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Original Research Paper

Emerging Trends in Kogi State Civil Service System of Nigeria

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Through content analysis method, this paper highlighted that despite the efforts of successive governments in Kogi state in strengthening the civil service through the initiation of reform measures, it has not been able to convert the opportunities into good account in qualitative service delivery. Following this development, this paper identified the fact that the civil service has also not been able to justify its existence as an organ of the executive arm of the government in the state due to internal and externally-inflicted limitations. These restrictions according to the paper are not far-fetched from inability to pay the salaries of civil servants at subsistence levels, incidence of arbitrary retirement/retranchment, absence of ethics, political partisanship to overstaffing of the system. The paper canvassed for among others the movement from simply piloting traditional-political approaches in public service delivery to transformed services on a developed scale, prioritizing salaries/allowances payment by the state government, and genuine overhauling of the headship of most of the agencies so as to bring in young, vibrant technocrats that represented the best in their various professions.

Keywords: Trends, Civil Service, Reform, Reorganization.

INTRODUCTION

According to Adegoroye (2013:71), at the restoration of democracy in Nigeria in May 1999, after 16 years of continuous military rule, the country was faced with a number of internal and external challenges. Internally as he noted is the socio-economic setting of the nation which was manifesting compelling challenges such as economic downturn, near collapse of national infrastructures; high unemployment, widespread corruption, massive poverty, low investor confidence and excruciating debt overhang. Externally were the challenges posed by the new wave of globalization that Nigeria, like all developing nations needed to address. Also, global trends were manifesting significant changes in the role of government and business driving forces.

Nations were moving from government to governance; and the new ethos were: meeting citizens' expectations" in the quality and efficiency of services delivered; mobilizing scarce resources to "achieve more with less", "decentralization" instead of centralization and "networks" instead of hierarchy. The indispensability of civil service in these challenging situations in any regime of a nation as Okoli (2010:146) reiterated, cannot be overemphasized. Consequently, it is an axiom that no nation develops beyond the competence of its

civil service, and there is still today an open agreement amongst Nigerians that the public service is wrecked and dysfunctional. In the submission of El-Rufai (2013:90), the quality of public servants and the services they provide to our nation are both below expectations.

Following the glorious days at Kogi State creation on August 27, 1991, the best and the brightest graduates competed to join the administrative service of the state up till 2003. However, the condition of the Kogi State and local government civil service is more recently perceived as an employer of the dull, the lazy and the venal personnel. Though the civil service is the brain box of the modern governments yet the system in Kogi state has been characterized by poor performance and inability to translate government policies and programs to reality.

Simultaneously, politicians and public administrators are faced with the challenge of redefining the role of government in public service delivery, socio-economic growth and development. Politicians are worried about the future of society, as well as their own political staying power in the midst of quest for rapid change. Civil servants are demoralized and

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uncertain about downturn nature of the system, particularly in a democratic setting.

Many state governments in Nigeria have been unable to keep the salaries of civil servants at subsistence levels. As a result of this, many civil servants have been forced to take second and third jobs, or to resort to other means to survive economically (Abochi, 2015:13). The consequence of this situation hangs on the reality that development projects have been affected, and many projects are left incomplete except those fully funded and staffed through external and international sources outside the civil service. Hence, this article seeks to unravel the pertinent trends and its consequences on the development and efficiency of the civil service in Kogi State; thereby recommending corrective measures that will re-stage the system.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nigerian political and administrative classes are faced with the challenge of redefining the role of government in socio-economic growth and development. Economic survival and the completion of many development projects and programmes have been severely affected. Hence, Wilmot (1989:12) believed that politicians are much concerned with power retention whilst the citizen's are thirsty for rapid socio-economic change. Civil servants on the other hand who ought to be drivers of public policy formulation and implementation are demoralized and uncertain on the emerging trends in the entire structure which have hindered motivation to perform effectively. Therefore, the Punch (2015:26) editorialized that:

The trend of effectiveness that saw Nigeria through the three national development plans and drove growth in the 12, and later 19, states has collapsed and the federal and state bureaucracies of today have become hindrances, rather than accelerators of development. They have become bastions of corruption, indolence, nepotism and oppression.

The current paralysis of the public service in many states of the federation is only the latest manifestation of the Nigerian national development crisis. This is so because; it is the civil service system of any nation that drives the government which its traditional function is the maintenance of law and order, and the management her national development programmes. Dating back from its many centuries of evolution, the civil service or the public service is universally acknowledged to be the engine room that lubricates the wheel of governance in any society or geo-polity (Kogi Public Service News Magazine, 2012:5).

