

# Effect of Strategic Management on Public Service Delivery in Selected Public Sector Organisations in Anambra State Nigeria

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**Abstract:** *This study investigates the effect of strategic management on public service delivery in selected public sector organizations in Anambra state. The objectives of the study are, to ascertain the effect of strategic human resource management on public service delivery, establish whether digitalization affects public service delivery and determine the effect of strategic financial management on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria. Based on the above objectives, three research questions and hypotheses were formulated and tested for the study. Relevant literatures were thoroughly reviewed and the study was anchored on the three theories, namely: The Contingency theory by Fred Edward Fiedler in 1964, Resource Based View (RBV) Theory by Jay Barney in 1991 and the New Public Management Theory by Hood (1991). Data was collected from a population of 454 staff of the selected organizations under study. The data collected were presented using simple percentage and analyzed, using Pearson correlation analyses. The study revealed that strategic human resource management, digitalization and strategic financial management have effects on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria. The study therefore, recommended that human resource activities in the public sector, especially public enterprises should be strategically geared towards the attainment of better services to the public.*

**Keywords:** Public Enterprises, Management, Service delivery

## 1.1. INTRODUCTION

In a competitive business environment, organisations do not succeed by chance or happenstance. It is usually a product of strategic planning that focuses on the organisation's core competences, comparative advantage, business strategy, resource allocation and utilization, among others. Thus, strategic management is a source of sustainable competitive advantage and in recent years, large enterprises have adopted various strategic management practices to guarantee their fit within the constraints of their environment. Strategic management is a field that deals with the major intended and emergent initiatives taken by the managers of organisations on behalf of their owners, involving utilization of resources, to enhance the performance of firms in their external environments (Nag, Hambrick, & Chen 2007). It entails specifying the organization's mission, vision and objectives, developing policies and plans, often in terms of projects and programs, which are designed to achieve these objectives, and then allocating resources to implement the policies and plans, projects and programs. Strategic management is a key driver of organizational performance, since it has to emerge as a strategic business partner helping the top management build an organization that is good not just for today, but for tomorrow and beyond. It entails working with the top management to propel the organization forward. Strategic Management is a concept that has posed so many problems to several organizations in its applicability. However, for any organizations to thrive well in this modern contemporary age, there is need for such organization to embrace strategic management in its fullness.

Sharabati & Fuqaha (2014) opined that in the globalization era, strategic management has been considered as the most important practice which distinguishes organizations from each other. Strategic management is the key process to achieve organizational vision, strategy and objectives. All organizations whatever they are, whatever they do, they should adopt strategic management practices to ensure that they fit within their environment.

To this end, the idea behind most reform exercises embarked upon in the public sector in Nigeria and elsewhere to borrow a leaf from the private sector in the belief that private sector organisations are more efficient and effective when it comes to the provision of goods and rendering of services. Public service delivery is the hallmark of all public sector organisations. The services rendered are so essential to the people that the security and welfare of the citizens, which is the primary purpose of government, can only be achieved through the efficient and effective provision of such services. Hence, the impact of public sector organizations is felt by the citizenry through the provision of essential services.

In the light of the above, this study was embarked upon to investigate the effect of strategic management on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria.

## 1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Public enterprises are not just expected to provide public goods and services, but such must be done efficiently and effectively. In a mixed economic system like Nigeria, the hypercompetitive business environment is pushing public organizations to limits, dictating the need to adopt strategic management practices that support plans, choices and decisions that will lead to an improvement in service delivery and to also achieve profitability, success and wealth creation (Kourdi, 2009). Thus, while private sector organisations compete among themselves to attract and retain a significant percentage of the market share for their products and services in order to make more profit, public sector organisations strive to improve on their services in order to retain public trust. The element of competition in both cases suggests that similar strategies can be adopted to similar situations to achieve similar results.

Management experts are of the view that strategic management addresses the question of why some organizations succeed and others fail and it covers the cause of their successes or failures (Melchorita, 2013). In Anambra state for instance, the Transport Company of Anambra State (TRACAS) and ANIDS Transport Limited, which are government owned transportation outfits are not competing favourably with their counterparts in terms of services rendered to their customers. Evidence abound to attest to the fact that majority of the vehicles under the TRACAS scheme are poorly maintained. This researcher has on more than one occasions experienced delays occasioned by vehicle breakdown halfway into proposed trips. An independent survey of selected passengers has also confirmed similar occurrences.

ICT initiatives for online bookings, ticketing, payments and logistics services have not been fully utilized. Some transport companies have even gone ahead to create a mobile application (Mobile-App) for customers to transact with them from the comfort of their locations anytime, anywhere, a feature that is lacking at TRACAS and ANIDS Transport Limited.

Coupled with the above is the fact that most of their drivers are unruly and lack good human relations skills. They tend to react aggressively and unprofessionally to passengers' complaints especially in cases where there is vehicle breakdown on the road or delays in loading a bus as a result of low turnout of passengers. Also, the Anambra Broadcasting Services (ABS) Awka, is nowhere near its counterparts in terms of profit maximization and quality of programming. A testament to the above assertion that the best radio and television stations in Nigeria are usually privately owned media outfits.

