

The Effect of Fuel Subsidy on Nigerian Civil Servants: Christian Ethical Point of View

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Abstract

The Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency wishes to inform all stakeholders of the commencement of the formal removal of the subsidy on Premium Motor Spirit, Petroleum products marketers are to note that no one will be paid a subsidy on PMS discharges after 1st January 2012,” said the statement signed by PPPRA executive director Reginald Stanley. The tempo of activities within the polity became overtly charged immediately after the announcement of the removal of fuel subsidy on January 1, 2012 by the Petroleum Products Pricing and Regulatory Agency (PPPRA). This indeed, came as a shock to most Nigerians as they were not prepared for the sudden change. Labour and transport unions, human rights groups, market women, taxi drivers and lawyers’ associations have been bitterly opposed to having the subsidy removed. That led to the announcement of a nationwide strike by the organized Labour, comprising the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) starting from January 9. That strike successfully grounded economic activities around the country for one whole week, with Nigeria losing approximated N320 billion per day. From some state capitals came reports that governors, who earlier decided at the National Economic Council (NEC) to advise the Federal Government to remove fuel subsidy had started siding with the people and encouraging protests.?

Index terms—

1 Introduction

Nigeria is an oil exporting, developing country. With a population of 165 million, it is the most populous country in Africa. Available evidence in extant literature shows that Nigeria is the largest in Africa and the sixth largest oil producing country in the world. Nigeria is the world’s 14th largest producer of crude oil with 10th largest proven reserve. It possesses the world’s 8th largest proven natural gas reserves. The country has 4 refineries with an install production capacity of 485,000 barrels of fuel per day.

2 a) The Refineries

Old Port Harcourt Refinery: installed processing capacity of 60,000 barrels per day, built by Shell was taken over by the Nigerian government in 1977. It is Nigeria’s first refinery.

? Kaduna Refinery: commissioned in 1988 with processing capacity of 150,000 per day. ? Warri Refinery: Has installed processing capacity of 125,000 barrels per day of crude. It was built in 1978 with initial capacity for 100,000 bbl per day. ? New Port Harcourt Refinery: processing capacity of 150,000 barrels per day. It was initially designed as an export refinery. It is the most modern of Nigeria’s refineries and was commissioned in 1991. ? Total refineries capacity $60,000 + 150,000 + 125,000 + 150,000 = 485,000$ bbl/day. Source: NNPC, 2009.

The total production is adequate to meet its domestic needs with a surplus for export. Yet, the country is a large net importer of gasoline and other petroleum products. It is rather ironic to posit that oil wealth which serves as the source of fortune for many countries is the main source of Nigeria’s misfortune. At least Nigeria was

economically steady and progressive before the so-called oil boom. Furthermore, the proceeds from the resources are not utilized for the benefit of the citizenry.

Subsidies are payments made by the government for which it receives no goods or services in return (Karl Case, 1999). Many governments across the globe perceive the provision of subsidies as a social obligation to the economically disadvantaged citizen, particularly the poor (people who live under \$2 a day) and vulnerable groups. In this way, virtually every country introducing subsidies takes the pro-poor point of view into consideration, sometimes arguing for some form of protection for citizens of the various countries.

The effect of the subsidy removal is widespread, the problems associated with the fuel subsidy removal and civil servants welfare as observed are highlighted below. The following areas are considered: a) Increase in the cost of living: The cost of living has indeed sprung up. Nigeria already has one of the highest poverty rates globally. Prices of many things have changed. Its effect is multi-faceted, as it affects food, clothing, shelter etc. This can be viewed under some headings i. Consumer goods: The prices of goods and services have increased owing to the subsidy removal. There exist, a decrease in the value of money (purchasing power). Funds available can now purchase or command less goods, when compared to what it used to get before. e.g. sachet water has experienced hundred percent increase from N5 to N10.

ii. Transport cost: Increase in transport fare is also a resultant effect of fuel subsidy removal. There is a sharp increment in the cost of transportation. This also adversely, affects their cost of living and invariably civil servants welfare.