This therefore emphasizes the indispensability opined by Ochagana (2012:11) and the crucial role of the civil service in the entrenchment of good governance, integrity and due process. At independence, Nigeria inherited a career civil service system which was actively transplanted by the politico-administrative elite. The civil service after the transplantation trickles down to all the three tiers of government (Federal, State and Local) in Nigeria and was considered a "noble career".

Therefore, Emma and Eme (2011:18) in PAUL, Usman and Alih (2013:20) referred to the civil service as a branch of the government which is grouped into the Executive without which governments cannot function. Paradoxically, in the context of the palaver that has characterised our national politics, it (the civil service) has acquired a terrible record of lack of commitment to meeting the basic needs and aspirations of the Nigerian citizens (Jega, 2007:274). While realising their

(governments) changing roles and increasing diversity of funding sources, they have not come to grips to managing these change drivers.

To be sure, as Jega (2007:274) posited, the Nigerian public service has arguably the best-trained and experienced technocrats and bureaucrats in comparison with any other African country. Possibly, El-Rufai (2013:90) said;

Of course, we realized that most of the rich people around us either worked for the government and very early on, I had an impression that public service was one route to being comfortable-even then there were rumours of some corruption in the public service, but in 1960s and 1970s, the civil service was perceived as clean. Indeed, civil service work was the honest pathway for belonging to the middle class. I am sure in Lagos there were people living comfortably who were not in the civil service, but in most of the north, other than the traditional commercial centers of Kano, Gombe, Gusau, Maiduguri, Jos and Funtua, this was mostly the case.

However, it is observed that the glorious days of the civil service which was the panacea that created an effective public service delivery has disappeared. The service came to be characterized by lack of professionalism, endemic corruption, slowness and inefficiency, and crass selfishness and greed (Jega, 2007:274). In a similar argument, PAUL, Usman and Alih (2013:20) noted that the civil service is (now) faced with continuous corruption, and embezzlement of public fund, unprogressive mindedness and resistance to reforms, arbitrarily large to the extent of having placement for political touts, excessive political intrusion and lack of accountability.

In Kogi State, the civil service since the creation of the State in August 1991 has gone through two influences. These are military and now the civilian administrations respectively. These influences notwithstanding retain certain common commitments, albeit in varying degrees-for example, career orientation for civil servants and the use of the Public Service Commission for promotion, discipline, and the rule reinforcement for the civil service (Otobo, 2005:296). Most importantly, it can be viewed that the civil service during the regime of military administrators fared well when compared with the civilian regime since 1999-date.

The Kogi State civil service under the military as Idakwoji (2012:46) submitted was said to have witnessed some level of due process which fairly conform to the civil service procedure. In essence, appointments were made in the civil service with due regard to qualifications and competence, and as such, discipline was said to have been maintained in the service (Ogunmola, 2009:68 in Idakwoji, 2012:46). Therefore, the civil service was defined as "the civil service" known for efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation and execution of public policies and programmes during the period of military administration in Kogi State.

Nevertheless, the civil service unethically witnessed an entirely different situation under the civilian rule particularly from 2003-date in Kogi State. Attah (2009:18); Adepoju (2009:10); Abalaka (2010:24), in Ichado (2012:34) agreed that the civil service in Kogi State has been over-stressed and manipulated to an extent that it is seen as an appendage of the ruling party in the State. It is reported that:

The period between 2003-2010 yet marked another administrative style which did not only ignore and side-step civil service procedures, but also marked an era in which the civil service was seen as not being in any way separate from political party in power but synonymous as one could meddle with the other. This era marked the period when civil

servants were made to be partisan, attend political party meetings and rallies (campaigns), make political statements at rallies, etc and politicians interfere with bureaucratic matters without due regard to civil service procedure (Ogunmola, 2009:68 in Idakwoji, 2012:47).

In a nutshell, Anagode, Okoye and Chukwuemeka (2012:8), in PAUL, Usman and Alih (2013:20) posited that for decades, the civil service has mainly served the interest of bureaucrats and engaged in the accumulation of public resources for private gain. Besides, corruption and nepotism perpetrated through god-fatherism and those who know who, Yusuf (2007:3) reported, are apparent in Kogi State civil service. From the foregoing, this paper shall examine the following guiding questions;

- What are the recent trends in Kogi state civil service?
- How have these trends affected the system? and
- What remedial measures can be put in place to change the situation?

