

AN APPRAISAL OF WAGES AND SALARIES STRUCTURE IN NIGERIA, 1960-2011

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to discuss the wages and salaries structures in Nigeria from 1960 up-to date, highlighting the roles played by different wages and salaries commissions, their contributions and achievements. It also analyzes the effects of wages and salaries review on the workers, market prices of essential goods and services, and nation's economy. Based on the analyses, concrete recommendations are made for improvement and restoration of normalcy and sanity in the Nigeria price control system for the good of all.

Everyone likes to be paid for services rendered or job done. The payment is compensation. The compensation is tied to the labour market. Employers must be reasonably competitive in payment salaries, and wages to attract and retain competent employees. Wages therefore are payments directly calculated on the amount of time worked. In contrast, people who are on salaries receive consistent payments each period regardless of the number of hours worked. Salary earners carry higher status wage earners. Some organizations maintain an all salaried approach with their employees in order to create a greater sense of loyalty and organizational commitment. They still pay overtime to certain employees according to labour laws.

Wages and salary structure differ from country to country and subject to change due to economic changes, development and awareness. In Nigeria analyses show that most private industries e.g. banks, multinationals pay higher wages and salaries to employees than government ministries, and parastatals.

The Concepts of Wages

There are three different concepts of wages:

- (i) The minimum wage: Minimum wage is the least of all wages. It is the base wage that the employer has to pay so that his workers/employees can fulfil the basic needs like accommodation, food, and clothing. Minimum wage is not market clearing wages. They are regulatory wages to ensure that market wages do not fall below subsistence. The minimum wage rates have to be revised at an appropriate interval not exceeding five years;
- (ii) The fair wage: The fair wage is above the minimum wage and it takes into consideration the paying capacity of the employer; and

- (iii) The living wage: The living wage which is the highest of the three is aimed at providing a comfortable living for the employee and his family. It includes providing health, educational and social facilities.

Today, Nigerians who are lucky to have jobs are finding it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to survive on their monthly pay. The major reason for this is that the pay of the Nigerian worker is not only one of the lowest in the world; it has also not improved as it should in the face of changes in market conditions. Workers in the public sector are particularly worse off. As huge revenues have continued to be acquired from the sweat of workers, the pay and conditions of service have continued to deteriorate; workers have increasingly been excluded from the wealth created by their labour.

In Nigeria, the difference in pay between managers and workers is not only one of the highest in the worlds: out of every ₦1 paid as wages, managers collect more than 80 kobo while workers receive less than 20 kobo; the difference has been increasing over the years. At the same time, owners and managers of banks, top government officials and members of the political class have seen their pay and wealth swell astronomically while workers have had to survive on starvation wages. Workers can no longer survive on what they earn; the situation is made worse by the fact that those who work also have to support family members who form part of the huge army of the unemployed.

It has become crystal clear that there is an urgent need for an upward review of the national minimum wage (currently ₦18,000 monthly) and an upward general review of wages and salaries, across board, to match the rate of hyper-inflation in the economy.

Factors that Determine Wages and Salaries Rates

One of such factors is the minimum wage considered by the government to be appropriate for the lowest qualified worker and enacted as law for the entire private and government established firms to implement.

Another factor is the ability to pay. The amount of wage or salary made by companies and government depends on their ability to pay their workers based on their financial capabilities. A firm can only pay workers wages or salaries depending on the amount of money that come into their coffers. That is why payments of wages and salaries vary from company to company and individuals are attracted to some companies, especially the transnationals, because of high remunerations and fringe benefits while some companies and government establishments pay low salaries and wages.

Furthermore, the cost of living in a country is another conspicuous factor that determines wages and salaries in a country. If the cost of living in a country is high, workers are bound to demand for salary or wage increase in order to adjust to the changes in the living standard. It will not be appropriate for workers to spend all the earnings for their maintenance without saving for the rainy day.

Where the saving and purchasing power of worker is eroded there is bound to be demand for increase to adjust to the harsh economic conditions.

Condition of the labour market is also another factor. If there is scarcity of skilled labour, the wages and salaries of such skilled labour will be high because of the demand, conversely where skilled labour is abundant, the wages and salaries will be poor.