iii. Cost of Accommodation: The amount usually charged for renting an apartment has increased. Also, there has been a top up on the price of building materials and this has resulted to as further increase in the cost of accommodation.

iv. High rate of corruption: The removal of fuel subsidy and devaluation of the naira has rendered the salaries received by public servants inadequate. They would not be able to fend for themselves as they want to. The tendency is that corruption would set in and be on the increase. This is expected as their basic salaries are not enough to cater for all their needs.

v. Reduction in savings rate and investment: Salaries received by public servants are not enough to even meet their expenditure. Prices of goods and services changed without a corresponding change in their pay. Thus, the extra fund needed to be set aside for savings and investment is reduced to the barest minimum.

vi. Motivation: This means that workers inner drive may reduce as they are not well catered for. They might see no need to go the extra mile in the performance of their duties so as to attain excellence.

3 ? Government (Policy Makers)

To the government, this study will reveal the effect of subsidy removal on the welfare of public servants and thus would aid subsequent economic decisions of the policy makers.

Innovative strategies that would facilitate a better well being and help channel the course of nation leaders in the right direction as it is expected to poise them into enacting citizen friendly laws.

4 ? Civil Servants

It serves as a platform to help civil servants express themselves by carefully giving attention to their views. Important strategies proposed by them to leverage their sufferings arising from the removal of fuel subsidy would be noted. Also, ways by which they can contribute better to the furtherance of the economy for growth, development and productivity sake would be addressed and how the government can play its own role.

The table below provides a clearer picture of the different pump prices by the different administrations from 1978 to Jan. 2012. According to Eme (2011) the Nigerian down stream oil sector is characterized by under-funding, shortage of Petroleum products nationwide, product adulteration, vandalisation of products distribution and shortage of facilities and poor and non-maintenance of facilities, especially the Turn-Around maintenance (TAM) of the nation's four refineries. The oil pipelines and depots also suffered many years of neglect and their vandalisation negatively impacted on the operational efficiency of the oil industry gave rise to the call for deregulation of the petroleum industry. The fallout of the above scenario was incessant fuel shortage fuel price like and rise in the prices of essential commodities.

Deregulation and Anti-Subsidy Removal Strikes in Nigeria.

The analysis below shows the reactions of citizens to the increase in the price of fuel since 1986-2012.

1986-The Ibrahim Babangida government increase in fuel price led to tension and mass protests across the country.

1994-The Abacha junta increased the price of fuel to N15, from N3.25 but after massive street protests, it reduced it to N11 on October 4, 1994.

Clashes with the military regime twice led to the dissolution of the NLC's national organs, the first in 1988 under the military regime of Gen. Ibrahim Babangida (rtd) and the second in 1994, under the regime of late Gen. Sani Abacha.

1998-Abdulsalami Abubakar increased fuel price from N11 to N25 but after days of sustained protests, it was reduced to N20 on January 6, 1999. 1998-After a series of flow stations were shut down, having been taken over by a group of Ijaw youth, Nigeria's total oil output fell by about one third. 1999-The Nigeria Police opened fire

and used tear gas to disperse protesters trying to gain entry into the National Assembly complex in Abuja. The demonstration was called by the NLC to protest against plans to end fuel subsidies. 2000-The Obasanjo regime tried to effect an increment in fuel price to N30 but protests and mass rejection forced it to reduce the increment to N25 on June 8, 2000 and further down to N22 on June 13, 2000. The price hike raised a lot of dust. For eight days; the economy was at a standstill.

2003-During the April 2003 election, Nigeria was engulfed by four nationwide stoppages over fuel subsidies. It witnessed a legal battle over the extent of the right to strike.

2004-Fuel hike affected international and domestic flights in Nigeria as many airlines were hit by a shortage of aviation fuel, with planes unable to leave the commercial capital, Lagos.

