

Examination Of Management Practices In The Nigerian Public Service And Its Impact On Workers Productivity: The Delta State Urban Water Board Experience

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Abstract: The study examines the management practices in the Public Service and its impact on workers productivity, using the Delta State Urban Water Board, Asaba as a focal point. Using the secondary sources of data collection, the study reveals that the dominant management practices in the Delta State Urban Water Board, Asaba is that which promotes sentiment in the application of rules and regulations. This has undermined initiative, promoted indiscipline and lack of professionalism in the board. It was also revealed that management practices in the Delta State Urban Water Board, Asaba is characterized by prebendalism and neo-patrimonialism. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations is hereby outlined: Management practices should respond to the yearnings of the staff in order to bring out the best in the staff: A transformational management practice is recommended for this study. This management practices promote a participatory culture that help develop staff capacity and responsiveness to organizational goals. Furthermore, management practices in the public service should de-emphasize as much as possible ethnic sentiments and all other divisive tendencies so that staff can work as a team in the organization: An autocratic management practice should be discouraged, rather, managers and public sector administrators should display attribute of professionalism at all times in order to encourage the subordinate to emulate them. When an administrator exhibit professionalism, staff indiscipline will be reduced and productivity will also improve significantly. Above all, public sector managers should at all times promote public service ethics that is in line with civil service rules and regulations.

Keyword: Management, Productivity, Prebendalism, Delta State, Organizations

I. INTRODUCTION

Management practices or style is a key determinant of the success or failure of any organization. This means that management is very crucial to organizational success. In order words, management ensure that the organization perform to expectation, they also ensure that the organization archive it purpose and goals, to do this the management perform certain roles and duties, this include organizing controlling, directing coordinating and leading. Management are also expected to influences, directs, and motivates others to perform specific tasks and also inspire subordinates for efficient performance towards the accomplishment of the stated organizational objectives.

Management practices therefore involves the process, manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. According to Jaskyte (1), while management in any organization have a pre-determined goals and objectives, its realization depends on how they are able to synchronized organizational goals with personal goals and ambitions of individuals members and staff or the organization. In his words, human beings become members of an organization in order to achieve certain personal objectives. The extent to which they are active members depends on how management convinces them that their membership will enable them achieve their predetermined objectives, while also striving to meet organizational goals. Therefore, management practices must ensure that an individual will support/be with

an organization if such an individual are made to believes that their personal objectives could be met, otherwise there will be a decline in the staff productivity. Thus management practices/styles in an organization is one of the factors that play a significant role in enhancing or retarding the interest and commitment of the individuals in the organization.

According to Ngambi (2), management involves the process of influencing others' commitment towards realizing their full potential in achieving a value-added, shared vision, with passion and integrity. The nature of this influence is such that the members of the team cooperate voluntarily with each other in order to achieve the objectives which the organization has set for each member, as well as for the group. The relationships between the management and employee, as well as the quality of employees' performance, are significantly influenced by the management practices adopted by the organization under a chosen or appointed management team/administrator (Jeremy, (3).

The above connotes that management is a critical skill process, involving the ability to encourage a group of people towards common goal. Management focuses on the development of followers and their needs. Managements exercising transformational leadership style focus on the development of value system of employees, their motivational level and moralities with the development of their skills (Ismail, (4). It basically helps followers achieve their goals as they work in the organizational setting; it encourages followers to be expressive and adaptive to new and improved practices and changes in the environment (Azka,(5). This is why Michael (6) aver that management has a direct cause and effect relationship upon organizations and their success. Management determine values, culture, change tolerance and employee motivation. They shape institutional strategies including their execution and effectiveness. Management can appear at any level of an institution and are not exclusive to a particular organization. Successful management do, however, have one thing in common. They influence those around them in order to reap maximum benefit from the organization's resources, including its most vital resources (human resources). This follows that in order to achieve the desired objectives, there must be an interaction between employers and employees (or management and staff or leaders and followers). The management style that characterizes the interaction between managers (or leaders) and their staff members (or followers) is most important in terms of employees' efficiency and productivity. Jaskyte (7) posited that employees' perception of management behaviour is an important predictor of employee job satisfaction and commitment. Hersey (8), notes that management practices and styles has been a fundamental concern of organizations and researchers due to its effect on subordinates who, it is suggested, work more effectively and productively when their managers adopt a specific management style that seems to incorporate the values and needs of individuals staff members into the overall goals of the organization. As such, the management styles employed by a manager or administrator in the case of public organization can either motivate or discourage employees, which in turn can cause increase or decrease in their level of performance. According to Schyns and Sanders (9), the sources of employee job dissatisfaction