THE CIVIL SERVICE: A BRIEF RE-EXAMINATION

The current principles and practices of public administration no doubt were developed and formulated around the centrality of the State and the civil service in the process of national development. Therefore, the United Nations Development Programmes (2012:52) reported that while the role of the State in national development continues to be important, consensus is shifting about the precise functions to be assigned to the State vis-a-vis other institutions and non-governmental organizations, and the appropriate modalities for discharging different national functions. For example, while maintaining a policy roles, many States have opted for competitive instrumentality of effective and efficient service delivery. To this end;

"White (1958) observed that many elements combine to make good administration: leadership, finance, morale, methods and procedure, but the greater than any of these is manpower". Well thought-out and well planned policies fail to succeed and the best organizations based on scientific principles break down if the human material is not competent to execute the work. In fact, no activity of public administration can be performed today without civil servants. The days of laissez faire are now gone. Under the impact of science and technology, the activities of states have multiplied. At every step the citizen comes into contact with the personnel who are the "sovereign factor in public administration" (Bhagwan and Bhushan, 2005:317).

As Nwabuoku (2009:193) alleged, government is a social institution designed to moderate the excesses of individuals and component units and endure that the common good is promoted and protected. However, government roles have changed (Ratepayers Victoria Inc., 2015). Historically, the government was the service provider of road, property and rubbish services. It stated further that, in the 1970s, these roles extended to include community and human services, and funding sources become more diverse to include new "user-pays" transactional fees and penalties, grants and subsidies.

Today, other new services like security and safety, employment provision, health, library, social welfare, etc also are included. Recently, it also receives fund allocations for certain infrastructural development and capital projects. To ensure that these goals are achieved the civil service system is reinvented.

The civil service is one of the greatest political inventions of the nineteenth century England, argued Kapul et al (2002:105), in Yusuf (2013:33) and that the first generation of civil servants was called "Court servants" or "Court clerks". He wrote further that before the era of court clerks, the work of government was done by persons of the royal household. Originally, as Wey (1971:2) cited by Yusuf (2013:33) made it known, the "civil service" terminology was coined in the mid-eighteenth century (1785) from the British administration in India to illustrate a system that emphasizes selection of manpower on the basis of merit.

Collins English Dictionary (2003) referred to the civil service as service responsible for the public administration of the government of a country. It explained further that it excludes the legislative, judicial, and military branches. Members of the civil service have no official political allegiance and are not generally affected by changes of governments. In other words, the civil service encompasses employment in Federal, state or provincial and local governmental agencies (Rosenberg McKay, 2015). Civil Service in view of its term for all nonmilitary employees of government; sometimes referred to a merit system (an approach to staffing based on formal qualifications for selecting, retaining, and promoting employees) as opposed to both the spoils system and the patronage system, which select employees and award government contracts on the basis of party affiliation or loyalty (LeMay, 2002:208).

The Constitution of the Federal of the Republic of Nigeria (1999), section 218, and subsection 1, define the civil service as:

The service of the federation in a civil capacity as staff of the office of the president, the vice-president, a ministry or department of the government of the federation assigned with the responsibility for any business of the government of the federation; while in respect to state civil service of the state in a civil capacity as staff of the office of the Governor, Deputy Governor or a ministry or department of the government of the state assigned with the responsibility for any business of the Government.

African scholars like Olowu and Erero (1997); Otobo (2005); Omale (2005); Ademolekun (2006); and Oluopa (2008) have commonly established that civil service as a concept in administrative studies is commonly used as the machinery of the government that translate both minor and major policies and decisions of the government into actions in the sub-Saharan African common wealth countries. In British conception, the civil service is used to refer to the body of permanent official appointed to assist the decision makers. On this note, Yusuf (2013:38) dissected the term "service" to connote a profession, a group of civil servants having common recruitment conditions and prospect, as well as a "career" in an acceptable lifetime employment under the government.

The term civil service is normally used when referring to the body of men and women employed in a civil capacity and non-political career basis by the federal and state governments, primarily to render and faithfully give effect to their decision and implementation (Ipianya, 2001), in Yusuf (2013:339). He noted further that such career officers normally derive their appointment from the Civil Service Commission (CSC), which also exercises the power of delegating duties and responsibilities to departments in accordance with laid down rules.

