

**ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGES OF ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF PENCOM  
COMPANIES ON PENSIONERS' RECORDS IN ABIA STATE, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*This study concentrated on the challenges of organizational effectiveness of PenCom companies in Abia State, Nigeria and pensioners' records. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of 384 pension PFA/PFC staff in Abia State, Nigeria. The study used Krejcie and Morgan (1970) method of determining sample size to select 196 staff for data collection. Self-structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for the study; while descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) was used in analysing the collected data of the study. Findings revealed that there are various challenges facing organizational effectiveness of pension commission companies. The study concluded that PenCom companies in Abia State, Nigeria need to seat up on their obligations by rectifying the numerous challenges facing their organization. They need to work on their created records of pensioners to avert truncations on meeting their goals by paying pensioners as and when due.*

**Key Words:** Organizational effectiveness, PenCom, Pensioners, Records, Abia State

**Introduction**

For an organization to be effective, the issue of working together to achieve a common purpose through the mission, goals and objectives of the organization must be upheld. Organizational effectiveness studies are crucial in certain types of organizations, and it points out many of the weaknesses and criticisms of past investigations. Organizational effectiveness is attainable with the prudent, effective and strategic use of organizational internal resources such as finance, manpower and technology which are controlled by leaders (Opeke & Oyerinde, 2019). This means that achievement of effectiveness in organizations has relationship with how the organization is being anchored or governed.

Organizational effectiveness in pension management is globally an important and efficient method pension companies use to enhance security benefits of pensioners and performance of investments in the industry. In countries like United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, and host of other developed countries, pensioners are provided with various forms of great esteem and regards by all and sundry in terms of providing public transportation and giving them special seats, provision of social security financial support, health care programmes, recreational provisions and entertainment programmes free of charge (Uma & Ogwuru, 2015). Irrespective of the above quality treatment of pensioners in the countries mentioned, they are not immune to pensioners' challenges. Pensioners in Nigeria face enormous challenges accessing their retirement benefits and most times not receiving it at all which negatively impacts their welfare; even as PenCom exists for the effective regulation and supervision of the Nigerian Pension Industry to ensure that

retirement benefits are paid as and when due (PenCom, 2019). Some states of the federation are more affected in these crises like Abia state. PenCom, through their respective Pension Fund Administrators (PFAs) and Pension Fund Custodians (PFCs) under their watch, work closer with the pensioners in their different organizations. They keep records of the pensioners generated from the date of employment down to the date of retirement which includes the name, position/rank, marital status, email addresses, phone numbers, place of birth, date of birth, and next of kin. Others include their financial transactions through which their pensions will be deducted monthly. The Pension companies in Abia State and in Nigeria, according to studies, go through challenges related to fund management, records management, emotional/perception, manpower, internal organizational issues, and others as illustrated by Nweke (2015). Some of the problems are lack of biometric data capturing machine, high work load by the staff processing pensions, poor funding by the government and mismanagement of pension funds. Also, Popoola and Oluwole (2007) pointed out that Nigerian administrators from diverse organizations are disturbed at the rate at which dynamic records are lost or misplaced or sometimes the snail-like pace the records take before it may be retrieved by the personnel minding such crucial office. All these intertwine with what pensioners go through with pension commission companies in Abia State.

### **Statement of Problem**

The desire to cater for the livelihood of pensioners after long years of laboring is not something to write home about. Mapping out strategies and regulations to achieve this as enshrined in PenCom's mission statement or objective is a welcomed development. However, studies and observations of what pensioners go through in Abia State at present negate the stated objective or goal of PenCom. For instance, the pensioners on regular bases end up on the streets with cards crying for relief from the government. Many die in the process of longing for their self-earned money of which if it was given to them while at work would have been so useful to them (Ikokwu, 2019). PenCom in Abia State are facing challenges related to funds as diversion of pensioners funds, inability to pay pensioners as and when due, presence of ghost workers, dealing with old manual records, improper keeping of records, lack of sufficient trained manpower, non-remitting of employees contributions, poor communication with pensioners and borrowing of pension funds for other activities by government to mention but a few. In view of all these, this study intends to marshal out even some hidden challenges of PenCom so as to know how to solve them and earn satisfaction of the pensioners.

