Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) Implementation, Prospects and Challenges in Nigeria

By

[1] Olowu Olagunju Folorunso
Department of Political Science & International Relations
University of Abuja
olagunju.olowu@uniabuja.edu.g

&

[2] Chinenye Nwaogu
Department of Political Science & International Relations
University of Abuja
nwaoguchinenye77@gmail.com

Abstract

Before the introduction of Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) in Nigeria, the federal civil service payroll system was an analogue system with a number of loopholes that could not fish out ghost workers, fraudsters and prevent inaccurate personnel records. However, IPPIS has restored some levels of sanity in Nigeria. As a result, the study x-rayed the implementation of IPPIS policy in Nigeria by assessing the achievements, prospects as well as challenges that characterized the policy. The study was a descriptive qualitative type with data collected from secondary sources and analysed by content analysis. The study found that IPPIS has achieved tremendous feats such as blocking payroll fraud, keeping accurate data of federal civil servants for more effective budgetary planning and saving cost that were allegedly stolen through ghost workers. Although, the implementation of the policy witnessed some challenges such as lack of synergy among stakeholders, corruption among implementers, over-centralization of operations, inconsistencies in civil servant salary arears payment. These shortcomings notwithstanding, IPPIS has in no small measure revolutionalised payroll administration in Nigeria. The study recommends among others that there is need to modify the payment platform to accommodate organizational peculiarity, synergy among implementing government agencies, training, and

retraining of IPPIS Desk Officers to mitigate challenges that are associated with the payment platform as much as possible.

Keywords: *Payroll System, e-payment system, IPPIS, Policy Implementation, Nigeria*

Introduction

The federal government adopted the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) to block leakages and corruption in civil service through payroll system and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the payment of public servants in Nigeria. Despite this new introduction, the implementation of the IPPIS has attracted lots of protests and criticism from the federal workers.

Invariably, the federal government employees who have been registered on the IPPIS platform expressed mixed reactions over the capacity and capability of the payroll handlers to effectively achieve the vision of the scheme as many of them complained bitterly about delay salary payment, under and over payment or complete omission of salary. Instances of this type of irregularities abound in many federal agencies of government. For instance, the salary of the Armed Forces personnel was delayed in April, 2020. Issues of over payment were recorded in Federal University of Technology, Akure in 2020 and National Security and Civil Defense Commission personnel suffered the same fate in 2018 a development which was attributed to inability and inexperience of IPPIS operators (Akubo, 2020).

Countless of federal public servants complained about the difficulty they faced while trying to get their salary increment and promotion arrears. This is not unconnected to a disconnect and lack of synergy between and among various stakeholders which often resulted in blame games for payment inability.

After the return of democracy in 1999, lots of reforms have been carried out in the public service and the salary administration aspect which is critical to public service was not left out of the reform. One of such reforms is salary administration reforms which came with the introduction of an electronic payment system designed to replace the cumbersome obsolete process that has characterized salary payment.

It was on this basis that the federal government introduced the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) to efficiently and effectively meet the needs of public servants in Nigeria and to block leakages and corruption in public service through payroll system. Mixed reactions have trailed the introduction as the implementation of payment platform has been enmeshed in a series of inconsistencies.

The introduction and the implementation of Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) in 2006 with core objectives to pay federal government employees on time and accurately, to have a centralized payroll system that meet the needs of federal government employee and help government to plan and manage payroll budget by ensuring proper control of personnel cost has been riddled with lots of criticisms.

Literature Review

Under this section, some relevant concepts are scholarly clarified and reviewed to avoid ambiguity.

Payroll System

Irish Times (2002) defined payroll system as "a system whereby workers are being paid according to their level of productivity". Emphasis was also made on the method and manner in which salaries and wages are prepared in different organizations. Payroll in this manner is a reward system put together for workers who have fulfilled a specified obligation.

But Armstrong (2001) sees payroll as a relationship between employees and reward system when he defines it as "the list of employees by a company and the amount of money to be paid to each of them. Before the advent of payroll system there was what was referred to as "compensation" of what was being rendered. That is to say, a job or work or goods were used to pay for work. But since the advent of money, it has become necessary to commensurate the job done with or by actual money value. This system for money exchange of labour or services rendered users in the use of wages and salaries as a means of remunerating laborers or employees for the services rendered to the organization. This therefore led to payroll system where employee's remuneration can be tabulated on paper

showing their total emoluments. The payment of wages and salaries on payroll therefore has become the usual practice in organization or tertiary institutions in the country for remunerating their employees.

According to Armstrong and Stephens (2005) the basic rule in most organizations is that every employee must be paid at the end of their hours of labour, either daily, weekly or monthly. An efficient wages and salaries system is essential to maintain the continued co-operation of the workforce.

