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International Digital Organization for Scientific Research  
IDOSR JOURNAL OF ARTS AND MANAGEMENT 2(2): 221-235, 2017.

ISSN: 2550-7974

## **Performance Implications of Nepotism in Nigeria Civil Service Employees Recruitment Process**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This article x-rays nepotism in Nigeria civil service employees' recruitment process and its destructive impact on our bureaucracy and social system. It explores the loopholes in our civil service recruitment policies; investigates the factors responsible for the perpetration of nepotism, regardless of well established, although contradictory employment laws/policies, yet nepotism keeps surging higher, daily. In Nigeria, however, nepotism occasioned by systemic corruption from the top management echelon paved way for scandalously recruitment that negates merit and skill (competence), which are the key characteristics of civil service in day-to-day execution of its duties as stipulates in Civil/Public Service Rules. This paper identified and suggested ways to tame nepotism in civil service recruitment thereby instituting the culture of merit in the system instead of the present 'Spoils System' that drives the Nigeria civil service employees' recruitment process. The paper also goes further to validate that nepotism is the root cause of deadwood, inefficiency, ghost workers, absenteeism and redundancy that characterized Nigeria civil service. Thus, to reposition Nigeria bureaucracy for efficiency in service delivery and enhance productivity, nepotism must be rooted out of the system.*

**Keywords:** Performance implication, Nepotism, Civil service, Employees' recruitment Process.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Human capital has gained popular acceptance as the greatest asset of any organisation, be it public or private oriented. This constitutes the employees or workforce that carries out day-to-day activities of the organisation in pursuit of its goals. Thus careful efforts should be taken to ensure the selection of the best brains, hands and skills during recruitment process, if the organisation is to succeed in realisation of its objectives.

Nepotism is favoritism; a situation where those in management echelon employ/recruit their cronies - friends, relatives, family members etc without adhering to the laid down rules in recruitment, which says that only the qualified, credible, best, and well-performed candidates should be recruited after successfully surmounting the hurdles in employment process.

Leadership failure is the bane of all crony manipulation in recruitment process in Nigeria. Ezeodili (2009)[1] opined that the undue political influence in the recruitment and appointment of public personnel and directors is closely a failure of leadership. The entire

system has been jettisoned by political cliental syndrome of “*Godfatherism*” and “*appoint the bearer syndrome*” which have over-loaded our public service with mediocre, inefficient and never do well loyalist of our highly placed politicians. When the management cadre or leadership embarks on recruitment on the basis of cronyism, nepotism, favouritism etc the organisation is likely to fail, and this is called boss/management induced inefficiency[2].

However, Onah (2010)[3] affirms that to sacrifice merit at the altar of nepotism and favouritism in employment process is a well-calculated and indirect plot to make any public or private organisation run deficit and capable of winding up in near future. This is because the strength and the engine room for success or failure of any private or public entity hinges squarely on the quality of the human resource that provide services to the entity towards the achievement of its goals. Eze (2005)[4] asserts that the greatness of nations is not measured on their land mass, vegetation, mineral resources, climate or geographical location but the quality of their citizens.

Recruitment on the other hand, is a set of activities used to obtain a sufficient number of the right people at the right time from the right places (Nickles et al, 1999)[5]. Its purpose is to select those who best meet the needs of the work place, and to develop and maintain adequate workforce through which an organisation can fulfill its human resource plan (Briggs, 2007)[6]. Agbo, Ojemba (2003)[7] defined recruitment as an activity which generates a pool of applicants wishing to be employed by an organisation out of which suitable candidates are selected.

It is against this background that Eze, Festus (2004)[8] states succinctly that the objective of recruitment is not mere searching, but obtaining in both qualitative and quantitative terms the manpower necessary to accomplish organisational goals. The exercise is both essential and critical in the sense that every organisation is a reflection of its workforce. When organisation attains its objectives, it implies that it has in its employ the right caliber of employees. Otherwise stated, any organisation aspiring to higher levels of efficiency and productivity must first of all most strategically develop ways of attracting and retaining a collection of competent, highly trained, and motivated manpower. The emphasis here is that the best way to remain in business is to have the right caliber of people in optimal quantity and quality.

