



Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEE BENEFITS IN NIGERIA: THE PROLETARIANIZATION OF THE ELITES?

AN INAUGURAL LECTURE

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to:

#Mal Abul-Hassan-Aliyu (Audi)

#Hajiya Rabi'atu (Ya-Takko)

#Alh Abbas Usman

#Alh Abbas Dabo Sambo

*Lawal, *Sani, Alh Yahaya, Haj Amina (Dudu), *Haj Maryam (Mairo), *Abdullahi, Alh Ibrahim (Iro), *Bello, Haj Halima, Alh Ahmed Tijjani, Haj Fatima (Lanti) Alh Shehu

#Alh Zubairu Usman

#Haj Salamatu (Yamini)

Justice Binta Zubairu

Amina, Abidah, Adilah, Anisah, *Aqibah & *Aqilah, Aslamah, Aunatullah Rukayya, Fatima

#Prof Dahiru Yahya

Hajiya Fatima-Uwani (Goggo)

Dr Anisah Yahya

Al-Amin, Abidallah, Adil, Anees, Aslam Yusuf

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Aisha, *Sadiq, Raheema, Halima Musa, Fadilah

#Alh Ahmadu Ido

#Haj Hauwa'u (Inna)

Haj Zainab Ahmad

Arif, Anisah, Nafisah

#Alh Abubakar Tanimu Kwarbai

#Alh Ibrahim Balarabe Hussaini

#/* Deceased

May the souls of the deceased rest in Aljannah Firdaus. Aameen, thumma Aameen.

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With deepest humility and gratitude to Allah-SWT, it is my great pleasure to stand before this august day and august gathering of scholarship, from the Department of Political Science and International Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, to present the first Inaugural Lecture from the Department and the third from the Faculty. I thank Allah-SWT for giving me this privileged opportunity with good life and health to be here today.

I wish to express my glowing appreciation to the Vice Chancellor, Professor Kabiru Bala and his top management team, for providing me with this opportunity, on this inaugural lecture platform, to present on a subject that everybody is concerned about-the employee benefits. I want to share my experience on this subject, underpinned in my special field of study of political economy, based on my understanding and deep thoughts about the discipline, with my academic and non-academic colleagues, students and general community. I also wish to thank the immediate past and current Chairmen of the ABU Organized Lectures Committee, Prof Bala B. Dewu and Prof Jacob Jari respectively along with their respective teams for a wonderful opportunity and support. In addition, I appreciate the presence of everybody. I also want to acknowledge and appreciate the presence of my immediate and extended family members, colleagues, friends and admirers.

I am certain that the subject matter of the lecture is of great value to everybody, particularly for extending the

academic frontiers of knowledge and shaping the administrative staff motivation within the context of employee benefits. The field of political economy is diverse and, therefore, touches on every aspect of public policy and implementation occasioned with a variety of outcomes. This does not only touch on domestic but also international (global) action. As this reflects on an aspect of my field of specialization, but profoundly provides a critique of the state of the employees in Nigeria (in and out of employment). My primary objective is to stimulate colleagues and students of political economy in taking up the field of study or research by expanding its horizon and frontiers and thus contribute to the on-going academic and scholarly debates and other forms of engagements about the subject matter of political economy in state-craft and state-relationships with, of course, administrative management.

In the development of my career as a political economist, there are numerous individuals I owe some debt of gratitude. I want to express my appreciation to all my teachers especially who shaped my intellectual thoughts and scholarship. These include the late Dr Yusuf Bala Usman, the late Prof Abdullahi Mahadi, the late Prof Sule Bello, Prof R.A. Dunmoye, Dr Abubakar Saddique Mohammed, Prof Ejembi Unobe, Prof Paul Izah, Prof Okello Oculi, Prof Sam Egite Oyovbraire, and the late Dr Wilberforce L. Hinjari whose inspirations are indelible to me. I also wish to thank Prof. S.U Abdullahi, former Vice Chancellor, whose concern and care for me facilitated my new engagement in the university in 2005.

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References

Bio Data of Prof. Isah Mohammed Abbass

PROTOCOL

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- The Registrar
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- The Chairman University Organized Lectures Committee and members of the Committee
- The Head, Department of Political Science and International Studies
- Heads of other Departments
- All Professors present
- Members of the University Senate
- Distinguished Colleagues and Friends
- Postgraduate and Undergraduate Students
- Distinguished Members of my immediate and extended family
- Invited Guests
- Gentlemen of the Press
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Part A: General Background

Section 1: Introduction

Employee benefits consist of an important and growing field of study, based on the connecting rod of motivational theory, underpinned by social, political and economic foundations (Maslow, 1987, Lyons, 1985:712, Fowler, 1980: 40-50). The field of study of employee benefits is consistently recognised by government, labour and business institutions as well as the academic community. Employee benefits are strategically designed as a method to motivate and appropriately compensate employees and simultaneously achieve the set-out objectives of institutions or state. There are, therefore, a number of employee benefits commonly used as compensation devices which, more often than not, vary from organisation to organisation and from individual to individual.

Another angle to understand employee benefits is that they consist a part of the total compensation plan designed by the employer or government (Rosenbloom and Hallman, 1986:3-8). The approach used in the design for the employee benefits, therefore, focuses on the various types of components that fit into the entire employee and work plan. This approach is designed in order to meet the employee satisfaction and exposures, on the one hand, and the prime objectives of leadership and governance, on the other. There is the need to explore how employers, based on the employee benefit devices, have attempted to provide socio-economic security for the employees and their dependents during and beyond employment

relationship. The implications of these policies have direct bearings on the political and economic nexus of state-citizen relations. These include relationships during retirement, layoff, and death benefits for the dependents. Thus, employee benefits have, overtime, expanded in types, scope and circumstances.

The growth and development of employee benefits in Nigeria have witnessed a long history with striking economic, political and social issues, problems and challenges. These benefits have represented major contentions and concerns in the horizontal and vertical landscapes or backgrounds and position of employees in public services. These have constituted some sources of security and insecurity concerns, as the case may be, for different categories of employees in different organisations and the state at large.

Thus, under the system that undermines production, thereby destroying the domestic or national productivity base, withdrawing employee benefits and engaging private enterprises in public services, the agenda has been set and geared towards the proletarianization of the Nigerian middle-class elites. Thus, the emerging scenario has, however, opened up the current displacement of the elites/employee's status to wage earning.

There are economic, political and social as well as demographic factors or forces that have contributed in influencing and favouring the climate for the growth and development of increased or degenerated employees benefits in Nigeria's public service. These include, the expansion of the public service, the growth in

urbanization, the attainment of higher educational and technical levels of employees, the transformation of the bureaucratic institution; the rise in the cost of living standards along with severe economic pressures and political desires/expectations, the rise in the medical and other coverages, increase in the employees' retirement age, and above all the trends of corruption and corrupt practices by the bureaucrats and all other segments of the Nigerian elites.

The surveillance of the Nigeria economy by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB) and World Trade Organization (WTO) close collaboration ensures that these international institutions have continued to define, prescribe and enforce the Washington-based policies that have become legally binding documents for the Nigerian state to be conformed and implemented. Hence, the status of the Central Bank of Nigerian (CBN) and the Federal Minister of Finance have to be modified by IMF and WB in order to make Nigeria conform to the World financial market demands. The CBN and the Finance Ministry act with complicity along with other local complementary bureaucracies and state actors which have thus been transformed as economic tutelage and saboteurs of the Nigerian economy. The illusory independence of the CBN is demonstrated by the growing subordination to its creditor as regulated and enforced by the IMF/WB under the aegis of the Paris and London clubs.

With the collapse of domestic purchasing power by a significant number of the public employees, sequel to the impoverishment of the workers, Nigerian public workers

cannot attend to their health needs and their families. However, their children cannot attend good schools. This has led to the resurgence of diseases and other health challenges, poor service delivery in education etc. generating into the rise in poverty, hunger, crimes rate and other forms of insurgencies. The destruction of education and health care systems, from primary to tertiary levels, has been deliberately and consciously by largely reducing education budgetary allocation, corruption, depression employee salaries and benefits as well as commercialization of what ought to be subsidized. Such services have been transformed into commodities as consumers of such services are to be provided on a cash-and-carry basis. This is because such services are privatized where appropriate. Hence, public institutions have been massively crippled and thus required to be self-financing through the Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) whereas private institutions, owned mostly by the corrupt state-actors, are encouraged to be ubiquitously established across the state.

With unprecedented collapse of public schools, there emerged the attendant low enrolment and high drop rates. The number and quality of teachers have also drastically reduced and compromised. Universities and other tertiary institutions are poorly funded as their survival would depend on generating internal revenue sources which the prevailing condition of apathy cannot guarantee. The financial control of the state is obviously in the hands of the international donor agencies (IMF/WB) which dictate on the Single Treasury Account (TSA) system to be imposed especially the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS).

The collapse of public hospitals and other primary health care units is a stark reality in Nigeria. Thus, the absence of the essential drugs, hitherto provided free-of-charge to the citizens, has ceased long time ago. Even the teaching hospitals have completely disintegrated with health infrastructure dilapidated despite the introduced user fees system within the ambiance of free-market sale of drugs. The paralysis of the health system in Nigeria was further accentuated by the continuous strikes by medical workers ranging on issues of salaries, benefits and working equipment/infrastructures. This has led to the enhanced emergence of private practice sector and immigration of hundreds of doctors and medical health workers abandoning the public services. All these have their intrinsic implications to the health-related and other challenges on the employees, due to the collapse of the system.

Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the democratization process in Nigeria is the idol motto that represents free-market enterprises. Hence, the democratic practice based on the so-called multi-party presidential system of governance is the added or complementary aspect of conditionalities to the Washington-based loan agreements with the Nigerian governing class (Chossudovsky, 1998:67). This has demonstrated the promotion of current fake or counterfeit American parliamentary institutions that aid and abet in the crippling of the Nigerian economy and society. This is a situation where a superstructure is imposed on a deformed infrastructure.

Such dramatic growth and development of employee's benefits have demonstrated and brought about powerful but different changes in the prompt payment based on the payroll percentages or wilful denial of employee benefits as the case may be. As employee benefits consist of the elements in the total employer's compensation package, such benefits are, therefore, expected to be crucially designed, coordinated in meeting the needs, desires and satisfaction of the employees as well as achieving institutional objectives. It should be borne in mind that it is not just the salary/wages paid but simultaneously the total compensation package that really matters in demonstrating concern for the employee socio-economic welfare and improved institutional or corporate efficiency. The Objectives of this Study are to:

- Examine how the trends and extent of the global economy, as regulated by the regime of debt, debt rescheduling and debt collection, have brought constraints to public institutions in handling of employee benefits in Nigeria. These have profoundly contributed in destroying public employment and the socio-economic condition of employees and activities of the state.
- Understand why the Nigerian national economy is interlocked with the global order and thus controlled by the Western global corporations. These have installed the emergence of crises and socio-economic consequences that have far-reaching geo-political implications for the Nigerian public employees

- Explore how the burden of external debts has destabilized the national economy, resulting in the devaluation and collapse of the national currency, outbreak of industrial standoffs, social strife, ethnic conflicts and the blown-out civil wars across the state.
- Assess how the debt crises of the 1980s, 1990 and 2000s have led to the weakening and dismantling of the state institutions, reducing employ benefits and their emoluments by impoverishing a large number of the Nigerian public employees.
- Analyze how the internationalization of the macro-economic processes has played a crucial role in the restructuring of the Nigerian economy, under the umbrella of the international bureaucracy (the IMF, WB and WTO), in regulating and manipulating the dominant interest of the market forces. This has also regressed employee status with cheap-paid labour, natural resource exploitation, and induced hype-inflation under the IMF/WB sponsored reforms. All these have paralyzed the economy and impoverished a large segment of the population, especially the elites that have a dramatic shrinkage of their purchasing power. The elites have been made bankrupt and enmeshed in structural poverty.

Section 2: The Subject Matter of Political Economy

The subject of political economy is diverse and it is a very important field of study which connects individuals and society with intricate relationships between the state and the economy. It examines the entire relations and activities of human society within the context of

dialectical and historical materialism. The materialist dialectics in political economy is concerned with the determination of the intricate relations between the state and citizens and on how public policy directly or indirectly affects the society (Martinussen, 1995:237). The subject matter of political economy relates to the description of economic issues and social relations in the society embedded within political context. In other words, economic issues or policies by the state must be understood from and related to their political and socio-political rationale and socio-economic implications.

The subject matter of political economy also relates to the intricate ties that shape vital aspects of production, distribution, exchange and consumption of material goods and services at different phases of human existence. It is therefore the concern of the entire economic behaviour and interests of the state and state-actors that deal with the acquisition and exercise of political power (to make public policies) which examines the character and trends of such competition and struggle for power, allocation and distribution of resources in the political system. These specifically focus on how the political economy of the state deals with issues of inequality within the social classes, wealth distribution, economic crises and development, roles of international organizations- ala globalization, etc. in the political settings and economic system.

The study of political economy enables scholars to examine and assess why and how the formation and implementation of public policies are made or initiated. It also evaluates the impact of policies on the economy in

general and the socio-economic as well as political settings or systems. Hence, in the study of economics, sociology, philosophy, politics and history, political economy explores the character and direction of the state on how it manages its social, economic and political features and challenges.

The study of political economy is, therefore, connected with the interrogation of how public policy is strategically designed and instituted, how political situation is manipulated and how political institutions in the state greatly impact on the economy. Hence, the beams of political economy that transverse and go through the lens of economics, sociology and politics strategically draw and define how the state socio-economic and political systems intrinsically effect or influence each other. These interdisciplinary studies may be analysed within the context and conflicting interests of the collective behaviour and changed circumstances of the domestic and global environment.

As a science, political economy studies the relations and ties, which have come, overtime, to shape essential aspects of production, distribution, exchange and consumption of material goods at different phases of human existence (Jennings, 1969:60). As a hybrid discipline or integrated social sciences, political economy studies the entire economic behaviour and interests of the state and therefore deals with the exercise of power within a given political setting. It thus examines competitions or struggles for power among different actors in the political systems (Abbass, 2014:57).

Political economy is, therefore, the study of how a state is managed and governed based on the economic and political circumstances. As an admixture of social sciences, political economy studies production and trade as well as their relationships with the law and other disciplines in addition to the state institutions. Again, political economy is, of course, the study of how economic realities have overriding impacts on some socio-economic systems based on the formulated and executed public policies.

Moreover, as an interdisciplinary branch of social sciences, political economy thus focuses on such interrelationships among factors, individuals, institutions and state public policies that have overwhelming economic consequences that play out in the real-world situation. In essence, political economy invariably seeks to explore how history, culture, traditions and customs affect a given economic system. Hence, the outcomes of interactions between politics and economics have continued to produce such relationships that constitute the state and society as well as the enactment of any given public policy.

Furthermore, political economy, in its socio-economic angle, deals with the allocation and distribution or exchange of resources within a political system and therefore examines the social relations within the people and society. As a whole, political economy tries to understand the past, by analysing it objectively, reflect on the present and scientifically predict the future, based on the analysis of the past and critical understanding of the present (Abbass 2014: 57-57).

In the early and mid-18th century, political economy evolved and began to develop as a specific area of study. This was basically as a response to trade which required the protection of merchants and capital. Such reactions to mercantilism by the earlier and classical political economists, Adam Smith, Thomas Malthus, David Itume, David Ricardo, John Sturt Mill, Francois Quesnay etc., sprang up the systematic study of the subject (Martinussen, 1995:19)

Various perspectives of political economy are based on a variety of actors and institutions. Analytical approaches to political economy are, therefore, situated on the issues being investigated and examined. Such theoretical approaches to the problems being investigated and attached to the political economy shed light on different models adopted by the liberalist, mercantilist and structuralist (Marxist and neo-Marxist) perspectives. All these perspectives on economic liberalism, mercantilism and structuralism have emphasized on the contributions and impacts they make on development effectiveness in the state. This study is a critique of both the liberalist and mercantilist political economy perspectives that were adopted in Nigeria prior to the era of direct colonial rule. These have however not reaped sustainable fruits of harvest in the Nigerian public employee benefits. The study, therefore, adopts the structuralism perspectives in explaining the pertinent issues of employee benefits and the trends of the proletarianization of the elites within the vigour of political economy analysis.

The perspectives of the political economy premised on mercantilism revolves around economic policy aimed at

maximizing exports and minimizing imports into the economy. The objective is to ensure favourable balance of trade through expeditions especially the forceful colonial exploitations. Merchants were thus encouraged and supported by the imperial state to move through colonial acquisitions in exploiting and gaining resources for the benefit of the home country. Hence the mercantile system describes a system of political economy that seeks to enrich the imperial state through restraining imports and encouraging exports. This was the dominant system of Western economic thoughts and policies from 16-18th centuries. This was how the Western nations' power and wealth were created, safeguarded or protected through the incursion of international capital characterized by globalization and determined by imperialism.

Economic liberalism perspectives of political economy consist of an ideology that is situated on a strong support of market economy, private property and thus opposed to state intervention in the economy or any competitive economic process popularly referred to as laissez faire liberalism. This ideology is, therefore, opposed to public ownership and regulation of public enterprises. The principles of the political economy of liberalism invariably opposes fiscal policy reduction in spending on social safety as it also frowns at corporate monopolies. Economic liberalism thus supports government regulations on private industry as well as labour rights through the promotion of income-proportional tax reform policies. However, neoliberalism is the modern or contemporary market-oriented reform policy advocacy of deregulation, market forces determinants on commodities, expansion and lowering of trade barriers

through the acts of privatization, commercialization, austerity measures and direct state influence on the economy.