among others things include, conflicting job demands (from the management) and absence of prospects for personal development. For efficiency purposes, an effective management practices, is one that positively affects employees' satisfaction and results in better performances, effectiveness and productivity. It is against this background that the study will examine management practices in the Nigerian public service and its impact on staff productivity, using the Delta state Urban Water Board, Asaba.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The public service contains a network of human relationships and associations extending from the highly influential government officials to the lowest paid and powerless individual charged with all resources, natural and human, and all other aspects of the life of the society with which the government is concerned Nnoli, (10). In essence, public service is the totality of how progress and development are made in the society. The Nigerian public service has faced a number of challenges, which has considerably undermined its capacity to serve as agent of development. Such challenges include those of achieving technical competence, coping with public expectation and change, behaving ethically and maintaining constitutional order Ayo, (11). The truth is that all these problems are inextricably linked to management practices in the Nigerian Public service. To a large extent, poor management practices has resulted in poor ethics, lack of professionalism, sentimental approach to the application of governing rules and regulations, indiscipline among civil servants, all leading to poor performance of public service. More importantly, just like the political leadership, heads of the civil service include those in junior cadre have failed to imbibed the attitude of viewing their service as sacred and sacrosanct. This situation has placed the public organization in a dysfunctional position in which it is unable to provide efficient services for the majority of the populace, Adebayo (12). The politicization of the public service has further undermine management practices in the public service leading to increase in lack of professionalism, poor motivation, discipline problem, poor supervision and indifference attitude of public servants has in many ways affected their productivity.

III. MANAGEMENT PRACTICE AND ITS DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

Management in a general context involves the act of getting things done and evaluating performance which is known as controlling. Controlling is one important aspect of management that ensures that things are done orderly that is in a proper way. The term management practice can be defined as the leadership method a manager uses in administering an organization. It includes controlling, directing, indeed all techniques and methods used by leaders to motivate subordinates to follow their instructions. It can be described as the particular practice used to direct an organization. Robbins (13) defined managers as —individuals who achieve goals

through other people, who oversee the activities of others and who are responsible for attaining goals in these organizations. According to Kavanaugh and Ninemeier (14), there are three factors that determine the type of management style: managers characteristics, sub-ordinates' characteristics and the organization environment.

More specifically, the personal background of managers such as personality, knowledge, values, and experiences shapes their feelings about appropriate leadership that determine their specific management style; employees also have different personalities, back- grounds, expectations and experiences, for example, employees who are more knowledgeable and experienced may work well under a democratic management style, while employees with different experiences and expectations require an autocratic management style. Some factors in the organization environment such as organizational climate, organization values, composition of work group and type of work can also influence management style. However, managers or (administrators in the case of public institutions) can adapt their management style to the perceived preferences of their subordinates Wood, (15).

Management styles can be classified according to the managers' power, usage of such power and behaviour as: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire, where styles are distinguished by the influence managers have on subordinates. More specifically, power has been considered as the potential of a process to influence people (Hersey et al., 2001-16); a part of the influence process at the core of leadership (Northouse, (17); and the rights that allow individuals to take decisions about specific matters. The influence of managers will differ according to the type of power used by a manager over their subordinates. The extent to which employees of an organization contribute in harnessing the resources of the organization and perform on their jobs depends on how well the managers (leaders) of the organization understand and adopt appropriate management style in performing their roles as managers and leaders. Thus, efficiency in resources mobilization, allocation, utilization and enhancement of organizational performance depends, to a large extent, on managers/leadership style, among other factors. Hence, management will be more effective when they know and understand the appropriate usage of power Hersey (18). According to Kavanaugh and Ninemeier (19), an autocratic style is embedded in managers who have full organizational power and authority for decision making without sharing it with their subordinates, while a democratic style implies that management share their authority of decision making with employees and delegate, and finally a laissez-faire or free-rein style exists where management give their employees most of the authority over decision making.

IV. MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PRODUCTIVITY

Studies that investigate the link between management practices and productivity have assessed the impact of an individual practice in isolation, the effects of joint adoption of practices and the impact of clusters or systems of complementary practices. Typical human resources management practices involve training, development,

empowerment and teamwork. Wall and Wood (20) suggest it is unlikely that there exists a 'one size fits all' set of productivity-enhancing management principles or practices. Edwards (21) builds upon this contingency approach, stating that the success of management practices are firm-specific and these are affected by the prevailing institutional environment.