2012-Strike action was also recorded. The announcement of the removal of fuel subsidy on January 1, 2012 caught Nigerians caught off guard. The nationwide strike came on board on January 9. By all intent and purposes, Nigerians were right to protest the fuel price increase, or what has been termed this time around fuel subsidy removal. While government estimated that it would make N1.3 trillion from the removal of subsidy, Many Nigerians had set themselves up for festivities at the end of 2011. Many had travelled to their home states during the long Christmas holidays. They were not expecting themselves back at their bases until the first week of January 2012. Thus, it was not surprising that the removal bred anger. Transport fares skyrocketed, prices of goods and services also pumped up, not just as a result of the fuel price increase, but also because of the usual character of transporters during festive seasons. States of the South South except Edo stayed out of the fuel strike, there were vociferous cries in Abuja, Lagos, Ibadan, Kogi, Kaduna, Minna and Kano also. It emerged that many of the states in the South East and even North East had stayed off the strike. It became obvious that politics was playing a big role in determining the face of the protest.

5 History of Fuel

6 Fuel Subsidy Removal and Civil Servants

The Civil service is one of the agents of development in any nation. The transformation of any society or system depends on the effectiveness and efficiency of its civil service, particularly, the developing societies.

Civil Service-Adamolekun (2002), states that the civil service is commonly used as the synonym of the machinery of the government, this is so in Britain and most common wealth countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. In the British conception, the civil service is used to refer to the body of permanent officials appointed to assist the decision makers.

Today, the civil service has come to be regarded as modern institution bequeathed to mankind in the process of revolutionizing an efficient way of organizing any large human organization. It is in this respect that the civil service is defined as a bureaucracy (Ipinlaiye, 2001).

OPEC and non OPEC countries and their fuel prices per litre and minimum wage. The implication of the subsidy removal on the welfare of civil servants is of utmost importance. Since they form part of the economy and do contribute their quota towards the overall development of the economy, thus, a country desirous of growth should put them into consideration. Wellbeing usually refers to the degree to which an individual is well. In this sense it is synonymous with 'quality of life'. Sometimes, however, the word is also used to indicate the quality of supraindividual phenomena, such as the family, a sector of industry or society as a whole.

7 III.

8 Merits of Fuel Subsidy Removal

To the protagonist fuel subsidy removal was a step in the right direction and in the interest of Nigerians.

According to Egbosiuba (2012), He points out the following: The positive outcomes of fuel subsidy removal are: i. It gives incentive to private companies to build oil refineries in Nigeria. ii. Reduces or eliminates fuel smuggling across Nigerian borders. iii. Reduce fuel usage. iv. The price of fuel also reduces a little bit due to competition.

IV.

9 Socio-Economic Consequences

The antagonists of the fuel subsidy removal present a contrary view. They have concluded that their leaders are truly detached from the reality of economic hardship endured by Nigerians.

There would certainly be a downward shift in the quality of life for the borderline income groups as they are forced further down into the most desperate or challenged group of workers as choices have to be made in the redistribution of the household and business budgets -trades off have to be made between the essentials -fuel consumption/transport costs vis-avis health care costs, feeding allowance, education allowance, saving investment opportunities until some adjustments have been made to the wage levels. This has not taken into cognizance the plight of the unemployed and possible levels of unemployment such a shock might trigger in the short to medium term. V.

14 B) PRESENTATION OF DATA ACCORDING TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

10 Research Instrument

The major instrument to be used for data collection is the questionnaire. The questionnaires will be printed and administered to the eight hundred (800) workers of the Local Government. The second part of the questionnaire consists of research questions raised in the study to find solutions to the research problem. Specifically, the questionnaires used a four point opinion/attitude scale, stated in the following ways: SA -Strongly Agree A -Agree SD -Strongly Disagree D -Disagree The table above shows the distribution of the respondents' according to some demography parameters.