The specific objective of this study is to determine the challenges PenCom companies in Abia State, Nigeria go through. The research question is "What are the challenges PenCom companies in Abia State face?"

### **Literature Review**

Irrespective of decent goals of PenCom, it is regrettable to note according to Otinche (2013) that lack of public trust and confidence existed in the PenCom making their service delivery as a mirage. The inefficiency affected the pension industry where high deficit financing, huge pension arrears and other administrative irregularities were recorded. This led to owing pensioners many months of pension benefits. Poor records management in the PenCom Company and the poor attitude of staff of the traditional pension offices affect the management of pension finance and pensioners records. Uma and Ogwuru (2015) and Fuayefika (2014) lamented that the monthly stipend meant for the pensioners (senior citizens) does not come as and when due which compels the elderly to suffer untold hardship and ultimately have untimely death. National Human Rights Commission has stated that three million pensioners die each year due to lack of care and neglect by the Nigerian government or states after their conscientious services during their youthful ages. These people honestly contributed to the progress of the country. Instead of using their funds on them, Adewusi (2014) noted that the administration of pension funds is associated with exceptional corruption with some public officers, institutions of government and banks generously helping themselves to the said funds, and thereby denying pensioners their pension.

The pension situation in Abia State has degenerated from irregular payment to non-payment for nearly two years as the chairman of the Nigerian union of pensioners, Abia State Comrade Chukwuma Udensi stated, and wondered if the annual budget and monthly expenditure on pensioners has been jettisoned (The Sun Nigeria, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2019). Abdulazeez (2015) emphasized that PenCom companies use the invested funds collected from the employees and employers to create social contracts which enable them to have obligation to pay a fair wage, prompt and regular payment of both gratuity and pension of the retirees, to treat workers with dignity during and after they might have disengaged from active service, to compete on fair terms, and to respect common assets. These are obligations but from the practical point of view, the said pensioners suffer deeper than it could be imagined. In addition, a serious lacuna is discovered on inadequate coverage of the new adapted pension system to cover all citizens.

Lot of fear grips immediate working employees sighting the trends of events on the affairs of pensioners who the PenCom has vowed to protect till date. Abdulazeez (2015) pointed that on the management of the pension funds by PenCom, serial mismanagement and misappropriation of amounts earmarked for employees' pensions especially in the public sector. Nweke (2015) lamented that one of the major factor against good pension administration under the supervision of PenCom is embezzlement of funds meant for payment. Some instances ranges from the era of then President Olusegun Obasanjo when he was accused of refusing to arrest detain and prosecute top generals and some banks who allegedly embezzled about N22.2 Million meant for military pension funds. The case of Maina indicates how pension fund is embezzled that causes much harm to the lives of pensioners yet PenCom is still working. In Abia State, Pensioners under the umbrella of Abia Concerned Pensioners protested over unpaid pension and gratuities owed them. They claimed to be owed a backlog of pension arrears over a period of 32 months from 2014 till date. The statement further revealed that the pensioners were owed gratuity for 19 years, and non-harmonization of pensions from 1998-2010 (Ikokwu, 2019).

Nwokorie (2017) reiterated that despite numerous reforms and policies which Nigeria has metamorphosed from yet lack of transparency, manipulation by top administrative class and moral laxity exists in the public sector organizations of which PenCom is one of them. A corrupt organization can never be effective hence so many factors may be bridged. Symptoms of management ineffectiveness and efficiency crises could be seen from diverse ways as high level of corruption, declining labour productivity, and unfulfilled goals syndrome takes the order of the day. With this situation, many employees may prefer having their cash today rather than the promise of a pension tomorrow. Nwokorie (2017) put it that poor communication certainly leads to misperception, misjudgment, misunderstanding, as well as lack of enthusiasm and misinformation. He further explained that poor leadership leads to loss of confidence, trust, respect and unwillingness to submit to managerial authority. In the life of PenCom companies in Nigeria and Abia State in particular, these factors in one way or another hinders the efficiency and effectiveness of their company. It requires immediate attention.

