

**ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION IN PROMOTION  
IMPLEMENTATION: A STUDY OF CROSS RIVER STATE CIVIL SERVICE  
COMMISSION, CALABAR**

**DR. EDINO, OJONIMI FERDINAND**

Dept. of Public Administration, Faculty of Social Sciences,  
University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

&

**EGOT, ESTHER BASSEY**

Dept. of Public Administration, Faculty of Social Sciences,  
University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

**ABSTRACT**

*This research is an assessment of the role of the Cross River State Civil Service Commission, Calabar in Promotion Implementation. Its specific objectives include: to find out whether or not the Commission delays in staff promotion when workers are due, to also find out whether promotion letters are released on time and whether or not workers get their financial benefits as soon as they are promoted. Three research questions were raised to guide the researcher. Survey research method was adopted, given the nature of the research. Accordingly, the researcher used the entire population of the Commission which is 84 staff for the study. No sample size was drawn from the population given the small size of the staff strength. Thus, 84 copies of questionnaire were administered to all the staff in order to generate relevant data for the study. However, only 80 copies were retrieved and analyzed. Two were not returned. The study found out that the Commission often delays in promotion of staff. Also, those promotion letters are not released on time as well as non-implementation of financial benefits immediately after promotion. Based on the findings, the study submits that the Commission should carry out its promotion functions promptly so as to boost the morale of workers.*

**Key words:** *Assessment, Civil Service, Commission, Promotion, Implementation*

**Introduction**

The Nigerian Civil Service has its origin from the British colonial administration. At independence in October 1960, under a constitution that provided for a parliamentary government, a substantial measure of self-government for the country's three regions was introduced. Since then, various panels have studied and have recommended for reformation of the Civil Service, including the Margan Commission of 1963, the Adebo Commission of 1971 and the Udoji Commission of 1972-74. With time, the 1979 constitution modeled the administrative system of Nigeria after that of the United States. The Dotun Philips Panel of 1985 also attempted to reform the Civil Service to improve efficiency and greater service delivery. Furthermore, the 1988 Civil Service Reorganization Decree promulgated by General Ibrahim Babangida had a major impact on the structure and efficiency of the Civil Service. The later report of the Ayida Panel made recommendations to reverse some of the past innovations and to return to the more efficient Civil Service of earlier years (Wikipedia, 2019). Apparently, the Nigerian civil service has undergone a series of reform over the years due to high

level of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in service delivery; with the aim of improving efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.

However, civil servants are often employed by the civil service commission. A Civil Service Commission is a government agency that is constituted by legislature to regulate the employment and working conditions of civil servants, oversee hiring and promotions, and promotes the values of the public service. Thus in Nigeria, the Civil Service Commission, at the federal and state levels are saddled with the responsibilities of recruiting, appointing, training, promoting, transferring, discipline and final disengagement of civil servants from service.

It is imperative to note that the Nigerian Public Service Rules provides the guidelines for the recruitment, appointment, training, promotion, transfer, discipline and final disengagement of civil servants from service. Thus the concern of this research is to critically examine the extent of compliance by the Cross River State Civil Service Commission with the guidelines for recruitment, appointment, training, promotion, transfer, discipline and final disengagement from service.

However this study focuses mainly on the aspect of promotion implementation in Cross River State Civil Service Commission. As SPARC, (2013) has rightly noted that In most civil service organisations, promotions take place on a regular basis, and promotions are often a matter of routine progress to the next most senior grade level. However, this is not an ideal approach, especially for specialist, professional and managerial posts. In these cases, every effort should be made to search for the most suitable candidate for the promotion, based on the needs of the post, the qualities and attributes of the candidate, and the need for transparency and equity, within the service promotion policies and rules.