Marxist perspectives of political economy offer a critique of the classical political economy of capitalism taking into cognizance of the historical, social and material foundations of the state and economy. This method of analysis explores and contributes to the critical understanding in examining the character and functioning of capitalism as well as the root causes of socio-economical and the political inequality and the continued exploitation in the society. The Marxist political economy perspectives in a strategic vigour hijacked the liberalist and mercantilist perspectives and refined the classical economists' ideas with revolutionary zeal by going beyond micro economics. Marxist perspectives are, therefore, premised on the method of historical and dialectical materialism in analysis which relates to the objective historical order and realities developed over time "in accordance with the laws provided by the actual historical course" (Marx, 1978:22). As it deals with the allocation and distribution of resources, surplus product and surplus value in the system, it also focuses on the origins of economic value, the role and impact of class and class struggle on the economic and political processes through the exposition of various modes of production and the ideology of the bourgeois society. These touch on the entire economic and political behaviour and interests of the state in the struggle and exercise of power

Invariably, this explained how economic theories began to be noticeably worked within the realm of human

activities and into the real world. In essence, such a real-world political economy was capable of directing the means of resource distribution designed to benefit majority of the people. Thus, not only could these be studied theoretically but also realised in a real-world situation backed and executed by public policies with positive outcomes. Whereas political economy consists and refers to a group of social science subjects that reflects on relationships between citizens, state and public policy with impacts on the economy, it's main or primary concern is to determine the citizen-state relationship and how public policy affects the society and thus reflected through the study of economics, sociology, politics, history, law etc.

Since economic and political issues are not distinct and separate, the matters involved are, therefore, intertwined and intrinsic. In this context, therefore, political economy has, no doubt, been transformed into a hybrid politics as much as politics to the economy. The prominence of political economy in such circumstances shows or indicates that it analyses how political forces in a state affect the economy. This is where interest groups within the state exert great influence, power and authority in any policy made and implemented by relevant institutions.

In addition, political economy employs devices or tools of economics to examine and review politics in the state, especially in the delivery of goods and services to the citizens. Such interaction modelling of politics and economics is meant to develop a lucid theoretical appreciation of the underlying forces and factors that drive the politics or economics of the state. Furthermore,

political economy also evaluates or determines how the economy intrinsically affect politics in the macroeconomic direction. Hence, the inclination of political economy may have the propensity to assist or destroy political power, leadership and governance in the state. Again, at a macroeconomic ground, therefore, the shape and structure of economic institutions may have an overwhelming impact on the character and direction of political praxis in the state.

It should be stressed that political economy is the fusion of the economic, political and other forces and factors in analysing all state activities. These activities, no doubt, make politics and economics irretrievably and intrinsically interwoven. In other words, politics intricately affects the economy and the economy affects politics, in the same way and in the same manner within the confines of approach and operations of the state.

Political economy analysis in this context situates the prevailing socio-economic and political activities or processes with all forms of interactions. These focus on institutions within group relationships and distribution of benefits as well as the contestations of power amongst all categories of interest. The analysis also examines the state of donor-funded alliances with the Nigerian state that have continued to promote stress and conflicts, leading to all forms of political instability, social tension and economic turmoil. All these have caused profound questions on the state of governance and national prosperity. The political economy analysis in this work also focuses on the employee benefit plans that are

designed to enable employees have ample time to work with security, confidence and satisfaction.

These conditions are, therefore, expected to give employees clear understanding in balancing between work and life that must compel the state or employer to fully take care of them by promoting all it takes to ensure that there exists a good working condition. This suggests that the political economy should protect the employees with extant benefits in order to exhibit the humane angle of the state during the employees' work life and their retirement towards overall productivity and development. The central focus of the political economy is in the examination of the double-edged policy/philosophy of the state on employee benefits centered not necessarily on being compensated alone, but on equal or equitable treatment of employees, horizontally and vertically, in all institutions. The Objectives of the Political Economy Analysis in the Study are to:

- Interrogate how the principles of political science and economics integrate in analyzing public policy and institutional responses with impact and dimension on employees, their benefits and their overall social and economic wellbeing.
- Explore the intellectual basis and effects of economic liberalism on the state of employee benefits on how the political forces shape public policies with impact on economic system and social interactions in the society at large.
- Evaluate the condition of employee status, based on the prevailing economic, political and public policy

issues, vis-à-vis the formal social transitions accompanied by the exposure to the international political economy and globalization.

- Examine how group or vested interests have influenced the political economy of employment and provision of employee benefits, in and outside work environment, in the state adopted policy through the political system.

Section 3. The Nigerian State and Public Employees

The emergence of the state, through the instrumentality of force, is associated with the inbuilt contradictions based on class interests, class division, conflicts and class struggle in the society. The state, notwithstanding its evil character of repression and exploitation, still persists to unleash its role but persistently going against the wishes and aspirations of the generality of people in the society (Abbass, 2016). The state, therefore, evolved to ensure that the means, ownership and control of production exist in private hands.

In essence, since the state does not exist and stand for the general interest but for capital and owners of private property, it only promotes and protects propertied class domination. The State is, therefore, conceived as the highest form of institution with varying degrees of unchallenged power, authority, domination and exploitation. Different theoretical postulates have, therefore, been advanced for the emergence and role of the state (Rothbord, 2009). But the force theory is ubiquitous, more relevant to our circumstances and potent

in the evolutionary processes of the state (Umaph, 2016).

Modern Nigerian state evolved out of the British imperialism and colonialism. The growth and development of the Nigerian State was subsequent to the incorporation of Nigeria into the global economic, political and social systems. Within the period, therefore, all vital institutions were established for the workings of colonial plunder and subjugation. Hence, the evolution of the Nigerian administrative structure, with appropriate bureaucracy, came into force in order to conform to the dictates of the needs of imperial state and systems. Such administrative structure included the civil service, especially based on the Native Authority (NA) system, with all the trappings of colonial system of exploitation and domination.

The political economy of the evolution, orientation and operation of the Nigerian state was based on divide and rule; hinged on a zero-sum game, for the political and economic motives and ends of colonialism. This inevitably suited and shaped the character, orientation and tone of the Nigerian state system. It should be noted that the relationship between the state or its institutions and subjects or employees is directly derived from the state's evolution and orientations. What are the evolutionary processes and impacts of the Nigerian state on public employees' benefits and society at large? This inquiry should offer explanations on why the employees in the public service (bureaucracy) in Nigeria have continued to be in a state of deprivation, denials of their rights and privileges during and after employment.

Due to the antecedent of history and a combination of other material circumstances, the monstrous character and orientation of the Nigerian state evolved to exercise control over almost everything in the economy. This has enabled the Nigeria state to become too powerful that knows no bounds and no restraints even against itself. Hence, a great number of public employees have, over time, continued to be deprived of a wide range of benefits and rights. However, due to the nature, orientation and character of the Nigerian state, enormous resources have continued to be diverted and channelled to areas that have direct bearings on the interests of a few state-actors.

State power in Nigeria is situated or located in its agencies, which are manned by officers who wield execute, legislative and judicial powers. These agencies, along with others, through the powers of the state, extract massive resources by fiat occasioned by inefficiency, waste, nepotism and mass corruption. They invariably determine and influence state failure as well as undermine the provision of social justice, employees' welfare and benefits in Nigeria. The objectives of the colonial state were but to extract much material resources based on the extant political policies and the attendant economic benefits. Officers were, nevertheless, recruited by the colonial regime to execute designed policies through the established state apparatuses.

The path to statehood in Nigeria and the establishment of public service sector have been hobbled by instability, personnel policy, policy inconsistency, contradictions, corruption and other forms of economic waste. The limping Nigerian state is incapable of discharging its role

primarily due to the vested interest of the state-actors. Therefore, the predatory character of the Nigerian state indicates that its actors are “greedily destructive and ruthlessly aggressive with constant determination to steal” (Abbass 2017:30). This has enabled the bureaucrats, politicians and even the military brass to always hide under the shadows of the state in order to unleash terror and all forms of denials, deprivation and domination of the bulk of the public servants and other Nigerians.

The public service sector in Nigeria, designed to deal with planning and executing state activities, was a colonial creation bequeathed in 1960. This was adopted in toto without any form of restructuring to suit local needs of public servants and demand for Nigeria’s development. Hence, the bureaucrats that took over power in Nigeria continued the colonial system of repression, exploitation and domination. They further developed new thirsts for wealth acquisition and forms of corrupt practices that aggravated abysmal service delivery through deprivations and acts of injustice. Since the major role of public service, in the Nigeria’s predatory state, seems to be maintain law and order as well as raise enough revenue to be looted, the judiciary, for example, has continued to exist not to administer justice but to sustain the status quo and stamp or justify the legal enforcement of injustice. The judges thus wear wigs and gowns, like their military and paramilitary counterparts in uniforms, to adopt and adapt whatever is desirable to be done, to justify the status quo notwithstanding the consequences.

Since the emergence of the Nigerian state, there has been inadequate and unsatisfactory provision of employee

welfare and benefits. There have also been poor trends in handling of the challenges which employees face with salaries/wages in the inflationary trends of the Nigerian economy. These have turned the entire public service and bureaucracy into a distorted caricature of morality with inability to achieve goal and deliver services to the society. This has also provided an opportunity for the Nigerian state actors to engage in a spree of looting and destructive activities of the state system (Abbass, 2018a: 22-33). Thus, since colonial era, there has been a lack of accountability, responsibility and transparency in the system that has been bequeathed to the post-colonial Nigerian state leading to a renewed self-aggrandizement.

Reforms in the civil service in Nigeria have only ended up reinforcing and driving the system in a whole new ballgame of corruption by the various specifications of top civil servants and leadership. These acts were designed to politicize the system that have resulted in further breakdown of discipline and professionalism as well as the institutionalisation of corruption at all levels of service. The weak institutional structures and apparatuses of the Nigerian public service have inevitably been dispossessed of a vibrant and coherent bureaucracy. Such a public service sector in Nigeria is, therefore, engulfed with unconventional methods of operations where “routine tasks are dumped and standard operating procedures buried and put aside” (Abbass, 2018b). Consequently, employees are deficient of facilities to work, lacking in training to cope with challenges of global demands, and faced with deformed skills. The employees are, nonetheless, in a perpetual apathy, hit by low morale, denied benefits, with strings accompanied by

ineffectiveness, low or poor service productivity and delivery.

The state and public service employee management of benefits in Nigeria has changed tremendously over the last three decades. In essence, the Nigerian state has deliberately and drastically reduced the size of public employment, thereby decreasing the cost of providing state services and increasing the height of unemployment. Nepotism is the bane of the Nigerian politics and economic wellbeing. The practice of nepotism in Nigerian public service has significantly contributed to the impaired quality and commitment of employees whose recruitment processes are mired with infamy of corrupt practices (Abbass, 2014: 315-317). This involves favouring one's family, ethnic group members and close friends in the recruitment process; against those with better qualifications and experience.

Even the Federal Character Commission (FCC), expected to regulated recruitments on Federal Character Principles, along with other standard criteria is shrouded in the nepotic activities of public service recruitment. Most of those employed are sons, daughters and close relations of those in power while the rest are employed strictly on a cash-and-carry basis. However, some of the services have gradually been contracted out (out sourced) under the pretext and assumption that they would be more efficiently carried out. In this regard, the state does not seem to recognize, foresee and bother about the social, economic and political cost and vulnerability of creating a large army of unemployed and those so-called outsourced vis-a-viz the security of the nation.

Furthermore, the weak application of the state's so-called good management principles in the judicious accomplishment of public employee's benefits has adversely hit the entire fabric of public service and a large proportion of the employees. The Nigerian public service has, therefore, lost its uniqueness and value in service provision and the loyalty, as well as the dedication to service of its employees. Hence, the changes in the management of the public service have indicated a swift withering away of the state responsibility to the citizens and employees in the provision of service and protection of lives and property.

Consequently, the general loyalty and respect which the Nigerian state is expected to have wielded in terms of planning the delicate or complex balance between focusing on crucial human values (fairness, equity, justice and social cohesion) and maintenance of political confidence and trust in the leadership and governance systems as well as on productivity, efficiency and effectiveness have all been significantly eroded. This should take into cognisance the complexities or power, economic and class relations of the Nigerian state that create and dominate public service and employees. These have all demonstrated the tragedy of the Nigerian state failures on a large segment of employees and citizens at large.

Directly connected to the Nigerian state roles and functions are the class positions and class determinism of the state actors (Abbass, 2010:32). Thus, class analysis and approach in the Nigerian state intrinsically enter public employees within the purview of the political

behaviours of the state and state-actors. The justification is, therefore, based on the assumption of the unique classification which the Nigerian public employees are expected to occupy within a special problem which warrants special analysis in order to unveil the character of the Nigerian state and state-actors.

Since the social division of labour within the state and public sector should be seen as a part of the extension of the function and role of the later, the intrusion or intervening of the public sector in the social division of labour justifies the innate inclination of the political and economic domination by the governing class and its interest. This also involves the dynamics of direct regulations, control of public enterprises and other agencies/parastatals of the state. The Nigerian state therefore provides an enabling condition for capital accumulation and directly protects both the local bourgeoisie and international capital to impinge on public service and employee benefits.

Class analysis of public employees has not only produced adverse outcomes in public service system in Nigeria but at the same time contradictions in class position and class determinism of the employees. This has further brought a set of political and economic impacts on the employee benefits. All these are in view of the state role, and the inherent socio-economic and political changes in the public service systems. In a historically determined social formation of the Nigerian state, at least since colonial era, the elite class category or stratum of the public service is highly dependent on and therefore coexistent in the entire processes of the state formation, role and function and the

entire mode of production. This has produced the type and function of the state, its orientation and character as well as its mode of operation.

Within this context, therefore, the development of bureaucratic apparatuses of the Nigerian state has always been decisive for advanced state control and domination through various tiers and arms of government. These have also come under the influence and authority of other forms of state organizations and administrative machines accompanied with the exploitation of labour and other materials. But based on the causal relationship between incomes of the different categories of employees, the welfare of the employees is highly dependent on the degree of deprivation exerted by the state/employer, which is perhaps independent of the law of value; (i.e. how much is given and measured by the required amount of payment or benefits gained).

There is an important issue of value within the purview of the continued existence of class division of a wage-working society. This reflects the intricate relationships of conflict of interest within the structure and character of the Nigerian state system. Hence, the preponderance of wage form structure in Nigeria is a crucial factor in determining class position of public employees. This also projects connections with class structure, class consciousness and class struggle as well as other so-called semi-autonomous wage workers (casuals) in such a highly class structured Nigerian society.

The growth and development of public sector system in Nigeria, which is in consonance with the decisive

processes of power and control have underpinned employee benefits and production system. This situation is, therefore, based on the corresponding growth and development of the elite working class. Furthermore, this could be seen in terms of raising or improving their condition of work, welfare and other benefits. Consequently, these attempts to improve employee condition had been determined by the normal structure of political power, vested interest, and economic base as well as the character of the governing elites. All these are, therefore, hinged on the existing system of the bourgeois-democratic state and transformed into a typical regime of cluelessness that is simultaneously dominated by the culture of deceit, insensitivity to the plight of employees through the use of instrumentality of force.

Part B: Approaches, Design and Significance of Employee Benefits

Section 1. Employee Benefits: Definition, Types, Applications and Significance

There are two major views concerning the idea and understanding of the design, description and operations of employee benefits. Defined conceptual model of employee benefits has designed the issue on both narrow and broad views based on the organisational capabilities and priorities. Employee benefits, therefore, refer to the general idea of payments, services and other subsidies granted based on various variations among different institutions on what they generally include as benefits.

A broad approach in defining employee benefits includes almost the entire employee compensation other than salary or wages. Thus, the overall category of the employee benefits consists of all kinds of non-salary payments and benefits. In this fashion, therefore, employee benefits may be defined as the large part of the total compensation costs which the employer incurs. Whereas different institutions follow different strategies with respect to the different components in their total compensation package, it should be noted that based on the public policy of the state, some financial *generating* institutions, as might be expected, tend to pay higher employee benefits than *consuming* organisations.

At one time, employee benefits are popularly referred to as “fringe benefits”, these benefits have grown to the point where they are far more than “fringe”.... In fact, employee benefits have

become so important to most employers, both as a cost of doing business and as part of their total compensation package, that careful planning and handling of these benefits have become vital to the employer's success (Rosenbloom and Hallmam, 1986:3).

In a restrictive view, the definition of employee benefits focuses on the designed plans to only maintain employees' income. This may be situated when confronted with personal losses, or conditioned only to plans that guarantee some medical benefits or expenses for the employee and dependents during periods of employment.

An employee-benefit plan as defined here, is any type of plan sponsored or initiated unilaterally or jointly by employers or employees and providing benefits that stem from the employment relationship and that are not underwritten or paid directly by government (federal, state or local). In general, the intent is to include plans that provide in an orderly predetermined fashion for (1) income maintenance during periods when regular earnings are cut off because of death, accident, sickness, retirement or unemployment and (2) benefits to meet medical expenses associated with illness or injury (Yohalem, 1975:19).

Employee benefits should, on the other way, be viewed as those categories of benefits that are considered as a very crucial part of the total compensation package for the employees. The political economy of the total

compensation package, therefore, represents the complete ways, direct and indirect policy which an employer or agency uses. This is of course based on the extant policy of the state to remunerate or benefits employees. This package usually consists of different elements made up of various purposes and classifications.

In essence, the value of employee benefits is usually gauged by the way organisations care about their employees. This care is measured with the provision of welfare services in the workplace environment. These include attractive salary, training or human capacity building, and other benefits, well-furnished office, challenging or interesting schedules/activities and flexible working conditions. Others include the set-out programmes that create and support employees' physically, mentally or psychologically in discharging tasks.

All the employee benefits and other services conferred on the workers essentially and entirely take care of the totality of their well-being and thus encompass the character of the employee welfare schemes. These include various areas of professional life of the employees that touch on their physical and mental health, education and safety, conducive working condition and institutional employer attitude towards employees. These benefits and welfare schemes centre on the entirety of human resources management idea on the employees. These treat and regard employees with respect and consider them as assets, not liabilities, in attaining organisational goals. This situation is, of course, attained through strategic employee motivation in direct response to their desires,

needs and aspirations in order to make them happy. This is attained based on the popular adage that a happy employee is a happy employer.