The payment of every employee must be made in a detailed explanation of computation used in determining the net amount received by the employee. The payroll system must therefore be capable of processing the input data such as employee's name, social security number, date worked, pay rate, overtime due and taxes, to produce accurate output of pay schedule, cheque, pay record, withholding or payee taxes, statements and reports to the appropriate government agencies (Jibrin, et al, 2015).

In other words, payroll is a method whether manual or digital way of rewarding employees after a commensurate performance of work done.

Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS)

Enakirerhi and Temile (2017:4) see IPPIS is an IT-enabled facility being put in place to establish a reliable and comprehensive database for the public service, facilitate manpower planning, eliminate record and payroll fraud, facilitate easy storage, update and retrieval of personnel records for administrative and pension processes and staff remuneration payment with minimal wastages and leakages. According to them, since the inception of the project, IPPIS have saved the Federal Government of Nigeria billions of Naira by eliminating thousands of ghost workers via personnel verification exercise and salary payment process.

While Enakirerhi and Temile conceptualized IPPIS from IT-enabled facility which has assisted the government in saving billions of Naira, Farajimakin and Anichebe (2019:19) view IPPIS as intervention scheme and reform when they observed that, Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS): is a world Bank-Assisted project under the Economic Reform and Government Project (ERGP)

which was aimed at establishing a reliable and comprehensive database for the public service, facilitate manpower planning, assist in providing information for decision making, eliminate double dipping and credentials falsification, facilitate easy storage, update and retrieval of personnel record for administrative and pension process, and to facilitate staff remuneration payment. According to them, IPPIS programme enables the government ministries and MDAs to fish out the ghost workers for the attainment of public probity in governance (Farajimakin and Anichebe, 2019).

According to Office of Accountant General of the Federal (2008), IPPIS is a child of the Federal Government Reform Programme which was conceptualized at the Bureau of Public Service Reform (BPSR) for the purpose of centralized payment of all civil servants in the employment of the Federal Government. The IPPIS project started in April 2007 with the enrolment of the seven pilot Ministries, Departments and agencies (MDAs). It was financed through a World Bank facility of about USD 4.9 million. It was finally transferred to the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation (OAGF) in 2008. In other words, the IPPIS was introduced to serve the purpose of centralized payment of all civil servants in the employment of the Federal Government which after 13 years of introduction has not registered some agencies and departments.

The federal government in October 2006, conceived the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) to provide a reliable and comprehensive database for the public service to address ghost worker also to facilitate human resource planning, eliminate manual record and payroll fraud also to facilitate easy storage, update and retrieve personnel records for administrative and pension processes, and facilitate convenient staff salary administration payment with minimal waste and leakage (Public Service Institute of Nigeria, 2011). This implies that IPPIS was conceived with a broad base objective which has not been fully achieved.

Department of IPPIS while describing mode of its operations asserts that, the Integrated Payroll Personnel and Information System (IPPIS) is a department within the office of the Accountant–General of the federation which is responsible for payment of salaries and wages directly to government employee's bank

account with appropriate deductions and remittances of 3rd party payments such as: Federal Inland Revenue Service, State Boards of Internal Revenue, National Health Insurance Scheme, Pension Fund Administrative, Cooperative Societies, National Housing Fund, Bank Loans and Associations Dues (Department of IPPIS, 2012).

According to Effiong, et al, (2017:26), IPPIS was conceived to reduce or eliminate corruption and data storage in the payroll system. According to them, "in a bid to reduce corruption, the Nigerian government in October 2006, conceived the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) to provide a reliable and efficient database for the public service to eliminate record and payroll frauds, facilitate easy storage, facilitate manpower planning, update and retrieve personnel records for administrative and pension processes and facilitate convenient staff remuneration payment with minimal wastes and leakages" (Effiong, et al, 2017).

IPPIS in other words can be seen as a paradigm shift from analogue process to IT-driven digital way of pay rolling public servants. It is a multi-tasking software designed to ease human resources challenges in the federal civil service.

2.2.1 IPPIS as e-Payment System

The e-payment system simply put is the "electronic system of payment". The Guardian Newspapers publication (2008:14), explained electronic payment as means of buying and selling goods and services through the Internet. Depending on the innovators, it comes in different formats. E-payment allows customers to buy goods and services from the precinct of their homes across the world without any hassle. The e-payment cards are a payment instrument in form of plastic cards, issued by the institutions to the cardholders to access telecommunication networks.