A strand of literature argues that management style can raise and sustain a high level of firm performance. Management practices can represent a significant source of competitive advantage, as they are the means by which firms locate, develop and retain rare, non-imitable and non-substitutable human capital Barney, (22). The studies found in the literature have predominantly reported a positive effect of using management practices although it needs to be ensured that costs for introducing and maintaining these practices do not outweigh their benefits. Empirical evidence suggests that unionisation is an important mediator for the success of management style. Koch and McGrath (23) investigated the impact of a set of management practices on labour productivity, to find that good management practices are positively associated with labour productivity. Results suggest that public organization that tailor their management practices towards the human resources needs of the organization in order to develop their workers are more likely to enjoy the rewards of a more productive workforce than those that do not, although this is not framed to take account of the bigger picture. For example, Capelli and Neumark (24) provided some indication that empowering work practices are related to greater productivity. The authors presented partial evidence of such a relationship, however, since the management practices raise labour costs per employee (in this case employee compensation), it is unclear whether such practices are beneficial to the firm overall. Another study, this time of the Belgian public works Department, revealed a similar situation. Sels (25) demonstrated a strong and positive relationship between management practices and productivity, controlling for past performance and using one-year lagged financial performance indicators (although the measures were recorded contemporaneously). This beneficial effect was greatly outweighed by the cost increases associated with higher management practices. Nevertheless, management practices was directly related to profitability, and the authors understand this in terms of the minimisation of unmeasured operational issues.

A cross-sectional, single-respondent empirical study of 52 public institutions in the US and Russia demonstrated that employee skills, attitudes and behaviours play a mediating role between management practices and firm outcomes Park (26). Results suggest that clusters of management practices positively influence the performance of public institutions in the United States and Russia. This can be explained in one of two ways: either management practices exert an influence regardless of the organization goals, or that these organisations always implement very similar 'best practices'. Indeed, other empirical evidence suggests that the potential causal path from management practices to productivity is more complicated than once thought. Another study, multi-respondent and quasi-longitudinal in design involving Indian bureau of infrastructural development presented empirical evidence demonstrating no direct causal relationship between the

management practices in question and organisational financial performance, although some management practices were directly related to operational performance parameters Paul and Anantharaman, (27). Instead, it was found that every single management practice measured indirectly influenced the organisation's operational performance. The indirect effect is very important, because few studies employ a research design where intervening variables are measured, but beware that the sample size was too small to apply all of the desired statistical analyses (i.e. maximum likelihood model) and no controls were added. The findings are nevertheless thought provoking and infer that simply focussing on a direct linkage between management practices and performance may not reveal the operational mechanism through which an effect is exerted. In support of this type of approach, Michie and Sheehan (28) analysed original data from a mixed sample of 32 public organizations in Europe. The empirical findings demonstrate positive relationships between management practices and organizational productivity. Additionally, the use of external flexible labour was associated with lower management effectiveness. The implications are very pragmatic, and although this survey is only cross-sectional, it could be inferred that there exists a two-way causal relationship between management practices and organizational performance.

Ichniowski (29) formed a statistical distribution of management practices to show that some practices are adopted only in presence of some others (i.e. as clusters), and some clusters display a more significant productivity advantage than others. The econometric analysis of this study is relatively robust as it is based on panel data rather than on cross-sectional data. Building on the findings, Ichniowski (30) analysed the impact of different clusters of management practices on productivity, to estimate the impact of a single management practice on productivity. Empirical results demonstrated that public organizations using a set of management practices are associated with a higher level of productivity than organizations employing a single management practice.

High Involvement Work (HIWM) management practices represent another important set of management practices. Employees of a high-involvement organisation take greater responsibility for its success. In practice, this involves management practices to develop and support a self-managing and self programming workforce. Guthrie (31) received responses from 19 New Zealand public institutions with at least 100 employees, and empirically demonstrated a positive relationship between the application of high-involvement work practices and productivity. However, an interaction was observed with employee turnover: when productivity was high, turnover was linked to decreased productivity; and when productivity was low, turnover was associated with increased productivity. Indeed, employee retention is critical when financial investments in work practices are relatively high, and this finding infers that employers may benefit from utilising complementary management practices (such as enhancing retention of good performers) alongside high-involvement systems.