Apparently, private sector investors understand merit based recruitment process (competence) than public sectors, because of their profit maximization motive. This is why some private organizations mostly Multinational Corporations (MNCs) go to the extent of contracting consultancy firms/recruiters who have enough expertise, experience, skill, deeper knowledge etc in recruitment process to conduct job interviews for them; knowing that the quality of the human capital present in any organization or country is the greatest of its assets. It is against this backdrop that this research work seeks to find out the performance implications of nepotism in the recruitment process of the Nigeria civil service with the intention to proffer solutions to the problem.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The factors that influence organizational communication like formal channels of communication, organizations authority structure, job specialization, information ownership, recruitment policies and processes etc affect merit in civil service recruitment, thus there is a clarion call for a change in the structures of civil service, to give room for equal opportunity [9].

According to the World Bank Report (1997)[10] corruption is the abuse of public office for private gains. This occurs when an official accepts, solicits or extorts a bribe. This kind of

corruption takes the form of political job placement, which is a socio-political absorption in workplace, where those in the echelon of power use the authority vested on them to give appointment and contract to their cronies. Ignorance of the real cost of inefficiency according to (Ile, 1999)[2] is when many people do not appreciate fully the great loss which the whole country is suffering through inefficiency in almost all our daily acts. How much loss, for example, does Nigeria suffer as a result of black-outs, traffic jams, artificial commodity scarcities, interrupted or unpredictable flight schedules, dumb telephones; delayed mails, bad work attitude of public servants and other subtle ways of negating the merit system? All the above setbacks to delivery of quality civil service as a result of nepotism in civil service job recruitment constitute our statement of problem.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of the study is to investigate the performance implications of nepotism on employees' recruitment process in Nigeria civil service. Other objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To ascertain the impact of nepotism on employees' performance in Nigeria civil service.
2. To find out the factors responsible for nepotism in employees' recruitment process in Nigeria civil service.
3. To suggest ways to curb or eradicate nepotism in Nigeria civil service employees' recruitment process.

### THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The study is anchored on 'Spoils System Theory' (Lack of Merit). The practice of the theory originated from the politics of the United States. A spoils system (also known as patronage system) is a practice in which a political party, after winning an election, gives government civil service jobs to its supporters, friends and relatives as a reward for working toward victory, and as an incentive to keep working for the party in power - as opposed to a merit system, where offices are awarded on the basis of some measures of merit, independent of political activity. The term was derived from the phrase "to the victor belongs the spoils" coined by New York Senator William L. Marcy, referring to the victory of Andrew Jackson Democrats in the election of 1828, with the term spoils meaning goods or benefits taken from the loser in a competition, election or military victory ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spoils\\_system](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spoils_system)).

Chukwu (2002)[11] is of the opinion that recruitment of unsuitable candidates, which undermines efficiency and lowers performance in public service, should by all means be avoided. Rather, democratic recruitment practice which is called "Merit System" of recruitment should be adopted as found in progressive countries like the USA, British and French public services. According to Adebayo (1992:170) one of the banes of Nigerian public service is the recruitment of mediocres or totally unsuitable candidates in preference to candidates of "high merit". The reason for this can be traced directly to nepotism.

To operationalise this theory for its application justification, the researcher had to find out whether the recruitment policies of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) and the Ministries are well spelt out religiously and strictly complied with during recruitment. Again, the researcher had to find out if the ministries' objectives at various levels are formulated democratically or autocratically. Also, the researcher had to find out if there are special or official government embargo placed on recruitment that could hinder merit from thriving in the Civil Service understudy during recruitment.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is guided by the following research questions.

1. Does nepotism impact on employees' performance in Nigeria civil service?
2. What are the factors responsible for nepotism in employees' recruitment process in Nigeria civil service?
3. What are to be done to curb or eradicate the practice of nepotism in employees' recruitment process in Nigeria civil service?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### AN OVERVIEW OF NEPOTISM

Nepotism in employment process is a situation where those in positions of authority single handedly hijack recruitment in organizations (public and private) thereby using their power to bring in (recruit) employees who are family members, friends, relatives, loyalist etc without meritoriously conducting proper recruitment exercise, which is against the laid down standard recruitment policies and rules in the organisation. This singular recruitment style of those in management echelon (employers) has ripple effects on the entire organisation since the success and the failure of any organisation is dependent on the caliber/quality of the human resource at its disposal, not on the volume of material and financial resources available in the organisation.