The failure of government in areas where the private sector is thriving lends credence to the axiom that government is a bad manager of businesses. The private sector contemporaries of most of these public enterprises are not only financially self-sustaining, but generate profit for their owners, while the reverse seem to be the case in most public sector organisations. It is in the light of the above that this study investigates the effect of strategic management on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria.

### **1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. Ascertain the effect of strategic human resource management on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria.
2. Establish whether digitalization affects public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria.

### **1.4 HYPOTHESES**

1. Strategic human resource management has no effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria.
2. Digitalization has no effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1.1 Strategic Management**

Strategic management is basically a systematic approach for managing changes which are fundamental to the success and survival of an organization. Strategic management has been defined in several ways by varying authors and scholars. Hence, there is no absolute consensus on the definitions of strategic management. One of such definitions is that strategic management is the art and science of formulating, implementing and evaluating cross functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its objectives (Aremu and Oyinloye, 2014).

Egbemi (2010) defined strategic management as a systematic approach to a major and increasing important responsibility of the general management to position and relate the firm to its environment in a way which will assure its continued success and make it secure from shocks. In this definition the emphasis is on the environment-organization relationship for the purpose of achieving the objective of continued success and remaining protected from environmental surprises through the adoption of a systematic approach to general management. Strategic management is a stream of decisions and actions which leads to the development and implementation of an effective strategy or strategies to achieve organizational goals and objectives (Okpala, 2014). The Free Encyclopedia Online (Wikipedia, 2017) defined strategic management as that set of managerial decisions and actions that determines the long-run performance of a corporation. It includes environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation.

According to The Academy of Management Review (2017), strategic management entails the analysis of internal and external environment of a firm to maximize the utilization of resources in relation to objectives while Harvard Business Review (2007) defined strategic management as the process of identifying and executing the organization's strategic plan by matching the company's capabilities with the demands of its environments. Strategic management, therefore, is more comprehensive than merely drawing up a plan as it aims at integrating planning with all the other parts of the organization. In fact, Hax and Majluf (cited in Emeaghalu (2016) argue that strategic management has as an ultimate objective of developing of corporate values, managerial capabilities, organizational responsibilities and administrative systems which link strategic and operational decision-making, at all hierarchical levels and across all businesses and functional lines of authority in a firm. Institutions which have reached this stage of management development have eliminated the conflicts between long-term development and short-term profitability. Strategies and operations are not in conflict with one another, but they are inherently coupled defining the managerial tasks at each level in the organization.

Strategic management is involved in deploying a firm's internal strengths and weakness to take advantage of its external opportunities and minimize its external threats/problems (Adeleke, Ogundele and Oyenuga, 2008). Bateman and Snell (2006) defined Strategic management as a process that involves managers from all parts of the organization in the formulation and implementation of strategic goals and strategies. Thompson and Strickland (2003) defined it as the manager's tasks of crafting, implementing and executing company strategies. They defined strategy as the game plan management has for positioning the company in its chosen market arena, competing successfully, pleasing customer, and achieving good business performance. Olamide (2014) consider strategic management as "the process which deals with the fundamental organizational renewal and growth with the development of strategies, structures, and systems necessary to achieve such renewal and growth, and with the organizational systems needed to effectively manage the strategy formulation and implementation processes.

Sharplin (2015) defines strategic management as the formulation and implementation of plans and carrying out of activities relating to the matters which are of vital, pervasive or continuing importance to the total organization. This is an all-encompassing view of strategic management and considers all plans and activities which are important for an organization. Harrison and John (2008) define strategic management as "the process through which organizations analyze and learn from their internal and external environments, establish strategic direction, create strategies that are intended to help achieve established goals, and execute these strategies, all in an effort to satisfy key organizational stakeholders.

Institute of Strategic Management, Nigeria (2010) defined strategic management as an integrative process of management in which all managers of an organization engages in continuous rethinking and auditing of themselves, the organization and the environment, and in developing, implanting, implementing and controlling the organization direction, strategies and programmes, aimed at effecting positive changes, building competitive advantage and achieving all time successful performance. Strategic management is an ongoing process that evaluates and controls the business and the industries in which the company is involved; assesses its competitors and sets goals and strategies to meet all existing and potential competitors; and then reassesses each strategy annually or quarterly [i.e. regularly] to determine how it has been implemented and whether it has succeeded or needs replacement by a new strategy to meet changed circumstances, new technology, new competitors, a new economic environment, or a new social, financial, or political environment (Lamb, 2009).

Strategic Management can also be said to be the identification of the purpose of the organization and the plans and actions to achieve the purpose. It is that set of managerial decisions and actions that determine the long term performance of a business enterprise. It involves formulating and implementing strategies that will help in aligning the organization and its environment to achieve organizational goals. Lawrence and William (2008) defined strategic management as a stream of decisions and actions, which leads to the development of an effective strategy or strategies to help achieve corporate objectives. The strategic management process is the way in which strategists determine objectives and make strategic decisions. Strategic management is a disciplined approach utilizing the principles and process of management to identify the corporate objective or mission of any

business. It determines an appropriate target to satisfy the objective, recognize existing opportunities and constraints in the environment, and device a rational practical way by which objective can be achieved (Aremu, 2003).