It would be observed from the table above that 55% of the respondents' were male whereas 45% were female. More so, 36.3% of the respondents' opined between 31 to 40 years as their age whereas 35% opined between 21 to 30 years. Likewise, 20% of the respondents' opined between 41 to 50 years as their age and 8.8% opined at least 51years as their age. Also, 65% of the respondents' opined they were married whereas 26.3% opined single as their marital status. Moreover, 6.3% and 2.5% opined divorced and separated respectively as their marital status. Furthermore, more than 40% of the respondents' opined HND/B.Sc. as their educational qualification whereas 22.5% opined WASC/SSCE/GCE. Likewise, 17.5% of the respondents' opined OND and 13.8% opined MSc/MBA as their educational qualification. Additionally, 56.3% of the respondents' were senior staff whereas 36.3% were junior staff and 7.5% were executive. It would be observed from the chart above that more than 60% of the respondents' which represent more than 6 respondents' out of every ten randomly selected opined that fuel subsidy is not a good idea whereas 36.3% opined otherwise.

11 Volume XX Issue XIII Version I

12 Fig. 2: Respondents' opinion for choice of job

It would be observed from the chart above that 62.5% of the respondents" opined that they work as a civil servant because they have no choice whereas 37.6% opined otherwise.

13 Fig. 3: Respondents' Satisfaction based on Remuneration

It would be observed from the chart above that more than 80% of the respondents' which represent more than 8 respondents' out of every 10 random selected opined that their salary is no longer capable of meeting their needs whereas 16.3% opined otherwise.

14 b) Presentation of Data According to Research Questions

Research Question 1: Is there any significant relationship between the removal of fuel subsidy and the level of poverty of civil servant? It would be observed from the table above that more than 60% of the respondents' opined that their purchasing power has reduced in relation to the prices of commodities whereas 32.5% opined otherwise. Likewise, 75% of the respondents' opined that their savings and investment have reduced whereas 25% opined otherwise. More so, more than 50% of the respondents' opined that the cost of accommodation has escalated as a result of fuel subsidy removal whereas 38.8% opined otherwise. Also, more than 80% of the respondents' opined that the cost of transportation has increased since the removal of fuel subsidy whereas 16.3% opined otherwise.

Thus, it could be concluded that there is a relationship between the removal of fuel subsidy and the level of poverty of civil servant.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the quality of lives of civil servants and the subsidy removal? It would be observed from the table above that about 80% of the respondents' opined that fuel subsidy has increased their indebtedness whereas 21.3% opined otherwise. Moreover, 72.5% of the respondents' opined that the proportion of their salary devoted to the purchase of consumable goods has decreased whereas 27.5% opined otherwise. Also, more than 90% of the respondents' opined that health care cost and other utility bills have all experienced a top up on their prices whereas 5.1% opined otherwise. Additionally, more than 80% of the respondents' opined that they salary they received is meager when compared to their needs whereas 16.3% opined otherwise.

Thus, it could be concluded that there is a relationship between the quality of lives of civil servants and the subsidy removal.

Research Question 3: Find out if the productivity of workers has declined as a result removal of the fuel subsidy removal. It would be observed from the table above that more than 60% of the respondents' opined that they are no longer motivated to work whereas 35% opined otherwise. Likewise, 71.3% of the respondents' opined that fuel subsidy removal has decreased their job satisfaction whereas 28.8% opined otherwise. Furthermore, 77.5% of the respondents' opined that their job has become more stressful and tiring whereas 22.6% opined otherwise. Additionally, 76.3% of the respondents' opined that subsidy removal on fuel has increased their expenditure whereas 23.8% opined otherwise.

Thus, it could be concluded that the productivity of workers has declined as a result removal of the fuel subsidy removal.

15 c) Presentation of Data According to Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There will be no statistically significant relationship between the removal of fuel subsidy and the level of poverty of civil servants. The computed chi-square statistic is given below:

16 CROSS TABULATION

$\chi^2 (df=3) = 6.01$

Computing the critical value, The degree of freedom is given as $(r-1)(c-1)$ where r = number of rows and c = number of columns. Thus from the cross tabulation table above, the degree of freedom is $(4-1)(2-1) = 3 \times 1 = 3$. Thus, the degree of freedom is 3.

Using 5% (0.05) as the significance level, the tabulated chi-square (critical value) is 9.488.

Since the computed chi-square statistic lags the critical value i.e. $6.01 < 9.488$, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Thus, this implies that there is no significant relationship between the removal of fuel subsidy and the level of poverty of civil servants.