However, nepotism does not occur in vacuum. What brought about it is vacant position(s) in organisation which must be filled with employee(s) to keep the organisation a going-concern in pursuit of its objectives, thereby, triggering recruitment and selection exercise. Therefore, recruitment according to Ojemba (2003:142) is concerned with developing a pool of job candidates in line with the human resources plan. He further posits that candidates are usually located through newspaper and professional journals, advertisements, employment agencies, and visit to college and universities. Recruitment, it follows comparatively simple, standard procedures.

On the other hand, nepotism occurs when there is deliberate selection of employees to fill vacant positions without adhering to the comparatively simple, standardized recruitment procedures. There are principles, policies, formats, procedures, standards, ethics, values etc to be religiously followed in recruitment process to ensure the selection of the best candidates that will be employed to constitute part of the organization's workforce. Any calculated attempt to bend the recruitment rules, policies and standard to favour any job applicant against others constitute nepotism.

Awake (2010)[12] in Eze (2005)[4] posits that there is a wide acknowledgement of the strategic role of employee recruitment and selection in the quest for competitive advantage by modern organizations. Recruitment is a vital soul of any organisation, if it is to survive and keep going in the highly competitive industry of this modern age. This is because the success or the failure of any organisation hinges squarely on the level of technical competence, skills, ability, experience, knowledge, attitude to work etc that are deposited in its personnel. The process of recruitment and selection should therefore be embodied in the corporate strategy of the organisation. This assumes heightened importance if new talents are needed to drive the main parts of the organisation's strategy[4].

Interview according to Onah (2003)[13] is the only well known and approved medium through which job applicants finally market themselves to the interviewer/employer by convincing him through writing, oral and demonstrative skills that they can do the job. Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary also defined interview as a "formal meeting at which somebody is asked questions to see if they are suitable for a particular job, or for a course of study at a college, university etc." The above definitions shows that employee who was not interviewed or successfully passed the hurdles of recruitment is not sure to be fit to

deliver on the job; hence employees who joined organizations through nepotism or cronyism are usually unfit for the said job.

Nepotism is against the principles and the theories of administration and management; hence it is one of the major root causes of the inefficiency that characterized Nigeria civil service. The above fact on the destructive effect of nepotism was validated by the Scientific Management Theory of Fredrick Winslow Taylor, which its features are based on rationality, predictability, specialization and technical competence Nwizu (1999)[14]. Nepotism is also against bureaucracy which is another name for civil service.

### APPROACHES TO NEPOTISM

Below are the main forms through which nepotism rears its ugly head as we are going to discuss them one after the other.

1. Blood tie nepotism
2. Corruption prompt nepotism
3. Compensatory nepotism
4. Pity oriented nepotism
5. Skill induced nepotism
6. Crony capitalistic nepotism

#### 1. Blood Tie Nepotism

As the name implies, blood tie nepotism is squarely on consanguinity of a people by virtue of nuclear or extended family membership or common ancestral affinity rooted in paternal/maternal genealogy. Blood tie nepotism also cuts across village, geographical region, continent, race etc. depending on the range of its existence in a given place and at a given time. The existence of blood tie nepotism in a wider spectrum like local governments, states and regional blood tie nepotism in Nigeria leads to the establishment of Federal Character Commission (FCC), which is a body created by the federal government of Nigeria to stop state-blood tie nepotism in the sharing of the national resources; federal government appointment, employment, admissions into federal universities, scholarship schemes, etc (1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Section 153).

Also, the existence of gender and racial blood tie nepotism in the USA between the males and the females, and the Whites and the Blacks respectively led to the passage of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Act. According to Onah, Fab (2003)[13] the recruitment program is the key activity used to meet state and national goals for hiring protected - class individuals. In developed country like the USA, there is the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) regulation. It protects all citizens irrespective of race, sex, colour etc from discrimination during employment. No doubt, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Act and Federal Character Commission (FCC) legislations were passed in the USA and Nigeria respectively, with the bid to avert nepotism originating from them and its gross consequences.