In a simple term, strategic management can be defined as the process of creating an organizational strategy, based upon a mission and vision, which keeps the organization on course. The mission, vision and strategy of an organization play an important role in the expression of its identity, the position it takes on the issues it faces, and its future direction. The three concepts are closely interconnected as all three must be developed, or at least be clear and under consideration at the start of a (large scale) organizational development process. Conceptually, therefore, strategic management aims to extend the strategic vision throughout all units of the organization, encompassing every administrative system. Instead of being mechanistic, it recognizes the central role played by individuals and groups and the influence of corporate culture. (Toft, 2009).

Strategic management could also mean a set of managerial decisions and actions that result in the formulation and implementation of strategy designed to achieve a company's objectives (Wheelen and Hunger, 2007). According to Thompson and Strickland (2007), strategic management is the process whereby managers establish an organization's long-term direction, set specific performance objectives, development strategies to achieve these objectives in the light of all the relevant internal and external circumstances, and undertake to execute the chosen action plans. Strategic management provides overall direction to the enterprise and involves specifying the organization's objectives, developing policies and plans designed to achieve these objectives, and then allocating resources to implement the plans.

Dess (2007) state that strategic management consists of the analyses, decisions, and actions an organization undertakes in order to create and sustain competitive advantages. They explained that the definition captures two key elements of strategic management. First, the strategic management of an organization entails three on-going processes: analysis, decisions, and actions. This implies that strategic management is concerned with the analysis of strategic goals (vision, mission, and strategic objectives) along with the analysis of the internal and external environment of the organization. Also, leaders and managers must make strategic decisions and take necessary actions to implement the decisions. Second, the essence of strategic management is the study of why some firms outperform others. So, managers need to determine how a firm is to compete so that it can obtain advantages that are sustainable over a lengthy period of time. Strategic management is the process and approach of specifying an organization's objectives, developing policies and plans to achieve and attain these objectives, and allocating resources so as to implement the policies and plans. In other words, strategic management can be seen as a combination of strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation (David, 2005).

Pearce & Robinson (2003) thus, defined it as the set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation and implementation of plans designed to achieve a company's objectives. To him, it comprises of the nine critical tasks;

1. Formulate the company's mission, including broad statements about its purpose, philosophy, and goals.
2. Conduct an analysis that reflects the company's internal conditions and capabilities.
3. Assess the company's external environment, including both the competitive and the general contextual factors.
4. Analyze the company's options by matching its resources with the external environment.
5. Identify the most desirable options by evaluating each option in light of the company's mission.
6. Select a set of long-term objectives and grand strategies that will achieve the most desirable options.
7. Develop annual objectives and short-term strategies that are compatible with the selected set of long-term objectives and grand strategies.
8. Implement the strategic choices by means of budgeted resource allocations in which the matching of tasks, people, structures, technologies, and reward systems is emphasized.
9. Evaluate the success of the strategic process as an input for the future decision making.

As these nine tasks indicate, strategic management involves the planning, directing, organizing and controlling of an organizations strategy-related decisions and actions. Strategic management is an on-going process that evaluates and controls the business and the industries in which the firm is involved, assesses its competitors, set goal and strategies to meet all existing and potential competitors and then reassesses each strategy to meet charged circumstances, new technology, new competitors, a new economic environment or a new social financial or political environment (Muogbo, 2013). It integrates strategic planning with quality (or continuous improvement) efforts, budgeting, resource planning, program evaluation, and performance monitoring and reporting. It is the process of positioning an organization so it can prosper in the future.

### **2.1.2. Phases of Strategic Management**

According to Wheelen and Hunger (2007), a firm generally evolves through four main phases of strategic management in order to cope with the changing world. The phases include basic financial planning, forecast based planning, externally-oriented planning, and strategic management.

**Phase 1. Basic financial planning:** Managers initiate some planning when they are requested to set up their budgets, and they consider these activities for one year.

**Phase 2. Forecast-based planning:** Managers sometimes consider projects that may take more than a year. The time horizon is usually 3-5 years.

**Phase 3. Externally oriented planning (strategic planning):** Top management conducts strategic planning, and they leave the implementation to low level.

**Phase 4. Strategic management:** This involves planning by forming a team from all levels in the firm.

Also, Ole & Paul (2008) noted that strategic management are considered the main business strategies supporting the whole activity of the organization. Technically, they are structural elements of the strategic planning activity, in the sense that the organization's strategic vision is based on a series of strategic issues. The strategic issues are also called "*the pillars of excellence*" in the specialized literature, and they define the organization's strategic reactions in its attempt to achieve its vision in its main domains, as follows:

- Financial
- Beneficiaries/Customers
- Internal processes
- Organizational capacity

#### 2.1.4. Strategic Management Practices and Organizational Growth

This constitute a vast array of activities that are necessary to clearly understand how environment influence the firm's activities as well as understanding how risks can be mitigated to reduce risks that might be experienced in the process. Studies across the globe show that strategic practices are beneficial for organizational growth and attainment of competitive age.

Firms operate in an environment that permits competitors to carry out a substituted products and services and therefore firms have no option other than adopting strategies that would help them remain competitive in a changing business environment. For example, some firms adopt porter's competitive strategies that is; differentiation, focus and cost leadership while others have adopted Miles and Snow argument that reactors do not influence firm's performance as opposed to his other strategies like defenders, prospectors and analysers. However, it is important to note that each firm is entitled to choose among the many strategies as formulated by several authors depending on its operational environment and competition in its market niche to remain relevant to the customers and enhance its overall performance if not operate on a brake even scale.