Today, the civil service has come to be seen as a complex organization and a modern institution baguettted to mankind in the process of revolutionizing an efficient way of organizing

any large human organization (Ipianya 2001, in Yusuf, 2013:39). The civil service is otherwise defined as a bureaucracy (Idakwoji, 2012:33).

Civil service is an organization of people who are directly responsible for the execution of government policy; it includes everybody who participates in the execution of public policy from the messenger to the top administrative officer (Nwizu, 2002). Therefore, the civil service can be considered as a body of men and women who are professionally trained and engaged by the government under a given condition, and on a permanent basis to deliver services to the people of the state. It can be explained more that it does not involve the Armed Forces personnel and judicial officers.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

Henry (2004:249) opined that the general civil service system is the career personnel who have tenure and who are administered according to traditional civil service practices, its overriding characteristic is the emphasis that is placed on the position; its description of duties, responsibilities, requirements and qualifications. Agba, Ochimana and Abubakar (2013:112) reported that the public service of any country (state) is regarded as a transformational institution because of its timeliness, responsibility of implementing public policies and programmes and the rendering of essential services to the masses.

Therefore the progress and democratic governance is largely determined by the quality and output of the civil service as reflected by the efficiency of its operators (Kogi Public Service News Magazine, 2012:5). As a public personnel system, civil service has been the historic locus of public administration. The civil service system values the notions of neutrality, merit, and distance from politics (Henry, 2004:249). The Nigerian situation as viewed by Olowu and Eero (1997:11) remains the formal structure of government that has increasingly become a fiction, thereby causing a reduction in the quality of services rendered (Asa and Oladoyin, 2014:43). Nevertheless, the features and output of the civil service are represented in the table 1 below.

Following these characteristics, the civil service is responsible for the formulation and implementation of government policies. To be able to assign responsibility for activities or group of activities, the civil service is divided into Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments (Ochagana, 2012:10). However, in Nigeria between 1967 and 1975 the higher civil servants as Otobo (2005:297) highlighted, dominated the policy process, leading to virtual loss of the attributes of political neutrality, anonymity, and impartiality.

Against this background, between 1975 and 1979, the role of civil servants in the policy process became less pronounced (Ademolekun, 1986 in Olowu, 2005:297). Olowu identified three major reasons that are attributable to the situation. These are the:

- i. Mass dismissals or "purges" of the civil service in 1975/1976 and 1984/85 made civil servants more circumspect and less likely to take a high profile in policy making.
- ii. Appointments of advisers to government with strong technical skills in various disciplines have reduced governments' reliance on civil servants.
- iii. Economic reforms, especially privatization and commercialization of public enterprises, have also reduced the opportunities for the appointment of

higher civil servants to the boards of parastatals, thus curbing their influence.

THE TRENDS

Itoduma (2013:22) wrote that the nature of public service delivery in Kogi State is poor. Essential services like education, healthcare, quality of the environment and security of life and property are found wanting in State. These aforementioned situations emanated from the following emerging trends which include:

Non-Payment of Salaries and Allowances

It is obvious that many state's civil servants have been forced to take second and third jobs, or to resort to other means for survival as a result of nonpayment of salary and wages. It was reported that about 23 states currently owe their workers' salaries and other allowances which the notorious states are Akwa Ibom, Imo, Oyo, Osun, Benue, Rivers, Kogi, Abia, Bauchi and Cross River. The socio-economic implications of this ugly phenomenon are very dire. Elaborately, Boyo (2015:73) wrote that:

...the erstwhile uncommon cases of corrupt enrichment in public service soon gave way to what has become a concerted looting cult, in the guise of taking personal responsibility to safeguard one's future, rather than enduring the uncertain prospects of honourable retirement with pension. Furthermore, civil servants also recognized that the unrestrained inflationary trend by serial naira devaluations after 1985 also reduced the once life sustaining pension payments to monkey nuts! In this event, public servants needed no persuasion to ensure they put themselves first before the people they served. Thus, it is possible that the spirit of "I" before state or country in public service may have become recharged throughout several states in the country by the current inability of several states to pay staff salaries. Certainly, under such circumstances, if the opportunity presents itself to collude and clandestinely dispose of expensive government equipment and machinery for self-enrichment, there would be many converts who would readily streamline the process. Regrettably, such anti-social coup d'état will be rationalized as self-preservation and or a divine opportunity presented in answer to ardent prayers.