Nwosu (2010:25) while enumerating the importance of e-payment, she asserts that "a good thing concerning the e-payment is that some governments are interested in some form of electronic payment system. They have provided regulations and gone as far as providing the necessary infrastructure whenever it is lacking. They

have issued guidelines/instructions to banks and other individuals to innovate and support electronic payment system.

In Nigeria the electronic payment system is being accepted by the elites and the urban dwellers. The rural areas are still not embracing the e-payment system due largely to the language barrier and low supply of electricity. Transactions in Nigeria have transformed from the trade by barter in the old days to the cheque system and lately the electronic form of transactions Nwosu (2010).

Financial analysts believed that even though the electronic form of payment is not enormous as in the advanced world, the ones already introduced are good enough to lift the fortunes of the economy and reduce incidences of carrying cash around. Some of the Information and Computer Technological-based banking services available in the country include the personal computer banking, telephone banking, internet, electronic card (credit card), the Automated Teller Machine (ATM), among others. The use of cheque has started dropping giving way to electronic payment. Cheques were formerly important in affecting large value payment, but the increasing need for safety and efficiency has brought out more ingenuity in the country Nwosu (2010:25).

Public Policy

Broadly speaking public policy can be seen as statement of intentions. When seen from this perspective, public policy is regarded as an embodiment of official pronouncements on what governments would want to do or to be done on behalf of the citizenry. It consists of a series of guidelines for actions to be taken in order to improve the welfare of the citizenry prepared by government or its designated agent (Dlakwa, 2008:3).

Supporting this direction, Ikelegbe (2006) conceptualizes it as the integrated course and programmes of action that government has set and the framework or guide it has designed to direct actions and practices in certain problem areas. While Anderson (1984) to align with this assertion when he conceived public policy as a purposive course of action followed by a political actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or a matter of common concern.

Cochran (2015) believes that policy comprises political decisions for implementing programs to achieve societal goals. Public policy comprises a plan of action or program and a statement of objectives, in other words, a map and a destination.

Amdii (2010) supported this stand when he observed that public policy can be seen as a paradigm or framework which guides government decisions, provide direction in an effort to bring about development and growth. To Ezeani (2006), it is the proposed course of action which the government intends to implement in respect of a given problem or situation confronting it.

Public policy as a process of decision making or choice. This informed the position of Amdii (2010) when he also observed that "Public policy can be seen as choice making among available alternatives, taking into consideration the cost benefit analysis. Towing the same line of thinking, Dye (1995) considers it as anything that the government chooses to do or not to do.

Nevertheless, no matter who the initiator of a public policy is, his initiatives would have to be acted upon by the government before such actions could appropriately be labeled as public policy (Dlakwa, 2008).

Policies are commonly described as action plans, positions, and/or guidelines which influence decisions based on a set of processes, preferences and choices. Policies (decisions made) usually aim to implement a programme of reform or change, but retaining the status quo is also a policy (Howlett and Ramesh, 2003).

Policies do not operate in isolation; some tertiary institutions explicitly establish requirements to ensure alignment between all institutional-specific texts (Freeman, 2013) for example Constitutions, Government Acts, among other laws. Policies can be adopted by individuals, groups/parties, privatized enterprises, but mostly often by the government; those adopted by the government are 'public policies'

Public policy can be seen as the decisions and choice making process of government which is authoritatively binding to solve societal problems. It is not

just political pronouncement, but it is also legally backing plans and programmes of government.

Policy Implementation

The stage involves execution of plans made in the earlier stages of the cycle. In other words, it is 'the translation of plans into practice putting solution into effect' (Howlett & Ramesh, 2003). This is when a decision is carried out through the application of government directives and is confronted with reality (Savard and Banville cited in **(**Mwije, 2012). Allocation of resources and assignment of responsibilities is significant at this stage if efficiency and effectiveness of policies are to be achieved. This is one reason why policy implementation often requires the development of formal rules and regulations by bureaucracies; and organizations and agencies are created to translate laws into operational rules and regulations (Dye, 2008) through regular monitoring on activities and resources. Civil servants' personal tendencies (ideologies, interests, thinking, etc.) can influence their perceptions and even their intentions when it comes to implementing a policy (Savard and Banville cited in **(**Mwije, 2012)). Implementation is purely technical in nature, and hence open to rapid change and reconfiguration involving much more than simply executing previous decisions or matching goals with means' (Howlett & Ramesh, 2003:203). Bureaucrats make policy as they engage in the tasks of implementation – making regulations, adjusting cases, and exercising their discretion (Dye, 2008). Thus, policy success depends on how well bureaucratic structures implement government decisions (Knill and Tosun, 2008); otherwise, all policies are bound to fail.

