 923,768 square kilometres (Akunyili, 2010). It is therefore easy to imagine the logistic challenge and cost that goes with service provisioning by the Federal Civil Service in the country. The use of ICTs

solutions by the service has enabled and will continue to enable it to render public services with greater efficiency and less cost to the ministry and the recipients.

b. Improved, Fast and Accurate Service Delivery

The traditional style of service delivery in the Federal Civil Service is time consuming because of the bureaucratic nature of the Nigerian civil service. ICTs application therefore, helps to reduce waiting time and red-tapism, thereby bringing about fast and accurate service delivery. Public sector organizations in Nigeria like the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Abuja Geographical Information System (AGIS) and a host of others have made service delivery to the citizens more convenient, faster and accurate through the digitalization of their operations and services. For example, JAMB utilizes e-initiatives now to conduct national matriculation examination for admission into Nigerian higher institutions of learning. This yearly examinations that usually involve over one million candidates see scripts computer-marked, and the results released and up-loaded to the website within seven working days. All over the country, what it now takes for candidates to know their results is to visit the internet site of the examination body. The revolutionary dimensions of this ICT-enhanced service can only be appreciated when compared with the former system where the examination results were anxiously awaited by the candidates for close to eight weeks. When eventually released, the notifications were sent by surface mail service through the post office. This created all sorts of mix-ups as some notifications got lost in transit partly because some candidates' addresses would have changed in the interval. Very importantly, manually marked scripts were more prone to errors than computer marked ones. One can therefore see from the JAMB example that ICT enhances improved, fast and accurate public service delivery. ICT eliminates time-wasting, loss of documents, delay in responding to requests, and kickbacks normally associated with traditional style of service delivery. Even the idea of repeated visits to offices from a far distance, which normally takes a toll on resources, is usually reduced through ICT usage. ICTs also allows for service delivery outside normal office hours. Arguing in this direction, Ndou (2004), avers that e-government initiatives put government services online thereby reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks, offers round the clock accessibility, fast and convenient transactions and obviously enhances the quality of services. Similarly, intergovernmental and international communication relations with other public and private organisations are made faster and convenient. This can be seen on the dominance of e-mails, which have taken over surface mails. In addition, e-government initiatives such as electronic chatting, e-conferencing/video conferencing, etc, are making the public service smarter with reduced risks of travel. These initiatives also enable both the government and the private agencies to have discussions at a distance and at the same time run their respective offices.

c. Creates Access to Transparent, Accountable and Participatory Governance

E-government initiatives have already demonstrated significant capacity for citizens to have greater access to information from public authorities in Nigeria. Public service delivery improves citizens' participation in public sector management, which is enhanced through ICTs. The opportunity generated in this perspective helps increase the transparency of decisions as citizens and the public servants interact through e-governance process. The citizens and other service recipients are allowed to contribute and exchange ideas and suggestions through electronic forum and websites. ICTs reform which is presently being experienced through e-government initiatives in Nigeria's public administration has created opportunity for public servants and citizens to have access to official information and transaction which were previously classified. This invariably enables the Federal Civil Service to harvest more data from operational systems through increment in the quality of feedback. It is therefore, obvious that government to citizens type of relationships enabled by ICTs application, which before now created suspicion are now reduced as more information are made available through different kinds of on-line communication between the Federal Civil Service and her service recipients. ICTs usage in the Federal Civil Service therefore, enhances transparency, accountability and participatory governance. It also reduces corrupt practices.

d. Enhances Networking and Inter Governmental Relations

ICTs provide and enhance networking of relationships among governments, customers, businesses, employees and other organisations. The successful use and diffusion of ICTs in the public sector involves a collective, multi-disciplinary and dynamic learning process (Mansell and Wehn, 1998). This is the case of such Nigerian public agencies like NYSC, JAMB, AGIS, NOUN WAEC, NECO, etc, that have fully embraced e-initiatives in the delivery of public services. According to Ndou (2004), the very nature and function of e-governments require network approach to put together skills, technologies, information and knowledge that span the boundaries of different governmental agencies. The application of e-government therefore, enhances the practice of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), which is an integrated business system that ties all the various functions of an enterprise like finance, human resource management, etc, into a cohesive system on a common database. In the views of Wescot (cited in Nweke, 2007b:168), ERP system may be integrated with the internet and workflow. ERP presents opportunities to the civil service in the areas of financial management, human resources management, records management, material management, etc. The establishment of integrated online network in the civil service therefore, enhances data sharing that facilitates feedback. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) argues along this line when it notes that strengthening relationship between the government and the citizens could improve the quality of services by allowing government tap wider sources of information, perspectives and solution to meet the challenges of policy making under conditions of increased complexity (OECD, 2001). In addition to the foregoing, services like attachment mails, online delivery of scanned files, etc, speed up bureaucratic transactions in the Federal Civil Service.

