

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Implementation of Minimum Wage and Dwindling Well-Being of Workers' in Imo State Civil Service, Nigeria

Dr. Uchechukwu Anthony Nwobi

Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department of Public Administration and Local Government,
University of Nigeria Nsukka, Nigeria

Abstract:

The contention on minimum wage over the years was premised on low standard of living and how to improve the worker's living standard. It was worthy of note that by the Minimum Wage Act (2000), Imo State Government paid ₦6,500 minimum wage. In an apparent realization that civil servants could no longer survive on what they earned given the economic situation, minimum wage was increased to ₦20,000 based on Minimum Wage Act (2011). Although Imo State Government is paying minimum wage of ₦20,000 above the benchmark of (₦18,000) fixed by the Federal Government, that could not meet the cost of providing the basic needs of workers'. The aim of this paper was to assess the effects of the implementation of minimum wage on the dwindling well-being of workers' in the Imo state civil service, Nigeria. The paper recommends provision of houses, free medical bills, vehicle loans by the Government, price regulation on commodities and school feeding programme.

Keywords: *Implementation, minimum wage, well-being, workers', civil Service*

1. Introduction

One of the duties of government is to ensure the welfare of her citizens. This was reflected in the coordinated attempt made at having a harmonized National Minimum Wage through legislation or government decree. The first National Minimum Wage was brought in 1981 when ₦100 was paid per month. It was increased to ₦125 and later doubled to ₦250 in 1991. Subsequently, there was an upward review to ₦5,500/₦6,500 in the year 2000 (Akor and Alaneme, 2010). It became remarkable when a National Minimum Wage Amendment Act 2000 was flagged off after several attempts (Ajani, 2011). Eventually, in March 2011 the National Assembly passed the 2011 National Minimum Wage Act which was signed into law by the President. That culminated into a new minimum wage benchmark of ₦18,000 for every worker (Onuegbu, 2011).

In Imo state, the previous minimum wage that took the form of 12% increase based on ₦6,500 and subsequent agreement of 25% increase which ended at 15% in 2007, was lower than the minimum cost of providing the basic needs of civil servants and their families. Despite that, the State Government could not pay workers' salary up to date. That subjected civil servants to unnecessary hardship (Akpaekong, 2002). As a result of that, survival became more difficult because the monthly salary of an average civil servant was very low. Even at that, poverty remained the biggest problem that faced the State since workers could not afford to eat three times daily. In an apparent realization that civil servants could no longer survive on what they earned, given the economic situation, minimum wage was increased to ₦20,000 based on Minimum Wage Act 2011 (Eme and Ugwu, 2011).

Reacting to this incidence, the ground shaking ovation that followed the announcement of ₦20,000 instead of ₦18,000 told the story of a civil service that has not witnessed such a lavish salary reception before (Ebere, 2011). Out of excitement, civil servants felt it was going to improve their purchasing power and thus, reduce the level of poverty in the State. Instead, there was a protracted economic downturn which led to retarded economic growth and workers were equally emasculated. Again, people were subjected to immense hardship; ordinary citizens were experiencing abject poverty, want and deprivation. Civil servants, who were working, were equally emasculated. In addition, health care, standard of education, cost of transportation and productivity could not improve (Ugbaja, 2001).

Although Imo State Government is paying minimum wage of ₦20,000 above the ₦18,000 benchmark of the Federal Government that could not meet the cost of providing the basic needs of workers'. On that premise, the aim of the paper was to assess the effects of the implementation of minimum wage on the dwindling well-being of workers' in Imo state civil service, Nigeria.

2. Minimum Wage

The concept of minimum wage is hydra headed in nature. Asodike and Atuwokiki (2012) defined minimum wage as that wage that provided for the basic substance of life and also for the preservation of the efficiency of the worker. It was

regarded as amount of money that must be paid to a worker in order to enable him/her to provide for their family's basic needs and sustain the standard cost of living. It was the lowest amount of money needed by workers to survive and afford their basic needs in terms of accommodation, utilities, food, clothing, medical care, education, entertainment, etc. More so, Tinuke, Olusegun and Olanrewaju (2012) contend that minimum wage is the smallest hourly amount of money that an employee may be paid as mandated by federal law. This could be adjusted periodically based on inflation. It can also refer to the rate of pay fixed either by a collective bargaining agreement or by governmental enactment as the lowest wage payable to specified categories of employees. The author further stated that minimum wage contains three salient ideas. The first is that it must satisfy the vital necessities of food, clothing, and housing among others. Secondly, it represents the lowest level of remuneration permitted by law. Lastly, each nation has the force of law to uphold it.

2.1. Civil Service

Civil service is the department of the Government that carries out the work of the Government. Ademolekun (2002) avers that the concept of civil service is used in two ways. First, it refers to the body of permanent officials appointed to assist the political executives in formulating and implementing governmental policies. These officials are called civil servants. The term could also mean the ministries and departments within which public administration takes place, excluding the local government. Ezeani (2006) also defines civil service as the administrative machine within which the work of government is carried out. In the same light, Nwanolue (2012) argued that the challenges of civil service were poor remuneration of civil servants. They are the most disadvantaged and depressed wage earners in Nigeria.