In choosing a strategy that suits the competitive environment of a firm it is important first for a firm to critically analyse its firm internal processes including personnel, physical resources and the financial muscles in order for it to compete without straining. The competence of the firm is anchored on how it can apply its resources and internal processes to boost its best chosen strategy for it to succeed since weakness in its core competences will result to failure of the best strategy which might be applied by the competitors to gain more superiority on the market.

The success of any firm in a competitive business environment depends on its core resources in place. Porter's strategies can be applied by firms depending on the resources the firms possess and the nature of the firms' goods and services it offers to the market. For instance, differentiation strategy is applied by firms with clear knowledge of the market to offer unique products with the customers' needs and expectation in their mind. Focus strategy can be applied by firms that needs to focus on a particular market niche due to the resources they have in place. Cost differentiation is applied by organization that want to produce at the lower cost depending on its internal structures and processes and the ability to outsource at a cheaper rate in order to remain competitive than competitors and also meet the customers' expectations. Firms that do not carefully select a strategy that fits its market and the resources it possesses automatically will fail as compare to those that are careful on the choice of the strategy that do not strain its resources and internal processes

### 2.1.5. Public Service Delivery

Public as used here is an adjective qualifying service, ‘public service’. It distinguishes the public service which is the main concern of this section from that which is strictly private. In other words, which public or what constitutes the public that provide public service? Here, the focus is on the organized public sector of the economy in contrast to the private sector. In Nigeria, the public service is the nerve center on which policy implementation hinges, apart from its strategic advisory role in policy formulation. It is the public service that provides the substantial public goods and services needed as catalyst for development by both public and private sectors of the economy. Here lies the place of public service delivery.

The concept “public service delivery” cannot easily be pinned down to a universally acceptable definition. Simply put, public service delivery is getting public goods and services as expected and as quick as possible by (recipients) citizens (Fagbemi, 2006). In the views of O’Toole Jr. & Meier (2011), service delivery refers to the achievement of public programmes and organizations in terms of output and outcomes that they produce. According to Oronsaye in (Onyekwelu, 2016), service delivery is the process of getting the needs of citizens through prompt and efficient procedures. It presupposes that the interaction between citizens and government results in value creation. According to Akhakpe (2014), public service delivery is the provision of goods and other life support amenities by government to maximize the welfare and well-being of the people. Indeed, to Franz (2011), it involves considerable human activity, hence human resource management is important as human element is often the key ingredients of service industries. In essence, public service delivery entails the provision and implementation of government policies and programmes that will enable the citizens to improve their living conditions.

The above definitions of public service delivery are all encompassing and a close examination of the definitions suggests that public service delivery is the degree and hallmark of excellence in the public service. Public service delivery is one of the major challenges facing developing countries Nigeria inclusive. This should be a top priority of the government if the country is to make substantial progress in socioeconomic development.

### 2.1.6. Integrating Strategic Management thinking into the Nigeria’s Public Organization

The public organizations in Nigeria is one that has generally thrived in ineptitude, corruption and indiscriminate operational functions (Obi, 2011). Anazodo (2014) also observed that the Nigeria’s public organizations are bedeviled by apparent lethargy, procrastination, and general inefficiency. To Iwuoha (2012), the manifestations of deepening attitudinal decay, mindful abuse of official codes and principles and hysterical stealing riddles the public organizations of today. He further added that, many of the over-dozed reforms and the enforcement of multifarious disciplinary regimes have not appreciably shielded a public organization from the vagaries of her own undoing.

Also, Onah (2000) noted that the public organizations in Nigeria is informed by unusual political setting, dominated by militarism, epileptic economic fortunes and misfortunes, the octopuses of ethnic consciousness, the inadequate technical competence of career persons and other environmental variables as religion, population etc. For him, the ideal pattern of managing public service is elusive and neglected either by omission or commission thus to the detriment of its efficiency.

However, Denise (2004) observed that, when an organization is practicing strategic management, thinking becomes more visionary, which is it gives room for a breakthrough in thinking about the future; organizational boundaries made are more flexible; a shift in focus from the inputs that are used to run the business to the outputs and outcomes the organization desires to achieve; a focus on optimizing organizational performance and process quality as keys to delivering quality products and services; a move toward an organizational culture that adapts easily to change.

The above assertions of scholars especially from Onah (2000) indicated that there is an urgent exigency to inject the strategic management philosophy in the management of the public organizations in Nigeria. This is because despite the amount of financial resources that has been invested into the public sector, especially public enterprises, the system still underperforms. For instance, a member of the 8<sup>th</sup> National Assembly, Senator Ben Bruce noted that the Nigerian Television Authority for instance has one of the World Best Coverage Cameras and equipment worth over 1 Billion Naira that are capable of transmitting any live programme from any part of the World; - The Stadiums across Nigeria according to him, can take over 150,000 people which worth over 1 Billion US Dollars but they are all in bad conditions today. The real reason for these circumstances is nothing other than bad governance.