Methodology

The study adopts qualitative and descriptive research designs. Data was sourced through secondary sources such as government publications (Office of Accountant General of the Federation) and (Department of IPPIS) were contacted for useful data. Also, contemporary works on IPPIS policy were accessed on the internet through various online journals. The data collected were and analyzed through content analysis to deductively make meaning of them.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts organizational process models as underpinning theory of the study as it conceived IPPIS introduction as a fall out of organizational reform in public service. Graham Allison (1971) cited in Dlakwa (2008) observed that every organization, especially large ones, consists of workers who behave in accordance with established traditions, as well as their personal interest. Politicians encounter pockets of resistance in the course of introducing radical reforms on the system owing to the stiff resistance from bureaucrats who have been used to certain patterns of handling policy decisions (Dlakwa, 2008).

Public policy is thus formulated through the application of well-known Standard Operation Procedures (SOP). These procedures lay emphasis on things that are routine and familiar to the actors. In other words, professionals apply habits and rigid rules and regulations in handling societal problems. By so doing their self-interest and pride influence heavily their attitude to reforms.

Bureaucrats are equally more inclined to address issues of the moment than to engage in long-term planning, putting them on collision course with politicians that are eager to see practical results of public policies within the shortest time possible. Allison calls the resistant attitude as "organizational parochialism". It is thus incumbent on politicians to work out a way of overcoming this form of parochialism (Dlakwa, 2008).

The policy analyst must be able to detect and assess the implication of such parochialism in public policy as well. In essence, this model is saying that "government decision-making behaviour is understood less as deliberate choices of leaders but more as output of standard operating procedures of large organizations: that are tenaciously held onto by career public servants' (Kickert, 1979).

The significance of this model lies in the fact that it shows clearly the disconnect between the rush for results by politicians on one hand and the dilatory attitude of the public servants on the other. It can help the policy analyst in understanding the consequences of friction between politics and administration on the planning and implementation of public policy. Therefore, in order to prosecute public policy

successfully there ought to be unity of purpose between the policymakers and the bureaucrats.

A reform must be carried out that would enable the public servants to relax the rigidity on procedures and adopt a dynamic approach to public administration. This would bridge the gap between politics and administration. Care must be taken to incorporate the bureaucrats in the policymaking process so as to build this unity of purpose. Doing otherwise will encourage the bureaucrats to sabotage the efforts of the government, especially when the policy works against their personal interest. Any government wishing to introduce radical changes in the political system must undertake a reform in its civil service bureaucracy as a precondition for success. There should also be room created for training of personnel to enable them to be proactive and innovative in their thinking (Dlakwa, 2008).

According to Aganga, (2011), Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) is one of the federal government reforms initiatives conceived to transform the Nigerian public service and make it more efficient and effective in-service delivery. The IPPIS initiative is aimed at improving the public financial management and providing a centralized payroll system in the country. IPPIS was designed to enroll all federal government ministries, departments and agencies, that draw personnel cost funds from Consolidated Revenue Fund. The AGF said when fully functional, the system will help solve the challenges for lack of efficiency, lack of central control, lack of central management and lack of edition of figures. Besides, he said, the elimination of replacement of personnel costs in the country.

The IPPIS since introduction has been a controversial issue that has caused dichotomy between politics and administration as the politicians expect practical results in no time the bureaucrats see policy as issue of moment rather than long term planning. While political actors like President Buhari, Minister of Labor and employment Chris Ngige, Accountant General of the Federation etc. as favorable information is paid attention to - by them whereas unfavorable or unfamiliar information affecting the bureaucrat are deliberately ignored. Such information includes the challenges which IPPIS has created as a result of instantaneous

implementation by politicians thus deepening the politics/administration dichotomy.

The Organizational Process Model emphasized on how the bureaucrats try to resist reform as professionals apply habits and rigid rules and regulations in handling societal problems with their self-interest and pride which heavily influence their attitude to reforms. IPPIS policy was a product of civil service reform introduced by administration of former President Goodluck Jonathan in 2006 whose total implementation is not fully achieved in 2020 under President Muhammadu Buhari. This gives credence to the claim that bureaucrats are indifferent to organizational reform at the expense of the masses.

Despite its implementation, the IPPIS policy was unable to accommodate the peculiarity of a few government MDAs such as university and others like Independent Electoral Commission (INEC), Ministry of Justice etc. which are not drawing salary from the Consolidated Revenue Fund account. The public servants continued resistance, and rejection can be descried as described as "organizational parochialism" in by Allison (1971) word to the IPPIS policy might be sympathetically justified. The Nigerian federal universities (both teaching and non-teaching), Nigerian Army, PENGASON and related agencies have resisted the continuation of the payment platform or refusal to transfer based on perceived inconsistency of the platform.