The number of employee benefits can, however, be unlimited depending on the capabilities of the organisations and their priorities. Hence, institutions, based on a given policy on ground, strategically improve the condition of their employees' welfare standard by taking necessary measures to provide critical employee benefits. These benefits include access to quality medical care, quality training and education for their children.

Hence, the benefits which employees derive from this set of welfare schemes include rising motivation, greater commitment to duty and increased morale with enhanced productivity. Based on the employee benefits provided, employees feel much better and safer at the workplace environment when they perceive that they are not really exploited but considered as a source of investment for mutual benefit. In other words, employees become highly interested in the institution when the employer devices a branding strategy and customer-friendly approach on the employee benefits and welfare priorities.

The stability of any workplace environment is dependent on and therefore determined by the way and manner employees are provided with satisfactory and sustainable benefits. The work therefore, thrives and the organisational objectives achieved only when employee benefits and welfare are well-managed to make them happy, healthy, safe and productive. Thus, the employees' well-being constitutes a cornerstone of institutional

priorities that support the sustainability and availability of benefits within the changing circumstances. These employees' benefits encompass their physical safety and mental health which may consist of the components of health insurance, retirement plans and other services in and outside job situation.

The attainment of these benefits, no doubt, enhances and ensures enjoyable and safe workplace environment with improved job performance and productivity as well as a general boost in employee morale. The integral part of the business of the state and objectives should be based on and thus enable any public policy to adequately manage employee benefits by providing all the necessary resources, facilities, amenities, tools and services in the execution of all jobs or tasks.

These job improvement strategies no doubt enhance employee life, bring a holistic development for the employee, employer and the society at large. These employee benefits further improve employees' efficiency and keep them constantly in check by contributing to the socio-economic and political morale of the workers. In addition, these develop a sense of responsibility and dignity to the employees by transforming them into good and dependable citizens of the state.

It should be emphasized and that all the operations of employee benefits come under the aegis and realm of the state's role and function or responsibilities in making life worth living by all and sundry within the socio-economic and political settings. All these have tremendous value in the nation's system of social justice which installs the

safety-valve in the prevention of certain forms of corruption, criminality, and conflict; by thus bringing about social, economic and political cohesion and development in the society.

Employee benefits and welfare applications encompass all the elements granted for the comfort and satisfaction of the employees. These are geared towards the improvement of the employees' social, economic and political as well as intellectual capacity. These include providing employees with the enabling environment (facilities, amenities, tools and other services) by encouraging them to peacefully and conveniently discharge assigned jobs. By enhancing employee morale, such granted benefits greatly add value to their health condition and that of the workplace environment because both bear intrinsic connection with employee productivity.

The establishment of benefits and enhanced welfare by the institutions to employees objectively brings about total loyalty, satisfaction, shared responsibility and dedication to duty by employees in the organisations. Its provision also develops a better working culture with a developed image for the institutions by improving the spirit of efficiency and productivity. This also enables the employees to have greater and raised morale, positive attitude to face challenges and live harmoniously with all as well as by reducing the spate of union face-off with government.

The provision of employee benefits will drastically reduce the level of poverty in the state. The employees will

continue to work sincerely and honestly based on the combined mental and physical health conditions to perform in the best manner. With good health and nutrition, education for the children, constant training and other services provided, employees will continue to work with renewed interests, inclusiveness, stability and dedication. The overall situation will, therefore, promote increased productivity and efficiency in all manners of production and enhanced relationships.

The importance of the political economy of employee benefits on how politics and economics play in policy making are diverse and cannot be overstressed. Change situation, especially the goals and direction of the state on monetary and fiscal policies, are likely to bring about changes in food security which affects areas of the economy and condition of the employee benefits. This also reduces political stress or tension.

In understanding the relationship between political power and economic decisions, one can appreciate how the political economy of employee benefits makes individuals within a given environment become more resilient or traumatic and unable to absorb the deformed socio-economic condition. Forward-thinking and proactive political actors should be in a position to provide or put in place employee-friendly policies which create greatest possibilities for employee's economic stability and satisfaction. Such policies should determine powerful influences on employee behaviour and attitude to work towards productivity. These should follow growth and appropriate distribution of benefits amongst different specifications or categories of employees.

The essence of the political economy of employee benefits is to design policies for institutions and evaluate relevant methodologies and approaches to execute them. The issue is how do the political actors specifically influence or force public institutions to implement unfriendly policies? It should be stressed that the political economy of labour market institutions on employment generation, the condition of employment and restrictions placed on employee along with the way and manner unions are manipulated have continued to bring about negative outcomes in the workplace environment and society at large.

However, political realities have continued to demonstrate how policy responses are often tampered with by both members of the public and some policy makers. This is particularly through resistance to some public issues as recommended by experts on a subject of public concern based on vested interests. As such, most political business cycles of policy makers have continued to create ebbs that flow the tides of the state political and economic activities. These provide powerful conditions for the intersections with impact on employee benefits.

Employment status of workers, in relation to their benefits or entitlements, generates issues of great concern in all public institutions. Hence, the legal position of employees to exercise their full rights to collective bargaining and other presentation by unions is, therefore, not unambiguous, except for the casual or agency employees. Although provision exists for employees to access benefits, this legal provision rarely materializes for a large

number. This is largely because most organisations do not willingly respect employee rights or benefits.

The perspectives of the political economy of labour emphasize on the dignity of labour. This is based on the dynamics of the workplace environment and employees working experiences. The essence of the political economy of capital should be seen as a material basis of enhancing new patterns of social relations. It is also to determine how to conceptualize and realise the potential, needs and interests of the employees and their benefits. Thus, such material aspects of the employees' work-life and their benefits may constitute the basic elements of the political economy of capital.

It is important to note that the relations between the economy and political processes should be seen within the context of a designed modification of employees' benefits. Thus, that modification enables the state and respective institutions to determine such other relationships that enhance institution-employee efficiency and satisfaction. Whereas the social welfare systems in a given institution are based on the appropriate distribution of benefits and provision of services, the tendency points to a situation of employee benefits actually being hijacked within the confines of the market settings. This tendency points to the invisible and invincible hands of international financial agencies by manipulating puppet leadership and thus working against the employees.

These so-called employee benefits have invariably come under siege in terms of the rights and privileges of the employees. These are invariably being put asunder by the

conditionality set out and imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB). This can pose serious dangers for social transformation based on the concept and reality of public service and social welfare of those in charge in the delivery of services to the members of the society.

Section 2: Approaches and Designs in Employee Compensation Benefits in Nigeria

There are various types of techniques or devices adopted by employers or state, sometimes along with their appointed consultants, to conceive and plan some employee benefits programmes. Therefore, in designing and evaluating the employee benefits, certain approaches are considered. These may include a crucial benchmarking by comparing and contrasting employee benefits and various institutions generally and specifically. Hence, some general or specific legislative issues for the employee benefits from different organisations may be evaluated or assessed. Again, issues on cost effectiveness and cost containment in the design, administrative management and sustenance of employee benefit plans are critically looked into.

It should be noted that despite the complexity of employee benefits, in technical and sophisticated patterns, the policy scheme is constantly growing. This complexity involves various categories of personnel or employees involved and cost implications. However, the quantum of funds required with regulatory settings and tax components as well as the total impacts on the employee benefits should be designed and funded.

New approaches and designs in employee benefits are increasingly evolving. These have added to the conventional forms of employee benefits and also other forms of compensation plan. With the continuous increase in the number, scope and complexity, the funding cost of the employee benefits are increasingly rising. This is largely due to the falling standard value of Nigerian currency, especially the current exchange rate of Naira against foreign currencies. This trend, in all respective areas, has led to a lot of standoffs between employers and aggrieved employees or their unions. There is the need, therefore, for the attainments of all cost-effective employee benefits, notwithstanding the tax favoured and tax granted employee benefits.

Since the scope and complexity of employee benefits have continued to grow in leaps and bounds, there is a need to understand why and how as well as the extent of accompanying impacts. There have, therefore, emerged a number of issues or problems and challenges in coping with or management of these designed employee benefits. These include;

- a. How to effectively contain the increasing costs of employee benefits particularly in various coverage areas, such as health care, education etc.
- b. How to adequately and continuously establish constant liaison with employees to attain the optimum range and value of their cherished benefits. This is hinged on the state of confusion and uncertainty the employees often have on the

nature, time, value and utility of the expected benefits.

- c. How employers may assist their employees in fitting the packaged, though vulnerable benefits into their overall personal financial plans or devices and on what to do with such benefits.

In designing employee benefits, there are a number of components in the compensation plan that fit into several benefit combinations. These constitute and form an integrated component of the planned employee benefits. In the Nigeria's public service, such a design and approach vary from institution to institution, with no single and perfect technique adopted for all. Different specifications of employees in the same or different organisations draw a variety of differentiated benefits. These differentiations of benefits bring about differentiated institutional goals, differentiated employee satisfaction and differentiated institutional compensation plan objectives and their attainments.

How can such packaged and integrated employee benefits simply be focused on and approached towards achieving institutional strategy, compensation plan objectives and employee satisfaction and productivity? Based on their conception, development and implementation, the objectives of the designed employee benefits are many and as diverse as institutions with, of course, attached organisational priorities. Since these benefits are expected to fit into the overall organisations' compensation plan strategy, they must nonetheless conform to the general

and specific context that redefine and reshape employer's current and future plans.

Public service may provide general policies and strategies with respect to employees' total compensation plan. These may be designed towards compensating employees at different points and levels based on the prevailing circumstances and conditions at different institutions. Such general compensation strategies often provide employee benefits that usually meet different but relative requirements and specification of employees. Some earn high wages or salaries which invariably attract high benefits. Those that earn low wages or salaries means that their payrolls are kept low with low accrued benefits. These no doubt bring possible inefficiency and other negative personal or worker attitudes towards work accompanied with installed institutional weaknesses.

Employee benefits vary widely among public institutions. The variations are based on the payroll emoluments as represented or bargained by different trade unions and institutions involved. Such individual organisations may adopt different strategies with respect to the different components of the benefits on the total packaged compensation. Thus, high financial-based institutions tend to pay high benefits premium than low financial-based organisations.

Such fringe benefits, as they were traditionally or conventional known, have been transformed to more than fringes. This is because employee benefits tend to be taken more seriously by employers in costing businesses and including them within the total compensation

package. This is designed to evaluate and assess or gauge employee satisfaction and motivation towards enhancing corporate image and success.

In a very restrictive sense, employee benefits may, therefore, consist of all those benefits that are jointly or unilaterally agreed and provided. These are often based on the employment relationship not directly underwritten or paid by government. Furthermore, incomes and other expenses of the benefits include medical and other coverages etc. to the employees and their dependents.

The political economy approach in designing benefits should ensure the stability of employment and sustainability of fringe benefits of public employees. This must be evidenced through the provision of substantial components of the total compensation package by the organization. In addition, this suggests the need for and all-inclusive negotiations and competitive choices towards modifying and improving employee conditions of service. Furthermore, the need to incorporate other vital elements of benefit schedules to improve productivity, enhance motivational spirits to discharge tasks and attain the overall interests or objectives of the institution would add more impetus to the quests for a glorified image of the society.

As a preparatory stage in understanding or appreciating structures, hierarchies and power dynamics that constantly regulate domestic and international trades, political economy intrinsically drives economic and political globalisation (Vaughan, Wright and Small, 2005:112-129, Odama and Aiyedun, 2004:43-50, Khor,

2003:1-116, Stiglitz, 2002:195-213 Edwards, 2001:1-15). This scenario has, in essence, impacted on the national and international distribution of wealth and poverty across and within nation states and regions of the world. Hence, all aspects of employee benefits also constitute a great share of this distribution of wealth/poverty on either side of the coin.

Public employee's compensation benefits in Nigeria, for example, are the anticipated gains that are expected to be provided to all specifications of employees. Thus, a system of accident compensation benefits in the workplace environment has not, for instance, been vertically and horizontally applied in most public institutions in Nigeria. In addition, most in-house trade unions have not always given this aspect a deep thought especially on how to articulate, challenge and generate positive actions towards engaging employers of labour or state on how the legislation should be provided and on why the law has been jettisoned from institutional framework or operations.

The political economy of marginal and static earnings of employees in Nigeria, even though with essential contributions to the organization's growth and development, has made employees to face serious economic and political constraints of in-work benefits. To address and adequately respond to the legislative process, especially from the tasks of the employers of labour's points of view, can be very herculean. However, empirical analysis derived or supported from the works of John Start Mill's political economy analysis (Mill, 1848) has shown that employees' compensation benefits parameters in

public institutions in Nigeria have, by and large, emerged from the political process that are usually underpinned by the employer's economic or financial considerations. This is especially evident in the high accident risk organisations; such as the oil and gas industry, production industry etc.

Invariably, this analysis may be used to interrogate, explore, evaluate or assess how the entire conditions of the employees are undermined by institutional dynamics or statics and influenced by group vested interests based on economic liberalism and neoliberalism of the contemporary market-oriented policies. In other words, this focuses on what specific problems prevail and what are the existing or contending interests and forces that have stung their application based on the real-world situation.

There is the need, therefore, to ensure that there is a regime of a novel securing of unambiguous provisions for such in-work and compensation benefits. This is in order to keep not only such benefit levels in constant check and adequate but also with sustainable and satisfactory execution. Hence, employers' adverse or negative response to this compensation benefits in Nigeria can only be in check primarily when organised labour is strong and focused. This may be tempered with whenever the state political reforms movements are characterized with unnecessary shifts and delays. This is especially when the state bureaucratic agencies are entangled in the seeming attempt to settle or scuttle the employees' compensation benefits.

In the social policy field of study, a form of income protection for the lowest level working population is receiving increasing global attention (Valera and Roco, 2014, Thomasma and Graber, 1991). This is, therefore, informed by and focused on the theories of welfare political economy (Navarro, 1999). In addition, within the context of the capitalist economy, the idea, interest, power and institutional frameworks for this policy are set within the realist approach (Antunes and Camisao, 2018). This is based on the principles of international politics, state power and international dominance. Such an exercise of state power, in its naked forms of *realpolitik*, constitutes and develops in relation to the liberal tradition. This is by examining the characteristics and trajectories of their growth and development as a policy approach and option.

However, under the Nigerian liberal market economy within the circuit of the residual welfare model, the failure of the market forces in meeting the desirable objectives and sustaining the accessibility of employee benefits, is highly guaranteed. This is sequel to the character and form of the state's corruption, the threat of closing the welfare wage group, the introduction and endorsement of poverty regime. This has also resulted in the extinction of the *middle class* in the Nigerian socio-economic scene and categorisation which have invariably become a stark reality in the Nigerian socio-economic scene.

Hence, the residual welfare model of Nigeria's social policy is premised under the perceived needs of the employees to be fulfilled through the privatization and commercialization of public enterprises. These aspects of the so-called residual social policy, the market forces to

determine the channels for the state to take action, have broken down and thus failed to work in Nigeria. The public employees have, therefore, been left to bear the brunt of the imposed policy they have no hand or idea whatsoever.

In Nigeria, the regime and system of low pay conditionality of employees are unprecedented and thus underpinned by a lot of economic and political complexities. Within this context, therefore, the extent of super-exploitation of employees is hidden under and justified by the existence or operation of the so-called welfare relations pretext. This is conspicuously displayed by the constant tensions between the ideals of liberalism and residual welfarism in the Nigerian state system. Thus, the political economy of welfare development regime in Nigeria emphasizes on certain perspectives. These perspectives relate to the ideas, institutions, structures and interests pursued by the Nigerian political elites and determined by economic circumstances. These prevailing events, therefore, identify the driving forces and mechanisms that explain the emergence of social welfare as a unit and form of constant state intervention in Nigeria.

Part C: Political Economy of Employment, Employee Security and Pay System

Section 1. The Politics and Economics of Public Employee Security and Benefits in Nigeria

Employee benefits and security in Nigeria's public sector employment vary horizontally and vertically. The politics of economic and social security of public employees, especially in the expected roles or responsibilities to discharge obligation in service delivery, has been greatly downplayed in order to conform to and deal with the ethics of liberalism and privatization (Klein, 2004:34, Neffi, 1999). Nigeria has, overtime, adopted or copied and thus relied on the populist Western programme of *welfare capitalism* in order to deflect or reduce the vibrancy of organised trade unionism.

Welfare capitalism in this context is indeed embedded and embraced within the competitive social welfare benefits of employees (Klein, 2004:34). These employee benefits also include areas related to the healthcare, safety and other forms of leisure components offered at the workplace environment by the Nigerian state or other employers. Liberalism is, therefore, the dominant Western approach to economics and therefore designed to shape state policies with shared economic exchange based on market conditions (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2009:278). All these were adopted in Nigeria in attempts to create or bring about the so-called open and free economy.

The policy of liberalization may, therefore, be regarded as a means of enhancing the backward, dependent and underdeveloped system of capitalism to grow but has

inevitably been embedded in structural dependence. These have been deeply constrained with new lines of loans which the IMF/WB have doled out that have trapped the Nigerian state with unending interests and repayment rescheduling. Hence, conditions of the employees have continued to be lowered in status and thus worsened.

Due to the mounted political pressures on the Nigerian state within the workplace social welfare needs and agitations by the workers, the conventional state responses would naturally be to ensure the improvement of the working conditions. This is in order to ostensibly guarantee social and economic security and political stability in terms of enhanced benefits. Threats to such benefits by employers will be regarded as repression and subversion to the rights and privileges of employees and could be swiftly and stiffly opposed by the labour unions.

These issues have formed a great watershed in the political economy of the structural relationships between the Nigerian state or employers of labour and workers. These relationships were accompanied with a set of clear acceptance or agreements on the expectations of each party in the governance of such interactions in the workplace environment. The accompanying interventions in the financial, agricultural, housing, energy and labour market, especially in the politics of minimum wage, pensions scheme, compensation plans, on employment rate issues, employee benefit compendium etc. are important. However, the stand-by agreements entered with the IMF/WB by the Nigerian state, therefore, facilitated the downgraded state and lowering the status of public employees (elites) in the country.