Bryson (32) investigated data (a nationally representative sample of organisational data collected using a preferable

technique of multi-respondent sampling across organisations) for the public sector only to test hypotheses regarding work organisation, trade union representation and workplace performance. Findings demonstrated a positive effect of High Involvement Work (HIWM) management practices on labour productivity; however, this effect was minimal within non-unionised workplaces. Descriptive evidence suggests this effect is attributable to concessionary wage bargaining on the part of unions. When comparing the productivity of Japanese and USA public workers, empirical evidence shows that USA public institutions who had adopted a full system of innovative management practices patterned after the successful Japanese system, achieved levels of productivity and quality equal to the performance of Japanese public organizations Ichniowski and Shaw, (33). This suggests that the higher average productivity of Japanese public organizations cannot be attributed to cultural differences; instead, this is related to the utilisation of more effective management practices.

It seems that there is consensus in the literature about a positive impact of an individual management practice in isolation on productivity. It is also worth mentioning that across the extant literature this is the most common approach of investigation. However, recent theoretical and empirical research suggests that this approach may be misleading since organizations often adopt clusters of management practices rather than individual practices in isolation Patterson (34). This is because the presence of complementarities among innovations is such that when an innovation is adopted in isolation it might not necessarily yield positive gains. However, when innovations are jointly adopted they can significantly improve productivity, increase quality and often result in better organizational performances than more traditional systems (Ichniowski (35) and Ruigrok (36). In other words, the benefits from the joint adoption of clusters of complementary innovations can be higher than the sum of the individual effects.

V. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the nature and context of the research work, the study will adopt the Bureaucratic theory. Bureaucratic theory was developed by a German Sociologist and political economist Max Weber (37). According to him, bureaucracy is the most efficient form of organisation. The organisation has a well-defined line of authority. It has clear rules and regulations which are strictly followed. Max Weber's Theory of Bureaucracy describes a new organizational form (i.e. bureaucracy) that Weber noticed had started emerging in Western society during the second half of the nineteenth century. According to him, in this new type of organization, leadership and authority were derived from a more 'rational' framework than was the case before. Previously, authority was derived from either charisma or tradition. In the case of charismatic authority, followers obeyed gifted leaders out of devotion, loyalty and respect. Traditional authority, on the other hand existed due to historical reasons and people obeyed a person in power for the simple reason that the person was in a position of traditional power, for example in the case of monarchical or other hereditary leadership positions. Weber

believed that authority in the new, bureaucratic organizational form was more 'rational' because leaders were recognized and obeyed for subscribing to values of logic, efficiency and reason. Such organizations functioned on the basis of 'legitimately' derived laws, rules and regulations. And laws, rules and regulations derived their legitimacy from the consistent, disciplined, rationalized and methodical calculation of optimum means to given ends. Weber posited that bureaucratic action was typically oriented towards solving problems and that bureaucratic decision-making was guided by the objectives of efficiency, calculability and predictability.

Consequently, decisions were more rational because they were made 'without regard to persons', i.e. were immune to personal, irrational, and emotional aspects. Weber identified three key features of bureaucratic organizations. Firstly, bureaucracies had a formal and unambiguous hierarchical structure of power and authority. Secondly, bureaucracies had an elaborate, rationally derived and systematic division of labor. Thirdly, bureaucracies were governed by a set of general, formal, explicit, exhaustive and largely stable rules that were impersonally applied in decision making. Moreover, all decisions and communications were recorded in permanent files and such records were used to refine existing rules and derive new ones.

Additionally, Weber also noted that bureaucracies entailed a separation of personal from official property, and that bureaucrats were usually selected on the basis of their qualifications (and not nepotism), were appointed (not elected), and were compensated via a salary. According to Weber, the goal of bureaucracy – the reason why it had evolved - was to maximize efficiency. He posited that bureaucracies were technically efficient instruments of administration because their institutionalized rules and regulations enabled all employees to learn to perform their duties optimally. Weber described many ideal types of public administration and government in his magnum opus *Economy and Society* (1922). His critical study of the bureaucratization of society became one of the most enduring parts of his work. It was Weber who began the studies of bureaucracy and whose works led to the popularization of this term. Many aspects of modern public administration go back to him, and a classic, hierarchically organized civil service of the Continental type is called "Weberian civil service. As the most efficient and rational way of organizing, bureaucratization for Weber was the key part of the rational-legal authority, and furthermore, he saw it as the key process in the ongoing rationalization of the Western society.