IPPIS Policy Implementation in Nigeria

Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) is a payroll policy that was introduced in 2006 in Nigeria. Farajimakin and Anichebe (2017:19) attested to the fact that IPPIS is a policy in implementation stage in their works Effect of Integrated Personal Payroll Information System on Employee Welfare: Evidence from Federal Ministries in Nigeria. Also, the study by Enakirerhi and Temile support that IPPIS is on implementation stage in their study which explores the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) in Nigeria by looking critically at the challenges of implementation of IPPIS, benefits to be derived when IPPIS is fully implemented and what the future holds.

There were series of workshops for stakeholders to discuss the benefits of the IPPIS policy by the then Honorable minister of Finance, Mr. Olusegun Aganga before the eventual flag off of Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System. One of such workshops was the IPPIS Phase II workshop held at the Sheraton Hotels Abuja.

If implementation involves the committal of funds, the establishment of structures and methods, the hiring of personnel, the administering or executing of activities, and the securing of policy goods, services and other intended outcomes as claimed by Ikelegbe (1996), then IPPIS policy implementation has taken off completely.

Huge money was assigned for the policy take off according to the Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR) when El Rufai was chairman, a sum of $4.9million sponsored by World Bank contract was signed with the Nigerian-Based System Specs Consortium in October 2006, for the provision of a more coherent Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS). Office domicile in the Office of Accountant General of the Federation has been created for IPPIS with sizeable number of employees to oversee the smooth implementation of the policy.

Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) was conceptualized in October 2006 by the Federal Government as one of its Reform Programme, to improve the effectiveness and efficiency in the storage of personnel records and administration of monthly payroll in such a way to enhance confidence in staff emolument costs and budgeting. It was also envisaged that the System will be implemented according to the best practices obtainable in other parts of the world where Information Communication Technology (ICT) is used to improve management reporting. The Pilot Phase implementation financed by the World Bank commenced in February, 2006 at the Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR) upon the approval of the Federal Executive Council (FEC). While the project went live in April, 2007 with seven (7) Pilot MDAs, its management was transferred to the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation (OAGF) in October, 2008. The Pilot MDAs are:

i). Federal Ministry of Education.
ii). Federal Ministry of Transportation (Works arm).
iii). Federal Ministry of Finance

iv). Budget Office of the Federation (BOF).
v). Federal Ministry of Information.
vi). Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and
vii). National Planning Commission.

Prior to their registration, the nominal rolls of the Seven Pilot MDAs submitted indicated 55,000 staff, hence World Bank paid for fifty-five thousand (55,000) licenses. However, after their enrolment into the Scheme it was discovered that their total staff strength was 32,000, therefore an additional eleven (11) MDAs were brought on board in July, 2009 to optimize the 55,000 licenses purchased. The MDAs are:

a) Federal Ministry of Transport.
b) Federal Ministry of Health.
c) Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources.
d) Federal Ministry of Aviation.
e) Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources.
f) Federal Civil Service Commission.
g) Federal Ministry of Works (Housing & Urban Development).
h) Federal Ministry of Information (Communication).
i) Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation.
j) Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation.
k) Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation.

Having seen the benefits of the Scheme, especially in the area of savings to the Government, the Federal Executive Council in its meeting of Wednesday 1st December, 2010 approved the enrolment of all MDAs that draw their Personnel Cost from the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) into the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS).

The Phase II Service wide implementation commenced under the platform of new Software called Oracle Application in September, 2011 in batches and is being financed by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Phase III of the project which commenced in May, 2016 covers the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Federal Tertiary Institutions and Para-military Agencies and Military

The technical support in Phase 1 was provided by SystemSpec Consortium, the Phase 11 solution provider is Soft Alliance and Resources Limited. The Technical support for phase IIIA (Nigeria Police Force) is being provided by Soft Alliance and Resources Ltd while Phase IIIB (Federal Tertiary Institutions) is being provided by Infiniti Segments Ltd (OAGF, 2020).

IPPIS Contractors/Consultants

S/N	C.E.O	Company Name	Company's Address	Project	Year
1	Mr. John Tani Obaro	SystemSpec Consortium,	Plot B22, Chief Yesufu Abiodun Oniru Street, Lagos Nigeria	The Phase II Service wide oracle Application implementation,	2011
2	Mr. Tunde Badejo	Soft Alliance and Resources Ltd	Ojuolape House Central Business district (CBD), Plot 9 NERDC Rd, Alausa Ikeja	Technical support for phase IIIA (Nigeria Police Force)	2016
3	Mr. Dapo Apara	Infiniti Segments Ltd.	plot 258B, Etim Inyang, Crescent, Victoria Island Lagos	Phase IIIB (Federal Tertiary Institutions)	

Source: Author's Compilation based on google search

The table shows the contractors that provided service wide implementation network for IPPIS as well as technical support. The three Information Technology companies are indigenous with cognate experience in IT are located in Lagos.