Such a state-intervened welfare provision in Nigeria may be seen as a designed approach, essentially focused on the structural state dynamics, towards socio-economic transformation of policies and welfare programmes for employees' benefits. Hence, the political economy approach of employee security and benefits in Nigeria basically underpins the inseparability of politics and economics. This is centred on upholding its core focus on the state driven and embedded by the capitalist or pseudo capitalist market forces and social relations.

Hence, the political economy of welfarism, situated in its interdisciplinary approach, emphasises on the structural and other perspectives or related trends of global neo-liberalism. This directly connects and, therefore, enhances socio-economic policies with increased role of the state and international actors. In order to drive home and secure the architectural interwovenness of capitalist market and state welfarism, civil society becomes imperative. Thus, the political economy approach links the production, distribution and consumption of welfare provisions through political forces and historical legacies. These may be identified where the trajectories of welfarism are situated on the power struggle, social classes and established structures.

The contradictory character or nature of the Nigeria's capitalist welfare system is obvious. This is based on the logic of capital accumulation and struggle within and among social and political classes. Thus, welfare policies, based on the themes of political economy are, no doubt, subjected to the dynamics of continuity and change. These are often affected by the diversity of trends and patterns

as well as the complexity of social and economic outcomes of policy output. The Marxian political economy advances that capital accumulation is the primary driver of capitalist welfare state and its policies. These policies however go contrary to the advocacy of the so-called democratic practice for state legitimacy.

It is important to note that, based on the provisions contained in sections 15, 16, 17 and 18 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, politics and economics have continued to be intertwined in the employment processes and employee benefits; since the creation of the Nigerian state. The need, therefore, for political representation in various spheres of economic and social interests have been well identified and established throughout the period of the existence of the Nigerian state. Thus, the Nigerian state has become increasingly responsible in all vital matters of economic and political well-being of the citizens, particularly the elites. Therefore, the role of the state in economic development, for instance, had begun, focused and continued in enhancing the dignity of the elites' livelihoods in employment processes. These have been designed and enhanced with a variety of employee benefits in different institutions in order to ensure motivation and service delivery.

The Nigerian state has invariably assumed greater roles and importance in providing jobs to a sizeable number of citizens in order to propel economic development and social well-being. This activity stands to be a primary preoccupation of the state's desire for large-scale investments, settlement and expansion of employment.

These are designed for political stability, national unity and enhancing national image among the comity of Nations. Indeed, the struggle for making and keeping the state stable and indivisible in the national political life has become highly imperative in actualising the class vested interests of the political actors and economic class.

Furthermore, to run the economy successfully, politics has to have a direct bearing and impact, particularly on employment. This is to ensure that employees discharge tasks based on the derived satisfaction of the jobs carried out. Hence, the delivery of services to the community or state by employees is, therefore, an outcome of their interests and benefits being provided by the state. Thus, the government is the greatest creator and provider of jobs/employment and thus supposed to be directly involved in providing a life worth living for the employed and a source of livelihood for the unemployed on a large scale.

Since the severity of unemployment is supposed to greatly hit government adversely, the length it goes with negative impacts cannot be measured or quantified. But the Nigerian state, through the actions and behaviours of state actors, doesn't seem to be perturbed by the waves and trends of unemployment and usurpation of employees' rights and benefits in the country. The need, therefore, to appreciate these essential security issues, problems and challenges has nonetheless obligated the Nigerian state to dispose all its artilleries to address and resolve them. This is partly by providing policy instruments to maintain optimal level of output and easy access to employment of

the citizens in various sections of national economy with, of course, enhanced employee benefits.

It should be noted that the pyrrhic victory of the macroeconomic theory in the proclamation of the *success* story in running the Nigerian market economy at certain levels of satisfaction of citizens and employees in particular, was only short-lived. Hence, the failure to fine-tune the economy, based on the internal dynamics of production, exchange and consumption, has become a reality. In addition, the macroeconomic picture in the management of the economy by both the domestic and international actors has equally become catastrophic in ensuring the continuity and sustainability of employee benefits. This has been primarily due to a situation where economic pressures have been taking their twists and turns through hyper inflationary trends in the country. Unfortunately, these are backed by unfavourable public policies, and soaring prices of commodities and services. These are therefore accompanied by cutting or denying a large number of employees, their benefits, and salaries coupled with the installed corrupt practices that have been embedded into the entire fabric of the Nigerian State.

Regime after regime in Nigeria, both military and civilian, seeming efforts to sustain employee benefits were initiated and pursued but to no avail. These have been orchestrated and accomplished by and through both the domestic and global monetary institutional policies as reinforced and backed by political actions. The point is that something had actually gone wrong with the classical economic policies pursued with political remedies applied. Therefore, unpalatable situations have continued

to go up which resulted in serious unemployment figures pervading the entire Nigerian environment. The failure of the market-oriented economy has, on the other side of the coin, brought drastic and uncontrollable hiccups in the Nigerian political and economic landscape. This is structurally based on the experimented liberal democratic system coupled with the inpatient, incompetent and corrupt political class.

In order to consistently capture the structural gap between the potency or otherwise in the macroeconomics of Nigerian settings, on the one hand, and the successes or failures in the management of the economy, on the other, the extent or degree of the neo-Keynesian liberals' prescription can be seen to have stripped the Nigerian state and economy naked and, therefore weakened any state political actions or reinforcement to have any sustainable outcomes. Hence, constrained Nigerian state economic capacity has become vividly clear with a lot of difficulties. This is particularly based on the shrinkage of the Nigeria's public sector and reduced or even denied employee benefits and employment regimes overtime.

Such a stuck in the mud economic situation in Nigeria has invariably brought about the lingering and constraining political quagmire that seems to be unresolvable by politicians. Even though the situations have continued to be manipulated, the social, economic and political silt of the Nigerian state remains deeply seated in a murky mass of uncontrollable quicksandlike environment. These have clearly delineated and illustrated the capacity of the Nigerian political economy in the employment of policies along with continued and sustainable employee benefits.

The prevailing economic stigma and negative employment impacts on major public programmes and projects in Nigeria further constrained socioeconomic and political development in the country. These have also affected the psyche of the employees to effectively and efficiently discharge tasks in order to obtain a speedy growth of the Nigeria's growing economy and nascent liberal democracy. It is sad to note that, over time, jobs have been destroyed and employees incapacitated due to the greed and incapability of the political elites. The apparent but fake socio-economic policies and politics of deception by Tinubu regime have destroyed public service employee rights, benefits and service delivery. The State does not care whether the employees go to work or not and thus does not care about their welfare.

Thus, interdisciplinary approach in employment issues explores important themes of economics and institutional principles as well as those of political systems and practices. The analysis reached, therefore, sets in some framework and critical thinking devices along with other economic factors that have direct bearings on the wealth, incomes and well-being of people in the state in general. For example, prospective employees in Nigeria are more interested in an organisation that offers attractive salary and other complementary working conditions. Hence, the nature and character of the organisational culture and employee benefits offered and the totality of their well-being are some of the political and economic issues being considered most.

While examining the politics of employee benefits generation in Nigeria, it is worthwhile to note that playing

politics with the decision makers and other stakeholders generates huge benefits for employees, especially by the trade unions without necessarily sacrificing or compromising the union's principled positions. Thus, talents should be strategically used and deployed to be crucially recognized at workplace environment for mutual benefits. Only a few agencies in Nigeria are able to play the game of politics in order to effectively draw large benefits for its employees. But a large number of institutions in the country have either been relegated or outmanovered because they lack the political skills like their other colleagues in other institutions.

Politicking in scheming, influencing and manipulating situation by underground and systematic plan or means may be seen as an important method in getting or driving a lot of employee benefits in a few Nigerian workplace environment. These deployed political skills hugely bring higher respect and greater success in organisational profile and employee benefit performance. Hence, the ability and capacity to read and understand the psyche and working of the minds of decision-makers and stakeholders, with a view to influencing them to secure resources to attend employee desires, needs and motivation as well as achieve organisational goals are very fundamental. This brings the issue of the strategy to establish a strong network on different layers and platforms. Hence, the power of networking towards developing the necessary connections with decision-makers and stakeholders is with a view to expanding the frontiers of wider exposures in attracting values and all the needed employee benefits.

It should be stressed that the politics of employee benefits in Nigeria provides the state with the apparatuses which it relies on and uses to incur into the workplace environment with regulations and policies based on welfare capitalism. These seeming and encompassed benefits of various dimensions and descriptions are as established and directed by the whim of the state. As the largest employer of labour, the Nigerian state has, overtime, witnessed the eruption of serious standoffs between it and organised labour over unpalatable reforms on employee welfare and benefits. Such political pressures from the state and labour were directed at the ways to design and improve working conditions that guarantee sustainable employee benefits and job security.

This situation, therefore, is a watershed in the history of Nigerian politics, and the political economy that governs the structural relationship of uncertainties between the state and employees over welfare and benefits. Hence, “welfare capitalism was aimed at preserving power relations between owners and workers. It had created islands of security within the economy, with high waters all around” (Klern, 2000:71). Therefore, new political struggles are usually ignited when new policies are made or the existing ones not addressed or adhered with by the state. This is in order to maintain some stringent control by the state, on the one hand, and sustainability over the existing employees’ benefits plan, by the unions on the other. Thus, “this political economic strategy and welfare capitalism fragmented the political institutional relationships that could have shifted workers’ security more firmly into public realm” (Klein, 2004).

The economics of employee benefits relates to resources allocation, distribution, management and consumption. This may be transformed into possible investment of all the factors of production in an organisation which is very important for employees expected benefits and employers' attainment of goals. Such payment expenditures are made in accordance with the policies hinged on certain indices of economic output and thus based on economics of scale. It should be noted that issues surrounding the total employee compensation plan are complex. This complexity is projected because the components of the plan consist of a wide range of benefits that complement each other and thus create some difficulty in their overlaps and measurements. There is, therefore, the tendency to ignore or to be oblivious of certain elements based on the dynamics and growing magnitude of the entire employee benefits in economic perspectives.

The allocation of resources and operation of institutions that have direct impact on the state policy make economic analysis of salary structure of employee benefits and management in organisations very important, especially in employee satisfaction and employer attainments of objectives. Thus, the determinants of employee benefit plans, the nature and magnitude of such benefits constitute the kinds of regulations employees receive as basic and direct payments. The classification of various payments is, therefore, based on the performance of specific functions/roles with differently assigned characteristics in different organisations. These, in other words, attract different categories of payments such as overtime, shift, productivity and other sundry payments.

Section 2: The Political Economy of State Employment, Employee Pay Systems and Benefits in Nigeria

The use of public employment in raising and encouraging social welfare and employment stability and sustainability via the appropriate provision of benefits cannot be overstressed. Indeed, it can be argued that it is central to Nigerian political stability and viability. It is further hinged on the glowing expectations vested in populist belief of public institutional employments: more stable, more sustainable and much more built with government installed and subsidized benefits. Hence, the state of Nigerian employment and its stability with accompanying benefits constitute the primary or basic employee security, satisfaction and institutional growth, productivity and development.

For any government to justify any form of legitimacy of its stay in power, it must maintain social, economic and political stability and cohesion in the system. This partly consists of sustainable provision of employments and facilities, welfare and enhanced employee benefits in and out of the state employment. There are, therefore, many factors that have continued to threaten the stability of the social, political and economic conditions of the employees in Nigeria. Thus, the low-income levels of employees in Nigerian public services have, overtime, produced low and negative repercussion on their benefits that have failed to bear or gain and sustain their livelihood. These low-income levels of Nigerian employees constitute a large segment of public servants whose quantum of contribution to the productivity in the system is huge. The spontaneous escalation of the cost of living,

through the rapid decline in the value of currency and inflationary trends in the economy, has accelerated the proletarianization of the middle-class. This demographic factor has continued to occasionally bring about hiccups in the stable polity, social stability and viable economic conditions with other forms of unrest in the society.

Nigeria has, therefore, been subjected to all forms of the IMF/WB as well as other international organizations' performance criteria. These criteria are, of course, within the context of the IMF/WB policy measures that have transformed the Nigerian state to be faced with deep-rooted debts and balance of payment crisis. Hence, the adoption of policies at the behest of IMF/WB devaluation of the Naira means directly taking over the commanding heights of the Nigerian economy and remotely controlling the leadership. These, no doubt, facilitated in bringing in the so-called expatriates to be effectively and firmly in charge. This is by providing jobs to foreigners or the nation's technical assistants while Nigerian languish in unemployment, excoriating poverty and instability. Thus, most of the hitherto critical extant employee benefits have been exterminated in most of the public institutions.

On the other hand, the use of unilateral and enforced administrative policy measures, the use of different workforce programmes, and the use of violent repression against workers (i.e. ASUU) by the Nigerian state cannot effectively check and control agitations or lower the frequent standoffs with the state and other destabilizing forces by government. However, the use of strategic manipulations of information by the state has continued to serve as a vital tool and strategy for any form of autocratic

control. All these have adverse implications for the Nigerian economy and society.

It should be noted that the so-called democratic system of the Buhari regime has used a number of autocratic measures, especially through the ministries of labour, education and finance to bully the Academic Staff Union of Universities' (ASUU) agitations and demand for welfare and benefits and other trade unions during industrial actions and standoffs. The Nigerian state has continued to use its power, institutions and state employment devices to mitigate the shock and embarrassment the state was facing due to the outright demand for academic and non-academic staff benefits.

State-owned parastatals have constituted one of the largest workforces in the Nigerian economy. These organizations employ a huge number of labour force with expected high premium of benefits and other privileges. These public institutions are supposed to attract a high amount of funds to be consumed by the state budget in terms of salaries, wages and benefits differentials they are expected to access from the conventional or general public service system. In comparable terms, this situation is opposed or contrary to the stark realities of the entire employees in the Nigerian public service employment with discharged benefits.

Hence, to maintain relative social stability in a seeming democratic but kakistocratic Buhari regime and survive is to effectively force or lure the employees through crude institutional maintenance of control mechanisms. This includes the use of potential means of liberal democratic

aggression and devices through the caricature political actors; exemplified by exaggerated comic actions. However, the effective manipulation and weakening of the judiciary in Nigeria have become a tool and a rule, rather than the exception of the state's business-as-usual responses to bad situations.

The authoritarian but ostensible democratic Nigerian state, operating low paid employees with crippled or denied benefits, has turned up and become clearer where a fatigued leadership lacks accountability and responsibility. This stressed and exhausted leadership is connected between people's uncertainty over leadership action and corruption that cannot be distinguished with normal state actions and processes. This situation has, however, consolidated deeply and widely in the system without borders and control.

The Nigerian state, therefore, uses different strategies and deceptive devices to secure and maintain control at all cost. One of the effective strategies is, of course, state-sponsored violence with all forms of repression. Another strategy is the strategic use of information manipulation and the manipulation or deception of trade unions via corrupt practices. State actors or regimes can change substantial contents of information for its benefits towards influencing the psyche and belief of employees by promising them heaven on earth. Other means being used include the autocratic use of selected employment to back and champion state propaganda machine against their colleagues. These have resulted in huge implications for the economic, political and social course and settings of the society in general.

Information and its strategic manipulation have become an indispensable tool for government and state power. As the state is open to accessibility to all shades of information at its disposal, it therefore makes use of all information technologies with, of course, the aid of all security platforms or agencies. These have made and enabled the government to gather, organize and store a huge account of information much easier. These invariably empower the government to use and abuse it as it deems fit. Hence, “information technologies give repressive governments more power to keep tabs on citizens, spy on dissidents, and manipulate public opinion (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2009:372).

The prime concern of students of political economy is to explore and assess public decision-making by testing its efficacy or otherwise. They also study the politics of global economic transitions (Oatley, 2003, Frieden and Lake 2000, Lipton and Cohen 1999). It should be noted that the Nigerian state and its institutions, more often than not, jungle on the pork-barrel funding benefits designed as an incentive device to woo support of some employees, and break the fabric of unionism. This is in order to enhance its power or authority over any important issue brought before the state institutions. Invariably, different models of bureaucratic devices, legislative and executive manipulations have been played to deceive and influence employees for established policies and their execution to be well entrenched. Hence, the political economy of employee benefits and costs involved can be approached from different distributive forms of politics being orchestrated by the Nigerian state or its respective institutions.

Public service employees are expected to be properly positioned with enhanced benefits in order to offer effective service delivery. Such benefits are in form of various classes and categories of allowances as well as other forms. These allowances are, therefore, more perceived in monetary benefits other than conventional salaries and wages that are granted to employees. In general, all such benefits of the public employees are periodically reviewed either through various consultative negotiations with trade unions or by national salaries, income and wages commission.

There are different types, and categories of employee benefits that are payable to workers as appropriate. For example, Public Service Rule (PSR) number **130102** provides for the following benefits to employees: duty tour allowances (DTA), kilometre/transport allowances, disengagement allowances, hotel accommodation allowance, estacode and other related allowances, warm clothing allowances, overtime allowances, local course and other related allowances, responsibility allowances, uniform allowances, call duty allowances, acting allowances, and teaching allowance (Nigeria, 2009).

The Nigeria's Federal Republic service has seemingly provided for a variety of financial benefits to be granted to public officers towards efficient service delivery and worker motivation. The financial benefits are granted according to the scalar chain of public officers' status/position from top to bottom. For example, DTA is designed to enable employee be granted lodging and feeding expenses outside workplace stations. This is also applicable to employees posted/transferred or on training

to a new station. The amounts, therefore, vary ranging from the uppercase of N37, 500 per night for the top-ranking employees to the lowercase of N10, 000 per night for the lowest positioned employees (Nigeria, 2018).

On an initial appointment into the Public Service, pay is usually set as a top priority. The pay system is the focus of any prospective employee because of the attached benefits. The salary pay of most employees is usually set at step one of the grades of the position offered or for which the employee is selected. Although an employee may be placed on a higher step based on certain circumstances, especially hinged on experience, superior qualifications or special needs and skills of the individual. Hence, employees working in certain establishments, institutions or organizations are designated with different salary pay and benefits. These institutions include the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), the Federal In-Land Revenue Services (FIRS) the Nigerian Universities, The Nigerian Military and Paramilitary Services, The National Assembly etc.