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant relationship between the standard of living of civil servants and the of fuel subsidy removal.

17 CROSS TABULATION

The The computed chi-square statistic is given below: $\chi^2 (df=3) = 8.20$

Computing the critical value, The degree of freedom is given as $(r-1)(c-1)$ where r = number of rows and c = number of columns. Thus from the cross tabulation table above, the degree of freedom is $(4-1)(2-1) = 3 \times 1 = 3$. Thus, the degree of freedom is 3.

Using 5% (0.05) as the significance level, the tabulated chi-square (critical value) is 9.488. Since the computed chi-square statistic lags the critical value i.e. $8.20 < 9.488$, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Thus, this implies that there is no significant relationship between the standard of living of civil servants and the of fuel subsidy removal. Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant relationship between the productivity of workers and the removal of fuel subsidy. The computed chi-square statistic is given below: $\chi^2 (df=3) = 8.04$

Computing the critical value, The degree of freedom is given as $(r-1)(c-1)$ where r = number of rows and c = number of columns. Thus from the cross tabulation table above, the degree of freedom is $(4-1)(2-1) = 3 \times 1 = 3$. Thus, the degree of freedom is 3.

Using 5% (0.05) as the significance level, the tabulated chi-square (critical value) is 9.488.

Since the computed chi-square statistic lags the critical value i.e. $8.04 < 9.488$, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Thus, this implies that there is no significant relationship the productivity of workers and the removal of fuel subsidy.

18 VI.

19 Conclusion

This study has provided information in terms of the effect of fuel subsidy removal on the welfare of civil servants together with their attitude and productivity level at work. The respondents' opined that fuel subsidy removal is not a good idea. Moreover, they also opined that they work as civil servants because they have no alternative with more than 80% stating that their salary is no longer capable of meeting their needs. More so, there is a relationship between the removal of fuel subsidy and the level of poverty of civil servant as their savings together with purchasing power reduced as a result of fuel subsidy removal such that this further affect the quality of life of the civil servants. As a result, the productivity of workers has declined as more than 60% of the respondents' opined that they are no longer motivated to work. In a nutshell, it could be said that fuel subsidy removal has negative impact on the welfare of the civil servants together with their productivity level.

20 VII.

21 Recommendation

The following are the recommendations as a result of the findings made: ? The remuneration of civil servants should be properly reviewed using the present economic situation in the country as the basis. ? The outlined promises made by the Federal Government for implementing the fuel subsidy removal should be fulfilled to maintain relevance before the citizens. ? Civil servants should be motivated to work to promote the furtherance of the mission statement of the civil service of the federation so as to save it from extinction. ? Government must put in place an effective regulatory framework to protect the citizens from exploitation by petroleum marketers. Therefore, the Petroleum Product Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) must be urgently reorganized. Subsidy as a social security is the rights of Nigerian particularly the under privileged. The ordinary Nigerian must be protected and money aimed at ameliorating the lives of the poor must be protected. ? The governance

21 RECOMMENDATION

structure should be more cost effective and corruption must be more effectively tackled. Government must sustain the momentum of dialogue and enlightenment to stabilize the polity and ensure accountability and transparency in the use of the savings from the policy decision for the benefit of the people. There is a seeming agreement among Nigerians that the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) is corrupt and needs a complete reorganization and persons found to be guilty be appropriately punished. ? Decision making must be participatory. Government must sufficiently involve the citizenry in the process of decision and policy making particularly on issues and policies that affect their lives. This could be through town hall meetings with all segments of society and making the necessary contacts with members of the grassroots and civil society organizations. To do this, government could employ the services of NGOs and National Orientation agencies across the country.