2.2. Standard of Living

Standard of living is the level of welfare available to individuals or to a group of people. It is also the level of wealth, comfort, material goods and necessities available to a certain socioeconomic class in a certain geographical area, as nurtured by quality income, quality employment hours of work, class disparity, gross domestic product, inflation, price stability, quality and affordable housing, healthcare, education, economic and political stability, adequate infrastructures, safety of lives and property (Nwude, 2013). In addition, a reasonable living expenses is made up of the following; food, clothing, personal care, health, household goods, household services, communications, education, transport, household energy, insurance, savings and contingencies, social inclusion and participation, housing and childcare (Seirbhis, 2013).

2.3. Minimum Wage in Imo State

One salient point about minimum wage generally was its aim of addressing inflationary rate. When the Federal Government announced the minimum wage increase of ₦5, 500 for the Federal and ₦4, 500 for the State civil servants, Imo State Government accepted to pay. Shortly after, another wage increases followed suit with announcement of ₦7, 500 for the Federal and ₦6, 500 for state civil servants. The State Government also agreed to pay ₦6, 500 to civil servants without post-agreement problem Komolafe (2000).

When the issue of the 2011 minimum wage was raised, Uwah (2011) submitted that Imo State Government was the first to confirm that ₦18, 000 minimum wages was the barest minimum any worker could take home in the nation. Furthermore, if workers were not paid ₦18, 000, they could be provided with all the essential services like: education, water, power, transport and essential commodities. For as long as these workers still have to pay for these essential services, ₦18, 000 was not too much. On that premise, Imo State Government promised to pay ₦20, 000 to civil servants above the National Minimum Wage of ₦18,000, although the promise was not unfulfilled (Soninna, 2012). That gave rise to industrial disharmony in which (Nwokoro, 2011) observed that the erstwhile Nigerian Labour Congress President, Omar Abdulwaheed, led the civil servants to embark on strike because of the unwillingness of the Government at all levels to pay the minimum wage of 2011. Amidst that, workers continued to earn ₦7, 500 for federal and ₦6, 500 for states respectively. That was a reflection of the inability of the erstwhile Labour Minister Emeka Wogu, and Labour Unions to resolve the dispute after their meetings.

In the same light, the minimum wage saga erupted into a two-week industrial action in the State (Oluigbo, 2011). Besides, the Nigerian Labour Congress on 25th September 2011 suspended the strike action over unresolved technical areas in the implementation of ₦18, 000 minimum wages. The union later gave Imo State Government two weeks grace, with effect from September 26th 2011 to work out an acceptable framework and modalities for the implementation of the new minimum wage across board from grade level 01 to grade level 17. The outcome of the civil unrest, resulted to the State Government announcing minimum wage package of ₦20, 000 for civil servants Uzoечи (2011)

3. Methodology

The study was a survey design. The total population of the study was 6370 but the study made use of 10% as the sample size. The population was divided proportionately among the ministries using proportionate sampling technique. In gathering data, a face-to-face interview and questionnaire were used to generate primary data to compliment the secondary data obtained from books, journals, newspaper, magazines etc. A pilot survey was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation was used to compute the coefficient from the two results which gave 0.69. The documents were face and content validated by experts. The data was presented in tables and a five-point Likert scale was used. The data collected were analyzed using the mean of the responses.

3.1. Theoretical Underpinning

System theory was adopted as the theoretical umbrella for this discourse. The major proponents are David Easton (1965), Capra (1982) Almond Gabriel, William Gay, Roy Grinker and a host of others It is relevant to this study because is found in every sphere of learning. In addition, is a trans-disciplinary framework for the explanation of relationships between the representatives of government, employers and employees on issues of common interest relating to social and economic policies within the environment it represents (Fajana and Shadare, 2012). The concept of system serves to identify those manifestations of natural phenomena and process that satisfy certain general conditions (Lazlo and Krippner, 1988). A system is a set of assemblage of things connected or interdependent, so as to form a complex unit, a whole composed of parts in orderly arrangement according to some scheme or plan (Izueke as cited In Ikeanyibe and Mbah, 2014).

3.2. Tenets of the theory:

(1) The output comprises of policies, education, health, impact of policy whether intended or unintended. (2) There is a feedback mechanism that may alter the demand or make further demand. (3) Organization cannot separate from its environment. (4) It emphasizes communication in the learning process regulated by the feedback. (5) There is interconnection between the Organization and the environment. (6) It is interdependent such that each unit or person contributes to the development of the other.

3.3. Application of the Theory to the Study

The diagram below is a reflection of the application of implementation of minimum wage on dwindling well-being of workers'.