History of Wages and Salaries Reviews Since 1963 Up-to-Date

According to the National Salaries, Income and Wages Commission, it is interesting to note that the history of Nigeria's pay structure predates her political independence. In the process of evolving an enduring pay structure and incomes policy in the country, many commissions have been set up. But for the purpose of this paper, the dates for consideration are from 1963 to 2010 as follows:

The Morgan Commission (1964)/Elwood Grading Team

This was the first post-independence Commission in the country whose focus was basically on 'junior' workers in both the public and private sectors. The general strike of September 27, 1963 had precipitated the setting up of the Commission. The outcome is its report metamorphosed into the Elwood Grading Team which investigated anomalies in the grading and other conditions relating to all posts in the Public Service of the Federation with a view to determining an appropriate grading system and achieving uniformity in the salaries of officers performing identical duties. This was one of the earliest times when pay relativities was mentioned in the country. There was no other Commission in the 1960s except that there were restrictions on the agitations of trade unions for increases in wages. The restrictions were in the form of a Trade Dispute (Emergency Provisions) Decree of 1968, which provided for the freezing of wages and prices, among other provisions, perhaps to permit the unhindered prosecution of the civil war.

The Adebo Commission (1971)

It addressed some of the problems facing the public sector, particularly the envisaged shortage of senior civil servants on account of their abysmally low remuneration package. It was observed that the last time senior civil servants had enjoyed wage increases was in 1959, courtesy of the Mbanefo Commission (1959). The Adebo Salaries and Wages Review Commission recommended the setting up of a Public Service Commission to exhaustively examine several fundamental issues, such as the role of the Public Service Commission, the structure of the Civil Service, and its conditions of service and training arrangements. The acceptance of the recommendations of the Commission led to the setting up of the Udoji Public Service Review Commission.

The Public Service Review Commission (Udoji Commission Report 1972/74)

The Udoji Commission of 1974 focused on the larger issue of increasing efficiency and effectiveness in the Public Service in the context of meeting the challenges of a development-oriented society. The Commission recommended, among others, a Unified Grading and Salary Structure (UGSS) which embrace all posts in the Civil Service from the lowest to the highest (Grade Levels 01-17) and provide equal opportunities for officers to advance to the highest post in the service, irrespective of their discipline, provided they had what it took to get there. The Commission placed emphasis on broad activities in grading and pay for all jobs. The Commission also recommended merit as the major yardstick for determining the promotability of officers in the Civil Service. The Commission recommended a co-ordinated salary structure that would be universally applicable to the Federal and State Civil Service, the Local Government Service, the Armed Forces, the Nigeria Police, the judiciary, the Universities, the Teaching Services and Parastatals. It also recommended the need to ensure that all Public Service employees received equitable treatment on pay and benefits in such a way that no individual component of the public sector would be at a disadvantage in respect of the recruitment and retention of employees.

Besides, the Commission also adopted five guiding principles for Nigeria's Public Service Compensation Plan as follows:

Principle 1:

There would be no discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, social class, or geographical location, or conditions in establishing rates of pay for work, the performance of which requires equal kinds of knowledge, difficulty, responsibility and effort under similar employment conditions;

Principle 2:

The achievement of pay and benefits comparability between the public and private sectors;

Principle 3:

A compensation system and appropriate organizational structures and schemes of service would provide for salary advancement by means of career progression, through the assumption of work of increasing difficulty and responsibility, with a continuing need for competency and efficiency.

Principle 4:

A compensation system would provide opportunity for salary advancement at all levels, based on the merit principle; and

Principle 5:

Salary structures and rates of compensation for senior management and senior supervisory positions would be adequate and reasonable in relation to

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those of subordinates in order to ensure the recruitment, retention and motivation of highly competent and qualified personnel.

The Commission recommended that the salary structure pay adequate attention to job content; provide for career progression; link public service pay and benefits to those provided for equivalent employed and pay levels in the private sector; and provide more equitable benefits and conditions of employment across the entire spectrum of public service employment. The annual salary of the highest paid civil servant was supposed to be ₦15,000 per annum, while that of the least paid civil servant was ₦1200 thereby resulting in a compression ratio of 12.5:1. One of the backlashes of the Udoji Commission was the official backdating and subsequent implementation of the recommended increases in wages and salaries (which ranged from 12 to 30 percent) and generated an inflationary spiral during the period.

Williams and Williams Commission 1975

It was set up to correct the anomalies in the Udoji Review.