Public/Civil servants Enrolment status on IPPIS as of July 2020

S/N	Items	MDAs	Staff Count
1	MDAs	558	389,758
2	Rtd. Heads of Service and Permanent Secretaries	1	266
3	Nigeria Police	43	292,653
4	Nigeria Army	1	120,368
5	Nigeria Navy	1	23,685
6	Nigeria Air Force	1	21,653
8	Nigeria Immigration Service	1	24,434
9	Nigeria Correctional Service	1	30,478
10	NSCDC	1	55,396
11	Universities	43	
12	Universities Research Institutions	5	106,280
13	National Open University of Nigeria	1	4,065
14	Federal Polytechnics	23	28,894
15	Federal Colleges of Education	21	23,100
	TOTAL	**701**	**1,121,031**

Source: Office of Accountant General of the Federation (OAGF, 2020)

The table shows the enrolment status of public servants as of July 2020. In total, 701 MDAs have been enrolled with 1,121,031 public servants on the IPPIS platform.

Ministry, Department and Agency not on IPPIS

S/N	MDAs
1	Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR)
2	Petroleum Product Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA)
3	Nigeria Nuclear Regulatory Authority, Abuja
4	Accident Investigation Bureau Abuja (AIB)
5	Petroleum Training Institute, Efurun, Delta State
6	National Intelligence Agency (NIA)

7	Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA)
8	Department of State Services (DSS)
9	West African Examination Council (WAEC).
Total	**9 MDAs**

Source: Office of Accountant General of the Federation (OAGF, 2020)

IPPIS Saving Cost and Eliminating Ghost Workers

The quality of government payroll administration has vastly improved, and an increasing number of MDAs are moving away from manual payroll administration. The MDAs have the necessary information for planning their personnel costs. IPPIS has actually reduced corruption by virtually eliminating ghost-worker syndrome where applied, thereby reducing the cost of governance. The Scheme has, from its launch in 2007 to December 2014, saved the government ₦185 billion (about US$1 billion), representing the difference between the money that government would have released to MDAs based on their estimated nominal roll submissions and the amount actually paid through the IPPIS platform. A breakdown of this shows that ₦416 million was saved in its first month of operation and ₦12 billion at the end of its three-year pilot phase. The scheme now covers 359 MDAs and has successfully enrolled 237,917 members of staff and weeded out 60,450 'ghost workers. Furthermore, it reduced the red tape involved in manual payroll administration (Olowu and Uke, 2023).

Achievements and Benefits of IPPIS

Within 17 years of IPPIS implementation, the payroll policy has recorded some remarkable achievements. These achievements notwithstanding are undermined with lots of challenges which were responsible for the slow pace of implementation. Some of the achievements are:

i. Improved prompt and regular payment of salaries of MDAs on IPPIS.
ii. Facilitation of prompt deductions and remittances to the accounts of all third-party stakeholders e.g., PFAs, NHIS etc.
iii. Over N361 Billion savings in personnel cost recorded between 2017 and 2019.
iv. Financial/personnel variances trends are easily accessible and available.
v. It makes personnel planning/budgeting easy since IPPIS is also a personnel management tool.

vi. Enforcement of compliance with due process on employment. IPPIS big data in various Organizations are being transformed into a rich source of information which could be leveraged to make rich decision about Government operations.
vii. Many of the Departments and Agencies having realized that personnel cost was no longer coming to them for direct disbursement, embarked on recruitment to utilize their approved manpower/personnel budget; Between September, 2011 and now, so many Nigerians have been employed in the IPPIS MDAs thereby reducing unemployment rate in the country; and
viii. MDAs are getting used to the application and many are currently managing their payroll at their respective offices without recourse to IPPIS Secretariat; (OAGF, 2020).

Benefits of IPPIS to the Country

a. Elimination of unauthorized personnel – workforce (ghost workers) from Government payroll.
b. Easy retrieval of personnel information of all public servants under the scheme.
c. Reduction in personnel records' falsification – record of service (including age, length of service; etc.
d. Salary/monthly emoluments are paid to all public servants on the scheme the same day no matter the location within the country without delay.
e. Actual personnel cost paid monthly/annually are easily accessible with reason(s) for fluctuation easily given.
f. The scheme as programmed effect automatic stoppage of payment to personnel due for retirement as a result of length of service, age and tenure thus reducing wastage or unauthorized payment.
g. All third parties' payment (cooperative deduction, tax, NHF, Union dues, etc.) are affected by employee's salary and paid directly and promptly to beneficiaries account on behalf of payee. Schedule of payment are made available to the beneficiaries.
h. Unapplied/unutilized funds are easily monitored.
i. Planning/budgeting for training of personnel can now be done easily since IPPIS is also a personnel management tool.

j. Savings to Government as a result of personnel cost over-budgeting; etc. (OAGF, 2020).