There are several salary pay systems in Nigeria from different institutions and agencies. The government institution of Salaries and Wages Commission develops and maintains a wide range of regulations and policies governing pay and benefits to all categories and specifications of employees in Nigeria. However, each of the federal organizations or institutions is responsible for the administration of their pay policies and regulations for its employees. In general, public employees relatively benefit from a variety of benefit plans based on different

salary pay system being administered by different public agencies. Some samples of public employee benefits in Nigeria include the following: -

❖ **Disability Benefits (Insurance):** The essential elements of these benefits consist of the whole issues related to social security insurance programmes. These programmes are expected to provide interventions or assistance, as the case may be, to employees who are accidentally hit and sustained by some forms of disability in the course of their employment. This may, therefore, be covered and located within the realm of medical benefits. In these circumstances, therefore, payments/benefits are supposed to be granted to the employees or certain accredited family members. This is taken into cognizance that the employees are insured for being in the employment when such accident occurs. This is indeed notwithstanding the income of the employees or the state of their resourcefulness. The disability of the employees may, therefore, be in form of all impairments (eye, ear etc.). The disability benefits are also expected to provide some income to the workers in the event they lose their jobs due to some disability situation. This covers the opportunity cost of the disabled employees that cannot engage in the type of job they performed earlier due to the severity of disability. In other words, when employees can no longer demonstrate in the same line of work, they were previously engaged, based on the status of the employees or their incomes, the existing social security should be able to cater for or provide benefits to the retirees, survivors and disabled employees.

❖ **Vocation, sick leave and holiday polices:** Employees in Nigerian public service are expected to benefit from

paid vacation days every year. The number of days increase with the length of service put up by the employees. In addition, employees also benefit from paid sick leave annually. This is irrespective of the length of service but with no limit to the amount of sick leave that may occur. However, such leave is covered within the medical needs, care for the members of the family and child birth. Furthermore, employees are also expected to benefit from paid holidays as declared by the state every year.

❖ **Health Insurance:** Some public employees in Nigeria benefit from the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). Such categories of employees are enrolled into the scheme based on the Pension Fund Administrators (PFAs.). Both the government and employees pay significant parts of the costs of the employee health benefit. However, NHIS does not cover every health need and requirement of the employees but a selection of rudimentary health covers for the employees and specific number of family members. Whenever the children's ages exceed 18 years, they are removed from the scheme, notwithstanding. Thus, for the health insurance benefits, the state and employees make contributions towards employees' annual or monthly premiums. These cover the difference between employee contributions and the actual premiums involved.

❖ **Overtime and Compensatory Time:** All employees identified and referred to as non-exempt are expected to be eligible to benefit from overtime pay. Such group or category of employees are expected to be compensated for the work conducted in excess of the regulated or prescribed hours of work. This is paid to only certain

categories of officers attached to the top management or are on special assignments or any other official assignments as approved by the CEO of relevant institutions. Therefore, all payments are supposed to be officially authorized and approved based on the extant policies and procedures for overtime by the Chief Executive Officer of the Institution concerned.

❖ **Work/Safety Equipment:** Specific employees in relevant locations discharging certain functionalities are expected to be provided with adequate safety protective wears. These include work overalls, uniforms, safety boots/shoes, safety helmets, rain wears, safety goggles etc.

❖ **Personnel Identification:** Employees are entitled to be issued with ID Cards, free of charge. This is to identify bona fide personnel for effective security checks and control.

❖ **Assumption of Duty for New Appointments:** All officers' category, on assumption of duty for new appointments and new stations different from their places of domicile or those transferred or posted are eligible to be granted transport fare for self, spouse and four children only. These categories of employees are also qualified to be paid for hotel accommodation for the first 28 days or allowances for the first 28 days in lieu of hotel accommodation.

❖ **Channels of Communication:** Employees have rights to pursue legitimate grievances. In addition, for group grievances, employees are granted to join relevant staff unions to handle such cases through the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC).

❖ Transportation Vehicle entitlement allocation:

These are of different categories and based on rank and status (a) Management- The category of management staff and those of immediate lower rank covering duties of management are entitled to personal allocation of one-chauffeur-driven car by virtue of their ranks and responsibilities. (b) Operational- This covers the senior staff category who are normally engaged in plant and field operations. They are expected to be allocated operational vehicles on 24-hours-a-day but on self-driven basis. (c) Departmental/Pool vehicles- Departmental vehicles may be allocated strictly for official use and not for personal allocation. All other light vehicles are however, kept and managed in a pool for the benefit of all Departments. (d) Mass Transportation Vehicles- These are for the mass transportation of staff to convey them to work and their children to school by buses as a privilege. (e) Motor Vehicle Maintenance- This is done at the established maintenance workshops while some staff maintenance package is monetized. (f) Boarding of Motor Vehicles- All unserviceable vehicles are officially disposed. The disposal and actual sale of all boarded vehicles/cars are expected to be processed and done by first option to the staff through competitive tendering or balloting of public auction or open competitive tendering. (h) Kilometer Allowance- This is granted where an employee has undertaken an authorized journey using his personal or commercial vehicle.

❖ Office Supplies: (a) Newspapers- Management staff and Heads of Department (HoDs) may be supplied a set of Newspapers and appropriate periodicals based on the status of the employees. (b) Consumables- These include

beverages, toiletries, soft drinks etc. supplied at limited or control levels.

❖ **Housing Policy:** The housing policy is designed to assist employees and thus enable them live in suitable housing accommodation during and after service. The policy includes: Staff Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (SHOAS), Home Ownership Scheme, Rent Subsidy/Home Maintenance Allowance etc.

❖ **Travel Outside Nigeria, Duty/Training Assignment:** On official tour or assignment outside the country, employees are paid allowances for their boarding, lodging and incidental expenses. When on official assignment or training outside the country that exceeds nine (9) months, employees are entitled to their spouse and four (4) children to accompany them with estacode paid based on the rank of the officers concerned. They are also entitled to a warm clothing allowance whether the foreign country is cold or temperate climate. In addition, when accompanied by spouses and children, the officers are paid family allowance every month. The officers are also entitled to excess air baggage not exceeding 20kg per person. Sea freight cost of packing insurance and freight charges for transportation of personal effects of employees returning from overseas assignment/training. The class of air travel is based on the rank of officer on either business or economy class.

❖ **Transfer:** The extant public service policy provides that any permanent transfer of staff shall benefit from free transportation to the new location. When the employees are expected to move with their family members, they are entitled to- (a) a one (1) year consolidated salary as disturbance allowance, (b) hotel accommodation for not

more than 90 days or payment in lieu, (c) an out-of-pocket allowance for the period of hotel, (d) transport claims as appropriate, (e) payment of personal effects of self and family based on the rank of the officer appropriate to the kilometers from domicile location, (f) air ticket of self and family (four children), (g) where employees' vehicles are used, a rate shall be paid per kilometer for the entire family en bloc. But when request for transfer is made by the employees, no payment of disturbance allowance (resettlement allowance), and no hotel accommodation shall be paid but only transport claims shall be applied.

❖ **Leave:** The nature of leave for employees in public service benefit varies (a) annual leave- Employees are entitled to an annual leave of 32 working days or 23 working days as appropriate to senior and junior staff respectively. Public holidays and weekends falling within the annual leave period are not calculated, (b) compassionate leave- Seven (7) days may be granted to employees on occasion of serious personal problem/tragedy, (c) examination- employees are granted leave to sit for an examination conducted by a recognized examination body for the duration of the scheduled examinations, (d) Maternity/paternity leave is also granted to employees on full pay, (e) Sick leave- Certified sickness and unable to perform official duties, employees are entitled to payment during the period of sickness. The first six month is with full pay, next six months is with half pay and thereafter the career fate of the employee is to be determined by the institutional management.

❖ **Loans and Advances:** Employees are granted a variety of loans and advances as provided by the extant regulations as appropriate to specific organizations and to

the categories of employees: (a) salary advance- Employees upon resumption of duty or transfer to new stations may be granted/advanced one-month basic salary in order to assist with the relocation expenses. This is payable in three (3) equal consecutive installments (monthly deductions), (b) Rent Advance- A rent advance not exceeding the sum of three (3) months basic salary may be granted to employees on first appointment or arrival at new stations on transfer. This is payable by 12 equal consecutive monthly deduction, (c) Compassionate loan- Confirmed employees are granted personal loans to enable them cope with circumstances arising from emergencies. This does not exceed three (3) months' basic salaries of the employees where repayment shall not exceed 12 months, (d) Vehicle Refurbishing loans- Different categories/statuses of employees are granted vehicle/refurbishing loans. Even within management, senior and junior staff, they are categorized with different amounts granted. Refurbishing loans granted shall not exceed one-year basic salary and the loans are to attract 2% interest repayable in 72 months, (e) Furniture grants- These are granted as a part of the elements of the consolidated annual salary of the staff concerned, (f) Home Ownership Scheme- Employees are assisted with grants to enable them build their own residential accommodation based on the policy of the Home Ownership Scheme with Home Ownership loans.

❖ **Healthcare Treatment:** (a) Medical- Institutions are responsible for the cost of medical treatment received in government hospitals or nominated clinics. Out-patient and in-patient treatment for employee's medical treatment and eight (8) registered dependents under 18 years. Full

cost of child delivery for female employees and registered wife of male employees. Cost of treatment received by employees during vocation or during emergencies. Treatment and maintenance of employees accidentally injured in the course of work, (b) Dental care received- This does not include procurement of dentures (false teeth), (c) Ophthalmic treatment- This is the cost of eye treatment and procurement of lenses, but not cost of frames, (d) Cost of treatment abroad recommended by approved institutional doctors and approved by management, except in cases of illnesses when an officer is on overseas duty tour, assignment, training (e) Cost of medical check-up- The cost of medical, medical check-up to undertake medical examination of fitness in two years' intervals, (f) Medical facilities to be established by organizations to benefits employee with various government and specialized hospitals approved by organizational management to enable employees and their dependents be appropriately referred to (g) Retirees and registered spouses are entitled to organizations' medical benefits, (h) Industrial health facilities provided for the employees' benefits range from first aid centre/box attendance, due to hazards and other ailments associated to the discharge of work, to other anticipated accidents at workplace environment.

❖ **Bonus:** All employees are entitled to an annual bonus of one month's basic salary or prorated percentages for the period of service less than one year. This applies to staff who are on payroll by 31st December and have rendered satisfactory services. A letter of warning to employees for indiscipline disqualifies them for the bonus.

❖ **Drivers' Non-accident:** on 1st January, a non-accident bonus to every vehicle driver who had driven in the year without accident would be paid one consolidated monthly salary as certified and approved by the respective HoDs.

❖ **Group Personal Accident Insurance:** This is a personal accident insurance cover for employees on a 24hours basis granted to provide compensation for accident disablement. It involves a maximum of five times at the annual salary for total permanent disablement. But in case of accidental death of the employee, compensation under this scheme would be granted to the deceased next-of-kin up to 5 or 6 times of the annual basic salary of the employee as appropriate. In addition, a three months' basic salary shall be paid within three weeks of employees' death upon production of "letter of Administration".

❖ **Staff School:** Staff schools are established by organizations within the premises where buildings, infrastructure, equipment and teaching materials are provided. The fees charged for the children of the employees are subsidized. Employees are only required to provide books, uniforms and other essential needs for their children.

❖ **Canteen Services:** Employees are provided with canteen services and thus entitled to one meal per day. When canteen services are not provided, employees are entitled to 80% of the cost of the meal in lieu of the meal, in the location as meal subsidy or as meal allowance.

❖ **Club Membership:** Employees are encouraged and sponsored to take up membership of any two social clubs conducive to the advancement of organizational interests.

Employees are supported or assisted to process entry into membership of relevant professional associations or bodies to develop and maintain professional competence.

❖ **Long Service Award:** Institutions recognize and appreciate employees' loyalty to organization, dedication and meritorious services. In this situation, token appreciation is expressed when employees are awarded a range of gifts for motivational purposes. Long service award ceremony is held annually to reward deserving employees who put up between 10 and 35 years with certificates, plaques, silver- or gold-plated wrist watches, colour TV, deep freezers, 20% of consolidated annual salary and a host of other gifts. These benefits are usually agreed upon from time to time by the in-house unions and management.

❖ **Death Benefits:** Employees who die while in service shall be entitled to (a) three months' basic salary for the first years of service and any period of service up to three (3) months' and above shall be counted as service of the first year, (b) the institution shall be responsible for the cost of the coffin, the grave space, transportation of the corpse, and personal effects of the immediate family to the deceased home town, obituary announcement in at least one national daily as well as in posters.

❖ **Training and Manpower Development:** A consciously high premium is always placed on vigorous training and strategic development of the manpower resources towards attaining the organizational aim and objectives. Therefore, employees are oriented with positive attitudes to undertake a variety of courses, seminars etc. in order to enhance their capacities. These are geared towards enabling employees to be

appropriately at pace with the dynamics or changing technology which requires high technical and management skills. On such local course of instruction, public officers derive benefits for boarding, lodging at 30% of the DTA for courses not exceeding 28 days. In addition, books and project allowances are granted according to rates based the duration of the course.

❖ **Five-Year Pension Guarantee after Retirement:** This applies to employees who die within five years of their retirement, whether or not voluntary or compulsory, would be entitled to pension award granted to the next-of-kin or close related survivors until the fifth anniversary of the date of deceased employees' retirement. In addition, there is what is referred to as disengagement benefit allowance paid to those employees proceeding on retirement. This is paid at a uniform rate of 5% of the annual basic salary or 50% of the consolidated salary as the case may be, along with other packaged allowances.

❖ **Others:** Other employee sundry benefits include, among others, recreational facilities to be built by the institutions concerned, provision of shift-allowance, call duty allowance, special hazard allowance as well as the general hazard allowance. Responsibility allowance for senior employees who cover the duties and responsibilities of management staff. The secretary or typist cadre categories burdened with a lot of duties and obligations, and attached to management staff, are also granted responsibility allowances. There is also the provision of merit Award strictly based on the outstanding performance of staff within a financial year. Included in this category are basic facilities and facilities in offices such as air conditioning and telephones (intercoms),

adequate ventilation and lightening, floor carpeting or tiling, desk and chair as well as visitors chairs appropriate to employees' ranks, conference tables/settee sets appropriate to employees' ranks, gas and housekeepers' allowances, bookshelves for top management and for other specialized usage, and workstation concept of office furnishing to be adopted as appropriate to the ranks of the employees etc.

Section 3: Casual (Agency) Employment in Nigeria: A Political Economy Approach and Analysis

One of the major labour and institutional problems with public concerns in Nigeria is the proliferation of casual or agency employment. These are imbued with issues bordering on benefits, rights and privileges. The greatest culprit in this casual or agency employment and denial of benefits to employees is the government. These problems, issues and challenges have posed potential and real negative implications for such agency workers in public services in all ramifications. Thus, the so-called institutional packages of benefits are all denied to casual workers. Since these categories of employees are highly vulnerable to instant dismissal, they are 'legally' excluded from any form of collective bargaining and therefore non-unionized.

This casualization in agency employment is, therefore, exploitative and thus a threat to human rights and security as well as societal political stability and economic sustainability. These imposed constraints in casual workers, of course, threaten their jurisdiction and membership of employees in any institution they find

themselves. Such an institutional phenomenon of pay-rolling casualism has unlawfully by-passed statutory obligations concerning any employee benefits and other entitlements as well as trade union rights.

When an institution becomes insensitive, autocratic and dictatorial to the rights of employees, it economically and politically imposes its will on employees. This also happens when the trade unions are weak and compromised while the leadership is corrupt. It should be emphasized that institutional rationality is usually justified on economic opportunism as exploited by state-actors in order to maximize profits, benefits for cheap labour and primitive accumulation. This is partly because the employees and their unions do not exercise legitimate rights to operate or are banned from exercising and determining the conditions of their employments.

This situation has continually resulted in the social injustice against the employees due largely to the imbalance of power between employers and employees. This imbalance of political and economic power, invariably brings about exploitation that results in the deprivation of employee's material interests, rights and benefits. Further blurring of the institutional operations has raised some crucial issues that smear organisational boundaries. These issues fundamentally smudge clarity on the vital positions of the employee-employer relations in labour laws.

We are therefore moved by and confronted with themes and arguments in political economy that are rooted explicitly and implicitly on the position of agency

employees vis-à-vis the permanent or full-time contract. Even though secure employments are declining and dwindling in Nigeria public sector, casual or agency employments have become lucrative and thus a novel idea in public institutions. These have become, in various ways, transformed and institutionalized as *outsourced* elements of employees paid through the so-called Internally Generated Funds (IGF). This transformation of public service has crippled its reputation and thus reduced it with negative image and negative source of regulations. These are, therefore, characterized with oppositions and unacceptable discriminations in the service.

The breakdown of security, sequel to the emergence of insurgencies and terrorism in Nigeria, can be alluded to and precipitated by the wanton destruction of public service, worker motivation, worker rights, responsibilities and employee benefits (Abbass, 2018, Abbass, 2017 (a), Abbass, 2018 (c), Chris, 2021). The destruction of the public service in Nigeria has emerged due to a number of factors. These include the institutionalized state corruption, low and stagnant remunerations, inflation and currency devaluation, poor professionalism, bad leadership and governance, absence of motivation, weakened institutions, infrastructure decay, deficient career growth, nepotic recruitment/employment processes, and negative condition in the workplace environment. These have further adverse impact on the Nigerian economy on a number of factors such as restructuring of the workforce in public service. This exercise consists of downsizing or right-sizing, demolition of the internal labour market and the disablement of the employees to exercise and effectively

function (Abbass, 2017 (b). This has also destroyed employer-employee relationship in a manner that is mutual, productive and thus capable of efficient performance that bring about satisfactory benefits to organisations and employees.