### TWO TYPES OF BLOOD TIE NEPOTISM

(i) **Close (biological) blood tie nepotism** - this has to do with given undue and unmerited employment favour to someone that has blood (biological) affinity with another person. Examples in this category are: people with the same family background, common ancestral lineage and communal genealogy (village and community inclusive).

(ii) **Distant (social) blood tie nepotism** - here we have geographical and social-political divisions of the states that influence recruitment based on nepotism. Example is found in people from the same local government, ward, race, gender, religion, culture, language etc. There is this evidence that religion, language and culture have a strong bond as a unifying factor amongst its people in society thereby making people to hide under their cloaks to

propagate and commit cronyism. It is against this background that Onah (2003)[13] posits that:

*“Religion releases opportunities through the strong bond of the spirit of brotherhood, sisterhood, fatherhood and motherhood that would not come even with biological bond of consanguinity. Religious influence affects our human society grossly than any other social influence and human factor. That is why majority of social problems like alienation, prejudice, deprivation, racism, injustice, marginalization, unfair play, dehumanization etc are traceable to religious affiliations as the root causes...”*

2. **Corruption Prompt Nepotism** - According to E. Igbo and E. Anugwom (2002: 109) corruption refers to persuasion through the use of money or other unqualified and unapproved favour to obtain services or goods from public officials or persons in authority, illegally. Corruption prompt nepotism occurs when an employer or interviewer obtains financial or material gains from job hunting candidates in order to give them job without adhering to due process as stipulated in recruitment policy of the organisation. So any exchange of money or material gratification between employer (interviewer) and the employee before recruitment to induce the former to give the latter job is known as corruption influenced (prompted) nepotism.

#### **TYPES OF CORRUPTION PROMPT NEPOTISM**

- i. **Employee instigated corruption prompt nepotism** - this is where the prospective job applicant or his representative goes out in search of employer that has job vacant, and persuades him to sell it. In this search, if the former meets with the latter, they negotiate on a price that is paid to the employer by the prospective employee who will then be given job without interview or even when there is interview does not stop him from getting recruited whether he or she passes the recruitment hurdles or not, having paid for the job. It is a transaction driven mechanism borne out of corruption by the parties involved. Instances have been observed where the panelists have shared out the vacant positions among their friends and relatives, thereby denying the otherwise more qualified candidates the opportunity. In this manner, majority of the interviews conducted in the public service are meant to ratify and legitimize selections already determined under the shady circumstances of favoritism and nepotism[4].

Ikejiani-Clark states from an inside story of the world's most corrupt Financial Empire (1992) that “corruption pervades Nigeria society” and added a statement from a senior government official in Nigeria saying:

*“The evil exits in every feet of the society. You bribe to get your child into school, you pay to secure a job and also continue to pay in some scales to retain it, you pay ten percent to avoid paying taxes....”*

- ii. **Employer instigated corruption prompt nepotism** - here, it is the employer that goes out to search for the clients (prospective job seekers or their representatives) who will buy job openings in the organization when vacancies occur. The employer here is a powerful personality whose sales offer to job seekers to buy job openings does not fail to materialize due to the overriding power, authority, influence etc he has in the organization. The employer also at times can have a representative who goes out to the public to source buyer on behalf of his master. Obasi, Isaac (1999)[15] states that evidence abound in developing nations to show that corruption forms a permanent or at least not readily avoidable texture of bureaucratic life. Arthur, Nwankwo (1993) alluded to the fact of corruption in Nigeria; he states that the nation has a peculiar case of corruption and mismanagement. In other words, corruption means to depart from or break away from morality, tradition, law and civil virtues[16].

The benefits accrual from corruption prompt nepotism could be sexual gratification, materialism, cash, and perpetual underserved loyalty of the employee to the employer. However, different types of nepotism result in inefficiency which characterised Nigeria civil service. Inefficiency according to Ile (1999: 357)[2] is concerned with the measuring of inputs to achieve desired output, or the gap between actual performance and between results and efforts.