The Presidential Commission on Salaries and Conditions of Service of University Staff (Cookey Commission) Report (1981)

This Commission was set up by Government following the agitation of university staff to opt out of the Unified Grading and Salary Structure (UGSS). After its deliberations, the Commission felt that the organizational structure, mission, and operational methods of the university system differed from those of the Civil Service and the Public Corporations and, therefore, needed to have conditions of service specifically tailored to meet their peculiar need. It, therefore, recommended that the harmonization of the Universities with the Civil Service should cease.

The Presidential Commission on Parastatals (Onosode Commission) Report (1981)

This commission was set up as a result of agitation for higher salaries, more generous allowances and better conditions of service by employees of State-owned enterprises, statutory corporations, the Universities and the Central Bank, on the ground that the nature and complexity of their work differed enormously from those of civil servants. The Commission was mandated to examine the structure, management, and job content of all parastatals and consider whether any of them should be removed from the Unified Grading and Salary Structure (UGSS). The Commission was also expected to recommend guidelines for fixing appropriate salary scales applicable to different public sector organizations.

The Commission recommended the following: that the Unified Grading and Salary Structure (UGSS) be separated and distinguished from the Unified Salary System (USS); that the 17-grades level structure continue to apply to the

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Public Service to the extent indicated in the classification of Parastatals in the Report; and that jobs in the different Parastatals be urgently re-evaluated in detail and on a regular basis to ensure that the right grade was maintained for each. The Commission's other recommendations included the following: After establishing the correct grades of its jobs, each organization with an "autonomous employer status" would determine the pay or price for the job, in accordance with the factors relevant to its operations; and that salaries within the Unified Grading and Salary Structure (UGSS) be reviewed. Consequently, parastatals were removed from the Unified Grading and Salary Structure (UGSS) and granted a different categorization and higher salary scales.

Adamolekun Commission 1981

Focused on Federal Government owned tertiary educational institutions apart from the Universities i.e. Federal Polytechnics, Colleges of Technology, advanced Teachers and Technical Colleges.

The Fatai Williams Commission (1990)

This Commission was set up to look into the request of doctors to opt out of the Unified Grading and Salary Structure (UGSS) because of the decline in their status, prestige and earning power. Consequently, the Committee looked into all matters relating to the remuneration of doctors. At the end of its assignment, they recommended, amongst others, that a separate salary structure be created for the health and medical services, similar to that created for the universities, the steel workers, airways and other "essential" jobs.

The Longe Commission Report (1991)

The Commission focused on some aspects of the problems of tertiary institutions, such as funding, salaries, conditions of service and curricular. On the issue of salaries, the Commission recommended a general salary increase of 30% to all staff of tertiary institutions within the Elongated University Salary Structure (EUSS). It also recommended various allowances to go with the salary increase.

The Allison Ayida Panel (1994)

This Review Panel on the Civil Service Reform was set up to, among others, to identify the various factors that had led to low morale in the Civil Service and make recommendations to raise the morale of staff and give them a sense of security. The Panel observed that workers' pay did not reflect the cost of living at all and that the gap between the public and private sectors' pay package was as wide as 300 to 500 percent, in favour of the private sector. The Panel recommended that the total emoluments of civil servants be substantially reviewed upwards and adjusted annually to reflect the general price movement with a view to discouraging corruption.

The Report of the Vision 2010 Committee (1997)

The Committee undertook an in-depth study of the compensation package in the Civil Service and made far-reaching recommendations for improvement. The Committee observed that workers' salaries did not reflect the cost of living in the country and that the civil servant's salary package was far below that of its counterpart in the private sector. It, therefore, suggested a harmonized salary package for the public and private sectors if Nigeria was to realistically achieve the laudable goals of the Vision 2010 programme. Accordingly, the Committee recommended the following for the Public Service:

- (i) Substantial upward review of wages and salaries, starting from 1998;
- (ii) A realistic minimum wage and an adequate reward system that could sustain an average worker and which would not be eroded by inflation at any time;
- (iii) A review of salaries and allowances every two years, based on a cost of living index to promote comparability of remuneration with the private sector;
- (iv) Payment of generous housing and allowances to enable civil servants rent adequate accommodation and reduce their incessant demand for living in government quarters; and
- (v) Providing assistance in the education of worker's children by paying education allowances on a maximum of four children per family until they graduate from secondary school

The Committee on Harmonization of Remuneration in the Public Service (1998)