Among other things, it brings about bribery and corruption, indolence, truancy, low self-esteem, depression, and other forms of ill-health. Ojo (2015:27) argued that it is difficult to convince a hungry worker to be loyal, diligent and honest on the basis that survival is the first law of nature and that a starving worker will cut corners and commit all manner of malpractices and sharp practices to live.

Arbitrary Retirement/Retrenchment of Personnel

It is a well acknowledged issue that till date, the major action of Governor Ibrahim Idris's administration in Kogi State to invite a private consultant who downsized the State civil service in 2008 created the greatest negative impact on the system at the State Civil Service Commission, Teaching Service Commission (TSC), Local Government Service Commission and the Kogi State Universal Basic Education Board. It can be noted that the exercise "decapitated" the service by removing the best, most experienced and most promising officers who would have built a successful civil service in Kogi State. The outcome of this singular action by then Governor established a bad precedent that the succeeding administration inherited.

Table 1. The Features and Output of the Civil Service

Salient features	Expected benefits
Recruitment and promotion based on merit	Efficient administration and high productivity
Security of tenure	Continuity and predictability in the conduct of government business Loyalty to the incumbent political executive Smooth political leadership succession Efficient administration and high productivity
Fixed decent salary	Honest and efficient administration and high productivity
Being property-less	Fairness and impartiality to all citizens, including consistency and equity of service Honesty in the conduct of government business
Political neutrality	Continuity and predictability in the conduct of government business Smooth political leadership succession Loyalty to the incumbent political executive Fairness and impartiality to all citizens

Source: Ademolekun (1993:41), in Ademolekun (2006:194).

As a corollary to this, the cumulative impact of the intervention in the remark of Adegroye (2013:94) was general decay that began to creep into the civil service system in 2010 and continues to manifest as the loss of civil service vitality, standard of performance and cohesion; the emergence of a culture of sidelining time-tested procedures and processes; and the loss of officers' self-respect and integrity. In addition, in spite of the intended reforms in the public institutions and Local Government in Kogi State, the public bureaucracy is problematic, highly centralized and unaccountable, opaque, corrupt, self-serving and insensitive to the economic fortunes of the society (Olowu 1993:335, in Oshionebo, 2004:5).

Furthermore, the idea of permanency of tenure in career civil service was brought under siege in Kogi State since the "Almighty Screening" exercise in 2008. Describing the upshot of this terrible legacy, Ademolekun (2006:124) maintained that this key feature of a career civil service has since remained under attack through the crude partisan politicization of 1979-1983 and the "purge" of 1984/85 combined with a retrenchment exercise aimed at reducing the staff strength in the public service.

Absence of Civil Service Ethics

According to Bratton and Gold (1999), ethics is the moral principles and values that govern the behaviour of an individual or group with respect to what is right or wrong. Omale (2005:181) citing Weiss (1996) contented that ethics involves such issues as conflict of interests, inappropriate gifts, sexual harassment, unauthorized payments, and affirmative action issues. Ethical issues also involve lying, expense account abuses, nepotism and favouritism and taking credit for other's work. Oshionebo (2004:3) mentioned that accountability and administrative responsibility constitutes part of the ethical components of the civil service. Most important is the evident that civil service is structured in the way that the institution is manned by bureaucrats of diverse cadres and designations who ensures that the laid down statutory functions and regulations which serve as operational code of ethics is implemented.

Performance reporting and accountability still remains outstanding issues in both the Kogi State Ministries and extra-Ministerial Departments/Agencies and all the local government civil service system. These goals are usually accomplished through the application of ethical codes of conduct which are provided to guide the conduct of civil servants in the course of discharging their duties (Agba, Ochimana and Abubakar,

2013:112). However, it is not surprising for the reason that the expected attitude of civil servants are found wanting.

This zest of interest in ethical issues in the content of Africa is because its public service faces ethical crisis manifested in the pervasive absence of accountability, unethical behaviour and institutionalisation of corrupt practices and new forms of cutting corners or what can be described as "briberisation" (Rashed, 1995; Ezeani, 2006, in Agba, Ochimana and Abubakar, 2013:112). It is observed that appointments, promotions, postings and discipline were bought and sold by the senior civil servants in Lokoja, a situation in Ministry of Federal Capital Territory (FCT) that El-Rufai (2013:317) likened to as the way shares are traded on the stock market.