The innovations that come with e-initiatives are reducing red-tap and similar lapses that come with traditional means of service delivery. Above all, e-government initiatives in the Federal Civil Service enable civil servants to interact, transact and communicate electronically with business, citizens and other stakeholders. It is therefore necessary to mandate the use of ICT tools and applications for the development of new forms of citizens' participation in the Federal Civil Service.

e. Boosts Competitive and Responsive Service Delivery

The digitalization of operations and services in the public sector in Nigeria means that the public sector is in a healthy competition with the private sector in delivering qualitative and productive services to the citizens. ICTs application in the Federal Civil Service therefore, boosts competitive and responsive service delivery in the country. This development is heart-warming and commendable especially when one recalls that the private sector was on top in the use of ICTs in the country prior to the digitalization of operations and services in the public sector. According to Nweke (2007b:168-169), the Automated Custom Data, Electronic Immigration Passport/Visa Application, Nipost Post Cash, and other similar initiatives are examples of e-government potentials in reforming public administration for increased productivity and competitiveness. In the view of Mansell and Wehn (1998), e-government plays a vital role, not only in facilitating market led initiatives but also in initiating the process of capacity building and in coordinating the actions of a large number of interested stakeholders. In addition, ICTs usage in the civil service provides structure of opportunities mediating between the citizens and the service using digital information and communication technologies by the government and the citizens. It therefore, implies that ICTs application in the Federal Civil Service brings about citizens that are active, connected and informed. ICTs also help to stimulate exchange of information in which citizens and government relate interactively thereby enhancing productive and responsive service delivery. This also helps to bridge the gap between the citizens and the government.

2.7 E-Governance Implementation and its Administrative Efficiency in the Nigeria Civil Service.

Though, erstwhile to the colonial rule, diverse ethnic groups and societies constituting Nigeria today lived in empires, kingdoms and clans with their various set of traditional administrative institutions through which policies and programmes were implemented (Edosa & Azelama, 1995; Oni & Joshua, 2010; Ogunrotifa, 2012) modern public service in the country is, however, an evolution of the British colonial rule (Okotoni, 2003). By 1906 British government had stretched its authority over most of Nigeria and began to establish its instruments of law and order such as Police, Prison, Public Works Judiciary, Department and the Departments of Customs, Ports and Telegraph (Oduwobi, 2011). In this regards, the Nigerian public service was the establishment of the British colonial government to support the colonial administration in its

exploitation and exploration of the resources of the country (Barkan and Gboyega, 2001). It is imperative to state that the structure of the entire machinery of government and the Civil Service in Nigeria at this time, was configured necessarily to make easy for the British administrators to report performance to their home government and not to the indigenous people (Ogunrotifa, 2012). This perhaps laid the foundation of irresponsible governance in Nigeria. It is also imperative to note that under colonial administration, administrative, professional, managerial and technical posts of the Nigerian Public/Civil Service were occupied by Europeans while Nigerians were restricted to posts in the clerical, semi-skilled and unskilled manipulative grades (Olaopa, 2008). The post-independence Nigeria public service was indigenized following the perceived scarcity of local skilled manpower that could take over most of the workplaces left behind by the departed foreign personnel (Ogunrotifa, 2012). As a result, Nigerian governments were not only challenged with the need to create a whole machinery of government that would promote accountability, transparency, predictability, participation, and efficiency and effectiveness but to change the emphasis of civil service from colonial legacy of tax collection to the role of community service delivery, infrastructural development and nation building capable of supporting the new government to plan and hasten the pace of Nigeria's socio-economic development (Okotoni, 2001).