The type of work arrangements being imposed in the Nigerian public service with zero-content benefits to employees have adversely weakened or even killed their morale in both agency and non-agency institutions. Hence, the burgeoning nature and character of employee expectations of benefits have, in essence, made employees highly brutalized, dehumanized and demoralized (Abbass, 2018; Abbass 2017(a), Abbass, 2014. These may inevitably be derived from the inherent and emergent forms of the newly-established casual or agency working environment and arrangements. The political economy explanation in this growing hired wage employee phenomenon has constituted a part of non-standard employment contact with abuses in benefits, service delivery and state gruesome failure to fulfil people's wishes and aspirations.

This study explores how public institutions in Nigeria have exploited a window for instituting and reinforcing indirect, informal and unethical ways to influence the imposition of unilateral employment processes. Such state public organisations have devised or designed a newly striking and unprecedented nudge of agency employment. This is characterized with uneven or unbalanced financial benefits and political power designed to unduly exploit the weak and vulnerable casual workers.

Driven by the neo-liberal economic agenda instituted and sponsored by the WB, IMF and their other policies, the Nigerian economy has rapidly been integrated into and positively responding to the dictates of the globalised economy (Abbass, 2014). This has resulted in the commercialization and privatization of the key state institutions as a part of the conditions to the opening up of export processing zones in order to attain and attract foreign capital (Dror 1984). This might have waived off the application of labour laws in the enterprises operating in these zones in order to attract investors. Invariably, this has changed labour relationship in public service in Nigeria and potentially contributed towards establishing a culture of subcontracting labour through third-party supplier establishment, i.e. the agency establishment and by disclaiming connection of employees with their benefits.

It should be emphasized that casual or agency employee status in Nigeria, in relation to the expected accrued benefits, is not only ambiguous but contemptuous. This ambiguity in employee status and contentious benefits usually exists in many forms and institutions. For example, an agency or contract employee on the list of an agency is not necessarily an employee of the agency. This is due to the fact that the employees are unilaterally recruited and work with low and ridiculous wages (far below minimum wage) under the supervision and control of the agency. In addition, the client institution is not usually regarded or taken as the employer of the agency worker. This is because there is no contractual relationship or agreement between them. But the only contract is between the agency and the client institution that benefits from the services of the agency worker.

Even if the client institution were to be considered or regarded as the *employer* in relation to absurd benefits and other irregular and vulnerable entitlements, the fact remains that the nature of the job is absolutely temporary. In other words, the employee is only working under the supervision of the client's organisation only. Hence, with the manipulative tactics or designs used by employers in pay-rolling devices, it has become difficult to establish a direct relationship between employees and clients' organisations.

It should further be stressed that when employees are hired through agencies and work for client institutions, they may be engaged for a long or indefinite period. But the employee can be instantaneously disengaged without any due process. This is because there are no legal restrictions on the length of engagement. Even though the employees are directly and exclusively managed by the client organisations, they are not accorded with the status of employees with benefits and obligations.

The baffling contradictions and utter omissions in the Nigerian agency employment centre on the abstruse problems and intricate questions on the sustainability and qualitative production of goods and services on the affected institutions. The way and manner such institutions have continued to use devices to dampen the spirits of the employees will affect worker motivation and quality output. Specifically, casual or agency workers are denied social security benefits which cover and provide for medical and maternity care, gratuity/national provident fund (pension) benefits, insurance benefits for the employees' essential components of insurance and other vital benefits.

Part D: Politics of Public Service Pension Reforms and Benefits

Section 1: The Political Economy of Pension Reform and Employee Benefits in Nigeria

This examines the political economy of pension reforms during economic turmoil and beyond as well as the associated impacts on social security of employees in different institutions of the Nigerian government. This therefore focuses on the issues related to the governance processes and expected responsibilities of the Nigerian state and pension institutions. Hence, such global agenda on social security laws, influenced by international organizations such as International Labour Organization (ILO), with pension as a potential policy thrust, backed by IMF, World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) etc., have abrogated the previous pension scheme in Nigeria by withdrawing state responsibility, enforced privatization of retirement payments and promoted industrial instability, corruption and other forms of injustice in the system.

The question of the relevance of the pension system and its sustainability in Nigeria have for a long time been a major subject of concern by the public employees. There are a number of hardships which retirees often face in accessing the end results of their labour outputs. Pension system in Nigeria has not fundamentally met the challenges and expectations of the vast majority of retired public employees. This is notwithstanding the novel and

ongoing public recognition and seeming preoccupation of the state in league with international organizations and the legislative arm in the seminal transformation and all the perceived changes put in place. Corrupt practices that have bedevilled the Nigerian system, coupled with the financial crunch or crisis in the public financial deficits and public debts have placed serious strains and stresses on the financial equilibrium of the Nigerian pension system.

The World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have continued to wield enormous power and authority to influence the direction of economic policies and their implementation in the Global South. These international institutions scrutinize and modify economic plans and other policies of such states by providing loans on their terms or conditions (Milner, 1982: x-xi). The capital provided plays an important role in funding early stages of accumulation which precipitate hardships and difficulties for all the specifications of middle and lower cadres of public employees and pensioners. The objective is to harmonize the global standard practices, upheld by international organizations, where retirees are regarded as liabilities and therefore non-productive drains to national resources.

With agreements signed and sealed on loans, WB and IMF send appropriate signals to the Multinational Corporations (MNCs) to move into such states in the provision of investments under Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The terms and conditions of WB/IMF are painful for the state and citizens. For instance, the installed inflation and

devaluation of currencies often bring about closing of budget which inevitably spur unemployment, and cut employee benefits. The cut in employee benefits will ultimately and adversely affect retirement benefits. These also require subsidies on food and basic goods to be reduced or eliminated. This inevitably brings about more debt due to the incursion of MNCs investments and capital accumulation (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2009:487).

It should be stressed that international institutions such as the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other international agencies have continued to impose political, financial pressures and other constraints on most underdeveloped and emerging economies of the Global South (Abbass, 2018:98-99). These international institutions have hastily introduced policies and reforms especially on pension matters and thus put government under intense pressure to implement. Such unilateral imposition of policies and reforms by international institutions is part of their conditions for a grant of aids, loans, etc. to Nigeria. Such an imposition has, for example, not allowed for an effective and mutual communication with all stakeholders for productive consultations. The hasty process has produced different and defective outcomes with serious questions on its suitability, sustainability and relevance to Nigeria and its employees.

What are the political sources of the current Nigeria's pension problems and challenges? The pension problems have a long history with profound consequences within the realm of the Nigerian economy. This is so because the current and past pension issues and problems have

revealed a sterling pattern of politics of inconsistency and corruption with the main stream conception that has been put forward since 2004. Since then, therefore, pensioners have found it really stressful and difficult to access their own personal contributions let alone that of the state. Such a structured pattern reflects the way in which the politics of public policy have been played and put in place or enforced. Pensioners have languished in poverty, and sickness while others passed away without benefiting from the fruits of their labour.

For instance, the way and manner by which the National Assembly schemed its ways out and manipulated the political tide to hurriedly pass pension act shows how they myopically behaved and turned around to increase their benefits in multiples. This was without any form of relying on or keeping their own contributions much lower or even non-existent as with others. The relationship between the Nigerian state politics and public pension issues is large. This is because public opinions and unions had been gradually eroded, manipulated, injured, corrupted and lured into accepting the political attractiveness by promising better future benefits which have become mere illusion. The unions have, therefore, lost the power and glory to push for higher compensation plan benefits for their members.

In Nigeria, pension reforms have for decades been a major concern for public policy issues and implementation. The number of challenges these reforms have cost the Nigerian economy are devastating especially for the well-being of the retired public servants. Most of the conventional public servants take one-quarter of their

salaries as their monthly retirement stipends to cope with more expanding demands and necessities for themselves, their families and other dependents. These challenges have affected a large proportion of the ageing or retiring workers' perception about public services and the expected rewards or benefits that have generally been elusive. Many have died before accessing their benefits. The aged still find it difficult, if not impossible, to endure the difficulties associated with the operating system. This inexplicable scenario has made pension system to most employees or retirees a great dramatic mirage.

Due to financial and economic crimes in Nigeria, especially corruption, the state failure in prompting or accelerating positive reforms process in pension system and the sustainability in restoring the good image of the system have become a herculean task. These corrupt practices in Nigeria have recorded rapid but negative increase in public sector waste of funds, especially in money laundering. These are associated with defects in the system and the added strains as well as stress on the pension system. Hence, the Nigerian state has suddenly abandoned its responsibility by complying with World Bank/IMF blueprint with questionable and destructive motives to the detriment of Nigeria's socio-cultural settings or system of family bonds, obligations and responsibilities.

The negative transformation of the Nigerian labour market has recorded a very high and persistent trends in unemployment and underemployment. These trends have also witnessed serious collapse in the quality and quantity of stable jobs as well as the spread of informal economy.

These have, no doubt, contributed to the drastic decrease in the quality of life and life expectancy of pensioners with declining health condition or status. They have therefore produced adverse socioeconomic impacts on the hitherto employees with their retirement benefits. Hence, due to pressures from WB and IMF, international organizations have drastically produced fewer mitigating potentials on employees' benefits with defective consultation, policies and their implementations.

Nigeria is invariably greatly influenced and affected by the global financial and economic crunch. Hence, the major pension reforms taken or recorded composed of the rise in the retirement age, change in the formula for calculating pensions; as dictated by international organizations, increase in the number of contributing years needed to access full pension rates and the tightening of the rules of access to early retirement. Hence, questions have continued to emerge on the extent of improvement and adequacy of pension benefits for the vast majority of Nigerian retirees. How could the introduction of alien, stiffer and eligibility requirements for full access to pension benefits be adequately beneficial? How could the increase in the retirement age be of value to the retirees? How could all these conditions be related to any kind of sincere measures designed to improve the quality coverage and adequacy of pension benefits?

Even in these circumstances, there still remains the fact that public institutions in Nigeria have been hastily pushed to accent the process and procedures of the new pension reforms introduced by the state in 2004 (Ogunde,

2006, Dostal, 2010, Kolawole, 2023). This was carefully and strategically done in order to rein hook the Nigerian state and to tactically curb all sources of public revenues towards further strangulating the employees (Casey and Dostal, 2008, Casey, 2009, ILO, 2006). It was also designed to destabilize trade unions who always voice out strong opposition or criticism of the haste and measures taken on the newly introduced pension system. The agendas on social security in Nigeria have significantly influenced the incursions of international organizations based on pension instrument. These have, therefore, emanated from ILO and supported by the IMF, UNDP, WB, OECO, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (Dostal, 2010:10). In other words, the speed or swiftness with which the pension reform process in Nigeria took form and place had raised some fundamental doubts. These created doubts centre on the reality and sustainability of the pension reform as well as its value in providing fair deals with adequate benefits to their employees.

Large body of literature on employee benefits in Nigeria and elsewhere globally focus or concentrate on the impacts of institutions on labour market plan (Kenton, 2023, Castillo, 2011, Carrigton, McCue and Piece 1996, Beers, 2022, Wooden, 2002). Such labour market on supply and demand for employment, based on both the micro and macro-economic levels on the national economy as a whole, seem to be zeroing in the bargain of the established employee benefits. These impacts may relate to the labour market outcomes of employment rates and patterns, benefits realised from the efficiency of wage distribution and degree of income inequality allocation

particularly on the new pension scheme. However, minimum wage phenomenon and other forms and politics of wage instability in Nigeria have drastically affected employee benefits at the point of retirement. This was due to the rate and amount paid to employees in different organisations at different pay packages for the employees. These aspects, for example, also relate to the severance pay benefits or pension pay regimes.

The implications of this for the economic and political realities in the workplace environment are enormous. As this is related to the overall productivity, it is also associated with greater informality through some investments and good outcomes of the employee's productivity. Invariably, these are expected to enhance employees' well-being, especially through proper implementation of minimum wage and severance package at the point of retirement.

This is further guaranteed through the acts of collective bargaining which empowers the employees to be more conscious and productive. These may be attained by implanting trust and confidence in the system and thus reducing suspicious behaviour or attitude. It may also reduce some form of resistance to the state of economic and social interventions or reforms. There is, therefore, the need for a greater employee job protection and rights that encourage skill investments that can bring about technical efficiency and growth in the system.

Threats of great magnitude have continued to pose and trail serious concerns on public employee institutions on employee benefits. The policy response in the Nigerian

public organisations has continued to be tempered by political and economic realities of the time. Hence, greater attentions have to be focused by investing economic and political capital to address the challenges of the contemporary circumstances. Issues of employment status in relation to benefits entitlements in Nigeria are diverse. The political economy of labour and the intrinsic employee benefits must adequately address the needs, interests and other material issues of both the employees and employers of labour. These focus on the qualitative and quantitative as well as the material aspects of the work life cycle of the employees which centre on retirement benefits.

It may be recalled that the current Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) introduced in 2004 was designed and arranged for both the employer and employees to contribute a portion of an employee's monthly emoluments or percentage to enable the employee access pension at the point of retirement. This new development expresses a structural state failure in its role and responsibilities to the employees. Hence, based on the IMF/WB directive policies, the Nigerian state would no longer shoulder the sole responsibility of employee's gratuity and pension. The implementation of the CPS would henceforth qualify the Nigerian state to access some IMF/WB facilities.

Since the implementation of the IMF/WB conditionality on CPS, the bulk of the Nigerian retirees have continued to suffer unmitigated hardships. Not only are they delayed or denied their retirement benefits as and at when due, but the previous benefits while on the job became elusive. The

processes and procedures for the individualized Retirement Saving Account (RSA) opened with the Pension Fund Administrators (PFAs) are driven by a global market system network and moved by the forces of profit typically by the Nigerian market economy. The institutions of the RSAs and PFAs in alliance with the state and its agencies, own, control and regulate most of the resources of the state for their vested interests rather than the needs and interests of the employees.

Hence, the World Bank's advocacy of private funded pension schemes has grossly lost its intrinsic value in all the third world countries adopted. These may be gleaned from the Chilean model of pension reform in the 1980s and 1990s. This has also lost the vital linkage of social security platform based on macro-economic growth in Nigeria that has defied the advocated social security protection by increasing deepening hardships to the retirees. Thus, the situation in Nigeria is that the new pension scheme has given birth to a new phase of poverty to the middle-class elites and pensioners rather than enhance their status due to the nature of its introduction and implementation. This invariably did not take into cognizance of the existing condition in the country by isolating the social, economic and cultural contexts as well as ignoring the political environment in policy-making processes and implementation based on the extreme corruption and inequalities in the system.

The primary aim of the new pension scheme is to enforce private sector ideologies in the system. It is therefore to provide goods and services at the highest prices in order to have highest dividends or turn over for the enterprises.

All these are driven by self-interest with, of course, minimal state intervention and backed by the instrumentality of globalization with the state-sponsored corruption. These make the RSAs and PFAs characteristically fraudulent which condition the retirees perpetually faced with uncertainty of the monthly stipends. Hence, the direct entry of private sector enterprises in Nigeria to handle public employee benefits is also another gruesome failure of the state to its citizens. Such a private sector and direct participation in public affairs has been structurally sanctioned and guaranteed by the Nigerian state.

In such structurally constrained conditions, how can the compulsory individual funded pensions positively affect national saving profiles and economic growth of Nigeria when corruption is the business-as-usual in the state-craft? However, in the present paucity in the basic social security, how can forced savings for the future needs of the pensioners be justified, or rationalized and desirable for the society prone to all forms of corruption? Furthermore, how can the failed Nigerian state, within the context of the failure of the economic and political power to accumulate resources for the future development, address and turn-around conditions in the interest of the Nigerian pensioners and the powerless/ordinary Nigerian citizens? In essence, the embarrassing low GDP profile in Nigeria cannot, therefore, support any form of investment by the political economy of the Nigerian state. Dostal, 2010, succinctly expresses that “in the Nigerian context, one can expect a mismatch between the accumulation of pension savings and the failure to fund appropriate

investment outlets that would produce real returns to pension savers (Dostal, 2010:8-9).

Some of the basic features of CPS show that it is privately managed by PFAs based on the individualized RSAs. It is therefore contributed by both the state (employer) and employees with the provision of the so-called group life insurance as provided by section 9 sub section 3 of the 2004 pension Act that does not sustainably guarantee even the basic health needs of the retirees and dependents. However, the new pension act singles out some state agencies or institutions for special privileges in conformity to the deceptive and destructive motives of the globalized agenda.

In addition, with the proliferation of the PFAs since the commencement of the new Pension Scheme, the management of pension investment turns out to be a very lucrative business venture, at least for the PFAs. Incidentally, Nigeria has recorded the highest number of competing PFAs in the world (Dostal, 2010:15). Not only in the proliferation of PFAs and other issues of concern, their capacities and competence are also highly questioned because most of them are fraudulent and crooks. Thus, PFAs, more often than not, fail to provide their customers with clear information about the status of their investment and strategies they put in place to secure them. These acts may directly be a concert with the Nigerian state.

The current pension scheme has only further turned majority of Nigerian retirees into destitution. They hardly access their personal contributions apart from the lots and

lots of discrepancies from the state contributions. After retirement, however, the retirees are, of course, weakened and cannot withstand the harshness of weather, time and distance to travel (including the cost to travel) for the routine verifications. All these are connected to and related with the conspired state role and directive principles of the trappings of the international financial institutions in the backward but dependent market Nigerian economy.