The mandate of this Committee was to harmonise the proliferation of salary structures in the public sector, which had varying degrees of minimum and maximum entry points and wide disparities in allowances and fringe benefits among various establishments. It recommended the harmonization of public service salaries in order to promote industrial harmony and specifically recommended five (5) harmonized salary structure for the Service as follows:

1. Harmonised Public Service Salary Structure (HAPSS) for the civil service, non-commercial agencies/organizations already operating Unified Grading and Salary Structure (UGSS) in any part of the Public Service, medical/dental/veterinary doctors in the civil service, judicial and non-judicial posts, staff of primary and federal secondary institutions;
2. Harmonised Police and Para-military Salary Structure (HAPPSS) for the Armed Forces;
3. Harmonised Police and Para-military Salary Structure (HAPPSS) for the Police, Customs, Immigration, Prisons, NDLEA and the Security Services;

4. Harmonised Tertiary Institutions Salary Structure (HATISS) for all staff of the federal universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, research institutes and institutions already operating the EUSS; medical doctors in teaching and specialist hospitals, federal medical centres and health agencies; and
5. Harmonised Remuneration of Top Federal Public Office Holders for the Executives, the Legislative and the top judiciary arms of the Public Service. Furthermore, the Committee recommended that:
 - (i) All commercial parastatals be allowed to continue to operate their respective salary structures and continue to fund their personnel costs without recourse to government subventions, but with clearance from the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission on subsequent reviews; and
 - (ii) All partially-commercialised parastatals receiving subventions from government of more than 33.3% of their recurrent expenditure adopt the proposed Harmonised Public Service Salary Structure (HAPSS) and those receiving subvention of 33.3% or less keep their respective recurrent salary structure

Finally, the Committee noted the need to establish a realistic minimum wage which would adequately address the cost of living issue as well as the basic needs of the least paid worker in the Public Service, bearing in mind the need to enhance workers' productivity and availability of resources.

In line with the foregoing recommendations, the (then) Head of State, General Abdulsalam Abubakar increased the salaries and allowances of civil servants in early 1999, although the allowances were later reduced due to its fiscal implications. The Obasanjo Administration had also affected substantial increase in the salaries and allowances of workers in the Public Service. The first increase was in 2000 and the latest is the Monetization Package whose implementation started in July 2003 and ongoing across the Public Service. In spite of the increases, however, morale and productivity levels in the Public Service are still very low.

This underscores the need to determine the appropriate wage structure that would raise workers' motivation as well as ensure comparability with the private sector.

Phillips Asiodu Committee 1999- Review of Academic and Professional Allowances for staff of Federal Universities, Polytechnic and Colleges of Education Review of Harmonised Salaries and Allowances in the Federal Service and the National Minimum Wage .

Shehu Sule/Ason Bur Committee 2000 - Committee on the Review of Professional Allowances for Doctors and other Health Professionals

Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) 1999-2001- Review the remuneration package of political office holders in the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary at the Federal, State and Local Government levels.

Rationale for Upward Wage and Salary Review

There are several reasons why there must be an upward review of workers wages today:

1. The consequence of the abdication of the agreed approach to the implementation of the phased-wage increases has been that wages and salaries are today sharply depressed and incapable of meeting the basic needs of most workers.
2. In the last one year, inflation has intensified with the cost of living index in the urban sector increasing by over 14 per cent. The disproportionate increase (20.9 per cent) in the cost of food means that the erosion in the real wages and salaries of workers is alarmingly severe.
3. The process of monetizing and consolidating in-kind benefits which were hitherto not taxed has resulted in an escalation of the tax paid by workers. This has further depressed the real take home pay of workers.
4. All over the world, salary increase in the public sector is underlined by the principle of equity and the need to bridge social inequality in the face of widening economic and social gaps amongst citizens of a country.
5. In Nigeria, while workers' salaries increased by 15 per cent between 2006 and 2007, those of political office holders increased by over 800 per cent. The 2008 increase in the compensation of political office holders has further aggravated the disparity (Table 1). On the average, their compensation package has been doubled. We need to reduce this disparity for greater equity, productivity and morale.