Bad governance is a product of many causative factors. Nigeria’s situation as a developing nation places huge responsibilities on its government. The state, being the biggest employer of labour as a result of lack of a well- developed private sector, has thus

become one huge instrument for stemming unemployment and other socio-economic miseries. Developing countries depend on big governments for their development because of their peculiar circumstances (Garba and Jirgi 2014). Thus, recruitment into public sector organisations is not just a personnel policy, but a social policy aimed at economic empowerment, employment/job creation and poverty alleviation.

This makes human resource management practices in the public sector to lacks strategy and focus. People are brought into organisations not on the basis of competence, but to enable the individual and the ‘interests’ he or she represents have a slice of the proverbial ‘national cake’. Thus, while private sector organisations emphasizes on competence in the recruitment and selection processes, their counterparts in the public sector places emphasis on where the candidate hails from and whose interest he or she represents. These negative phenomena also affect other aspects of human resource management in the public sector- performance appraisal, staff training, posting and secondment, disciplinary actions, etc.

As a result of the faulty foundations in the recruitment process, the organization is thereby starved of the needed skill and knowledgeable workforce to deliver efficiently and effectively on its statutory mandate. In an era of strong technological presence, it is disheartening to note that most public sector organisations still lack online presence – no active social media handles, moribund or nonexistent websites and a general inability to drive innovation taking full advantage of the potentials of information and communication technology (ICT).

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopts survey research design. Data for the study was collected from primary source. The primary data was generated through the use of structured questionnaire to elicit required information. Copies of the structured questionnaire was administered and the participants were placed on objective response for each statement on a likert scale. A 5 point Likert scaled questionnaire was used in collecting relevant data for the study; it was arranged ranging from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The data gathered from the survey was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. Descriptive statistics was used for mean and correlation coefficient analysis was used to test the hypotheses.

### 4.0 DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Table 4.1.1: Respondents’ responses to the sub variable, Strategic Human Resource Management  
N=350**

S/N	QUESTIONS	Σ fx	X	Decision
1.	Recruitment processes in your organisation are not geared towards addressing specific organizational manpower needs.	1244	3.55	Agreed
2.	The major entry requirement for being employed as a staff of your organization is a strong referral from a very important personality (VIP).	1286	3.67	Agreed
3.	Recruitment, selection and placement of employees in your organization is as a result of strategic management decision to implement certain kinds of strategic policies and programmes.	900	2.57	Disagreed
4.	Performance appraisal in your organization is conducted to ascertain how individual employees fare in relation to the achievement of strategic organizational goals and objectives.	840	2.4	Disagreed
5.	Appraisal exercises are not routinely done, but conducted only when it is time for promotion.	1228	3.51	Agreed
6.	Your organization organizes training programmes specifically in a bid to address skill deficiencies identified in the course of regular appraisal of employees’ performance on the job.	955	2.73	Disagreed

7.	Staff training programmes in your organization are conducted mainly to siphon public funds with no real intention to impart practical knowledge and skills on the trainees.	1045	2.98	Disagreed
8.	Job postings and placement to the various departments in your organization are based on job description and job specifications.	1155	3.3	Agreed
9.	Promotion and career progression in your organization are not based on job performance, but on length of service.	1242	3.55	Agreed
10.	In most cases, people only leave the service of your organization on retirement or on their own volition, erring colleagues are rarely dismissed from service on disciplinary grounds.	1158	3.3	Agreed

**Source: Agbazue, Field Survey, 2019**

Table 4.1.1 presents an analysis of the various question items that address the sub variable in the first specific objective of the study which is to ascertain the effects of strategic human resource management on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria. The issue of human resource management (HRM) in the public sector has been a source of major concern to scholars and has provoked the conduct of series of research studies. While private sector organizations conduct their HRM activities in ways that ensures that the organization gets the best from the employees in terms of qualification, job expectations and actual performance, the case in the public sector seemed to be a situation where political, social and other consideration constitute a clog in the wheel of getting the best out of public servants in their service to the government.

As a result, the focus of the first component of our analysis seeks to address some of these concerns. Beginning with one of the foremost activities in HRM, the first three statements focuses on the issue of recruitment in to the public service. Respondents in question item one agreed that recruitment processes in their organizations are not geared towards addressing specific organizational manpower needs. This response is an indication of the fact that most public sector recruitment exercises have no strategic organizational focus. Even when there are existing vacancies to fill in the organization, the major entry requirement for being employed as a staff of most public sector organizations is a strong referral from a very important personality (VIP). Respondents, in agreeing to the second question above, disagreed to the notion that recruitment, selection and placement of employees in their organizations is as a result of strategic management decision to implement certain kinds of strategic policies and programmes. This goes to show that there is some level of consistency in their responses so far.

Other aspects of HRM – performance appraisal, training and development constitute the focus of questions four to seven. Respondents in question four disagreed to the notion that performance appraisal in their organizations is conducted to ascertain how individual employees fare in relation to the achievement of strategic organizational goals and objectives. What this means is that the exercise is more or less a ritual carried out ‘to fulfill all righteousness’ than a personnel management exercise aimed at enhancing public service delivery. To buttress the above assertion, respondents in question five agreed that appraisal exercises are not routinely done, but conducted only when it is time for promotion.