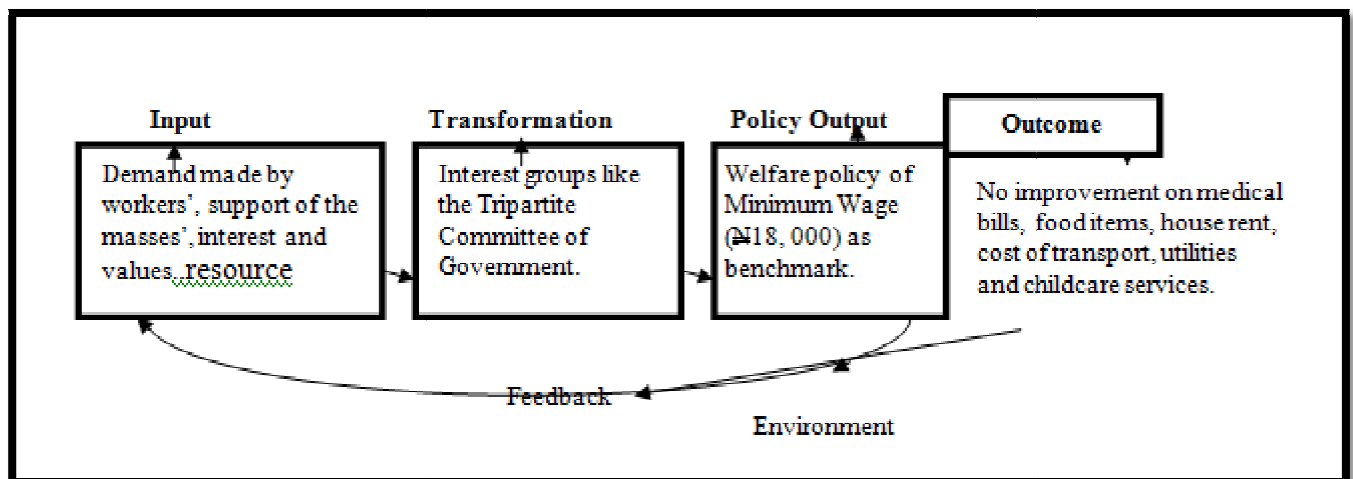


Figure1: A Diagram Showing the Input-Output Transformation of System Theory to Implementation of Minimum Wage and Well-Being of Workers'

Adapted from Izueke, M. (2014) *Theoretical Framework of Analyses in Public Administration*, in Ikeanyibe, O, and Mbah, P. (Eds) *An Anthology of Theories for Social Research*, (159-183). Enugu: University of Nigeria Press Ltd. Updated by the Author

In the light of the above figure, civil servants made a demand on the Government which represents the input. The demand was sent into the system where it was transformed through collective bargaining by the stakeholders. The output was what the stakeholders arrived at from the bargaining process which translated into ₦18,000 minimum wage benchmarks. The outcome translated into no improvement on medical bills, food items, house rent, cost of transportation, utilities and childcare services on workers' that made the demand on the system. Furthermore, the inadequate provision of those basic amenities led to loss of production and manpower contraction among workers (Anyim, Odogwu and Ogunyomi, 2012). The multiplier effect was that civil servants were grieved on the actions of the Government seen as dishonest, corrupt and collective agreement torn into shreds (Eme and Ugwu, 2011). The effects were sent through a feedback mechanism to those who made the demand. The dissatisfaction of the masses would warrant resending their input into the system for reprocessing until their needs are met. To pull out of this quagmire, there should be a good working condition and welfare package for workers (Okolie, 2012). In the same vein, a successful Labour Union calls for more cooperative and synergistic relationship between labour and management (Ikeanyibe and Onyishi, 2010).

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

The data showed that out of 637 questionnaires administered, 627 copies (%) were returned while 10 (%) were missing. Out of 627 questionnaires returned from the respondents, 336 (54%) were male while 291 (46%) were female. Age

showed that out of 627 questionnaires returned, 60 (9%) were under 20 years of age, 199 (32%) were between 21- 30 years, 213 (34%) were between 31-40 years, 105 (17%) were between 41-50 years, 50 (8%) were between 51-60 years and non-above 60 years. Marital status: 390 (62%) were married and 237(38%) were single. Categories of staff showed that out of the 627 questionnaires returned, 162 (26%) were management staff, 215 (60%) were senior staff and 250 (40%) were junior staff.

S/N	Items	SA 5	A 4	UD 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean	Decision
1	Food items	83 (13%)	204 (32%)	29 (5%)	161 (.26%)	150 (24%)	2.85	Rejected
2	House Rent	50 (8%)	207 (33%)	31 (5%)	223 (36%)	116 (18%)	2.76	Rejected
3	School Fees	148 (23%)	268 (43%)	68 (11%)	99 (16%)	44 (7%)	3.60	Accepted
4	Hospital Bill	87 (14%)	189 (30%)	43 (7%)	212 (34%)	96 (15%)	2.93	Rejected
5	Electricity Bill	70 (11%)	180 (29%)	18 (3%)	263 (42%)	96 (15%)	2.78	Rejected
6	Transport	98 (16%)	120 (19%)	35 (5%)	229 (37%)	145 (23%)	2.67	Rejected
7	Kerosene	90 (14%)	119 (19%)	33 (5%)	244 (39%)	141 (23%)	2.63	Rejected
8	Water Bill	71 (11%)	80 (13%)	20 (3%)	283 (45%)	173 (28%)	2.35	Rejected
9	Clothes	86 (14%)	76 (12%)	29 (5%)	96 (15%)	340 (54%)	2.15	Rejected
10	Entertainment Cost	93 (15%)	86 (14%)	33 (5%)	298 (47%)	117 (19%)	2.58	Rejected
11	Telephone Bill	140 (22%)	329 (53%)	20 (3%)	71 (11%)	67 (11%)	3.64	Accepted
12	Soaps and Detergent	68 (11%)	54 (9%)	5 (1%)	273 (43%)	227 (36%)	2.14	Rejected
13	Child Care	81 (13%)	97 (15%)	35 (6%)	258 (41%)	156 (25%)	2.19	Rejected
	Total	1165	2009	399	2710	1868	35.27	
	Grand Mean						2.71	Rejected

Table 1: Percentage, Decision and Mean Scores of Respondents on Whether Implementation of Minimum Wage Have Helped To Improve the Well-Being of Workers' on Affordability of the Following
Source: Authors Field Survey (2018)

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$$

Data on Table 1: showed that items 3 and 13 had mean scores above the criterion mean of 3.0. That indicated that the implementation of minimum wage had helped to improve the well-being of civil servants in Imo State civil service. The other items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 had mean scores below the criterion mean of 3.0. That indicated rejection. The grand mean (2.71) was below the criterion mean, which showed that the implementation of minimum wage did not improve the well-being of civil servants in Imo State civil service.