Challenges of IPPIS Policy Implementations

i. Increased need for training programmes for IPPIS Role Players in the MDAs and IPPIS secretariat respectively.
ii. Deliberate Institutional resistance by many MDAs in joining IPPIS in the face of set deadline for enrolment.
iii. Stiff resistance from the unions in the tertiary Institutions, especially ASUU in the Universities and resort to incessant blackmail of IPPIS on the media for self-seeking objectives.
iv. Inadequate Infrastructure: Poor internet connectivity to the Primary Data Centre (PDC) by MDAs on IPPIS and inadequate computer hardware for IPPIS Role Players. This inhibits efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.
v. Lack of well - defined Business Processes and Workflows in the solution deployed by the service provider is affecting the efficiency and effectiveness of the system, especially in the area of controls.
vi. Lack of standard operating impresses for the smooth running of the Office.
vii. Inadequate office accommodation and supporting tools for IPPIS Department.
viii. Inadequate motivational remuneration package for the IPPIS Staff.
ix. MDAs abandonment of internal complaints and resolution mechanism on variations in the public service but resort to social media and newspapers for undue attack on IPPIS and its leadership to sustain the status-quo at all costs through blackmail.
x. The IPPIS application has not been fully utilized. Of the seven modules on the software, only the payroll module is in appreciable use. The Human Resource modules, which are meant to manage staff recruitment, posting, promotion, training, discipline, and disengagement, are yet to be fully deployed for use by MDAs Service-Wide. The current vendor has not delivered everything contracted and paid for and the project management of the initiative has been weak.
xi. The existing structure for IPPIS is such that each of the key control agencies is in charge of a specific aspect of the Scheme. There seems not to be a

defined reporting line for these agencies, which slows down implementation. Albeit a proposed governance structure to take care of this challenge is awaiting approval.

xii. Most of the IPPIS Staff in the MDAs have not been exposed to Oracle Training and some of the few that received the training have been deployed to other MDAs (OAGF, 2020).

xiii. Corruption among IPPIS staff conniving with some MDAs officials for illegal recruitment or ghost workers as the case may be.

xiv. Lack of administrative decentralization hinders effective operations of IPPIS thus creating big problems for federal civil servants who must come to Abuja for payroll irregularities.

xv. Lack of proper synergy among the coordinating government agencies and major stakeholders has led to negligence and overlapping responsibility (Olowu and Adeyemi, 2022).

Conclusion and Recommedatios

The study examined IPPIS policy implementation In Nigeria and found that the policy has come to stay with high benefits and achievement which includes helping government to save money by blocking loopholes, proper records for personnel planning etc. despite the achievement and benefits of IPPIS policy implementation In Nigeria, lots of challenges still characterized the IPPIS policy implementation In Nigeria. These challenges notwithstanding, IPPIS policy has successfully replaced the archaic analogue payroll system. The following recommendations are suggested as follows:

i. ***Training and retraining of personnel:*** The implementation of IPPIS policy signified a paradigm shift from the archaic analogue system of payroll system to a more digital centralized payroll. No doubt the introduction has eased difficulty associated with salary payment, but the federal government still needs to pressurize the consultants on the need for the platform to accommodate more organizational peculiarities and also train enough personnel to handle the platform to eliminate the irregularity and inconsistency such as under and over payment as well as omission of federal civil servants' salary and other entitlements.

ii. ***Effective record keeping for personnel budgetary planning:*** IPPIS office should step up their data gathering efforts to meet the needs of personnel cost,

overhead cost and budgeting. As a matter of responsibility, the federal government should give IPPIS policy. A legislative backing in order to compel every federal employee to register their biodata on the IPPIS data bank. Even if some MDAs are exempted from using IPPIS payment platform, their employee's data should be captured for the purpose of budgeting and planning as well as effectively blocking loopholes and reducing payroll fraud to achieve sanity in salary administration.

iii. ***Synergy among stakeholders:*** there is need for all stakeholders to meet incessantly to synergize in order to surmount challenges, prompt response to complaints to avoid too many of such to accumulate. Accountant General of the Federation (OAGF) can establish a customer care cashier/desk officer that will be attached to MDAs to collate and respond to complaints.

iv. ***Remodification or redesign of platform:*** There is need to remodify the IPPIS platform to inculcate diverse peculiarities in order to ensure uniformity. Anybody who is found culpable of compromising the platform should be severely punished in accordance with the civil service laws to serve as deterrence and there is need for legislation to give IPPIS legal backing and more powers.