**3. Compensatory Nepotism** - this as the name implies, is a kind of nepotism whereby those in position of authority with the power to recruit use the leadership position vested on them to give people employment based on reward perspective having the people either served them as maiden, driver, cook, dry cleaner, errand boy or girl, personal assistant etc. This is usually done by politicians and top bureaucrats in the bid to compensate party stalwarts who served them or helped them win elections into various public posts. Or to compensate business mogul who donated money/materials to sponsor their electoral campaigns. Hence the politicians resort to awarding contracts to these businessmen with impunity, which is 'crony capitalistic nepotism', which we shall discuss later.

Compensatory nepotism is a two-way factor; a give and take practice, and a balance of relationship that exist between a master and a servant. It is a medium of appreciation use by the master (employer) to thank the servant (employee) for his obedient service, loyalty, trust and commitment when serving the master. Compensatory nepotism does not exist in vacuum, hence whenever one is recruited based on what one has done in favour of the recruiter, it is a compensation in that regard.

**3. Pity Oriented Nepotism** - the emotional understanding of human feelings like sorrow, hunger, poverty, suffering, anger, frustration etc that people undergo is the architect of this type of nepotism. This pity oriented nepotism is birthed in the high level of unemployment and under-employment prevalent in the present day Nigerian society. Many people with the requisite qualifications like certificates, experience, skill, knowledge, abilities, exposure etc are joblessly roaming the streets with little or no hope of getting a job. Awake (2010)[12] reports on the crushing emotional impact of unemployment thus: "if you have nothing, people treat you as nothing, and before long you begin to view yourself the way they view you". Hence, pity oriented nepotism is when a recruiter consequent upon the plight of an unemployed person decides to give the unemployed person job to alleviate his suffering and to salvage his misery.

**4. Skill Induced Nepotism** - Here, the recruiter when assesses one based on his own personal criteria and discretion for measuring individual performance and deems the person assessed to be excellent and outstanding, will then on his own power recruit the person without subjecting him to recruitment tests or hurdles. This is done by the recruiter with the 'good intention' to harness the skills, utilize the talent and the knowledge inherent in the person recruited based on observation by the recruiter.

**5. Crony Capitalistic Nepotism** - is a coined term describing an economy in which success in business depends on close relationship between businessmen and government officials. It may be exhibited by favoritism in the distributions of legal permits, government grants, special tax breaks, or other forms of state interventionism. Crony capitalism is believed to arise when business mogul and related self-serving friendships and family ties businessmen and the government influence the economy and society to the extent that it corrupts public serving economic and political ideals. Crony capitalism globally is viewed as virtually any government decision favouring "cronies" of government officials irrespective of the social strata involved ([en.wikipedia.org/wikicrony\\_capitalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wikicrony_capitalism)).

Crony capitalism is characterized by creating harsh and unfavorable business conditions for entrants to deter them from coming into the business to compete with them and knowing their secrets, such as seen in the privatization and commercialization of (2003-2005) in Obasanjo’s regime, which colluded and convinced the elite and the comprador bourgeoisie class to defray, loot and milk our national economy dry via privatization and commercialization exercise[17].

Report by the media in the recent senate Ad hoc committee probe of Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE) are replete with instance of fraud, corruption, bending of rules and plain evidence of looting of public assets. Alleged captains of industry are accused formally of buying public assets with fake documents (MoUs) and the stripping (the plain term for which is looting!) such enterprises of their assets. The public is also raped and short-changed by BPE simply searching at outrageously low and rigging the bids against preferred bidders (see table below).

**Table 1: The Current Tip of the Looting Iceberg**

S/N	Enterprise	Valued At	Sold At	To Preferred Bidder?
1.	Delta Steel Company	\$ 1.5 million	\$ 30 million	No data
2.	NICON Insurance	Worth over ₦6Billion	Bought with fake MoU and fake cheques and stripped of most of their assets.	No
3.	Ajaokuta Steel Company	\$1.5 Billion	\$30 million	No data
4.	ALSCON	\$130 million	\$ 130 million	No data
5.	Nigeria Re-Insurance corp	₦50 million	₦1.5 Billion	No data

**Source:** Insider Weekly, April 5, 2004: PP. 18-23

### FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR NEPOTISM

Below are the identified factors that are responsible for nepotism in any organization, especially in the civil service as we are going to explore them in details.