SPARC maintains that the role of the human resources management (HRM) function in a modern promotion system is to:

- Ensure that the promotion policy of the service is clear. Public service promotion policies are usually based on a mix of seniority, qualifications and historical job performance. The relationship between these, and the weight given to each must be explicit
- Ensure that promotion procedures are systematic, equitable and published
- Ensure that the criteria for promotion are based on characteristics which are essential to the job, including skills, education, training and supervisory or managerial ability
- Ensure that appropriate mechanisms are used to identify candidates for promotion and to decide which candidates will be promoted. These can include promotion examinations and interviews as well as a simple review of seniority, qualifications and previous appraisal reports
- Ensure that Administrators are trained to base promotion decisions on neutral, job-based criteria applied equally to all candidates
- Ensure that promotion decisions are adequately documented (in the same way as selection decisions)
- Regularly review promotions to ensure that bias has not crept into the promotions system or to some promotion decisions. Make sure it doesn't eliminate certain categories of people from job advancement. Distribute job announcements widely, not just in public places of your workplace but also in newspapers and magazines.

### **Statement of the Problem**

From the background of this study, it is obvious that several problems are associated with promotion implementation in Nigerian civil service with focus on Cross River State Civil Service Commission, which amongst others include: partial compliance with promotion criteria, delay in releasing promotion letter, delay in implementing promotion benefits in terms of payment of arrears, allowances and other fringe benefits associated with promotion. Other problems which the research aims at investigating include: the quality of promotion examination and whether or not civil servants in Cross River State are actually examined for promotion.

### **Objectives of the study**

The broad objective of this study is to examine the role of Cross River State Civil Service Commission in promotion implementation, while the specific objectives are to:

1. Find out whether or not Cross River State Civil Service Commission delays in promoting staff.
2. Ascertain whether or not CRSCSC delays in releasing promotion letters.
3. Investigate whether or not CRSCSC pays financial benefits attached to promotion promptly.

### **Research questions**

In this research, the following research questions were raised to guide the researcher in the course of investigation so as to be able to achieve the aforementioned objectives of the study.

1. Does Cross River State Civil Service Commission delay in promoting civil servants that are due for promotion?
2. Does Cross River State Civil Service Commission Delay in releasing promotion letters to newly promoted staff?
3. Do Cross River State Civil Servants receive their financial benefits immediately after promotion?

### **Scope and limitations of the study**

In Nigeria, there is one Federal Civil Service Commission and 36 state Civil Service Commissions. The scope of this study covers promotion implementation as one of the key functions of Civil Service Commission with focus on Cross River State Civil Service Commission, Calabar. In terms of limitations, the researcher was actually constrained by inadequate data and indifferent attitude of respondents to supply relevant information needed for the study. Also, time and resources constituted a major challenge in the course of this research owing to the researcher's tight schedule in the workplace. However, as a result of persistent efforts, the researcher was able to overcome all the challenges and hence, the successful completion of this research.

### **Significance of the study**

This study will be a very useful source of research material to both practitioners and students of public administration and other interested researchers.

In addition, at the end of this research exercise, it will be certain that, this study has contributed immensely to the existing body of knowledge in the field of public administration with particular reference to the Cross River State Civil Service Commission, Calabar.

Furthermore, the study will serve as a useful source of reference to public administrators as the findings and recommendations herein would be of great assistance to them in administration of the Commission and the public service generally.

### **Definition of terms**

In this study, the following terms are defined in the context of this research.

- a) **Examination:** This implies the process of looking at and considering something carefully with the intention of learning something. In this wise, examination connotes the assessment of workers in terms of testing their abilities and competencies before promoting them to the next level.
- b) **Role:** means the part somebody or an organization plays in an action or event. In this study therefore, role is seen in terms of the part the Cross River State Civil Service Commission plays in promotion implementation.
- c) **Civil Service:** The civil service simply connotes government work force. It also implies all the ministries, departments and agencies of government and the people working in them to execute government policies.
- d) **Civil Service Commission:** A Civil Service Commission is a government agency that is constituted by legislature to regulate the employment and working conditions of civil servants, oversee hiring and promotions, and promotes the values of the public service.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **The Civil Service**

The term civil service refers to the “administrative structure employed in the fulfillment of government policies and development programmes. It is used to refer to public servants who are direct employees of federal and state governments other than the police, the armed forces, the judiciary, the teacher and the statutory corporation personnel” (Abdul Salami, 1988 in Bagaji, 2002:34). To Obiagbaoso (1995) cited in Bagaji (2002:35) the term civil service is used to describe the body of permanent officials whose duty is to assist the political executive in formulating government policies and implementing them.