References

Akubo, J. ASUU, Senate Brainstorm on Way Forward for IPPIS, Union Want UTAS. The *Guardian Newspaper* Published on October 13, 2020 and retrieved onhttps://guardian.ng/news/asuu-senate-brainstorm-on-wayforward-for-ippis-union-want-utas

Amdii, I.E.S. (2010) Public Policy Analysis Lecture Notes. University of Abuja. Abuja: unpublished.

Armstrong M, and Brown D, (2001) New Dimensions in Pay Management, CIPD: London.

Armstrong, M. and T. Stephens, 2005. A handbook of employee reward management and practice. Kogan Page: London Background to the Nigerian Civil Service available at http://www.ohcsf.gov.ng/about_civil_service.html

Cochran C. L (2015:15). Public Policy: Perspectives and Choices, Third Edition,

Dlakwa, H. (2008), Concepts and Models in Public Policy Formulation and Analysis. Maiduguri: Pyla-Mark Services Ltd.

Effiong, S.A., Oro, B.L., Ogar, G.U., Imong, N.R., Jacob, G.E., and Iroushu, R.B. (2017). "Treasury Single Account (TSA), Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS), and Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS): Application and Implementation Effects on Fraud Management in the Public Sector in Nigeria". *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM) e-ISSN: 2278-487X, p-ISSN: 2319-7668. Volume 19, Issue 8. Ver. VII August, PP 22-30*

Enakirerhi, L.I and Temile, S.O. (2017) "IPPIS in Nigeria: Challenges, Benefits and Prospects International" *Journal of Social Science and Economic Research* ISSN: 2455-8834 Volume: 02, Issue: 05

Farajimakin, A.S and Anichebe, A.S. (2019) "Effect of Integrated Personal Payroll Information System on Employee Welfare: Evidence from Federal Ministries in Nigeria". *Australian. Journal of Arts and Scientific Research Vol.22. Not. pp. 1-143, March 20*19.

Fred Nwaozor "IPPIS Intrigues, Technicalities in Nigerian Varsities", The Guardian Opinion Published on 07/09/2020 and retrieved on 23/11/2020 https://guardian.ng/opinion/ippis-intrigues-technicalities-in-nigerian-varsities/

Howlett, M., & Ramesh M., (2003), Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy

https://www.globalgovernmentforum.com/commonwealth-countries-leading-the-world-in-civil-service-effectiveness

Ikelegbe, A.O. (2006), Public Policy Analysis: Concepts, Issues and Cases. Lagos: Imprint Services. Institute of Nigeria.

Integrated Personnel and Payroll System Operational Manual. Office of the Accountant General of the Federation. (OAGF), January 1,2008

Irish Times, (2002). 'Body Offers Neither Accountability nor Transparency'. Dublin, 4-7-2002: Irish Times.

Jibrin, M.S, Ejura, S.B, and Nwaorgu, I.A. (2015) 'System of Payroll in The Public Sector Administration', Asian Development Policy Review, 2015, 3(1):919

Kickert, W.J.M (1979) Organization of Decision Making: A System Theoretical Approach. Administrative Science Quarterly. Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company. Mintzberg.

King, D.K. (2016) Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousnesses: The context of a Black feminist ideology. In Race, Gender and Class. Routledge.

Leyira, C. M, and Temple M. (2018) IPPIS and the Ghost Workers' Syndrome in Nigeria's Public Sector. Scholars Journal of Economics, Business and Management (SJEBM) e-ISSN 2348-5302

Mela, K. (2019) the 'Implementation of IPPIS Policy in The Nigerian Universities: Benefits and Challenges' Global *Journal of Applied, Management and Social Sciences (GOJAMSS); Vol.17, August; P.201 – 212*

Nwosu, O. (2005) 'Importance of e-Payment'. *Financial Standard Newspaper* Vol 6 (25) Nigeria.

Olowu, O.F. and Adeyemi, S.O. (2021) The gains and pains of Integrated Personal Payroll Information System Policy Implementation in Nigeria. *Journal of Human Resources and Sustainability Studies*. Vol 9. No 4 December.

Olowu, O.F. and Uke, I.I. (2023) Payroll Administration Reform in Nigerian Civil Service: Assessing the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373019965_payroll_administration_reform_in_nigerian_civil_service_assessing_the_integrated_personnel_and_payroll_information_system [accessed dec 31 2024].