1. Organizational structure
2. Socio-political environmental influence
3. Corruption by Management (managers/administrators)
4. High cost of conducting transparent recruitment exercise
5. Government laws and policies

**1. Organizational Structure** - the principles and theories in practice in civil service go a long way to influence the general happenings therein, and also determine so many factors, nepotism inclusive. The form of structure on ground or in practice in Nigeria civil service usually hinders merit in employee recruitment process. Example, in civil service, one way communication system exist where order comes from top to the bottom strictly non-negotiable while request go from bottom to the top. This does not give room for ideas, information, merit etc to flow from bottom to the top [18].

2. **Socio-Political Environmental Influence** - the climate of any entity that is facing autocratic, undemocratic, dictatorial and paternalistic management style is unsuitable and intolerant for merit and transparency to flow. Hence in any civil service where bad leadership exists, nepotism is inevitable, and prevails against merit in the conduct of the organisation's business. According to Ile [2] it is the role of management to adapt our organization to the current demands in the environment. The technological, economic, political, social, ethical environment must be managed by our managers.
3. **Corruption by Management** - a selfish, ignorant, bossy and arrogant manager sees himself above the organisation's policies. Therefore, he does things 'anyhow' to his own advantage without consulting anybody or following the rules thereby paving way for nepotism to thrive.

The success and failure of any organization to a large extent depends on the leadership, and that is why Ile (1999) posits that:

*"Boss-induced inefficiency is the inefficiency brought about when the boss himself is inefficient, gives bad examples, stifles initiative and is unwilling to control his subordinates. The fact that it is recommended for top officials to be exposed to training suggests that bosses can and do induce inefficiency."*

Furthermore, corruption from the top, according to Nye in Girling (1997) is a deviation from 'normal duties' of a public role for private, pecuniary or status gains. Such violation of duties or rules include bribery (use of reward to pervert the judgment of a person in a position of trust), nepotism (appointment by ascription rather than merit), and misappropriation of public resources for private gain. Ezeodili (2009)[1] challenge for efficiency in public sector is of the opinion that:

*"The corrupt nature of our public administrators is obviously informed by the poverty-ridden nature of our public administration... Nigeria access to government began to depend on political clientelism or Godfatherism, breeding the concept of monetizing public positions."*

4. **High Cost of Conducting Transparent Recruitment Exercise** - the expensive nature of conducting transparent job recruitment based on meritocracy in conjunction with stress, massive application letters to be screened from the thousands of job applications make Nigeria civil service to operate hidden/secret job market most often. Secret job market is where job opportunities/vacancies are not advertised publicly for the interested candidates to apply, rather those in position of authority smuggle in their cronies into offices and positions secretly without undergoing the normal recruitment process stipulated by the law. The resultant effect of this is the height of inefficiency and the mass of deadwood found in Nigeria civil service.
5. **Government Laws and Policies** - due to the diverse multi-lingual, cultural, ethnic, religious and historical background of Nigeria, government in the bid to foster national integration and unity enacted legislations to encourage fair and equal representation in the allocation or sharing of national resources. This has been achieved through quota system, catchment area, and establishment of Federal Character Commission (FCC) etc which in the long run negates merit in Nigeria civil service recruitment process. Also in this category of government policies is the Executive Secret or Classified Document Acts via which top management cadre leverage on to shield certain information from public domain thereby abusively extending the Acts to recruitment by hiding vacancies and filling same with their cronies.

Closely related to this challenge of primordial and kingship ties brought into public service in Nigeria is the concept of federal character representation in the recruitment and appointment of public officers, which violates the principle of ideal bureaucracy. Therefore, with the heterogeneous nature of Nigeria society and its attendant federal

character structure as contained in 1999 constitution, the various tribes or ethnic groups must be proportionally represented[1].

The political system or political parties and in some cases the military, sought to promote national integration by recruiting people on the basis of particularistic criteria. At a certain period (even presently), the “quota system” pattern of recruitment and appointment was adopted. This has metamorphosed into reflecting the “federal character” such recruitment policy is likely to damage the moral of civil service. Mediocrity, resulting from quota system or federal character (particularistic) in brazen disregard for professionalism is dangerous in job-placement sub-culture[1].