5. Findings and Discussion

The findings revealed that there was no improvement on affordability of the following: medical bills, food items, house rents, transportation cost, utilities and childcare services etc.

Medical bills: The under remunerated workers engaged mostly on self-medication because they could not afford the bills of government hospitals not to talk of private hospitals. About 57.5% of workers made use of herbal treatment; 36% patronized general hospitals while 5.8% patronized private hospitals. The majority of the household made use of herbal treatment because of lack of money to pay hospital bills (Oluwatayo, 2008). This situation calls for attention because some have lost most of the important part of their being such as their sight organs, their ability to walk or even eat solid food. This situation had brought about death to a lot of families. Self-medication was bad in the sense that the practitioners were just engaging in trial and error with their lives. Also, most under remunerated workers in the State found it almost impossible to

eat three times daily. At times when they were able to provide food three times a day, such food lacked the essential components of a balanced diet. This however, made a child not to be mentally alert and also reduced a child's resistance to sicknesses. That paved way for sicknesses as a result of malnutrition (kwashiorkor, anemia) or even reduced the possibility of their wound being healed (Ayoka, M. I. Personal Communication February 7th 2018). The underlying causes were food insecurity, inadequate care for children and deprivation of unhealthy living condition. In turn, these resulted from lack of resources (Adetokunbo, 2007).

Food items: This is one of the major essentials of life. Workers had always complained of their inability to meet the demand of food. On that premise, the following table illustrates the prices of some food items as an exposition of the effects on workers.

Food Crop	Rice	Yam	Beans	Garri	Green Leaf Vegetable	Tomatoes	Onions	Fish	Crayfish
Unit of Sales	(1cup) 0.16KG	2Small Tubers 6.07KG	(1CUP) 0.17KG	(0.15G)	Small Bundle 0.16KG	A Heap 0.13KG	A Heap 0.21KG	0.85KG	A Heap 0.01KG
1997	10	140	5	6	5	10	10	30	5
1998	10	140	5	6	5	15	15	30	5
1999	15	150	7	10	10	20	20	60	10
2000	15	150	10	15	10	30	22	100	110
2001	18	180	15	18	12	30	25	120	15
2002	20	200	18	19	15	32	25	120	20
2003	22	220	20	22	20	32	27	200	22
2004	25	250	25	22	20	35	30	250	25
2005	30	300	25	30	50	40	35	300	30
2006	30	300	30	30	50	40	35	300	30
2007		200	40		50				30
2008		200			50				30
2009		200			50				30
2010		200			50				30
2011	35	150/200	25/30	10/20	50	20/50	10/20	150	50
2012	30	150/200	25/30	10/20	50	20/50	10/20	150	50
2013	30	150/200	40	10/20	50	20/50	10/20	150	50
2014	30	150/200	50	10/20	50	20/50	10/20	300	50
2015	30	200/300	60	10/20	100	50/100	10/20	300	50
2016	00/120	400	70/90	60/100	50	100	50/100	400	50/100
2017	130	400	100	100	100/200	150/200	100	400	100

Table 2: Annual Average Prices of Food Stuff per Minimum Sales Unit in Owerri Imo State (Prices in Naira)

Source: Adapted from Mbah, P. Ohaka, C. and Mkpado, M. (2010). "Correlates of Food Crop Staples to Food Price Index in Imo State: Implication for Food Security in Nigeria" *Nigerian Journal of Agriculture, Food and Environment*, Vol 6, Nos 1&2, Pp. 110-113, Updated by the Author

In the light of the above table, from 1999 to 2000, the price per cup of rice was ₦15. From 2001 to 2004, there was marginal increase in the price while it rose to ₦30 per cup from 2005 to 2006. A tuber of yam showed marginal increase of ₦10 from 1999 to 2000, ₦20 from 2001 to 2003 and rose by ₦100 in 2006. A cup of beans was sold for ₦7 in 1999. It increased gradually to ₦30 in 2006. Minimum wage was ₦6, 500 and it increased to ₦20, 000 per month. Presently, civil servants buy a cup of beans for between ₦50 to ₦70 depending on the specie. Garri which sold for ₦10 per cup in 1999, ₦15 in 2000 gradually increased to ₦30 in 2006 within the ambit of ₦6, 500 minimum wages. The price of one cup of garri in 2006 was sold for between ₦20 to ₦30 within the ambit of ₦20, 000 minimum wages. The increase in prices intensified from 2015 - 2017.