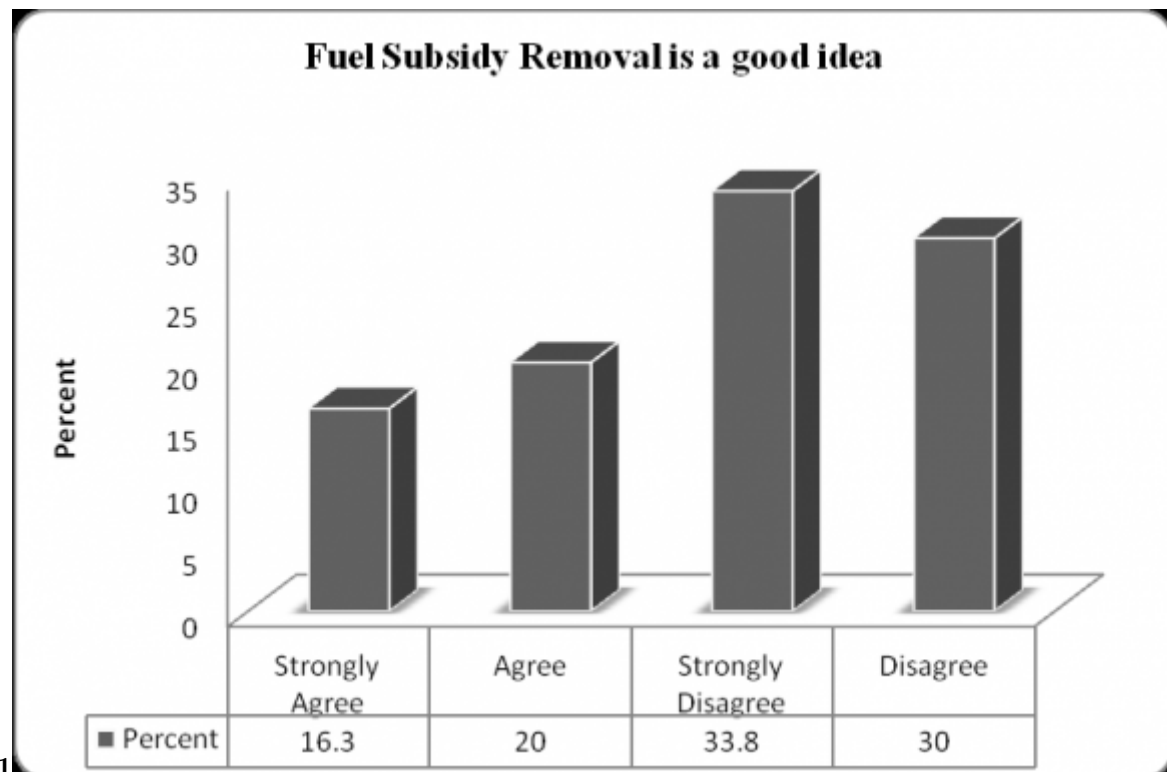


Figure 1: Fig. 1 :