On the issue of staff training, respondents disagreed to the statement in question six that their organizations organize training programmes specifically in a bid to address skill deficiencies identified in the course of regular appraisal of employees’ performance on the job. Thus, in also disagreeing to the seventh statement that staff training programmes in their organizations are conducted mainly to siphon public funds with no real intention to impart practical knowledge and skills on the trainees, it might be safe to assume that training programmes are hardly conducted in these organizations.

The last three questions in this subsection cover other aspects of HRM activities in organizations. On the issue of job posting and placement, respondents agreed to the assertion in question eight that job postings and placement to the various departments in their organizations are based on job description and job specifications. With respect to promotion and career progression, the respondents also agreed that promotion and career progression in their organizations are not based on job performance, but on length of service. This is usually the norm in the public service where seniority at point of entry usually takes precedence over performance and competence. The last statement in this subsection which bothers on termination of an employee’s services from the organization reveal that respondents are of the view that staffs only leave the service of their organization on retirement or on their own volition, adding that erring colleagues are rarely dismissed from service on disciplinary grounds. The implication of all



the above is that the HRM practices in these organizations have little or no strategic focus, even though the organizations are expected to operate using business models. This assertion will be scrutinized during the test of hypotheses.

**Table 4.1.2: Respondents’ responses to the sub variable, Digitalization of operations in your organization**  
N=350

S/N	QUESTIONS	Σ fx	X	Decision
11.	ICT initiatives have been effectively utilized in the activities and operations of your organization.	1035	2.96	Disagreed
12.	Computerization of your organizational activities and operations is anti-bureaucratic and harmful to your organization.	923	2.64	Disagreed
13.	Employees in your organization lack the requisite skills and competences to effectively bridge the digital divide in your organization.	1250	3.57	Agreed
14.	Some of your colleagues still prefer the use of typewriters to the use of computers in their various offices.	1225	3.5	Agreed
15.	Embracing ICT initiatives will not necessarily enhance the operations of the organization’s activities and implementation of their core mandate.	830	2.37	Disagreed
16.	ICT in the public sector enhances transparency and accountability in the public sector.	1155	3.3	Agreed
17.	Since the introduction of the use of computers in your organization, there have been rampant issues of network failures and systems breakdown in your office.	815	2.33	Disagreed
18.	Digitalization enhances good governance and effective conduct of government business.	1244	3.55	Agreed
19.	Internet fraud and cybercrime is one of the reasons why the public sector should not go fully digital in their activities and operations.	889	2.54	Disagreed
20.	Storage of sensitive organizational data and information in the computers is risky because of theft or damage.	856	2.44	Disagreed

**Source: Agbazue, Field Survey, 2019**

Digitalization of operations has become the trend in most public and private sector organizations. It has proven to be an important tool in enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in organizational activities. In the Nigerian banking sector, digitalization has improved customer satisfaction and service delivery through innovations such as Automated Teller Machines (ATMs), Internet banking (or electronic banking), cashless transactions, etc.

To this end, the second specific objective of the study was to establish whether digitalization affects public service delivery in selected public sector organizations in Anambra state, Nigeria. Just like the previous sub variable, ten question items were drafted to address this sub variable. Respondents disagreed to questions eleven and twelve. The notion that ICT initiatives have been effectively utilized in the activities and operations of the organizations under study was rejected by the respondents, an indication that some public sector organizations are yet to fully go digital.

This, notwithstanding, respondents seem to be favourably disposed to digitalization as they disagreed to the assertion in question twelve that computerization of their organizational activities and operations is anti-bureaucratic and harmful to your organization. Even if the digitalization strategy is to be implemented, most of the employees in the organizations under study lack the requisite skills and competences to effectively bridge the digital divide in their organizations. This idea was captured in question thirteen to which the respondents accepted and the situation calls for capacity building in the form of staff training that will be strategically attuned to address IT skills deficiencies.

Even though respondents agreed in question item fourteen that some of their colleagues still prefer the use of typewriters to the use of computers in their various offices, they however, disagreed to the notion in question fifteen that embracing ICT initiatives will not necessarily enhance the operations of the organization’s activities and implementation of their core mandate, while accepting the fact that the adoption of ICT in the public sector enhances transparency and accountability in the public sector.

Respondents’ disagreement to the statement in question seventeen that since the introduction of the use of computers in their organizations, there have been rampant issues of network failures and systems breakdown in their offices, reinforces their stance in question eleven that ICT initiatives have not been effectively utilized in the activities and operations of your organization.

The respondents’ favourable disposition to the digitalization initiative was further reinforced in question eighteen with agreement to the statement that digitalization enhances good governance and effective conduct of government business. The last two questions in this subsection which tried to highlight some of the disadvantages of the digitalization strategy as a tool for enhancing public service delivery in the selected organizations were rejected as respondents did not agree that internet fraud and cybercrime is one of the reasons why the public sector should not go fully digital in their activities and operations. Also, respondents disagree to the view that storage of sensitive organizational data and information in the computers is risky because of theft or damage. By implication, the responses to the issues raised in this subsection is an indication that digitalization is not in full operation in the organizations studied even though staff members of the organizations are favourably disposed to it.