VI. APPLICABILITY AND RELEVANCE OF THE BUREAUCRATIC THEORY TO THE STUDY

Weber's ideal bureaucracy is characterized by hierarchical organization, delineated lines of authority in a fixed area of activity, action taken on the basis of and recorded in written rules, bureaucratic officials need expert training, rules are implemented by neutral officials, career advancement depends on technical qualifications judged by organization, not individuals. While recognizing bureaucracy as the most efficient form of organization, and even indispensable for the

modern state. as is evident, the management practices in the Nigerian public service are hierarchically delineated to ensure effective coordination of staff from various cadre.

In Max Weber's "Economy and Society", Weber describes six bureaucratic values that are vital in obtaining a functioning and self-sufficient organization. These six characteristics include imperial positions, rule-governed decision making, professionalism, chain of command, defined responsibilities, and bounded authority. These features defines the pattern of management in the Nigerian public service. Although many of these values seem to collide and be seemingly similar to each other, they are unique with individualized qualities. Imperial positions should be utilized for three main purposes. The first is every day activities must be maintained by official positions. These positions are needed for a successful bureaucratic business. The second purpose is for those who hold these positions to disseminate orders in a specific and stable manner. Finally, the third purpose is for methodical provision, which is used for the constant fulfillment of these specified duties. The imperial positions are on the top of the communication hierarchy and determine the methods as to which the information is shared throughout the organization. Weber states "with the full development of the bureaucratic type, the office hierarchy is monocratically organized. This speaks directly to rule-governed decision making. Every worker needs to know the office hierarchy and which avenues to take when they have a question. The upper management communicates their ideas to those under them who will then funnel these directives throughout the business in an orderly fashion.

Furthermore, professionalism is another important aspect of a successful bureaucratic organization that Weber goes on to describe. A sense of professionalism in the workplace creates a distinguished atmosphere creating the opportunity for workers to achieve their utmost potential. This feeling yields a drive in the workplace because the workers want to perform well for those in command thus creating a positive overall attitude in the workplace. Yet another Weberian value is chain of command. Everyone in the organization must know whose directives they should follow. The hierarchy of power is exemplified through salaries. Those that have higher salaries in turn have more power in the decision-making process. Those in power make decisions and relay these decisions to an associate who will then tell a manager, who will then tell his employees, and so on. The chain of command is extremely important to a bureaucratic business because it sets up a specific ladder that allows for information and important decisions to be relayed swiftly and efficiently.

Max Weber also describes defined responsibility to be an important value to Weberian Bureaucracy. An office or workplace must have fields of specialization in order to diversify the company. Every worker must know the responsibilities of his job in the most intimate detail possible. For a company to be successful, employees have to know the details of their job so they can be supremely efficient and not conflict with the obligations of another employee. The last value that Weber discusses is bounded authority. In the workplace, there must be a stable, defined set of general rules for the employees that they must abide by at all time. This commitment yields jurisprudence and business management.

In turn this will instill a hardworking and confident frame of mind throughout the workforce. Each of these values is pertinent to the success of a bureaucratic organization.

One can therefore infer from the above that management practices in the Nigerian public service are based on the principle of Rationality, Objectively and Consistency. In the Nigerian public service, there are formal and impersonal relations among the member of the organization; Interpersonal relations are based on positions and not on personalities; there are well defined Rules and Regulations. These rules cover all the duties and rights of the employees. These rules must be strictly followed; there are well defined methods for all types of work; selection and promotion is based on technical qualifications; only bureaucratic or legal power is given importance amongst. That the Nigeria public service have long lost these values is not in doubt. In this wise, the due process mechanism is expected to act as a means of ensuring professionalism, ensures that the principle of rationality, objectively and consistency are followed in the performance of public duties; that there are well defined rules and regulations in all activities within public institutions amongst others.

VII. MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE DELTA STATE URBAN WATER BOARD AND ITS IMPACT ON PRODUCTIVITY

Public sector organizations that strive to deliver quality services are those that embrace various performance review practices to assess their employee performance and motivate them with incentives. The success or failure of public sector organizations hinges on the ability to attract, develop, retain, empower and reward a diverse array of appropriately skilled people and is the key to improving organizational performance Robert and Angelo (38). Most public sector businesses failed in Delta State of Nigeria because of ineffective and inefficient performance management system Esu and Inyang, (39). In the Delta State Urban Water Board, the role of staff is often limited to policy implementation without any recourse to evaluation. However, experts are of the view that there is no link between employee performance and financial data Pollitt and Bouckaert (40). These organizations are required to give adequate attention to performance management reviews to enhance productivity. Records also show that in the Delta State Urban Water Board, less effort is devoted to embarking on performance appraisal and review. Some informed authorities blame this on managers who do not have adequate information on performance review techniques that could have significant impact on employees' performance for greater organizational effectiveness Esu and Inyang (41).