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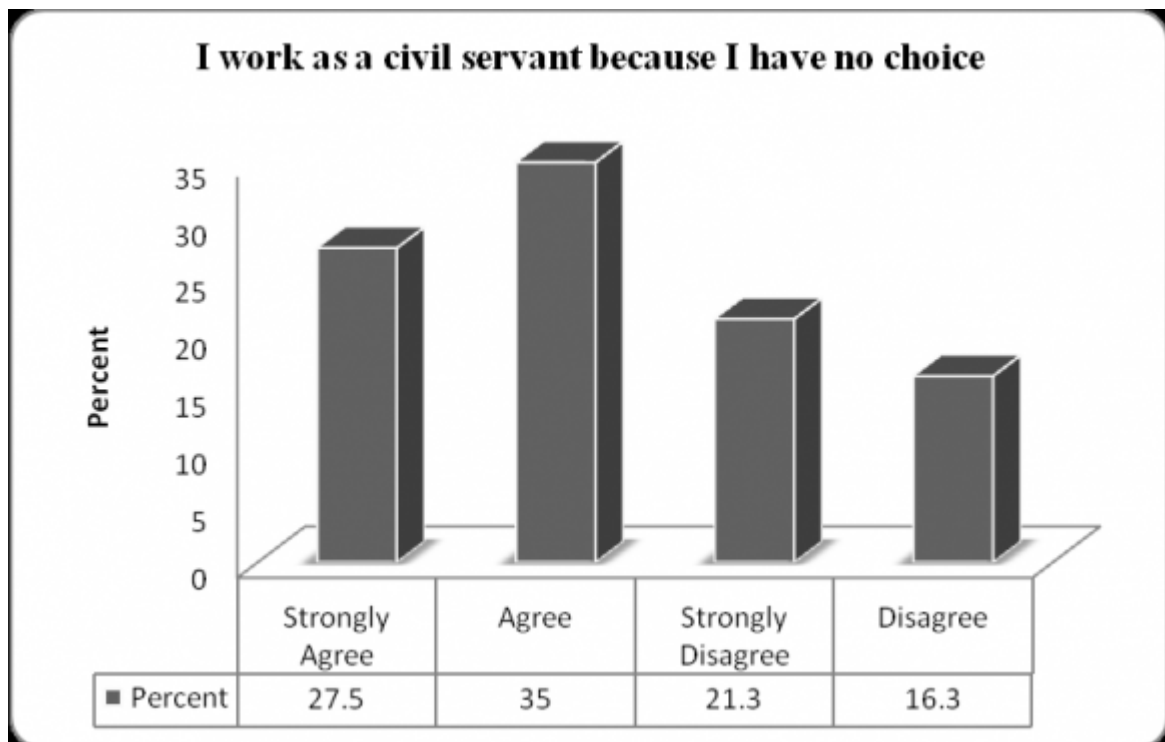


Figure 2:

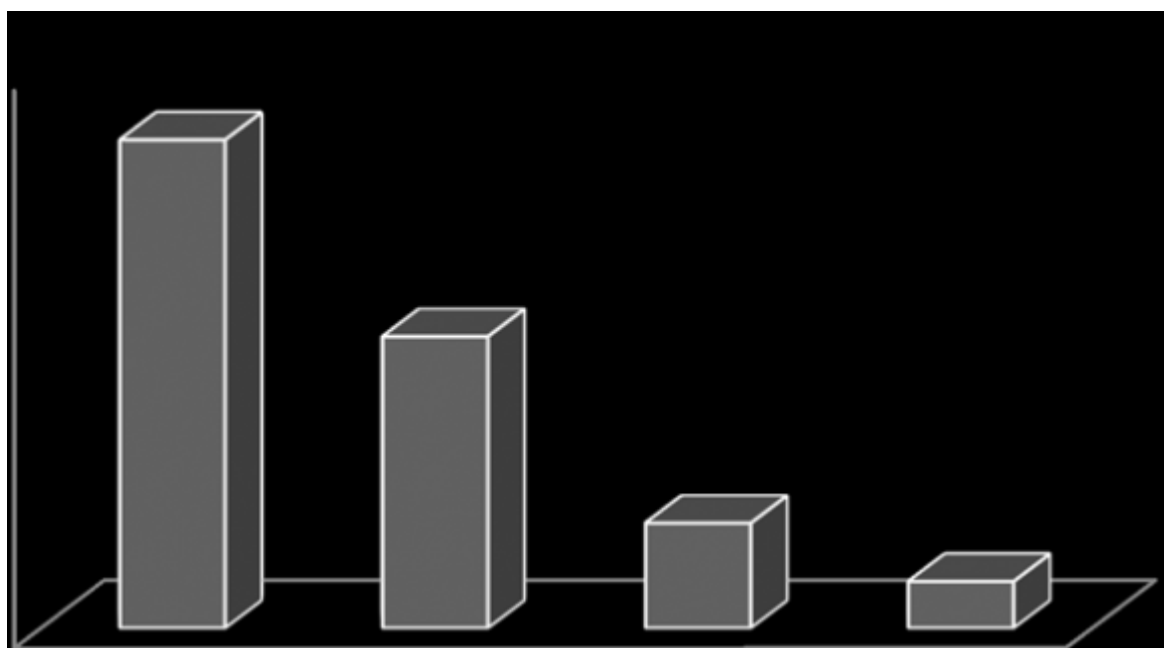


Figure 3:

I

S/N	Date	Administration	Price	Percentage change
1	1978	Obasanjo	15k	
2	1990	Babangida	60k	300%
3	1992	Babangida	70k	17%
4	1992	Babangida	3.25k	364%
5	1993	Babangida	N5.00	54%
6	1994	Shonekan	N11.00	120%
7	1994-1998	Abacha	N11.00-	
8	1998-1999	Abacha	N20.00	82%
9	2000	Obasanjo	N20.00-	
10	2000	Obasanjo	N22.00	10%
11	2001	Obasanjo	N26.00	18%
12	2003	Obasanjo	N40.00	54%
13	2004	Obasanjo	N45.00	13%
14	2007	Obasanjo	N70.00	56%
15	2007	Yar'Adua	N65.00	7%
16	2010-2012	Jonathan	N65.00-	
17	2012	Till date Jonathan	N141.00	117%

Source: Adagba O., Ugwu S.C and Eme O.I, (2012)

Figure 4: Table I :

II.

				25
				Volume XX Issue XIII Version I
				(A)
Date	Cause of strike	Duration	Resolution	
June 1, 2000	Prices of petrol increased to N30/litre from N11/litre	Eight days	Price reduced to N20 per Arabian litre	
June 16, 2002	Price increase from N20/ litre to N26/litre	Two days	Price retained at N26 per litre	
June 30 - July 8, 2003	Price increase from N26/ litre to N40/ litre	Eight days	Price reduced to N34/litre	
		Price increase from		
October 11, 2004	N34/litre to N50/litre Price increase from N42/ litre to N52/litre	Three days	Government appointed the 19-member Sen. Ibrahim Mantu committee on palliatives.	
September 2005	Price increase from N52/ litre to N65/litre	No Strike	Protest by NLC and civil society groups led to a cut in price	
June 20, 2007	Price increase from N65/ litre to N70/litre	Four days	Price reduced to N65/litre	
January 1, 2012	Price increase from N65/litre to N141/litre	Eight days	Price reduced to N97/litre	

Figure 5:

1

Classification Variable	Frequency	Percent
GENDER		
Male	44	55.0
Female	36	45.0
AGE		
21 -30yrs	28	35.0
31 -40yrs	29	36.3
41 -50yrs	16	20.0
51yrs and above	7	8.8
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	21	26.3
Married	52	65.0
Divorced	5	6.3
Separated	2	2.5
QUALIFICATION	18	22.5
WASC/SSCE/GCE	14	17.5
OND	37	46.3
HND/B.Sc.	11	13.8
MSc/MBA		
MANAGEMENT POSITION	29	36.3
Junior Staff	45	56.3
Senior Staff	6	7.5
Executive		

Figure 6: Table 1 :

2

My purchasing power has reduced in relation to the prices of commodities.	28.8	38.8	17.5	15.0
My savings and investments have not reduced.	10.0	15.0	38.8	36.3
The cost of accommodation has not escalated as a result of fuel subsidy removal.	21.3	17.5	25.0	36.3
The cost of transportation has not increased.	2.5	13.8	28.8	55.0

Figure 7: Table 2 :

3

STATEMENTS	SA	A	SD	D
Fuel subsidy removal has increased my indebtedness.	32.5	46.3	18.8	2.5
The proportion of my salary devoted to the purchase of consumable goods has decreased.	45.0	27.5	22.5	5.0
Health care cost, electricity charges, water bills have all experienced a top up on their prices.	57.5	37.5	3.8	1.3
The salary I receive is meager when compared to my needs.	52.5	31.3	5.0	11.3

Figure 8: Table 3 :

4

STATEMENTS	SA	A	SD	D
I am no longer motivated to work.	32.5	32.5	25.0	10.0
Fuel subsidy removal has increased job satisfaction.	16.3	12.5	36.3	35.0
My job has become more stressful and tiring.	42.5	35.0	21.3	1.3
Subsidy removal on fuel has made me increased my expenditure.	46.3	30.0	12.5	11.3

Figure 9: Table 4 :

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