The civil service is the great body of men and women that translates law into action from one end of the country to the other and brings the government into daily contacts with the rank and file of the citizenry. It is this reservoir of experience and knowledge that furnishes the cabinet and Parliament with much of the information required in shaping and enacting policies on a multitude of subjects (Areoye and Adekunle, 1971:98). Thus, the function of the civil service in a modern state is not merely the improvement of the government but it assures the continuity of any government.

### **Characteristics of the Civil Service**

Duru and Njoku (2014) outlined the principles and characteristics of the civil service as follows:

1. **Political neutrality:** this implies that the civil service translates government policies into action. Therefore, civil servants should be non-partisan in their behaviours and serve diligently, any government in power with equal zeal, devotion, loyalty and obedience.

2. **Commitment to government policies:** this is about total commitment on the part of civil servants in ensuring that government policies and programmes are adequately formulated and implemented through their commitment, dedication and loyalty in discharging their responsibilities.
3. **Subordination to the political executive:** this connotes a situation whereby the civil servants make proposals and recommendations to government, whereas, the power to make final decision rests on the political executives.
4. **Permanence in office:** civil servants spend more time in the office than the elected political executives whose tenure last for a period of 3 to 4 years. Political executives change as government changes but civil servants remain permanently in the office and serve any government that is in power until retirement.
5. **Anonymity:** this principle presupposes that civil servants can only be seen and felt but not heard. As they translate government policies into action, they make useful advice to government (their political executives) who bear the responsibility of both success and failure of policies.
6. **The merit system:** the merit system is entrenched in the civil service to ensure that most qualified individuals are recruited and utilized. Thus, there is a standard procedure for appointment, promotion and remuneration of civil servants. The merit system is geared towards eliminating corruption, ethnicity, nepotism, favouritism, sectionalism as well as political patronage in the civil service.
7. **Impartiality:** this implies that civil servants should not give preferential treatment to members of the public, regardless of ethnic, religious, tribal and sectional differences. Hence, there are rules and regulations guiding the conducts of civil servants. Also, there are government institutions such as the Ombudsman, Public Complaints Commission, serving as a means of seeking redress by the public in the case of injustice by the civil servants generally.
8. **Hierarchy:** hierarchy is the organization or arrangement of public office and personnel of various ranks and grades in systematic superior-subordinate relationship. One of the disadvantages of hierarchy is the fact that it causes delay in implementation of government policies and programmes (Ogunna et al, 1999).
9. **Rules and procedure:** in the civil service, things are expected to be done according to the established rules and procedure. These rules are found in general orders, financial regulations and established circulars among others, including the public service rules.

### **Civil Service Commission**

As earlier noted, Civil Service Commission is a government agency that is constituted by legislature to regulate the employment and working conditions of civil servants, oversee hiring and promotions, and promotes the values of the public service. The role of the Cross River State Civil Service Commission therefore includes: the appointment or recruitment, promotion, training and development, discipline, transfer and final disengagement of state government workers from service in accordance with the provisions of established laws.

## **Functions of the Civil Service Commission**

The civil service has three main functions: It advises the Government on policy matters. It helps prepare and draft new legislation and it helps the Government to run the country according to the legislation passed by the government (parliament).

## **Promotion and its Requirements in the civil service**

On a general note, promotion connotes advancement to a more senior job or a higher rank, grade or position in a workplace. Accordingly, section 7 Subsection 020701 of the Public Service Rules (2008) provides as follows:

- a. Except where powers of appointment or promotion have been delegated, no promotion shall be effective until they have been approved by the commission.
- b. All officers who fall within the field of selection for any promotion exercise shall be considered except those who are under disciplinary action. The minimum number of years that an officer must spend in a post before being considered eligible for promotion shall be as follows:

Officers on grade level 06 and below     minimum of 2 years

Officers on grade level 07 – 14 minimum of 3 years

Officers on GL 15 – 17 minimum of 4 years.