Table 9.1: Formula for Pension and Gratuity Calculations Based on Percentage of Final Salary

Years of Service	GRATUITY			PENSION		
	Civil Servants	Officers	Other Ranks	Civil Servants	Officers	Other Ranks
10	100%	a) * 100%	100%	-	-	-
11	110%	110%	110%	-	-	-
12	120%	b) * 120%	120%	-	-	-
13	130%	130%	130%	-	-	-
14	140%	140%	140%	-	-	-
15	100%	100%	100%	30%	40%	40%
16	110%	110%	110%	32%	42%	42%
17	120%	120%	120%	34%	44%	44%
18	130%	130%	130%	36%	46%	46%
19	140%	140%	140%	38%	48%	48%
20	150%	150%	150%	40%	50%	50%
21	160%	160%	160%	42%	52%	52%
22	170%	170%	170%	44%	54%	54%
23	180%	180%	180%	46%	56%	56%
24	190%	190%	190%	48%	58%	58%
25	200%	200%	200%	50%	60%	60%
26	210%	210%	210%	52%	62%	62%
27	220%	220%	220%	54%	64%	64%
28	223%	230%	223%	56%	66%	66%
29	240%	240%	240%	58%	68%	68%
30	250%	250%	250%	60%	70%	70%
31	260%	260%	260%	62%	72%	72%
32	270%	270%	270%	64%	74%	74%
33	280%	280%	280%	66%	76%	76%
34	290%	290%	290%	68%	78%	78%
35	300%	300%	300%	70%	80%	80%

a) * For Ex-Servicemen affected by Decree No 13 of 1975 only

b) * For Colour Servicemen

Note: Any part of a year that is more than 6 (six) months shall for the purpose of this Schedule be regarded as a complete year

Source: PTI Condition of Service Document, 1999, P113

Table 9.1 adequately captures a sample of the formula for pension and gratuity calculations of retirees based on percentages of final salary of the previous pension scheme prior to the 2004 scheme. There seemed to have existed an equitable and justifiable provision based on the final salary of the retirees not on the so-called CPS. These were, therefore, percentages of grants based on years of service for both gratuity and pension for civil servants, officers and other ranks. This however seems more stable and sustainably satisfactory for the retirees without any form of ‘market’ manipulations. Furthermore, the total take-home of the retirees was, therefore, not far less than the salaries received during service, when the state took sole responsibilities for the gratuity and pensions. This was, indeed, much better than the peanuts currently received despite the populist CPS.

Section 2: Nigerian State Politics, Public Service and Employee Benefits

The Nigerian political-economic system has, overtime, imposed some constraints and vulnerability on public employees and their benefits. These constraints seem to have consequently established withdrawal syndrome on the commitments of the employees to the optimal attainment of organizational goals. Governments’ role in the enhancement of employee welfare has continuously been on the decline. These actions of government have exacerbated the employee conditions by introducing unnecessary irritants into the political arena, thereby, almost dispensing-off the rich professional career skill and technical or security intelligentsia of the employees that serve the Nigerian economy and society at large.

A large number of public employees in Nigeria would usually be expected to tenaciously hold institutional values to service beyond the pursuit of material interests. Their capacities, capabilities and willingness, based on their conscientious performance of quality services and disinterested culture of material acquisition, have gone higher than the goal of making personal desire for profit. Whenever these principles are applied to the work culture or ethic, the employees' creativity, service, responsibility and accountability manifest positively in the organizations. But under the politicized conditions, employees are faced with serious dilemmas. These include exercising work with all forms of harassment and accompanied with the introduction or institution of new and absurd policies. Others are the state-actors' undue influences and manipulations with curtailed or denied and withdrawn employee freedom and benefits.

Since human service sectors and a range of employee benefits tend to be highly politicized when supported or curtailed by public funds, government agencies/institutions appropriately benefit or suffer from state intervention, as the case may be. However, contradictions in policies usually become visible between the provision of adequate financial requirements in certain institutions with withdrawal and total denial of such finances. This is based on not only public policy but equally on administrative decisions by either the legislative or executive arm of government and affirmed by the judicial arm.

Notwithstanding the values and experiences of public employees in discharging public works in various

agencies of government, they are generally the most vulnerable, despised and neglected elements of the elites. This is largely due to the politicised Nigerian public system. Hence, despite their accumulated power of knowledge, experience and skills, the value of the employees in the eyes of the state and state-actors is continually diminishing. This is because such values are not utilized and translated into good policy processes and outcomes that benefit them. Their interests are however seen to have adversely collided with the political and economic interests and rationales of the governing class.

Hence, the strategic position of employees in public service and the delivery of their benefits testify and amplify their political role and significance in service delivery and stability in the political, economic and social realm of the state. The dependence of the political and economic systems on public employees to discharge national duties or functions provides them with a political privilege and leverage. They should thus be considered and held in high esteem and with lots of security cautions. The Nigerian state and society, hobbled and riddled by the existence of affluence and extreme poverty on both sides of the socio-economic divide, the effective delivery of employee material benefits can effectively mitigate the elite poverty slide situation that erodes political trust and undermines the political and economic systems.

Employee benefits can also be considered as those remuneration components that consist of the packaged compensation for the employees. They therefore consist of the essential and classified elements such as salary/wage payment-based compensation, medical

expenses benefits, life insurance coverages, disability benefits, personal losses benefits, annual bonuses, incentive benefits, retirement benefits, special executive-based benefits and a host of other employee specific payment-based compensation.

All these and other elements of the employee's total compensation system are commonly referred to or considered as employee benefits. These have evolved due to the needs and desires of the employees' working condition and part of the payment system. The entire components naturally differ from one individual to another (based on their status/position) in an organisation and from institution to institution in the Nigerian society. These arrangements are objectively designed to, among others: -

- a. Provide an appropriate standard of living for the employees and their families, based on the employees' relative positions with and responsibilities to the employer.
- b. Recognise the employees' performance through the provision of incentive compensation.
- c. Provide protection against medical services and expenses for the employees and their dependents.
- d. Offer safeguards against loss of income in the event of employee's sudden death, disability etc.
- e. Aid in the processes of retirement income benefits such as medical expenses during retirement.

f. Make the availability of sound retirement and financial planning and other services (Rosenbloom, Hallmam, 1986:7).

Some of the major institutional objectives of employee benefits include:

i. Motivation and retention of employees based on employees' welfare.

ii. Attraction and retention of professional talent to improve corporate image and efficiency.

iii. Provision of incentives for the overall individual and institutional performance.

iv. Assurance and guaranteeing of adequate benefits and system of total compensation appropriate and equitable to the strength and needs of the employees.

v. Desirous to expand systematic and cost-effective funds for employees' benefits.

vi. Provision of stakeholder identification amongst specific groups of employees with great impacts on institutional growth, development and profit profile.

vii. Respond and attain to union demands for effective bargaining and other labour negotiations to improve employees' condition of service.

viii. Promotion of institutional image towards empowering institutional capacity to meet the expected obligations to employees and society.

Nigeria's contemporary society is crisis ridden. The crisis is essentially drawn from the images of people's feelings about leadership and governance; deeply characterized by corruption. This trend has so far described the shady character of various regimes' slinking out of their responsibilities to employees due to the rise of an overarching Nigerian state. The failure of the Nigerian state is, therefore, in many folds; especially in the delivery of service to the people and provision of welfare and benefits to public employees. This broad category of public employees constitutes an overwhelming majority of the Nigerian elites.

The pervasive role of the Nigerian state has advanced beyond redemption and thus, deteriorated to the extent that the velocity of the state corruption spree indicates that no state institutional sector is left untouched. Hence, the social, economic and political life of individuals has become increasingly dependent on and affected by such weak and corrupt institutions which have invariably turned the life of public employees worthless during and after public service. This accretion of the Nigerian state overwhelming oppression and dominance is compounded by the complexity and contradictions in the character of employment and institutional disparities as well as the state or condition of benefits being granted to employees.

The current and previous Nigerian political systems have submitted serious impacts on the myriad of problems. Based on the glaring issues on ground, no tangible mechanisms of control could be used to sustainably curb the employee growing frustration and anger that have been continuously repressed by the state instrumentality

of force. Such use of force has thoroughly conditioned the character of the Nigerian state in dealing with the rights and privileges of public employees. Thus, the dented image of the Nigerian political system has presented itself with direct and embarrassing contradictions between people's perceptions and the elusive employee expectations based on the woeful system performance (Muller, 1973:125). This failed system performance is partly due to the cut in the subsidized consumer goods, employee benefits etc. by Nigeria as remotely dictated by IMF/WB all in the name of development and economic growth.

It should be noted that the legitimacy and stability of the Nigerian state must rest on and operate in the type of democracy put in place. Thus, trust and loyalty in leadership and governance are credited on state agencies based on their performance and relevance/value received by the employees. But the moment public employees perceive government institutions or agencies where they work as legitimate, it suggests that their welfare and care are expected to be taken care of. As such, tensions and instability arising from the failures of the state to provide benefits and close gap between what is officially promised and interpreted may not be realised with satisfaction.

However, when there is a scarcity of provision of employee benefits, the deprivation and frustration in actualizing the expectations, the tension and instability that emerge cannot be absorbed, ruled out or endured in the system. As such, forceful willingness or manipulation of the employees to tolerate any form of unacceptable shortcomings of the state cannot be contended with or

counteracted by the political force of the state. Hence, the incursion of the Nigerian state into the institutional province and everyday life of public employees has continued to result in serious direct or indirect violations of their rights and benefits. This has made the Nigerian political system and nascent liberal democratic experiments highly vulnerable and performing unsatisfactorily.

Hence, abrupt changes in the pecuniary compensation packages of the Nigerian workers, alien to the extant policies and regulations, based on the politics of the state and other vested elite/class interests, will continue to weaken state legitimacy and meet employee resistance as championed by trade unions. These acts will, no doubt, continue to weaken the base of the Nigerian political system as well as fabric of the political, economic and social stability. Therefore, access to positions of political power in Nigeria designates the state-actors the opportunity to control vast and unlimited material resources and people as well as institutions with impunity.

The continuous cutting down of employee benefits and other forms of subsidized items and coverages by the Nigerian state in “revitalizing” the economy and “modernizing” politics appear to be highly incomprehensible and thus unacceptable by the affected Nigerian elites. These have invariably continued to weaken and demoralize a large segment of the middle-class elites by proletarianization of their status, from the critical state elements, from the local embourgeoisement processes; especially in the ownership/control of the

means of production to the debased status as wage/salary earners (labourers) only.

Invariably, when the Nigerian state legitimacy officially confers authority, power and influence on individuals, it automatically recapitulates a system of domination and oppression. Such a situation in Nigeria sets in a wilful decision on policies and priorities on unlimited allocation of resources against the interests of those who confer such legitimacy. In this way and in this manner, politicians in Nigeria, especially those at national and state assemblies in league with the executives, assert absolute domination on people after obtaining the legitimating rationales after elections. In other words, once politicians established legitimacy, after winning elections and having occupied political and legislative positions, that serves them right to justify the manner and character of their relationships with the people and public servants through abusive and excessive exercise of political power. They consider less the welfare of people in general and employee benefits in particular but their own immediate interests.

This development is generating calls or agitation for a change in the structure of the current political system, especially by the downtrodden electorate, particularly the vulnerable elites. Hence, the challenges of the practice and value of the liberal democracy in Nigeria, based on the current political system and the question of political legitimacy of the political actors, are most damaging. This is in view of the current state of public (civil) service and the entire condition of living of public servants. It can be recalled that one of the factors leading to the collapse of monarchical governments was the advocacy for the liberal

democratic system or principles on the basis of legitimacy, responsibility and accountability. Now that liberal democracy is diminishing and having no much-expected value in Nigeria and where it is still in practice, the advocates of new political system are raging for cost effectiveness, welfare and provision of enhanced benefits and value.

In Nigeria, due to the neglected and relegated employee benefits, during and after employment, the employees' moral foundations and trust in the system have been eroded by the on-going process and thus systematically destroyed. Hence, the hitherto institution of work ethic has also lost its intrinsic value. The needed motivational incentives and spirits along with the complementary and inculcated discipline as well as inspired diligence and dedication to duty are lost. The multiple jeopardy being characterized in the service makes and magnifies any plausible attainments of institutional goals not only herculean but impossible. The only and easily observed ethic in the Nigerian system by the large percentage of employees is the endemic state corruption. Hence, for decades, the achievement drive of Nigerian employees in public service has, by and large, appeared to be a visible substitute for apathy.

Work or public service in Nigeria has lost its cherished function and value in the face of the negative changing circumstance of employee's condition of work. This has been conditioned by the deformed character of institutional sense of attainment of objectives. In addition, the source of motivation and cohesion in the service has also been lost due to the greed and other forms of

primitive accumulation by the governing class. Thus, policies that have put asunder on the Nigerian employee welfare and benefits have been strategized, rationalised and geared towards the maximization of control and institutionalization of individual and group interests. These acts have, therefore, strengthened the emerging conditions that advocate or demand for enhanced improvement in the condition of living, work benefits, service delivery, sterling leadership and governance, egalitarianism and inclusive or social democratic practice.

Unfortunately, the current situation in Nigeria does not foster the actualization of the cherished values for a good society hinged on public service. The reality on ground, in terms of economic viability of the nation, is completely the stacked aberrations of a well-endowed state that has been economically drowned, politically downgraded and socially dislocated and thus transformed as the global /world centre of poverty and destitution. Such scepticism by Nigerian employees regarding their welfare and benefits, based on the fake political promises by politicians, have questioned the moral values of leadership and institutional performance. As the agitation for a radical revamping of the political and economic structures is gathering momentum, serious predicaments on moral choice, options and responsibilities are likely to constitute a great threat to the stability of the Nigerian state.

When the needs, interests and desires of the Nigerian public employees cannot be pursued and protected by the state, during and after employment, these automatically breed potential condition for provocative standoff,

instability and conflict in the system. The denial of these benefits to employees can easily motivate and mobilize a large and growing population of elites (belonging to the middle and upper-middle classes) to agitate and advance for a socio-economic and political change. Their involvement in industrial action can greatly hamper productivity and deform institutional capacity in attaining desired goals. The eight months' strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), over benefits, welfare and infrastructural defects in the universities, greatly demoralized staff, distorted academic sessions, brought down decay in infrastructure and loss of trust in government and installed with herculean tasks to meet institutional objectives.

Experience overtime has demonstrated or shown that the Nigerian government is incapable of coping with and solving the myriad problems of employee benefits and welfare. Hence, the complete subordination of the socio-economic welfare of employee benefits by the Nigerian state is always reinforced by the fiscal legislation. This is always hurting the interest of the Nigerian workers adversely and the quality of public service output. Increase in corporate taxes over the last decade, for instance, has progressively decreased employee morality and mobility to put in their best. However, the uniformity of interest and standardization of criminality on the part of the class that controls the economy and political apparatuses of the state have made the situation even worse. These policies have, therefore, accelerated the depreciation of employees' standard of living, work benefits, purchasing power and thus diminished their potentials as good citizens. These have not, in any

strategic fashion, ameliorated the employees' zeal to defraud the state and engage in all specifications or specialisation of corrupt practices whenever an opportunity strikes.

The pertinent issue is that despite changes in Nigeria's public policies regarding the emerging employee challenging circumstances with fiscal allocations, the effects have not actually addressed and substantially ameliorated the associated problems set out to resolve. Additionally, new problems have continued to sprout without solving or resolving the earlier ones. These include the disparities in payments of salaries and wages, social inequality among employees, reduced employee benefits and welfare etc. have not reversed the course or trends of further disparities, denial and reduction. Hence, part of the major failure of the government has always been associated with a number of factors, especially in accessing the retirement benefits in time and with value.

However, due to the character of the decadent Nigerian system in place and hit by the destructive forces of corruption, high proportion of allocated funds does not reach the retired employees for their terminal benefits. Many employees have continued to die without benefiting from the fruits of their expended labour. Whereas many other employees are spending years languishing in abject poverty, illnesses and all forms of excruciating pains of denial and deprivation of their benefits. All these have opened up a Pandora's box of diminished or illusive employee expectations that can hardly be met due to the greed of political actors. It is, of course, obvious that these unmet aspirations of work have severely and seriously

undermined the credibility of the government and its agents.

It should further be stressed that the greatest numbers of public employees in Nigeria have continued to significantly but unduly suffer with a lot of consequence on the underdeveloped and unpaid employees' welfare and benefits. This becomes obvious in view of the huge allocation of benefits by those who are constitutionally saddled with the prescription of the national budgets. Members of the National Assembly, by abuse of public office, misappropriation of public funds, gratification and nepotism, prescribe whatever they want in the budget. These acts, however, only protect their group interest with wilful and affluent allocation beyond imaginations. Thus, the deprivation of public employees' benefits and welfare has sharply and vertically cut across the different specifications of employees especially those from the upper-middle group to the lowest strata.

The Consequences of these acts of deliberate denial and deprivation of employee benefits and welfare by the Nigerian State have, overtime, negatively transformed a large portion of the Nigerian petty-bourgeoisie into real proletariats who own no capital but their labour to sell. Hence, the resistance of the proletarianization status of these segments of the Nigerian employees has demonstrated the extent of their being politicised and depressed. Thus, the intolerable conditions, the forceful public employees' marginalization has regressed and relegated their condition of living from a higher social status to a lower pedestal.

Invariably, the failure of the government or state-actors to recognise and prioritize the needs, interests and desires of public employees within the purview of the socio-economic and political realities, despite the politicization of the everyday life of employees, presupposes the total lack of political consciousness of the governing elites. This has been demonstrated and determined by the continuous disarticulation of the employees' interests and demands. This failure, therefore, relates to the open vulnerability of the political actors, due to greed, and to the threats or dangers being posed by the inevitability of instability in the system as a whole.

The politicized and depressed Nigerian public employees pose serious dangers to the economic and political stability as well as other facets of development. The employees' actions, behaviours and attitude to the conditioned workplace environment provokes them to be involved in instantaneous corrupt practices that hinder development. Accompanied with intense frustration and unhappiness, due to the denial of benefits, public employees perceive the political economy of the Nigerian state and the real *politik* as the essential cause of their predicaments. However, to look for a political solution to their beset socio-economic problems will be a mirage. Hence, the politically complacent employees perceive the political institutions, due to the lack of trust in the legislature, executives, judiciary, political parties, the military and paramilitary institutions etc., with repugnance and disinterest. With the loss of confidence in the legislature, the loss in the executive is even worse. This is due to the prevalent state interventions in the economy, education, healthcare, social services, taxations

etc. and how they have adversely assaulted the Nigerian public employees' standard of living.