Table 1: Salaries of Political Office Holders (Pre and Post-consolidation)

S/N	Categories	HASS (Basic) (₦)	CONPSS (₦)
1.	Special Assistant to the President; Chief Speech Writer to the President; Chief Press Secretary to the President	626,700	4,392,012
2.	Ministers of State; Senators; Principal Officers of the House of Representatives; Special Advisers TTP	1,015,700	13,374,240
3.	Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives, Minister; Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Head of Civil Service of the Federation, Chief of Staff TTP, National Security Adviser, Chief Economic Adviser, Inspector General of Police, Chairmen, Federal Civil Service Commission, Federal Character Commission, National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission, Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal	1,015,700	13,374,230
4.	Deputy President of the Senate, Justices of the Supreme Court, President, Court of Appeal	1,194,600	15,094,426
5.	Speaker of the House of Representatives	1,649,400	16,348,926
6.	Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President of the Senate, Chief Justice of Nigeria	1,938,000	21,524,164
7.	President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria	2,506,000	24,954,405

Source: National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission and Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission, Abuja.

However, a table of the reviewed Consolidated Public Service Salary Structure (CONPSS) attached to the circular shows that the least paid worker on Grade Level 01/1 would receive a salary of 204,878 per annum, while an officer on Grade Level 17/9, which is the highest grade in the public service, would take home ₦5,441,336 per annum.

The table shows that ₦208,206 is now the annual salary for a worker on grade level 02/1; ₦211,048 for level 03/1; ₦221,072 for level 04/1; ₦250,499 for level 05/1; ₦305,429 for level 06/1; ₦507,165 for level 07/1; ₦769,856 for level 08/1; ₦853,384 for level 09/1; ₦903,711 for level 10/1; ₦1,042,408 for level

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12/1; ₦1,163,433 for level 13/1; ₦1,285,018 for level 14/1; ₦1,767,816 for level 15/1; ₦2,188,877 for level 16/1; and ₦4,172,860 for level 17/1.

The Federal Government in May struck an accord with the unions of Federal Workers for a pay increase, and the president on May 29 announced approval for the increases with effect from July, without giving details. A supplementary budget with provisions for the implementation of the new pay structure is being considered by the National Assembly.

The Wages Commission's circular said, "The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces has approved upward review of the Consolidated Public Service Salary Structure (CONPSS). A table of the revised salary structure is attached herewith. The effective date for the implementation of the salary structure is 1st July 2010. (See Table 1 at the end of the paper).

It should be noted that this pay review is the result of a collective agreement at the end of a collective bargaining exercise between the Federal Government and the Trade Union Side of the Joint Public Service Negotiating Council. Therefore, it should not be regarded as an award of a general review in the Public Service.

Further, this particular pay increase is granted on the condition that there shall be a noticeable improvement in the productivity and conduct of public servants in service delivery to the public. The framework on the standards and modalities to achieving this objective will be worked out by government and relevant stakeholders not later than 31st December 2010.

Wages, Salaries and Inflation

Inflation and wages are interrelated. High inflation demands increases in wages to maintain the current lifestyle at higher prices. When wages are increased it further fuels the existing inflation by increasing demand. Raising wages is one way of improving the standard of living of the masses. Another is providing employment at the current wage. The rise in gainful employment and wages of the marginal class and the high salaries of the upper class obviously result in increase in the total demand of goods and services. Such is the dilemma in Nigeria when salaries are linked the demand increased further to such an extent, fulfillment of which is not possible for the economy in the short run. This phenomenon can be termed as overheating of the economy where there is no price control and regulation. Revelations on food stuff show that even the staple stuffs have gone up in prices. Count them: garri, yam, tomato, onion, fish, flour, sugar, beverages, and others. The irony of this is that even the poor Nigerians do not often differentiate between the time of scarcity and the time of abundance.

Some people always think that the increase of ten or twenty naira on the prices of any commodity makes no difference.

A bag of garri which was sold for little above ₦6,000.00 few months ago has gone up with additional ₦2,500.00. Although, it must be acknowledged the fact that some foodstuff are seasonal due to our weather and yet our inability to employ modern technologies in farming which promote production of any kind of crop throughout the year, it is unfortunate that the common Nigerian is left to the whims and caprices of these greedy traders who have already strategized to spell doom for the citizenry in the event that any single kobo is added to the income of the civil servants. This is a serious case for the government to look into in its attempt to increase the wages of the poor Nigerians who labour for the nation under the civil service. It is a case that the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and all trade unions which have the interest of the common Nigerians in their hearts must pursue when government finally increases the salaries of the civil servants.

The prices of beans, yams, onion, potato, flour, among others have increased about 25 percent, and so are the prices of sugar, milk, toothpaste and other toiletries. Even the fairly used dresses popularly called okrika which have become the main source of clothing for millions of Nigerians have begun to go up in prices too. The situation is as bad as that, unfortunately increase in transport fares is not excluded either.