**METHODOLOGY  
SOURCES OF DATA**

Data is simply defined as facts and figures. It is what differentiates research from guess work, imagination, myths and other sources of knowledge (Vincent et al. 2010)[19]. Data can be obtained from two major sources which the researcher used herein. As a survey and documentary research design, primary and secondary sources of data were used via structured questionnaire instrument administered, and interviews from the employees in the five selected ministries in Enugu State, and statistical reports obtained from documents in the ministries regarding recruitment.

**POPULATION OF STUDY**

Population comprises all the elements of a particular group. It is known as all the people or things that constitute the focus. The population of this study was collected from the five ministries in Enugu State. The population is five hundred and seven (507).

**Table 2: Population Distribution Table**

S/N	Ministries	Population	Percentage (%)
1.	Youths and Sports Development	171	34
2.	Chieftaincy Affairs	37	7
3.	Transportation	79	16
4.	Gender and Women Affairs	117	23
5.	Water Resources	103	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Planning Research and Statistics (organizing) departments of the five ministries under study.

**SAMPLE SIZE**

Sample is a fraction or segment of the total population whose characteristics is used to represent the entire population (Vincent A. et al, 2010)[19]. The idea of sample arises because, in most cases, it is difficult to study the entire population. The fact that a sample is used, instead of the entire population introduces what is called *sampling error*. This is the difference between the result that would have been obtained if the entire population was used and one obtained using the sample[19].

The sample size was determined using the formula provided by [20].

Therefore, the formula is applied thus:

$$n = 1 + \frac{N}{N} (e)^2$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population size

e = Level of significance or error allowed

1 = Constant

Therefore, the sample size was two hundred and twenty four (224). However, to determine the sample size of each sub-group, the **Population Probability Technique (PPT)** is used.

**Table 3: SAMPLE SIZE DISTRIBUTION TABLE**

S/N	Ministries	Sample size	Percentage (%)
1	Youths and Sports Dev.	76.6	34
2	Chieftaincy Matters	15.68	7
3	Transportation	35.68	16
4	Gender and Women Affairs	51.52	23
5	Water Resources	44.8	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Research Data, 2013.

#### SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sampling technique used in selecting the sample for the study was **Stratified Random Sampling Technique**. The researcher developed three (3) research questions and out of each research question, five (5) items of questions were developed, which equaled up to fifteen (15) items of questions. The instrument developed by the researcher to measure "The effects of nepotism on employees' performance in Nigeria civil service" is called Nepotism on Employee Performance Description Questionnaire (NEPDQ).

To ensure the validity of the instrument, a "**pilot tests**" was applied by the researcher. Moreover, to ensure reliability of the instrument, the researcher used "**test-re-test technique**", which according to Olewe(2009)[21] is a process whereby the researcher administers the constructed questionnaire to the same reliable sample group more than once with the view to discovering how consistent each element of the group is.

#### DATA PRESENTATION

As a survey research design, it treats data based on information gathered from the respondents in which out of the 224 copies of questionnaires distributed, only 196 copies were returned and used. The frequency and the percentage of the responses from a particular question is obtained and used to interpret the data. The results are presented in a tabular form; the research question is equally stated to ensure conformity with the questionnaire.

**Table 4: RESEARCH QUESTION ONE**

What is the impact of nepotism on employees' performance in Nigeria civil service?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Very negative impact</b>	92	47
<b>Negative impact</b>	61	31
<b>No Idea</b>	8	4
<b>Positive impact</b>	20	10
<b>Very positive impact</b>	15	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2013.

The above table shows that out of the 196 respondents, 92 of them or (47%) hold the view that the impact of nepotism on employees performance is very negative, 61 respondents or (31%) were of the opinion that it is negative, 8 respondents or (4%) are biased with no idea, 20 respondents or (10%) maintained that it has positive effective, and 15 or (8%) say that it has very positive impact. Then the table as shown above from the calculation so far proves

clearly with enough conviction that nepotism impacts negatively on employees' performance.

**Table 5: RESEARCH QUESTION TWO**

What factors are responsible for nepotism in employees' recruitment process in Nigeria civil service?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Organizational structure</b>	25	13
<b>Corruption</b>	108	55
<b>Environmental or social influences</b>	9	5
<b>High cost of conducting transparent interview</b>	51	26
<b>Government policies</b>	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2013.