- c. Promotion shall be made strictly on the basis of competitive merit from amongst all eligible candidates
  - (i) In assessing the merit of officers, a clear distinction shall be made between their records of performance or efficiency in lower grade and their potential for promotion, i.e ability and competence to perform the duties and responsibilities of the higher post efficiently.
  - (ii) Seniority and previous records of performance will be taken into account in choosing between candidates with equal potential for promotion.
  - (iii) In all cases, however, a general satisfactory record of conduct shall be considered.
- d. The responsibility for the promotion of officer shall be as follows:
  - (i) GL 06 and below – by the ministry/extra-ministerial office.
  - (ii) GL 07 – 14 by the ministry/extra-ministerial office or the relevant staff pool subject to confirmation by the Service Commission
  - (iii) GL 15-17 by the Service Commission recommendation from ministry/extra ministerial office or the relevant pool routed through the Head of Civil Service.

Subsection 020702 states that “Before each promotion exercise, the appropriate officer shall compile a list of eligible candidates to be considered, the list being prepared on the basis of the job requirement or set of criteria established for the post by the office of the Head of Service..., e.g. Qualification/experience, age, training. Performance e.t.c, as contained in the scheme of service. Furthermore, subsection (b) provides that “Officer shall qualify for promotion to higher grade after acquiring the skill and competence as provided in the scheme of service for the particular cadre.”

With respect to promotion from junior to senior post, Subsection 020703 states as follows “The appropriate committee shall meet to interview and consider officers holding junior appointment in the Ministry/Extra Ministerial office who may be recommended to the ... Commission which shall examine the suitability of the officers so recommended and their promotion to existing vacancies”.

### **Effective date of Promotions**

The effective date of all promotions shall be 1<sup>st</sup> January of the year for which the promotion exercise was conducted or as may be determined by the ... Commission.

### **Promotion Challenges in the Civil Service**

One of the major challenges associated with promotion in the Nigerian Civil Service is the delay in payment of financial benefits to officers. As Bakoyo (2018) rightly stated:

“... the question of promotion arrears in the first instance is caused by us. In the sense that if we have done what we are supposed to do, and do it on time, then the question of arrears wouldn't have come up. It means that essentially, a man is ready for promotion in January or June, you have completed that process at that time, and it is possible, if we do what we are supposed to do. But even if you don't complete it right on time, it is just a question of one or two months. So we have seen situation where there is backlog of promotion, but, unfortunately, some being promoted three years after. That is a reality”. ([www.vangurdngr.com/2018/09/challenges\\_of\\_civil\\_service](http://www.vangurdngr.com/2018/09/challenges_of_civil_service)).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The framework of analysis used in this study is the Bureaucratic Theory as propounded by Max Weber. This theory is believed to have adequate analytical strength to explain the study. This is justified by the fact that, a bureaucratic organization like the Civil Service Commission characterized by officials working under rules, regulations and procedure and a clear structure of command which are typical of the Weberian ideal type bureaucracy. Max Weber (1947) in Idakwoji and Paul (2012, p. 42) outlined some basic characteristics of bureaucracy which an organization must meet for such an organization to become efficient and effective. These characteristics include:

- (a) A hierarchically defined authority structure, with limited areas of command and responsibility;
- (b) A specified sphere of competence;
- (c) Strict and systematic adherence to discipline and control in the conduct of official duties;
- (d) Recruitment based on merit and technical qualifications;
- (e) The existence of a career structure with a system of promotion based on seniority, merit or both;
- (f) A system of remuneration in the form of salary with a right to position;
- (g) Impersonality of official.

In Weber's view therefore, the above characteristics, if followed would lead to precision, orderliness, efficiency and effectiveness of an organization. The ideal model postulated by Weber, according to Oko & Uyionore (2003) cited by Paul (2012, p. 23) promotes the existence of a system of control based on rules which regulate the whole organizational structure and serve as apparatus for the achievement of maximum efficiency. Using the above premise, what comes to mind is the question of the extent of compliance or application of the Weberian ideal type bureaucracy in the Cross River State Civil Service Commission, Calabar in terms of promotion implementation. As Adamolekun (2006) rightly observed the idea of neutral competence or authority of expertise is that, appointed officials who are recruited/selected on the bases of competence and expert knowledge, skills and experience are valuable for conducting the partisan inclination. This role was put succinctly in the British context in the 1954 North Cote-Trelyon Report which states that permanent officers subordinates to ministers yet possessing sufficient independence, character, ability and experience to be able to advise, assist and to some extent to influence those who are from time to time set above