A lot of basic and normal state functions and responsibilities can no longer be performed in Nigeria. This is due to the fact that the Nigerian political system is held and determined by the rhetoric of political promises and instrumentality of coercion. As long as these conditions are in force in Nigeria, the political system cannot grant the expected material benefits to the employees. These have, therefore, hindered the system from addressing the old and emerging employee problems with sterling leadership and governance. Hence, the fraudulent processes in the acquisition of or grabbing governmental political power by the kakistocrats constitutes the primary factor for the instructional, state and systemic failure in Nigeria which invariably border on public employees benefits and welfare, among others.

Since the intricate relationships between the employees and the state have continued to subject the former to the vicissitude authority of the latter, the state has invariably become the fulcrum of making everyday life of the worker completely dependent on it as determined by its whims and caprices. However, the recent official removal of fuel subsidies by the Tinubu regime has further and tremendously affected the already hopeless situation of public employees in respect of their condition of living. Even the so-called spirit of collective bargaining or agreement, thrown off board, is completely discrete and not integrated within the political economy and policy direction of the state. It is, therefore, dependent only on

what the government is willing to respect, accept and honour.

Furthermore, this sort of condition obviously questions the credibility and reality of the so-called granted university autonomy. This university autonomy, which is no longer within the realm of unfettered acceptability by the Nigerian state has continued to create false imagination of the academics and the university system. Thus, the expected concerns or increase of government responsibility in these sectors of university employee benefits and welfare has, therefore, paralleled the institutionalization and politicization of all the benefits in all the areas of employees' life cycle.

In addition, within the Nigeria's public service, the employees' groaning discontents and systematic erosion over access to essential services, such as education, medical costs and healthcare, as well as other meaningful or essential services have become endemic. This is largely based on the open state discrimination amongst public institutions and agencies' accrued benefit emoluments to employees. The entire spectrum of institutional and sectional crisis has been hinged and held responsible on the state game of politics played by politicians and other state bureaucratic actors. This is because the lives of the employees have been highly affected by the political decisions and implementations. Thus, the deprivation mechanisms being employed and the exercise of power with the complementary judicial cover have invariably produced the regime of unwillingness of government in removing these sources of employees' discontents and grief.

Government is always seen to be in a vantage position to meet employees' demands or needs. But the overarching state pressures in economic and social realm and with the institutionalization of policies or regulations prove contrary. These state promises and policies provide a clear justification for a variety of government stance on the precarious employee situation. However, the deprivation of employee benefits and welfare can be regarded as a deliberate act or refusal of the state to politically allocate the needed resources for employees' benefits. In essence, what actually happens is that the state political motives have, over time, shifted from the public employees' interests to the striking political targets and personal interest aggrandizements.

The political rhetoric and sustained burgeoning promises by the Nigerian governing class have saturated the political climate of Nigeria's scene. Paradoxically this has handicapped the seeming state interventions and unmet employee expectations. The degree of politicization of employee benefits and welfare in Nigeria as well as the type and extent of deprivations vary from one political leadership to another and from institution to institution. This perhaps explains the relative power positions employees and trade unions exert in pressing for the restoration of the deprived benefits. The decline in the growth of the power of employees and trade unions may be due to some significant increase in unemployment coupled with naked nepotism in the employment of the sons, daughters or close relations of the state actors who generally lack required skills and capacity to deliver and therefore, do not wish to confront their benefactors.

Section 3: Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, it should be noted that the political economy of public employee benefits in Nigeria is an engaging and growing discipline that connects motivation and social policy; underpinned by political and economic foundations and orientations of the state. Employee benefits are crucial ingredients that uplift the morale and spirits of workers in attaining self-esteem and organizational or state goal. Hence, the establishment of such benefits provides the energies that galvanize and move the engines of employees and conserve state resources, lower industrial stand-offs and keep stable polity, stabilize economic development, enhance social harmony and cohesion in a society. In addition, the provision of employee benefits, during and after employment relationships, promotes longevity of employees with large storage of experience and skills for the younger generations to benefit in the execution of new and challenging state policies. These highly esteemed employee values, therefore, reduce waste and prevent corrupt practices. In other words, the less the waste gets into the system, the healthier and more stable the environment will be. Invariably, providing employee benefits is only a part of the much-needed efforts to gauge state response to its role and to the needs of employees towards combating strategic change and making a big difference.

The results of the investigation of this study provide some significant insights into the relationships between the state and the economy, on the one hand, and the politics and economics of employee benefits, on the other hand. These

findings in Nigeria's public policy issues have shown how the direct confrontations with the needs and desires of public employees, as sanctioned by international financial institutions, have undermined worker motivation, elite status and state objectives. The outcomes of the study have further exhibited that the shrinkage of the bulk of the employee status or proletarianization of the elites (the middle class, the petty bourgeoisies), being relegated to the wage-earning position, has moved them far away from having access to political and economic powers to those reduced to selling their labour power in order to survive. These include the professionals and others with high or advanced knowledge and skills. These developments, therefore, highlight the need for a great appreciation of the myriad of employee benefits to be in tune with the effective running of the state in service delivery. These further underscores the significance of the subject matter of political economy which relates to the description of economic issues and social relations within political context and their implications.

As these have further shed more light on the significance of the employee benefits within the context and analysis of the political economy paradigm, the issues on Nigerian state presented and provided have underscored a profound impact on the state of public employees in the healthy life of the Nigerian state since colonial era, particularly on the repressive and exploitative character of the state and the behaviour of the state-actors in running down of the state and economy. Employees should be well treated and regarded with respect and therefore considered as assets, not liabilities, in and out of employment, in attaining institutional objectives. This is based on the fact that a

happy employee is a happy employer. Hence, the stability of the workplace environment is strategically dependent on and determined by the ways employees are provided with satisfactory and sustainable benefits.

The complex roles, responsibilities and relationships of public employees are primarily to serve the public. Over time, the changing roles of the employees had a bargain with politicians and military leadership in Nigeria. However, their expert advice and loyalty in policy making and implementation, in exchange for benefits, have been undermined and threaten by the political economy of the state with job insecurity. Whereas public employees have developed and delivered programmes and services with informed policy design and execution along with evidence-based advice, these have consequently been upturned by politicians for selfish ends. More often than not, employees have been unduly politicized from their non-partisan and impartial roles which has profoundly contributed to their current involvement in the new trends of corruption spree based on the degree of politization of the benefits.

Many studies have paid scant attention on public employee attributes to state-craft and state-being. Little efforts have merely been put in motivational traits and organizational commitments in attaining objectives. How can all these deepen our understanding on the need for the employee concerns, in and out of job environment, via-avis the concerns of the state-actors within the intricacies of the political economy of the state? The arms of government and state agencies in Nigeria have continued to wield enormous powers, occasioned with mass

corruption along with the undermining of the provision of justice and employee benefits within workplace environment and beyond. Thus, public service in Nigeria has, since colonial era, been hobbled by instability, uncertainty, inconsistency, contradictions, and waste due to vested interests and greed of the governing class. These have invariably weakened the services and service providers with ineffectiveness, inefficiency and poor service delivery.

The Nigerian state politics of public service and employee benefits vis-à-vis the role of international organizations have impinged on the standard of living of majority of employees and their dependents, especially on the new trends of causal employment and retirement benefits. These have been established by ensuring that market economic conditions and laissez faire capitalism prevail with the Nigerian state. This is to enable or encourage the state to remain aloof in shackles in its gloomy role to citizens and employees by shutting down its doors from the boundless benefits of the abundant state resources. The politicised public service system, coupled with the crisis ridden Nigerian state and the images of people's perception on leadership and governance, have assumed great dimensions as compounded by the new trends of globalization. These are being exerted on the political and economic platforms dictated by the various sets and specifications of WB/IMF conditionality.

Hence, such abrupt and negative transformation of the pecuniary compensation packages and employment conditions of the employees are alien to Nigerian culture. The hasty alteration of employee benefits was essentially

based on the politics of the state and the vested interests of the governing class that have ultimately wrecked and destroyed (by putting asunder on the vital hyphen of) the fabric of the Nigerian economy and state system. These are related to and associated with the impacts of the global agenda on social security regulations imposed on employees through the state as influenced by the ILO, OECD, EBRD, IMF, and WB etc. on the new pension scheme, NHIS etc. These have been enforced and attained through the promotion and institutionalization of privatization and commercialization of public enterprises in Nigeria. Such policies are designed to enable the sustenance of the market economy to thrive in Nigeria in order to harmonize the globalized practices backed by MNCs, FDI and SAP.

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Bio Data of Prof Isah Mohammed Abbass

Isah Mohammed Abbass attended Kofar Kuyambana Primary School, Zaria (Town School No.1). He attended St. Patrick's Secondary School, Zaria, GSS Birnin Gwari and Sardauna Memorial College, Kaduna. Isah Abbass had his Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate Degrees at Ahmadu Bello University in 1981, 1990 and 1997 respectively. He also obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Administration from the same University. Isah Mohammed Abbass received further training at the Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, Scotland, International Human Resources Development Corporation (IHRDC) Boston, USA, The Royal Institute of Public Administration, London, International Management Training Centre, Worthing, United Kingdom. in Administrative Management, Development Programmes, Strategic Change, Human Resources Management, Business and Investment in Oil and Gas across the globe. Abbass was also awarded PhD (Educational Management) by the Marlborough University. In his scholarship attainments, Abbass currently holds the highest number of google scholar academic publications along with the highest google scholar citations in the Faculty of Social Sciences, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Isah Mohammed Abbass began his public service career with Kaduna State Government under the Ministry of Education. He taught at Barewa College, Zaria from 1982 to 1986. During that period, he was appointed a Form and Year Group Master, 1982-86, HoD History/Social Studies, 1982-86, Guidance and Counselling Master, 1983-86,

HoD Humanities, 1983-86, Coordinator, New Continuous Assessment Grading System, 1983-86.

From 1986-1998, Isah Abbass took up appointment as a lecturer at Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna. At the Polytechnic, Abbass served as a Coordinator Certificate Programmes, 1986-87, Diploma Programmes, 1987-88, Higher National Diploma Programmes, 1988-89, Coordinator, Research Committee, 1989-91, Secretary, College Magazine, 1987, Member, Committee of Board of Governors on Investigation of Religious Crisis in Kaduna Polytechnic, 1988, Member, Kaduna Polytechnic Senior Staff Association (KAPSSA) Constitution Review Committee, 1989, Founding Member, Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP) 1988/89, Supervisor, Civil Service Examination, 1987-1990, Member, Professional Misconduct Investigation Committee, 1990, Coordinator, Philosophy, Aim and Objectives on the Conversion of Kaduna Polytechnic to University of Technology by Federal Government, 1990, Member, Examination Malpractice Committee, 1987-91, Chairman, Junior Staff Appointment Committee (JSAC), 1993-98. In 1998, Abbass was appointed as a lecturer in the Department of Political Science Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

Isah Abbass was appointed as the Registrar and Secretary to Council, Petroleum Training Institute, (PTI) Effurun-Warri in 1998. As an energetic scholar and administrator, Isah Mohammed Abbass acquired and developed a mature, responsible and resilient approach to bringing positive outcomes in wherever he finds himself and at whatever prevailing condition. As a multidisciplinary and experienced scholar, he combines history, politics,

economics and management to achieve tasks. As a team builder, bridger and leader, Abbass works to attain goals within time-frame. With a clarity of mind and logical approach to problem-solving, Isah is enthusiastic to learn and overcome challenges towards organizational transformations. In his quality-focused, proactive and innovative passion for human improvement, Isah's target-driven and inspiring leadership repositioned PTI in numerous ways. Abbass instituted rotational departmental academic headships with young academics.

Furthermore, Abbass introduced the review of the academic regulations currently in place. He also initiated and implemented quality restructuring of Works and Maintenance Directorate. Isah Abbass revolutionized the workplace environment and processed the computerization of PTI operations in order to be as par with the challenges of the oil and gas industry. To further motivate staff, he assiduously anchored and facilitated the implementation of NNPC Conditions of Service. In order to have back-up resources, Isah Abbass repositioned the establishment of the PTI Consultancy Services Unit to provide further services and initiated the formation of PTI Research Committees. He also influenced PTDF upgrade project to solve Institutional weaknesses in staff and infrastructure. Furthermore, he transformed admission established more and entrance examination centres, with transcript and results computerized and backlog of old/new certificates signed.

In addition, Abbass brought NBTE accreditation that added values to academic programmes, enabled students participate in NYSC and thus marshalled out plans for

improved staff/students' welfare. With established influence and connections, he also enhanced public image of PTI through oil/gas industry interventions in the Institute's activities (in MoUs and partnership agreements). These and other things further transformed PTI as Federal Institution with staff/students from all the States of the federation. At its Golden Jubilee (50 years) celebration in October 2022, PTI honoured Prof I.M. Abbass with an outstanding Achievement Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the growth and development of the institution and Nation at large. In 2005 Abbass returned to Ahmadu Bello University and appointed as lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

Isah Abbass was also appointed as the Registrar and Secretary to Council, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria in 2011. As the Registrar, Abbass identified ways, means and strategies to deal with its myriad of problems and challenges with a vision, and systematic approach to management and planning. Even though he faced stiff resistance in the implementation, a lot had been achieved within a very short period. Hence, in promoting the ideals of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Abbass began to transform the institution as a formidable beacon dedicated toward excellence, dedication to service in the restoration of its glories. He also promoted the ideals of hard work, honesty, recognition and sacrifice towards prudent use of available resources.

With vigorous staff motivation in providing visionary leadership, and mentorship, Abbass' wisdom has been to accelerate the increasing rise of good image of Ahmadu

Bello University with landmark progress to enhance its reputation though staff attitude to work and quality service delivery. Abbass therefore began to rectify the distortions within the structure and operations of Ahmadu Bello University Registry by distinctly shaping them out based on decentralization and devolution of power, authority, responsibilities and accountability. Thus, the linchpin idea in the resolution of the critical challenges of the university has been to revive the Registry and make it functional, responsive and respectable. With Registry breathing and alert, it can provide proper functioning of various organs of the university system.

Within a short while, Abbass strategically restructured the University Registry to enable it respond to the new challenges. In the entire restructuring, all jobs were identified, defined and assigned with strategic or key responsibilities. All jobs were further established with the accompanying purposes, specific or key responsibilities and tasks with connections and relevance to all organs of the University system. In addition, all jobs were assigned with their scope of responsibilities and reporting channels. With various complementary Departments created along with sections and sub-sections, taking good actions, in a decentralized or devolved management settings had been unprecedentedly installed and institutionalized in Ahmadu Bello University history.

The crux of Abbass' idea was to bring about cohesiveness of the University functions with enhanced discipline and dedication for improved cooperation, expansion, advancement and actualization of objectives. Abbass therefore transformed the Registry with mentoring

strategy thus, rebranding the University and transforming the psyche of Registry staff in rethinking about new challenges in resource development, management, and efficient record keeping. These were attained based on an established networking of sustainable strategy of increased efficiency in the operations of the University based on team work spirit, accountability and responsibility.

Professor Isah Abbass is a Fellow and Member of National and International Professional Bodies such as Fellow, Nigerian Institute of Management(FNIM), Fellow, Institute of Administrative Management of Nigeria (FIAMN),Fellow, Marlborough University Graduate Association (FMUGA), Fellow, Institute of Corporate Administration (FCAI), Fellow, Institute of Management Consultants of Nigeria (FIMCN), Member, The Institute of Petroleum/Energy Institute, London (MIP/MEI), Member, Nigerian Political Science Association of Nigeria(MNPSA),Member Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (MIPMN), etc. Isah Abbass is one of the five Pioneer Members who conceived and established Zaria Education Development Association (ZEDA).

In addition, Isah Mohammed Abbass served as Member, Kaduna State Education Endowment Fund, 1994, Member, Kaduna State Science and Technical Schools Management Board, 1994-1997,Consulting Editor, Solid Journal, Nasarawa State Polytechnic Journal of Academic and Technical Discourse, 2010, External Assessor, Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic, Katsina, 2007-2011, Secretary, Islamic Propagation Centre(IPC) Warri, 1998-

2010, Member, Editorial Board, Kaduna Polytechnic Journal of Administration and Social Sciences, 2009-2011, Member, Ahmadu Bello University Senate, 2009, Member, Participation/Publicity Committee, World Petroleum Congress, 1998- 2005, Member/Resource Person, Technical Aids Corps Directorate of Technical Aids Corps, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009-2014.

Furthermore, Professor IM Abbass also served on Sabbatical/Visiting lecturer Appointments at Kaduna State University (KASU), the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), Kaduna 2015-2016. Combined with academic engagement at the Academy, reviewed the entire Academic and Administrative Conditions of Service of Military University in 2016. He also served as an External Examiner, Department of Political Science, Bayero University, Kano as well as an Assessor, Mambayya House, BUK, Kano. Isah Abbass also served as External Examiner/Assessor, University of Maiduguri, among other institutions.

Isah Mohammed Abbass has been cited in *The Who's Who in Zazzau*, 1997, *The New Who's Who in Nigeria*, 2003 and *The Contemporary (International) Who's Who*, 2003; with numerous Institutional, Community, National and International Meritorious Awards. He wrote, edited and contributed Chapters in Books and Official Conference Proceedings. Abbass published over 80 papers in National and International academic peer review Journals as well as National Newspapers. He attended National and International Conferences, Seminars and Workshops; and engaged as an Educational Consultant by

National and International Research Agencies such as the Presidency, the UNDP. Isah Abbass has supervised many Postgraduate, Undergraduate and Diploma students and served as External Examiner/Assessor to Tertiary Institutions such as Bayero University, Kano, University of Maiduguri, Kaduna Polytechnic, FCE Zaria etc. He published *State, Class and Management of Local Government in Nigeria*, (2010) and *The Political Economy of Rural Development Nigeria* (2014). His hobbies are reading, travelling and photography. He is married with children.



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