The data from above table shows that 25 respondents out of the 196 respondents or (13%) opined that organizational structure is one of the major factors responsible for nepotism in employee recruitment process; 108 respondents or (55%) believe that corruption is the root of nepotism in employee recruitment, 9 respondents or (5%) stand on the fact that environmental or social influences induces nepotism, 51 respondents or (26%) say that high cost of conducting transparent interview contributes to nepotism, 3 respondents or (1%) are of the view that government policies play roles that give room for nepotism to thrive.

**Table 6: RESEARCH QUESTION THREE**

What can be done to curb or eradicate nepotism in employees' recruitment process in Nigeria civil service?

Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Advertising job vacancies</b>	63	32
<b>Hiring recruitment expert firms</b>	51	26
<b>Written and oral tests</b>	49	25
<b>Conducting interview</b>	19	10
<b>Conducting seminar</b>	14	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2013.

The table above indicates that out of the 196 respondents, 63 of them (32%) strongly believe that announcing or advertising job vacancies will curb or eradicate nepotism thereby improving merit system in employee recruitment process, 51 respondents or (26%) claim opinion that hiring recruitment experts will curb or eradicate nepotism, and enthrone merit in the recruitment process, 49 respondents or (25%) say that carrying out written and oral tests openly will curb nepotism, and enhance merit, 19 respondents or (10%) is of the view that conducting interview before filling any vacant post will ensure improvement of merit, 14 respondent or (7%) say that conducting seminar in organizations on dangers of nepotism will lead to eradication of nepotism, and enhancement of merit in recruitment process. The above table clearly indicates that advertising job vacancies and conducting transparent interview will enhance merit in civil service recruitment.

### FINDINGS

The researcher has been able to found out that the application of nepotism in employee recruitment process impacts very negatively on workers performance. The study showed that the major factors responsible for nepotism in employee recruitment process are organizational structure and corruption being on the top list amongst other factors like environmental or social influences, high cost of conducting transparent interview and government policies. It also found out that nepotism is eradicable or at least could be curbed via the applications of advertising job openings/vacancies, conducting transparent interview openly, hiring professional recruiters among others will ensure the selection of the best candidates who will lead the organisation to the promise land.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Government at all levels, its agencies and quasi-bodies like Civil Service Commission and the management of the ministries in their bid to ensure higher productivity and efficiency in public sector will have to shun nepotism and embrace meritocracy in employees' recruitment process to ensure the selection of the best, and well qualified candidates who will deliver as and when due, for high productivity, growth enhancement, and sustainability. This is because the quality of the personnel in any organization is the fulcrum that drives the wheel of success or failure in the organization. The government should enforce the application of advertising all job vacancies, written and oral interview should be transparently, meritoriously and openly conducted with results announced immediately or not too long after the tests to ensure fair play in the recruitment process thereby leading to selection of the most credible job candidates. This will attract the best brains, technical competence, and also gives everybody 'equal opportunity' in the service of the father land, which the Nigeria fundamental objectives of state policy is anchored on as enshrined in the constitution.

It is also recommended that organizational culture and practices which don't give room to industrial democracy should be discarded as it gives room for corruption which makes nepotism thrive. The management cadre and bodies involved in recruitment should be adequately re-oriented to have a change of attitude, value and perception on the implications of the canker worm called nepotism. The silent position of law on recruitment by nepotism is not encouraging, thus there should be legislation for the law to have its full course or rot on perpetrators of nepotism thereby preventing people from committing nepotism.

### CONCLUSION

The result of the findings through this study shows that nepotism in employees' recruitment process has disastrous negative consequences on workers performance in the civil service. The implications of the existence of nepotism on workers performance is not far-fetched as it pops up ugly head with full expression on the high level of low output in civil service, dead wood, ghost workers, redundancy, low morale and bad attitude to work, inefficiency, half bake, and square pegs in round holes personnel, culminating in moribund government entities. Meritocratic system of recruitment should be embarked on to address the problem of poor workers performance in the civil service, and to give every citizen equal opportunity and access to the civil service of the father land.

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