The public sector of every nation is germane to her national development. Perhaps, this accounts for why a larger proportion of the Nigeria national budget has been voted for the creation and sustenance of public enterprises Adeyemo and Salami (42). Through its ministries, departments and agencies, government puts in place policies, programmes and services that help galvanize development at all levels, engender economic progress and increase trust and connection between the managers of the state and the people Imhonopi

and Urim, (43). On the contrary, the performance of workers in the Delta State Urban Water Board has been replete with varying contradictions and has even become an epitome of all that is corrupt, mediocre and fraudulent (Imhonopi and Urim, (44). As it stands, service delivery in the Delta State Urban Water Board has virtually collapsed. Politics and politicisation has systematically bastardised the very essence of management system in the organization. Consequently, morale is weak, remuneration is very poor, efficiency is no more, competence has been ditched and merit abandoned Kagara (45).

Whether in domestic or global companies, ultimately, the commitment to business ethics and foundation is built through organizational culture, with ethical values reflected in the workplace Society for Human Resource Management, (46). In the public sector for example, all government departments have to be efficient as they have to deliver value for taxpayers' money. Efficiency encompasses the qualitative and value-laden expectations of the society. In fact, efficient, effective, responsive, transparent and community-oriented public service delivery is an imperative prerequisite because without it unethical behaviour will result Raga and Taylor, (47). This proviso remain a challenge because the rent-seeking behaviours of management in the Delta State Urban Water Board as marked by the involvement of senior management in the implementation process of the boards policies and projects combine to undermine the capacity of the agency to ensure effective service delivery. As should be noted, Prebendal politics which has been identified by Joseph (48) as the bane of the development of sustainable democracy in Nigeria can be seen as having its motivating roots in this rent seeking psychology which sees state resources and machinery as possible objects of appropriation by the power wielders and their primordial blocs. In the case of the Delta State Urban Water Boards, Management often see projects budgeted for as object of pillage and personal aggrandizement. The core characteristics of Management in the Delta State Urban Water Board is such that they demonstrate a 'neopatrimonialism tendency' — private appropriation of the public sphere, the primacy of vertical ties and personalism. This, the study reveals have fundamental implications for staff productivity and in the ability of the agencies to carry out her primary responsibility of providing adequate and clean water supply to the populace. The political and patronage-based appointments and corruption have thus become the order of the day and thus, undermine the capacity of the organization to make and implement policies, to manage allocated resources and to undertake routine tasks. Weber emphasised the importance of a modern bureaucracy — one that combines a high degree of administrative competence, meritocracy, impartiality, probity and accountability — to the development of the modern state. However, the study reveals that management practices as characterized by prebendalism and neo-patrimonialism have generally undermine and constrained these salient features that would have help ensure optimal productivity among the staff of the Delta State Urban Water Board, Asaba.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Today, contemporary organizations are characterized by such constantly changing dynamics as complexity of customization, and competitiveness; importance of people rather than strategies; reliance on technology and the rise of the knowledge economy among many other challenges. This is why management practice is a key factor in the growth, development, performance and productivity of staff and organization as a whole. In this study attempt has been made to x-ray the impact of management practice on staff productivity in the civil service using the Delta state Urban water board as a case study. The study reveals that the dominant management practices in the Delta State Urban Water Board, Asaba is that which promotes sentiment in the application of rules and regulations. This has undermine initiative, promote indiscipline and lack of professionalism in the board. It was also revealed that management practices in the Delta State Urban Water Board, Asaba is characterized by prebendalism and neo-patrimonialism. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations is hereby outline

- ✓ Management practices should respond to the yearnings of the staff in order to bring out the best in the staff.
- ✓ A transformational management practice is recommended for this study. This management practices promote a participatory culture that help develop staff capacity and responsiveness to organizational goals
- ✓ Furthermore, management practices in the public service should de-emphasize as much as possible ethnic sentiments and all other divisive tendencies so that staff can work as a team in the organization.
- ✓ An autocratic management practices should be discouraged, rather managers and public sector administrators should display attribute of professionalism at all time in order to encourage the subordinate to emulate. When an administrator exhibit professionalism staff indiscipline will be reduced as much as possible and productivity will also improve significantly.
- ✓ Above all, public sector managers should at all time promote public service ethics that is in line with civil service rules and regulations.

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