2.8 The Challenges of Integration of E-Governance and E-Administration for Effective Service Delivery in Nigeria's Public Sector

The challenges to e-governance implementation in Nigeria are similar to those of other developing nations. Scholars like Abasilim & Edet, (2015); Abasilim, Gbervbie & Ifaloye, (2017) agreed that one of the challenges to the effective implementation of e-governance in Nigeria is poor telecommunications and internet facilities. Fatile and Olufemi (2012) capture this issue by emphasizing that the enabling technological frameworks for the adoption and implementation of e-governance in Nigeria are substandard and insufficient. Olaopa (2014) succinctly itemized factors impeding the effective implementation of e-governance in Nigeria's public service which includes inadequate funds allocated to the e-governance projects, difficulty associated with streamlining various silos of e-Government projects already existing or being implemented prior to the creation of the Ministry of Communication Technology, disparity between urban and rural dwellers or those with low literacy levels in accessing the internet, potential to erode the privacy of the citizenry, perceived lack of value for money when the huge cost of deploying e-Governance projects is compared to the actual value to the people, false sense of transparency as the challenges to the adoption and delivery of e-governance in Nigeria.

Abdulrazaq (2015) highlighted the major obstacles to the implementation of e-governance in Nigeria to include the following:

Infrastructural Deficit: ICT facilities in Nigeria are urban based. Most of the telecommunication base stations are located in the urban areas, with little or no access to the rural areas. Although the tele-density rate of the nation is high at almost 90 percent now. The rate and level of internet usage in the country is not encouraging and this adds to the challenges facing the implementation of e-governance in Nigeria.

Digital Divide: This is the difference in the access and usage of technology between regions and areas that have the same identity. A proper explanation on the digital divide in Nigeria, chronicles the change in the accessibility, use of technological services between the rural and urban areas. Digital divide results from low literacy, infrastructural deficits and massive poverty.

Incessant Power Failure: This is one major problem affecting the successful implementation of e-governance in Nigeria. The power supply in the country is epileptic and unreliable. Power outage is a common occurrence in villages, towns and cities in Nigeria with negative influences on the robustness of the nation's ICT initiative. Most telecommunication stations are powered by constant generating sets and this affects the services rendered to the consumers, and the cost of running the base stations are transferred to consumers.

Low IT Professional Manpower: The level of ICT education in Nigeria is another problem facing the implementation of e-governance in Nigeria. During an interview with an official of the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC), he gave detailed analysis on the deficiencies of staff performing e-services in many locations in Nigeria, and that the few skilled ones are overburdened (Nchuchuwe and Ojo, 2015).

Attitude or Resistance to Change: This is also a challenge in the public sector. Most of the public servants are still used to the old way of carrying out government activities. That is, they are still known to be working with a lot of papers, carrying of files from one desk to the other or from one office to the other. Their resistance to e-governance implementation in their services is what has culminated to the poor rating of the implementation of e-governance in the public service. Some of the reasons for this, is that most of the public servants are not computer literate, not qualified, have little or no training in the installation, maintenance, designing and implementation of ICT infrastructure.

3.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The world is at such stage where things change faster than anyone can imagine, as such private and public sectors are in constant hustle to provide better service delivery for the people and their customers in general. And one constant game changer is information communication technology which is being used to develop different aspects of public sectors in Nigeria, even though we still have a long way to go but Nigeria is a nation that is very much aware of her

potentials and such is oblivious of the power of information communication technology in service delivery especially in the areas of security, education, health etc.

The recommendations include;

- i. In adoption of new technology the government should engage in proper orientation of the users on how to use them so that the objective of adoption will not be defeated.
- ii. Proper consultation and involvement of experts is very much warranted if e-governance and administration is to work in public sectors, every stages are important as such, the government needs to ensure those designing and formulating
- iii. The government needs to work better on providing infrastructures that will aid the development or advancement introduced within the public sector.
- iv. The high rate of illiteracy is a major problem, the government needs to put more efforts in reducing the high rate of illiteracy so that more people can have access to more information and services.
- v. The government needs to ease on their harsh policies directed at information communication technology platforms like social media, rather government should develop policies that can help drive sustainable relationship these platforms because they aid government in achieving the goals of e-governance.
- vi. Government needs to ensure there is proper security for these online platforms especially the one used to save people data like the NIN database system so that people can safely secure.

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