To buttress the above view, since 2003, 2005, 2007, 2008, the prices of food showed a steady long term upward trend, characterised by short-term viability with pronounced peaks and troughs. The purchasing power of goods was higher than it was within 2012 to 2017. Although the income of a worker appears bigger than it was then due to inflation Samuel, Gavrilovic, Harper and Nino-Zarazua (2011). Inflation rate averaged 10.33% from 2006 until 2014, reaching an all-time high of 15.60% in February 2010 and recorded low of 3% in July, 2006 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2014). In 2009, the prices of food items like rice, yam, chicken and other food items as well went up and out of the reach of civil servants (Nkwopara, 2009).

In a week for most families' beans and its derivatives like akara and moi - moi were the richest source of nutrients and very often the only source of protein. Meat/fish, milk and egg, having disappeared from the menu long ago, the new price of beans meant that if a small family on minimum wage of ₦20, 000 bought beans worth of ₦1, 000 per week they would have spent ₦4000 per month leaving the family with a paltry sum. It led to increased financial flow and spending capacity which in turn

reduced the standard of living of civil servants (Onwerre, J. Personal communication, February 7th 2018). That was reflected in the record of Food and Agricultural Organization from 2000 to 2002. There were 19% under nourished people in Imo state. There was malnutrition particularly in terms of protein intake. This was as a result of low purchasing power of the workers. As the cost of living in the State rose, the problem of malnutrition became more intensified. It was apparent that the minimum of 65gm of protein per day recommended by World Health Organisation was yet to be attained in the State. Rather, the per capita consumption per day was found to be 6.5gm which was only 10% of World Health Organization recommended level (Oruche, Atala, Akpoko and Clukaire, 2012). The cost of living went up as such that service providers like civil servants were affected by the implementation of minimum wage. The producers of items like carpenters, market men and women added to the prices of their items. The resultant effect became price increases which did not improve the economic standing of workers as expected. (Agorua, C. Personal Communication, February 7th 2018).

House Rent: Workers lived in the outskirts of the city because houses within the city were way beyond their ability to pay. In contrast, apartments in the outskirts of the city and in slum areas were a lot cheaper. So, these poor folks moved to these low-cost areas (Umunakwe, S. Personal Communication February 7th 2018. Unfortunately, that decision gave birth to new challenges. Living in the city outskirts also meant living far away from work. This inevitably led to high cost of transportation for these low-income workers. They spent virtually all they earned on transportation to work and rent. There was nothing left to pay school fees and fuel or fix other family needs. This kind of atmosphere bred dishonesty. Workers had to seek out ways to make ends meet. That gave rise to corruption in the civil service. Even the massive shortage of housing, transportation and infrastructure meant that in addition to rising food cost, which our government had denied workers; many families spent most of their income on accommodation and transportation. As a result of that, nothing was left for other essentials of life like health, education and clothing (Nwude, 2012). In that light, the following table indicates the cost of rent.

Year/Size	1Room	3 Bed Room	One Room Self con.
1999	1500	8,000	3000
2000	1500	10,000	3000
2001	1500	10,000	4000
2002	1500	10,000	4000
2003	3000	10,000	4000
2004	3000	13,000	4000
2005	3000	13,000	4000
2006	3000	13,000	4000
2007	3000	13,000	4500
2008	3000	13,000	4500
2009	3500	18,000	4500
2010	3500	18,000	5000
2011	4000	25,000	5000
2012	4000	25,000	5000
2013	4000	25,000	5000
2014	4000	25,000	5000
2015	6000	30,000	10,000
2016	6000	30,000	10,000
2017	6000	35,000	10,000

Table 3: Distribution of Rents Paid for Apartments per Month in Owerri Imo State (in Naira)
Source: Authors Field Survey (2018)

From table 3: above, one room apartment showed that from 1999-2002 was ₦1, 500, 2003-2008, ₦3000. 2009 - 2010, ₦3,500. 2011 - 2014, ₦4,000. 2015 - 2017, ₦6, 000. Three-bedroom flat apartments showed that in 1999, it was ₦8000. 2000 - 2003, ₦10, 000. 2004 - 2008, ₦13, 000. 2009 - 2010, ₦18, 000. 2011 - 2014, ₦25, 000. 2015 - 2016, ₦30, 000. In 2017, it was ₦35, 000. One room self-contains apartment showed that in 1999 - 2000, it was ₦ 3000, 2001-2006, ₦ 4000. 2007- 2009, ₦4, 500. 2010 - 2014, ₦5000. 2015 - 2017, ₦10, 000. The table revealed that prices were jerked up from 2015 to 2017.

Utilities: The official pump price of petrol/diesel/kerosene increased as follows: In the year 1998 ₦11per litre, 1999 ₦20, 2000 ₦22, 2001 ₦26, 2003 ₦40. Subsequently the price was jerked up to first ₦65 and again over ₦100. However, it was reversed by Nigerian Labour Congress to ₦65 (Ajani, 2011). In the same light, the hike was 130% in 1999 from ₦11per liter to ₦20 and the attendant increase in the cost of transportation, foodstuff and other essential items showed the insensitivity of the Government (Adeloye and Akinmutimi, 1999). The price increased in the year 2005 from ₦65/80 to ₦100/120 within the year 2012 in fuel stations and from ₦100/120 to 140/200 outside fuel stations. Hospitals, homes and governmental services had come to depend on the use of generators for effective service delivery because of the failure of regular power supply (Uhunnuangho and Aibieyi, 2012).