**Table 4.1.3: Respondents’ responses to the sub variable, Strategic Financial Management**  
N=350

S/N	QUESTIONS	Σ fx	X	Decision
21.	Strategic decision making on the allocation of resources will help reduce the high incidents of waste of public funds.	1100	3.14	Agreed
22.	Your boss gets funds from the government to finance the operations of the organization mainly by lobbying the governor or members of his kitchen cabinet.	1208	3.45	Agreed
23.	Allocation and utilization of funds in your organization are outside the purview of the organizational management, but a government prerogative.	1030	2.9	Disagreed
24.	Prudent management of scarce resources enhances the provision of goods and services.	1195	3.41	Agreed
25.	Open budgeting and accounting system in the public sector is a strategic way of improving public financial management.	1183	3.38	Agreed
26.	Open bidding for, and transparency in the award of contracts in your organization can help improve public sector efficiency and effectiveness.	1244	3.55	Agreed
27.	Investment in technology and training of staff can help reduce cost of production and huge personnel overheads.	1160	3.31	Agreed
28.	Reduction in the volume of cash transactions is a strategic way to improve public financial management in the public sector.	1173	3.35	Agreed
29.	Your organization cannot survive on its internally generated revenue without the government subsidizing its operations by way of funding	1286	3.67	Agreed
30.	With strategic planning and execution, your organization can become financially self-sufficient and even contribute to the internally generated revenue of the state.	1341	3.83	Agreed

**Source: Agbazue, Field Survey, 2019**

With respect to the third objective of this study, which is to determine the effect of strategic financial management on public service delivery in selected public sector organizations in Anambra state, Nigeria, question items twenty-one to thirty were drafted to interrogate some of these variables. Finance is important to all organizations whether they be public or private. The truth of this assertion is in the fact that while the private sector needs money (capital) to set up, their ultimate aim for establishment is to make profit through effective utilization of the capital in the production of goods and provision of services. Similarly, government or the

public sector on their part needs money to provide public goods and services, good governance and ensure the prosperity, political, economic and social stability of the societies they govern.

Finance is never enough. Economists and financial management experts agree that human wants always outweigh available resources. In the light of this respondents agree to question twenty-one that strategic decision making on the allocation of resources will help reduce the high incidents of waste of public funds. On the way and manner of sourcing for this scarce resources, respondents align with the view in question twenty-two to the effect that sourcing for funding for critical projects and operations of their organizations is done mainly by lobbying the governor or members of his kitchen cabinet. This level of financial dependence is an indication that most public enterprises in Nigeria are not financially viable.

Respondents slightly disagreed to the assertion in question twenty-three to the effect that the allocation and utilization of funds in the organizations under study are outside the purview of the organizational management, but a government prerogative. They are, however, favourably disposed to the ideals of public financial management. For instance, in question twenty-four and twenty-five, respondents agree that prudent management of scarce resources enhances the provision of goods and services and that open budgeting and accounting system in the public sector is a strategic way of improving public financial management.

Their respondents subscribed to the ideals of public sector transparency and accountability in questions twenty-six by their agreement to the notion that open bidding for, and transparency in the award of contracts in your organization can help improve public sector efficiency and effectiveness. As a means of reducing the incidence of fraud and corruption in the management of public finance, respondents in question twenty-seven agreed that investment in technology and training of staff can help reduce the cost of production and huge personnel overheads. They further subscribed to the view in question twenty-eight that reduction in the volume of cash transactions is a strategic way to improve public financial management in the public sector.

With respect to their financial situation, respondents agree in question twenty-nine that their organizations cannot survive on its internally generated revenue without the government subsidizing its operations by way of funding. This is a confirmation of the situation in question item twenty-two to the effect that sourcing for funding for critical projects and operations of the organizations under study is done mainly through government funding and subventions. The last statement in this subsection to which the respondents also agreed to is that with strategic planning and execution, public sector enterprises can become financially self-sufficient and even contribute to the internally generated revenue of the state and the country in general.

**Table 4.1.4: Respondents’ responses to the variable, Public Service Delivery N=350**

S/N	QUESTIONS	Σ fx	X	Decision
31.	One of your guiding philosophies is to ensure that you put a smile on the faces of every one of your customers.	1160	3.31	Agreed
32.	It is a management policy in your organization that you should not delay your visitors, customers and clients beyond what is necessary.	823	2.35	Disagreed
33.	Your organization strongly disapprove of unethical behaviours like lateness to work, idle gossiping, office trading during work hours, etc.	1195	3.41	Agreed
34.	Occasions where the management is forced to intervene in disagreements between your colleagues and your customers hardly occur.	1035	2.96	Disagreed
35.	There are channels for lodging complaints against erring staff in your organization.	1204	3.44	Agreed
36.	The poor attitude of public servants to their job duties and responsibilities in most public sector institutions is antithetical to quality service delivery.	1238	3.54	Agreed
37.	Complaints lodged by your customers are resolved with speedy dispatch to restore public confidence in your organization.	840	2.4	Disagreed

38.	Clarity of organizational goals enhances service delivery.	1140	3.26	Agreed
39.	Effective monitoring of employees also enhances service delivery	1100	3.14	Agreed
40.	The services you render to your clients are at your discretion, which is not a function of whether the customer is satisfied with your services or not.	1160	3.31	Agreed

Source: Agbazue, Field Survey, 2019

The fourth and last subcomponent of our questions for analysis borders on public service delivery, which happens to be the dependent variable of our study. The perennial issue of poor service delivery in the public sector informed our decision to embark on this study in the first instance. Just like others before it, this subsection also contains ten statement aimed at addressing some of the perceived issues that borders on service culture, timeliness and quality of services rendered by public sector organizations in the discharge of their mandate.