Why should there be arbitrary increase in the prices of commodities without any just cause? For the past few years, the prices of petroleum products especially fuel have been steady; kudos to the government of the late President Umaru Musa Yar-Adua of blessed memories. The increase in the price of fuel used to spell doom for Nigerians, both the business and non-business class.

On this note, the matter that must be vehemently tackled by governments at the state and federal levels before adding a kobo to the wages and salaries of civil servants is to study how best to control prices of essential goods and services.

The worth of the money should be in the ability to make little savings at the end of the month. It is only when the prices of commodities are strictly controlled that this will be possible. And when it happens, assuredly, it will surely put smiles on the checks of the people, enhance productivity and dedication in the civil service and, in no small way, reduce corruption in Nigeria.

Critical Analysis

In the analysis of the wages and salaries structure in Nigeria, conflict theory is adopted based on the fact that wages and salary increases in the country

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rarely come on a platter of gold. The demand for income increases has always come from the aggrieved workers because of the adverse effects of the cost of living on them. These demands have often resulted to the death of protesters. Conflict theory has several roots, such as Karl Marx, Weber, Simmel. As a body of knowledge on the dynamics of the social order, the conflict heritage has produced specific principles which to a large extent influence the social structure of the society. These principles include that the social arena comprise of individuals and groups who struggle between and among themselves. The outcome of this struggle is the polarization of the societies and groups into object groups and subject groups. Scarce resources (economic, power, and authority) are the primary things over which people struggle (Iwarimie-Jaja, 2001).

The mismanagement of public funds by the ruling class has been one of the basic reasons why those at the helm of affairs are always reluctant to meet the financial desires of workers. Funds budgeted for workers salaries and other welfare packages are channel led to other projects not planned for and payments for, such projects are promptly made because those at the helm of affairs are the owners of such contracts, therefore, salaries and bonuses are not paid and the cost of living keep soaring and the workers are seriously buffeted by the harsh conditions. This behaviour results to friction between the workers and the government in the public sector and between the workers and management in the private sector. This antagonistic relationship results to strikes or assumes other perilous dimensions before wages and salaries commissions are constituted to ameliorate the problems.

The quest to remain dominantly the ruling class could be the reason why they dole out peanuts as remunerations to workers. These peanuts they dole out as incomes to worker that are too meager to withstand the cost of living which further pauperise the workers and ensure their permanent subjugation and subordination to the ruling elites or captains of industries. This attitude results in demand for wage increase which most often are resisted by those at the helm of affairs, persistence from the workers results to conflicts which manifests as strikes before remedial measures are sought.

Suggested Solutions

1. Increases in wages or salaries for staff in the public sector should be based on percentage as practiced by most parastatals to induce performance and reasonable increase in their earnings. The incremental step method being adopted should be phased out since the increment is small and does not induce performance. If a worker is aware that if he works hard he may be awarded up to 10% of his consolidated salary, he will make efforts to meet his yearly performance target.

2. The government should allow its ministries to negotiate salaries and fringe benefits/allowances with their employees biennially or triennially based on agreement between the management of the ministries and their subordinates. This will forestall the constant demand for increases from the public sector and enhance the living standards of workers.

3. The federal government as matter of urgency should revive the price regulatory agencies to monitor the arbitrary increases in prices of goods and services in order to permit workers have relative comfort of the income earned. It will be absolutely insane for government to increase salaries, and market women double the price of goods. The increase will be worthless and the workers will return to status quo. Therefore, it is wise to advise that government should resuscitate the moribund price and market monitoring agencies or alternatively constitute new ones to monitor exploitative and stupendous price increases by marketers in all forms and disguises.

Conclusion

The establishment of wages and salaries commissions as well as their roles were traced from 1963 to 2010. Conflict theory was engaged in the critical analysis. Suggested solution for improvement were also made. It is important to stress that in the course of the various Wages Commissions significant achievements have been made especially the adoption of the Unified Grading Salary System by the Udoji Commission which helped establish a unified salary structure for the public sector, and entrenched sanity in the wages and salary structures. However, there is great need to control prices of goods and services, for any review in wages and salaries to be meaningful and achieve its objectives.

Table 1: Consolidated Public Service Salary Structure (CONPSS) (Effective from 1st July 2010)

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