In that direction, the table below revealed the increases in the prices of petrol, diesel and kerosene products with some of their percentage increases.

Year	Petrol	(%)	Diesel	(%)	Kerosene	(%)
1999	₦20	19	-	-	17	-
2000	₦22	10	19	0	17	0
2001	₦22	0	19	0	17	0
2002	₦26	18.20	26	36.84	24	41.18
2003	₦34.42	30.8/23.52	38	46.15	38	58.33
2004	₦49	16.72	50	31.60	60	57.90
2005	₦65	24.68	90	58.02	60	-
2006	₦65	0	-	-	60	-
2007	₦65	0	-	-	-	-
2008	₦65	0	-	-	-	-
2009	₦65	0	-	-	85	-
2010	₦65	0	112	-	85	-
2011	₦97/110	33/41	150	-	-	-
2012	₦97/110	33/41	150	-	110	-
2013	-	-	-	-	-	-
2014	-	-	-	-	180	-
2015	100/105	-	-	-	230	-
2016	-	-	160/180	-	230/350	87.12
2017	145/160	-	160/300	42	230/434	93.19

Table 4: Petrol/Diesel/Kerosene Increases

Source: Uhunnwuangho, S and Aibieyi, S. (2012) "Policy of Deregulation and Liberalization of the Downstream Oil Sector in Nigerian Economy in the 21st Century" *Journal of Economic Theory*, Vol 4, No4, Pp.112-119, Updated by the Author

The above table indicates that the price increase of petrol from the year 1999 - 2002 was between ₦20 - ₦26, 2003 - 2004 ₦34 - ₦49, 2005 - 2010 ₦65, 2011 - 2014 ₦97/100, and 2015 - 2017 ₦100 - ₦160. Diesel increased from the year 2000 - 2001 to ₦19, 2002 - 2003, ₦38, 2004 ₦50, 2005 ₦90, 2010 - 2017 ₦112/ ₦160 - ₦300. Kerosene increased from the year 1999 - 2001 to ₦17, 2002 ₦24, 2003 ₦38, 2004 - 2006 ₦60, 2008 - 2009 ₦85, 2012 - 2014 110 - 180, 2015 - 2017 ₦230 - 230/434. There were astronomical increases in the year 2005, 2011, 2015, and beyond.

With each rise in the prices of petrol/diesel/kerosene, there was a commensurate rise in the cost of production of goods and services which became transferred to the consumers without commensurate increase in minimum wage. Unfortunately, even when petrol/diesel/kerosene prices were reversed. The increase experienced with the cost of goods and services were never reversed. Incidentally, the multiplier effect on the economy of the State like high cost of production and increased house rents fell on civil servants whose well-being was badly affected. Surprisingly, the price of kerosene was higher than the price of petrol (Fatukasi, 2005). To buttress the above summation, the table below confirmed the value of minimum wage paid by the State.

Year	Exchange Rate ₦/\$	Monthly Gross Minimum Wage (GL1 Step 1)	Poverty Level (USD 1.5)	Poverty Level (USD 2)	A Family of Four Earning Per Person Per Day
2000	85.98	4500/6500	128.9	172	50/72
2007	125	9456.25	187.5	250	105
2008	120	9456.25	180	240	105
2009	171	9456.25	256.5	341	105
2010	151	9456.25	226.5	301	105
2011	152	20,000	228	304	222
2012	158	20,000	237	316	222
2013	158	20,000	237	316	222
2014	180	20,000	270	360	222
2015	300	20,000	450	600	222
2016	400	20,000	600	800	222
2017	380	20,000	570	760	222

Table 5: Summary of Comparative Analysis of Naira Value of Minimum Wage in Relation to Dollar (USD 1/USD 2) Poverty Level Current Benchmark in Imo State (2000, 2007 To 2017)

Source: Adapted from Otilaiye, H and Ebeuvu, C. (2014) "Exchange Rate and Market Policy: the Nigerian Gum Arabic Marketers Experience" Scholarly Journal of Business Administration, Vol 4, No3, Pp. 67-72, Updated by the Author

In the light of the above table bearing in mind the conservative exchange rate of one to two dollars per person per day as poverty benchmark, minimum wage was below from the year 2000 – 2017. In 2011, it was below by 26%, 2017 by 71%. In a family of four children, both parents earning ₦20, 000 each. When combined, it translates to ₦40, 000 per month. Per person per month, it gave ₦6, 666 and per person per day it gave ₦222. Even at ₦18, 000 it translates to ₦36,000 combined family income per month or ₦6, 000 per family member per month or ₦200 per family member per day. These are the class of workers whose earning capacity makes it impossible for them to provide the basic needs of live such as basic education, shelter, good healthcare, food, utilities among others. Their plight is the level of poverty afflicting workers in the Imo State civil service (Agbaegbu, 2012). It was reasonably inferred from the cumulative result of the findings that implementation of minimum wage did not improve the well-being of workers' rather it was grossly unjust and below poverty level.

6. Summary

The research was an exposition of implementation of minimum wage and the dwindling well-being of workers' in Imo State Civil Service to ascertain the effects of the wage on the well-being of workers. Related literatures on the subject matter were reviewed. Interview and questionnaire were used as primary data to complement the secondary data obtained from books, and journal etc. Proportionate sampling technique was used. System theory was adopted as the theoretical underpinning for the study.