Organizational effectiveness of PenCom companies in Abia State and Nigeria in general is challenged with the coordination of the intellectuals/professionals in the system to arrest the incessant problems of the pensioners. PenCom professionals are currently being confronted with the challenge of coping with the demand for knowledge-workers with issues relating to the hiring, training and retention of a skilled and competent workforce (Abdullah, 2009). Oghojafor, Muo and Aduloju (2012) stated that any organization that is not capable of been profitable by majoring in their objectives, may not survive talkless of being effective. Lack of clarification of policy or goals of organizations greatly affect the effectiveness of institutions. Furthermore, Steven (2019) identified that lack of awareness of current trends in the society diminishes the effectiveness of organizations. Blocking of leaders ear to the happenings around him and the environment will surely pull down the progress of the institution. This shows that lack of building capacity and information pipeline in the system helps intensively never to achieve the objectives of the organization. Bucata (2018), identified that lack of clear objectives by management increases challenges to the system. That is, inability to implement effective strategies, internal structure and workable processes in the

organization definitely lowers effectiveness of any organization. This implies that lack of customers’ satisfaction will pull down the dignity and scare more customers thereby making the organization ineffective. Dahir-Umar (2019) asserted that corruption; non availability and/or improper records/data storage and management in the system; improper investment of pension funds and inadequate funding of the scheme; incompetent and inexperience with lack of trained pension staff resulting to incoordination of administration. Others include inefficient and non-transparent system, weakness of the regulatory and supervisory agencies in monitoring pension scheme, compromise between the regulatory body and the government, act of government borrowing the organizations’ funds while the pensioners are dying.

Non-compliance of the objectives, vision and mission statements has hinders the potency of organizational effectiveness under PenCom which brings doubt about its effectiveness. To this end, lots of laments of pensioners from Abia State is noted thus: “We are protesting for over 20 months’ outstanding pension arrears. We want the government to settle us, our children are out of school, and we cannot pay house rent, we cannot pay anything, we want all to be paid” (Nwankwo, 2019, p 3). “We have been dehumanized and subjected to unimaginable deaths, chronic sicknesses and unfilled promises by the State government. That is why we embarked on a statewide prayer summit/protest to inform Abians and the world, in general, of the inhuman treatment we are facing since 1998 -2019” (Ikeokwu, 2019, p 2). It is equally indicated that improper records, endemic fraud and corruption leading to avoidable pains and misery for the retirees and beneficiaries (Anyim, Olusanya & Okere, 2014).

There are noted pension records and disbursement flaws pending on the way a record of pensioners in the public sector is kept and its procedure for payment of pension create problems. Abdulazeez (2014) concurred that no accurate record of actual pensioners exists as such creates room for more corruption in absence of facts and figures from records.

**Methodology**

This research adopts descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised of the 384 PenCom PFA staff obtained from the nine (9) Pension Fund Administrators in Abia State under the umbrella of The National Pension Commission (PenCom) in Nigeria. Using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) method of determining sample size, 196 of the staff were sampled for the study; while self-structured questionnaire was used for the study too. Validated Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure the reliability of the research instrument at 0.05% level of significance. The filled and retrieved questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) for the research question.

**Table 1. Sample Population of PenCom Companies in Abia State**

| S/N | Name of PFA companies         | Staff Strength | Sample taken from each PenCom (PFA/PFC) companies in Abia State |
|-----|-------------------------------|----------------|---|
| 1   | AIICO Pension Managers Ltd    | 52             | $196 \times 52 = 10192 / 384 = 27$                              |
| 2   | APT Pension Fund Managers Ltd | 42             | $196 \times 42 = 8232 / 384 = 21$                               |
| 3   | ARM Pensions                  | 41             | $196 \times 41 = 8036 / 384 = 21$                               |
| 4   | Crusader Sterling Pensions    | 38             | $196 \times 38 = 7448 / 384 = 19$                               |
| 5   | Leadway Pensure               | 44             | $196 \times 44 = 8624 / 384 = 23$                               |
| 6   | OAK Pensions                  | 46             | $196 \times 46 = 9016 / 384 = 23$                               |
| 7   | Premium Pensions Ltd          | 32             | $196 \times 32 = 6272 / 384 = 17$                               |
| 8   | Sigma Pensions Ltd            | 53             | $196 \times 53 = 10388 / 384 = 27$                              |
| 9   | Trust Fund Pensions Ltd       | 36             | $196 \times 36 = 7056 / 384 = 18$                               |
|     | <b>TOTAL</b>                  | <b>384</b>     | <b>196</b>  |

**Data Analysis**

**Research Question: What are the challenges of organizational effectiveness of Pension Commission companies in Abia State, Nigeria?**

Research question four was analyzed with frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation statistics. The result of the analysis is reported in Tables 2.