them (Adamolekun, 2006). Based on the above premises, Key (1942), in Hembe (1997) opines that, politicians dominate the issues which have a high content of political judgement and a low content of technical expertise, while administrators dominate the issues with a high content of technical judgement, (e.g. science and technology matters), and that in regard to issues both a high content of political judgement and technical expertise, politicians and administrators take decisions by cooperative effort as partners in a joint enterprise (e.g. the budget process).

The existence of the above situation as given by Adamolekun (2006) would enable the career officials to serve an incumbent government with competence, loyalty and fairness. The interactions between the two groups with reference to cooperation, partnership, trust and loyalty, that is implied by their joint enterprise will provide over all leadership of governmental administration. In the Nigerian situation of our time as viewed by Akinola (2004), the expected partner, trust and loyalty have been ruined by the politicization of appointment in the civil service thus, hampering governmental efficiency, effectiveness and service delivery.

### **Research Design**

Given the nature of this research, survey method was adopted whereby the case study is identified, the population of the study, sample size and sampling technique as well as methods of data collection and analysis. This serves as the blueprint with which the researcher was guided in the course of the research.

### **Area of Study**

The area covered in this research is the Cross River State Civil Service Commission, Calabar with specific focus on issues associated with promotion implementation.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study is the entire staff of the Cross River State Civil Service Commission in Calabar which is 84. The Commission has the following departments: Appointment/Recruitment Department, Promotion Department, Discipline and Appeal, Department, Administration /Human Resource Management Department, Finance and Supply Department and Planning, Research and Statistics Department.

### **Sample size and Sampling Technique**

Given the size of the population of this study, which is 84 staff, the researcher decided to adopt the entire population since the population is not too large to be managed. Hence, there was no need for sampling.

### **Method of Data collection**

Both primary and secondary methods were used in data collection. In terms of primary method, the researcher employed questionnaire and interview to generate data, while information gathered from text books, journals, newspapers and government publications served as the secondary data

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The method adopted in analyzing data is the use of statistical tables and simple percentage to validate or invalidate the research hypotheses based on the responses of the respondents.



## DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### Data Presentation and Analysis

The data collected from the field are organized, presented and analyzed using table and percentage as follows:

**Table 4.1** Distribution of Respondents by Age

SEX	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Male	50	60
Female	34	40
Total	84	100

Source: Edino & Egot, field work, 2019

The table above shows that out of the 84 staff of the Cross River State Civil Service Commission, 50 representing 60 percent of the population are males while 34 representing females constitutes 40 percent of the population.

**Table 4.2** Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualification

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
PRIM. SCH CERT./SSCE	12	14
OND/NCE	17	20
MGT. DEVT. INST CERT	11	14
HND/BS.c	33	39
MASTERS	6	7
Ph.D	5	6
TOTAL	84	100

Source: Edino & Egot, field work, 2019

Table 4.2 above indicates that out of a total number of 84 staff of the Commission, 12 have primary school certificate and or SSCE (14%). 17 have OND/NCE (20%), 11 staff have Management Development Institute Certificate (14%), 33 have HND/B.Sc (39%) while only 6 staff have a Master's degree (7b%) and 5 of the staff are Ph.D holders (6%).

The essence of this is to enable the researcher determine the degree of knowledge of the respondents.

**Table 4.3** Responses to Research question one: "Does Cross River State Civil Service Commission delay in promoting civil servants that are due for promotion?"

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	30	37.5
Strongly Agree	45	56.25
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	5	6.25
Undecided	0	0
Total	80	100

Source: Edino & Egot field work, 2019

Table 4.3 above reveals the responses of the staff of the Cross River State Civil Service Commission when they were asked whether or not the Commission delays in promoting staff that are due for promotion. 30 staff representing 37.5% of the population agreed, 45 respondents, representing 56.25% of the staff population strongly agreed while 5 staff, representing 6.25% strongly disagreed.