The wage increase did not have any significant improvement on workers well-being. The reasons are not far-fetched. Workers were unable to foot their hospital bills. Most incapacitated workers resorted to herbal treatment which is inimical to health. Prices of food items were at the zenith and were not within the reach of civil servants. House rent was not different as those houses in the outskirts of the city where workers ran to were also expensive. Prices of kerosene are more than petrol which was a reflection of the bad economy. Sadly, the exchange of naira to dollar became so high such that the minimum wage was below poverty benchmark. Concisely, the aforementioned occurrences were a pointer to the dwindling nature of workers' well-being in the State.

6.1. Recommendations

Based on the findings from the research, the following recommendations were made.

- Medical bills should be made free by the State Governments. There should be refund of expenditures of civil servants made on medical bills to them and their families. The National Health Insurance Scheme should be used to take care of workers in the State.
- There should be price regulation on commodities and subsequent risk of speculation in the market. This could be achieved through global fund to support micro finance to boost small scale farm production. The Federal Government should make provision to support small scale farm production. This would help to reorganize the food market infrastructure and institution to regulate food prices and provide food safety nets aimed at alleviating the impacts of rising food prices and food shortage. When this is done, the well-being of workers would have an improvement.
- There should be provision of houses for workers by the Government. This could be achieved through Public Private Partnership.
- There should be provision of vehicle loans for the senior civil servants and motorcycle loans for junior civil servants. Besides, there should be provision of efficient luxury buses for the ministries by the Government.
- There should be School Feeding Programme. The State Government should oversee that and extend the programme to all primary pupils irrespective of income. The programme would certainly ensure at least a whole meal for the children thereby encouraging school attendance and academic attainment. This would aid workers and reduce the cost and rate of taking their children to the office.
- There should be provision of vehicle loans for the senior civil servants and motorcycle loans for junior civil servants. Besides, there should be provision of efficient luxury buses for the ministries by the Government.

6.2. Closing Remarks

Implementation of minimum wage was an effort geared towards providing an acceptable standard of living for low paid workers in a dwindling economy. Sadly, the meager wage paid workers aided in stifling the economy. That economic downturn was also attributed to the inflationary trend which did not allow the impacts of the minimum wage to manifest conspicuously. Amidst that, the well-being of civil servants dwindled significantly instead of experiencing a remarkable improvement.

Civil servants could not afford to meet their basic needs on affordability of food, housing, utilities, and hospital bills among others. To pull out of the chains of dwindled economy as a result of the paltry sum received by the worker, the aforementioned recommendations are the necessary drivers for the effective implementation of minimum wage in the State.