Table 2: Challenges of organizational effectiveness of PenCom in Abia State, Nigeria

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2021

| <b>Challenges of Organizational Effectiveness of PenCom:</b><br>Tick from the options provided the best answers to the statements: | <b>Strongly Agree (5)</b> | <b>Agree (4)</b> | <b>Moderately Agree (3)</b> | <b>Disagree (2)</b> | <b>Strongly Disagree (1)</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std.</b> |
|--|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Negative perception of employees   | 122(62.2)                 | 60(30.6)         | 14(7.1)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.55        | 0.62        |
| Reviews to gratuity and pension-for-life   | 122(62.2)                 | 59(30.1)         | 15(7.7)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.55        | 0.63        |
| Inability of understanding provisions of the Act   | 121(61.7)                 | 61(31.1)         | 14(7.1)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.55        | 0.62        |
| Capacity of operating institutions   | 121(61.7)                 | 60(30.6)         | 15(7.7)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.54        | 0.63        |
| Restrictions on withdrawals from savings   | 121(61.7)                 | 60(30.6)         | 15(7.7)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.54        | 0.63        |
| Non remitting of employees’ contributions by some employers  | 118(60.2)                 | 64(32.1)         | 14(7.1)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.53        | 0.62        |
| Fear of pension fund safety from state government interventions  | 117(59.7)                 | 66(33.7)         | 13(6.6)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.53        | 0.61        |
| Poor communication with stakeholders   | 118(60.2)                 | 64(32.7)         | 13(6.6)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.53        | 0.62        |
| Investments in unsecure money markets and stocks   | 118(60.2)                 | 63(32.1)         | 15(7.7)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.53        | 0.63        |
| Bad economy of the country in handling the stock markets   | 119(60.7)                 | 60(30.6)         | 17(8.7)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.52        | 0.65        |
| Pensioners dying on verification queues  | 119(60.7)                 | 60(30.6)         | 17(8.7)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.52        | 0.65        |
| Inability to meet organizational goals, objective/mission statements   | 115(58.7)                 | 67(34.2)         | 14(7.1)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.52        | 0.62        |
| Poor leadership in the system  | 114(58.2)                 | 69(35.2)         | 13(6.6)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.52        | 0.62        |
| Several pullouts or attempts to pull out from the scheme   | 118(60.2)                 | 60(30.6)         | 18(9.2)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.51        | 0.66        |
| Dealing with old manual records  | 113(57.7)                 | 70(35.7)         | 13(6.6)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.51        | 0.62        |
| Lack of all organizations/States in joining the contributory pension scheme of 2014 Act  | 114(58.2)                 | 68(34.7)         | 13(6.6)                     | 01(0.5)             | 0                            | 4.51        | 0.64        |
| Improper keeping of employees’ records which calls for recapturing of members regularly  | 116(59.2)                 | 63(32.1)         | 17(8.7)                     | 0                   | 0                            | 4.51        | 0.65        |

|  |           |          |          |   |   |      |      |
|--|-----------|----------|----------|---|---|------|------|
| Issues of fabrication of data to siphon pensioners' money by government officials.             | 111(56.6) | 72(36.7) | 13(6.6)  | 0 | 0 | 4.50 | 0.62 |
| Lack of sufficient training of manpower  | 114(58.2) | 65(33.2) | 17(8.7)  | 0 | 0 | 4.49 | 0.65 |
| Presence of ghost pensioners   | 112(57.1) | 67(34.2) | 17(8.7)  | 0 | 0 | 4.48 | 0.65 |
| Non-compliance to the contributory pension scheme by all states as approved by the Pension Act | 112(57.1) | 67(34.2) | 17(8.7)  | 0 | 0 | 4.48 | 0.65 |
| Inability to pay pensioners as and when due  | 110(56.1) | 69(35.2) | 17(8.9)  | 0 | 0 | 4.47 | 0.65 |
| Borrowing the pension funds by government while pensioners are yet to be paid                  | 106(54.1) | 72(36.7) | 18(9.2)  | 0 | 0 | 4.45 | 0.65 |
| Problems of retirement age   | 105(53.6) | 72(36.7) | 19(9.7)  | 0 | 0 | 4.44 | 0.66 |
| Diversion of employees' funds by senior administrators and fund managers                       | 97(49.5)  | 75(38.3) | 24(12.2) | 0 | 0 | 4.37 | 0.69 |
| <b>Challenges (Average Weighted Mean = 4.50)</b>   |           |          |          |   |   |      |      |