The first statement in this subsection received a positive response from the respondents as they agreed that one of their organizations’ guiding philosophies is to ensure that they put a smile on the faces of every one of your customers. This appears to be the situation in theory. In practice, however, respondents disagreed to the statement in question thirty-two that it is a management policy of their organizations that they should not delay their visitors, customers and clients beyond what is necessary. This implies that the quality of services rendered to the public by these organizations are at the discretion of the public servants rendering the services.

The focus of the statement in question thirty-three is on ethics and its effect on service delivery in the public service. Respondents agreed that their organizations strongly disapprove of unethical behaviours like lateness to work, idle gossiping, office trading during work hours, etc. Conflict resolution also have an impact on service delivery and forms the focus of questions thirty-four and thirty-five. Respondents disagreed to the statement in question thirty-four that occasions where the management is forced to intervene in disagreements between them and their customers hardly occur. This disagreement is a pointer to the fact that such incidences are not rare. However, the next question seemed to proffer a remedy to the situation as respondents agree that their organizations have channels for lodging complaints against erring staff in your organization.

The statement in question thirty-six focuses on the attitude of public servants to work, which is a contributory factor to the other issues raised earlier. In the said question, respondents are of the view that the poor attitude of public servants to their job duties and responsibilities in most public sector institutions is antithetical to quality service delivery. Sadly, those who feel aggrieved might not get speedy justice as the respondents in question thirty-seven do not subscribe to the view that complaints lodged by customers are resolved with speedy dispatch to restore public confidence in their organizations.

Respondents in question thirty-eight agreed that clarity of organizational goals enhances service delivery. They also agree to the statement in question thirty-nine that effective monitoring of employees also enhances service delivery. Sadly, these are not to be the case in the selected organisations studied as question respondents, in question forty agreed that the quality of services rendered is at the discretion of the public servant.

#### 4.2. Test of Hypotheses

##### Hypotheses One

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Strategic human resource management has no effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Strategic human resource management has an effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria.

#### Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Strategic Human Resource Mgt.	3.8211	.27416	350
Public Service Delivery	3.5021	.23551	350

**Correlations**

		Strategic Human Resource Mgt.	Public Service Delivery
Strategic Human Resource Mgt.	Pearson Correlation	1	.194**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	350	350
Public Service Delivery	Pearson Correlation	.194**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	350	350

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the analysis above, it shows that the probability value (0.003) is less than the alpha value (0.05), the researcher therefore rejects the null hypothesis and conclude that strategic human resource management has an effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria with a correlation value of 0.194.

**Hypotheses Two**

**H<sub>0</sub>**: Digitalization has no effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria.

**H<sub>1</sub>**: Digitalization has an effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria.

**Descriptive Statistics**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Digitalization	3.1144	.28121	350
Public Service Delivery	3.4129	.33782	350

**Correlations**

	Digitalization	Public Service Delivery

Digitalization	Pearson Correlation	1	.187*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.028
	N	350	350
Public Service Delivery	Pearson Correlation	.187*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	
	N	350	350

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In testing the second hypothesis, the analysis shows that the probability value (0.028) is less than the alpha value (0.05), the researcher therefore accepts the alternative hypothesis and concludes that digitalization has an effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria with a correlation value of 0.187.

#### 4.3. Summary of Findings

1. That strategic human resource management has an effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria. (P value = 0.003 < 0.05, r = 0.194).
2. That digitalization has an effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria. (P value = 0.028 < 0.05, r = 0.187).

#### 4.4. Conclusion

From the analysis of data done in the previous chapter, the findings and discussions, it was observed that strategic human resource management has an effect on public service delivery in selected public sector organisations in Anambra state, Nigeria. It was also discovered that strategic financial management and digitalization have effects on public service delivery in selected public sector organizations in Anambra state, Nigeria. As a result, this study concludes that organizations, be it in the public or private sector need to adopt appropriate strategies to enable them navigate their business environment or service environment as the case may be. Organizational planning, decision making and implementation should focus on the achievement of specific organizational goals and objectives. The situation in public sector organizations is usually more complicated owing to the fact that while private sector organizations pursue mainly economic objectives, their public sector counterparts strive to achieve both political, economic and social objectives. It is for this reason that this study proffers the following recommendations below.

#### 4.5. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion reached in this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Human resource activities in the public sector, especially public enterprises should be strategically geared towards the attainment of better services to the public. Recruitment, selection, placement and postings, secondment and transfers, disciplinary actions, performance appraisal, staff training, remuneration, rewards and career progression etc. should all be geared towards enhancing the quality and quantity of the organizational human resources for better performance. The era of recruitment by 'strong recommendation from those that matters' should be jettisoned for merit, competence and capability.
2. Public sector organizations should embrace digitalization. It is appalling that most government Ministries and Department do not have functional and user friendly websites. Of special focus in this recommendation are those public sector organizations that operate like business organizations. It is recommended here that they should embrace competition in this regard from their counterparts in the private sector.

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