7. References

- i. Adeloje, L and Akinmutimi, T. (1999) "Labour, Government Battle over New Wage" Guardian. January 12th p. 21.
- ii. Ademolekun, L. (2002). Central Government Organization in Ladipo Ademolekun (ed) Public administration in Africa. Main Issues and Selected Country Studies, Ibadan: Spectrum Books.
- iii. Adetokunbo, L. (2007). Short Textbook of Public Health Medicine for the Tropics. London: Book Power.
- iv. Agbaegbu, T. (2012) "Poverty: The Ravaging Scourge in the North". Newswatch. April 23rd p. 12- 20.
- v. Ajani, J. (2011) "Why Minimum Wage, Fuel Subsidy Removal and Revenue Formula do not Mix" Vanguard, July 10th pp. 12-14.
- vi. Akor, S. and Alaneme, E. (2010) "The Unending Battle for Living Wage". Daily Champion, October 25th pp. 15 & 18.
- vii. Akpaekong, O. (2002) "A War Waiting to be Fought" Newswatch, October 7th Vol 36, No 14
- viii. Anyim, C. Odogwu, C. and Ogunyomie, O. (2012) "Trade Disputes and Settlement Mechanisms in Nigeria: A Critical Analysis" Interdisciplinary Journal of Research in Business Vol 2, No 2, pp. 1-8
- ix. Asodike, J. and Atuwokiki, S. (2012) "Civil Servants Perception on Minimum Wage Increase in Nigeria". Global Journal of Human Social Science, Vol 12, No 9, pp. 18-28.
- x. Biobele, R. (2007) "Problems of Recruitment in Civil Service; Case of the Nigerian Civil Service" African Journal of Business Management, Vol 1 No 6, pp.142-153.
- xi. Ebere, U. (2011) "LG Workers Inclusive 25th Salary Ceiling" Horn, November 28th-29th p. 5
- xii. Eme, O. and Ugwu, S. (2011) "Governors' and the New Minimum Wage Act; Implications for State Labour Relations in Nigeria" Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review, Vol 1 No 3, pp. 1-14.
- xiii. Eroke, L. (2011) "A New Deal with Labour" This Day. August 6th p.53
- xiv. Ezeani, E. (2006). Fundamentals of Public Administration, Enugu: Snaap Press.
- xv. Fajani, S and Oluseyi, S. (2012) "Workplace Relations, Social Dialogue and Political Milieu in Nigeria" International Journal of Business Administration, Vol 3 No1, pp. 75-83.
- xvi. Fatukasi, B. (2005) "Determinants of Inflation in Nigeria: An Empirical Analysis" International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Vol 1, No 18, pp. 262-271.
- xvii. Government of Imo State (2011) New Minimum Wage for Imo State Public Servants Establishment Circular No 1/2011. Owerri: Office of the Head of Service. 1-17
- xviii. Ikeanyibe, O. and Onyishi, A. (2010) "Emerging Trends in Labour-Management Relations: Implications for Industrial Harmony in the Nigerian Public Sector" Nigerian Journal of Public Administration. Vol 15, No 1, pp. 91-116.
- xix. Izueke, M. (2014) Theoretical Framework of Analyses in Public Administration. In Ikeanyibe, O. and Mbah, P. (Eds) An Anthology of Theories for Social Research. (159-183). Enugu: University of Nigeria Press Ltd.
- xx. Komolafe, f. (2000) "Minimum Wage Struggle Shifts to States Factories" Vanguard June 1st p. 22
- xxi. Mbah, P. Ohaka, C. and Mkpado, M. (2010) "Correlates of Food Crop Staples to Food Price Index in Imo State: Implication for Food Security in Nigeria. Nigerian Journal of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Vol 6 Nos 1&2, pp. 110-113.
- xxii. Laszlo, A. and Krippner, S. (1998) Systems Theories: Their Origins, Foundations, and Development. Amsterdam; Elsvier
- xxiii. Ministry of Planning and Economic Development. (2012). Government of Imo State of Nigeria 2012 Authorised Establishment: Owerri: Author.
- xxiv. National Bureau of Statistics. (2014). Annual Abstract of Statistics. Federal Republic of Nigeria Abuja: Author.
- xxv. Nkwopara, C. (2009) "Prices of Fuel, Food Items Rises in Imo State" Retrieved on December 16th from Vanguard <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2009/12.1.05pm>.
- xxvi. Nwanolue, B. and Iwuoha, V. (2012) "The Nigeria Civil Service and Promotion of Sustainable Human Development: A Critical Analysis" Arabian Journal of Business Management Review, Vol 1, No 9, pp. 12-21.
- xxvii. Nwokoro, G. (2011). "Labour Union Insists on Three Days Strike Over Minimum Wage". Horn. July 18-19th p.6
- xxviii. Nwude, C. (2012) "The Politics of Minimum Wage: Unresolved Issues. Asian Journal of Empirical Research, Vol 3 No 4, pp. 477-492.
- xxix. Oha, M. (2001) "Minimum Wage, Maximum Lay-off. Vanguard, February 1st p. 24.
- xxx. Okolie, C. (2012) "Trade Unionism, Collective Bargaining and Nation Building: The Nigerian Experience" Retrieved on 12/4/2018; 1:42pm. From <http://www.ajol.info>>article.
- xxxi. Oluigbo, C. (2011) "Ceasefire in Imo" Retrieved on 17/7/2012 from <http://www.nigerianorientnews.com>.
- xxxii. Oluwatayo, I. (2008) "Explaining Inequality and Welfare of Households in Rural Nigeria: Evidence from Ekiti State". Humanity and Social Science Journal, Vol 3, No 1, pp. 70- 80.
- xxxiii. Onuegbu, H. (2010) The New Minimum Wage; Strategies for Effective Public Private Sector Management. Annual Conference of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (CIPMN). Rivers State: Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUC)
- xxxiv. Oruche, E Atala, T. Akpoko, J. and Clukaire, J. (2012) "Impact of the National Special Programme for Food Security on Livestock Farming in Ideato South Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria" Greener Journal of Agricultural Sciences, Vol 2, No 6, pp 251-258.

- xxxv. Otilaiye, H and Ebeuvu, C. (2014) "Exchange Rate and Market Policy: The Nigerian Gum Arabic Marketers Experience" *Scholarly Journal of Business Administration*, Vol 4, No3, pp. 67-72,
- xxxvi. Samuel, F. Gavrilovic, M. Harper, C and Nino-Zarazua, M. (2011) *Food Finance Fuel: The Impact of the Triple F Crisis in Nigeria, with a Particular Focus on Women and Children*. London: Overseas Development Institute <http://www.css>
- xxxvii. Seirbhis, D. (2013) "Guidelines on a Reasonable Standard of Living and Reasonable Living Expenses" Retrieved from <http://www.isi.gov.ie.pdf>.
- xxxviii. Soninna, J. (2012) "Rochas Okorocho: The Governor of Imo State at his Lunch" <http://www.nairaland.com/rochas> 10/8/2012
- xxxix. Tinuke, F. Olusegun, A. and Olarrewaju, L. (2012) "Minimum Wage Implementation and Management in a Post-Recession Economy: The Nigerian Experience" *European Scientific Journal*, Vol 8, No 7, pp. 18-35.
- xl. Ugbaja, C. (2001) *Entrepreneurship Development in Anambra State*. Awka: African Representative Publishing Company.
- xli. Uhunnwuangho, S. and Aibieyi, S. (2012). Policy of Deregulation and Liberalization of the Downstream Oil Sector in Nigeria: The Implication of the Nigerian Economy in the 21st century. *Journal of Economic Theory*, Vol 4 No 4, pp. 112-119.
- xlii. Uwah, H. (2011). "Imo'll Pay ₦18, 000 Minimum Wage 2011" *Sun*, August 20th pp. 59-60.
- xliii. Uzoechi, S. (2011). "Imo State Okorocho ups the Ante. Increases Minimum Wage from ₦18, 000 to ₦20, 000" Retrieved on 23/10/2012 from <http://www.myondostate.com/myondostate> .