**Decision Rule:** 1.0-1.80 = Strongly Disagree; 1.81-2.60 = Disagree; 2.61-3.40 = Moderately Agree; 3.41-4.20 = Agree; 4.21-5.0= Strongly Agree.

Respondents were asked to identify challenges of organizational effectiveness of Pension Commission companies in Table 2. The result depicts generally that there are various challenges facing organizational effectiveness of Pension Commission companies (weighted average mean = 4.50). In the list of the challenges measured, the result showed that negative perception of employees (mean = 4.55), reviews to gratuity and pension-for-life (mean = 4.55) and inability of understanding provisions of the Act (mean = 4.55) constituted major barriers to organizational effectiveness of Pension Commission, on a scale of 5. This was closely followed by capacity of operating institutions (mean = 4.54), restrictions on withdrawals from savings (mean = 4.54), non-remitting of employees' contributions by some employers (mean = 4.53), fear of pension fund safety from state government interventions (mean = 4.53), poor communication with stakeholders (mean = 4.53) and investments in unsecure money markets and stocks (mean = 4.53). Other barriers to challenges of organizational effectiveness of PenCom companies in Abia State were shown in Table 2. This result suggests that management of PenCom should give serious consideration to resolving the aforementioned challenges of organizational effectiveness of Pension Commission companies.

### **Discussing of Findings**

The findings of research question on challenges of organizational effectiveness of PenCom companies in Abia State, Nigeria revealed that PenCom goes through numerous challenges though they are putting efforts to clear as many as they could. The result depicts generally that there are various challenges facing organizational effectiveness of Pension Commission companies (weighted average mean = 4.50). Having multiple challenges may hamper the effectiveness of PenCom in Abia State, Nigeria. Nwokorie (2017) reiterated that despite numerous reforms and policies which Nigeria has metamorphosed from yet, lack of transparency, manipulation by top administrative class and moral laxity exists in the public sector organizations like PenCom. Nwokorie equally stated that corrupt organization can never be effective hence so many factors may be bridged. Symptoms of management ineffectiveness and efficiency crises could be seen from diverse ways as high level of corruption, declining labour productivity, and unfulfilled goals take over their affairs. Poor communication in organization affects the effectiveness of such organization. Nwokorie (2017) put it that poor communication certainly leads to misperception, misjudgment,

misunderstanding, as well as lack of enthusiasm and misinformation. Accountability, managing the personnel and stakeholders, satisfying customers, equipment and technology are some of the key challenges they face (Bhargavi & Yaseen, 2016). Villegas and Valldares (2005) stated that the challenge most managers are facing in today's rapidly changing economy is to address right tools to evaluate their own performance against rival results. In addition, Oghojafor, Muo and Aduloju (2012) stated that any organization that is not capable of being profitable by majoring in their objectives, may not survive talkless of being effective. Therefore, PenCom in Abia State need to capitalize on the identified challenges to be that effective as expected of them and majorly walk towards paying their pensioners as and when due in view of their objectives.

### **Findings and Conclusion**

On challenges of organizational effectiveness of PenCom in Abia State, Nigeria, the result depicts generally that there are various challenges facing organizational effectiveness of Pension Commission companies (weighted average mean = 4.50 on a 5 point scale). This result indicated that PenCom companies in Abia State and Nigeria in general need to seat up to their obligations by rectifying the numerous challenges facing their organization especially on the created records of pensioners as to meet their personal set goals which enshrines paying the pensioners as and when due to leverage their predicaments.

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