Table 4.4 Responses to Research Question two: Does Cross River State Civil Service Commission Delay in releasing promotion letters to newly promoted staff?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	25	31.25
Strongly Agree	45	56.25
Disagree	5	6.25
Strongly Disagree	5	6.25
Undecided	0	0
Total	80	100

Source: Edino & Egot, field work, 2019

Table 4.4 shows the responses of 80 staff of the Commission when they were asked if the Commission delays to release promotion letters to staff. 25 staff (31.25%) agreed. 45 of them representing 56.25% strongly agreed while only 5 disagreed and another 5 strongly disagreed which is equivalent to 6.25 and 6.25% respectively.

Table 4.5 Responses to Research Question three: Do Cross River State Civil Servants receive their financial benefits immediately after promotion?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	0	0
Strongly Agree	0	0
Disagree	35	43.75
Strongly Disagree	45	56.25
Undecided	0	0
Total		100

Source: Edino & Egot, field work, 2019

Furthermore, table 4.5 shows the responses of 80 staff of the Commission who were asked the question if the Commission implements financial benefits for workers as soon as they are promoted. 35 of the staff disagreed (43.75%) and 45 representing 56.25 strongly disagreed that the Commission does not implement financial benefits of workers that are promoted, immediately.

### Discussion of Findings

Basically, this study was carried out to assess the role of the Cross River State Civil Service Commission in promotion implementation as one of its fundamental functions. From the three research questions raised, and the responses obtained from the respondents, the followings are the findings of this research: that indeed, the Commission often delays in promoting its staff. This implies that the staff that are due for promotion in a particular year often times, are being delayed. The Commission would not commence the process on time. Consequently, there are backlog of staff to be promoted. As Bakoyo (2018) rightly stated:

“... the question of promotion arrears in the first instance is caused by us. In the sense that if we have done what we are supposed to do, and do it on time, then the question of arrears wouldn't have come up. It means that essentially, a man is ready for promotion in January or June, you have completed that process at that time, and it is possible, if we do what we are supposed to do. But even if you don't complete it right on time, it is just a question of one or two months. So we have seen situation where there is backlog of promotion, but, unfortunately, some being promoted three years after. That is a reality”. ([www.vanguardngr.com/2018/09/challenges-of-civil](http://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/09/challenges-of-civil))

The study also found out that promotion letters are not released on time due to unnecessary administrative procedures and bottlenecks. At times, it takes several months for the letters to be ready and dispatched, thereby putting the staff in a perpetual state of worries and anxiety.

Finally, the study found out that apart from the delay in the commencement of promotion process and release of promotion letters, workers also experience backlog of promotion arrears. This is a situation whereby somebody is promoted without getting the financial benefits on time. Confirming the assertion, the International Centre for Investigative Reporting ICIR, (2017) reported that the Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria (ASCSN) issued a 14-day strike notice to the federal government over promotion indebtedness to civil servants. No doubt, such delays in the implementation of promotion benefits have negative effect on workers' morale.

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Summary**

This study focused on assessment of the role of Cross River State Civil Service Commission in promotion implementation. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the work was structured into five chapters. Chapter one dealt with background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, scope and limitations of the study, significance of the study and definition of terms. Chapter two concerned itself with review of relevant literature and theoretical framework. Chapter three contains the research methodology and chapter shows data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings while chapter five dealt with summary, conclusion and recommendations.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of the research revealed that the Cross River State Civil Service Commission actually plays vital roles in promotion implementation. However, over the years, there are issues associated with promotion implementation such as delay in promotion process, not releasing promotion letters on time and non-payment of financial benefits to workers as at when due. This study therefore concludes that non-implementation of promotion benefits has negative effect on workers' morale and productivity. It can also lead to industrial conflict between the management and the employees.

### **Recommendations**

The following are the recommendations of the researcher:

1. The Commission should always endeavor to commence promotion exercise on time and when due by putting in place all the necessary arrangements and logistics in order to avoid delay and backlogs.
2. The staff should be served or issued their promotion letters on time without delay as this serves as morale booster.

3. Implementation of promotion benefits, especially financial benefits should take immediate effect rather than allowing it to accumulate, culminating to arrears of promotion

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