In the same vein, Jega (2007:274) subscribed to the truth that demoralizations, authoritarian mind-sets and endemic corruption have combined to erode the essence and spirit of serving the public; in the Nigerian public service, one is instinctively tempted to place the public service in inverted commas. He submitted further that what goes on is partly eye-service, partly self-service and essentially private, rather than public service. It is an observable fact that there is little or no regard for work any longer. In their opinion, Asa and Oladoyin (2014:48) noted that indiscriminate lustful desires are noticeably displayed among the staff.

They noted that as a result of this unethical behaviour among the staff, super-ordinates and subordinates relationship are stained to the extent that strict instruction passed down from the top echelon to bottom are either not followed or treated with levity. In fact, the situation continued to worsen, with reported corruption in postings done by the Head of Civil Service and even malpractices in promotion examinations undertaken by the Federal Civil Service Commission (El-Rufai, 2013:314).

Partisanship

In Kogi State, civil servants have hijacked the political stage from the hands of political actors (Itoduma, 2013:23). The civil servants who were called upon to assist in activities relating to politico-administrative matters have invariably become subversive. For instance, Permanent Secretaries and Director of Local Governments/Head of Service as they are called in Kogi State were mandated to "Operation Deliver your Constituency" in the 2003 general elections, and the trend still continues till date. Ademolekun (2006:128) described the contention in this issue when he pointed out that:

This was true of civil servants' role in the conduct of elections and in their relationships with legislatures and elected local government councils. Civil servants participated actively in rigging elections and they joined hands with politicians in disregarding the rules of the political game...

At the state level, civil servants were contemptuous of elected local government councils. In the last (2015) general elections in Kogi East Senatorial District for example, it is observed that one of the Chairmen of National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) became an agent of a political party in a polling unit (even displaying the party tag on his chest). It is germane to note here that civil servants are now heard and seen, which a contradiction to the norms is. Discipline which is the hallmark of the civil service efficiency has been sacrificed on the table of political patronage employment.

Accordingly, Itoduma (2013:22) said, Kogi State civil service represents the "spoil system" of old which has produced inefficiency and ineffectiveness. The extent of political interference with bureaucratic matters and bureaucratic politicization is exceptionally high to the point of meddlesomeness, resulting in poor service delivery. Idakwoji (2012:6,7) posited that the politics-dominated view of administration has made analysts to argue that bureaucratic activities such as staff recruitment, selection, placement, promotion, discipline, policy execution, and service delivery in the state were handled without regard to bureaucratic ethics and norms, to the extent that bureaucratic principles have been jettisoned and abandoned.

Adeyemi (1988:11) cited by Okoli (2010:150) said, if administration changes hands from one political party to another, the predictable tendency would be for the new administration to flush out, and replace, some of the key public servants employed or promoted by the previous administration. The major implication of this trend is that, it creates a lack of continuity in government policies and programmes.

Over-staffing

Overloading of the service with unwanted human resource remains the order of the day in Kogi State civil service. The aftermath of this was the influx of low quality personnel into the civil service at career levels far above their knowledge, experience and capabilities (Adegoroye, 2013:94). This situation is highly salient in the local government system where there are Community Health Officers (CHOs) without Primary Health Care (PHC) centers.

This scenario is also applicable to agricultural extension workers in the state. For example, in 2001 as El-Rufai (2013:314) reported, a human resource audit of the Federal Civil Service at the behest of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) revealed that about 20 percent of the nominal roll consisted of 'ghost workers'. El-Rufai authoritatively explained that about over 20% of the public service employees were 'ghost workers' –non-existent people on the payroll whose emoluments were stolen by staff of personnel and accounts departments.

In the same way manpower audit is a daily affair in Kogi State as a result of "ghost workers syndrome" (Okpe, 2011:35). The Kogi State public organizations, in a resolution by Ogbadu and Igagwu (2013:23) have been turned into compensating institutions and payment of political allowances through a massive offer of employments to "political touts". Idakwoji (2012:6) affirmed that there is employment of unqualified personnel and the institutionalization of mediocrity in the civil service which has greatly hampered the efficiency and

effectiveness of the state bureaucracy. These atrocities are responsible for the depletion of vacancies, which ought to be utilized for the promotion of deserving serving officers in the service (Olokor, 2015:7).

THE CONSEQUENCES

The devastating impact of these trends on the potential dignity and self-confidence that civil service requires cannot be underestimated. The system unarguably needs its unchallenged characteristics to drive the socio-economic and infrastructural development of Kogi State in particular and the Nigeria at large. As Boyo (2015:73) emphasized;

...an abiding sense of responsibility and integrity may become compromised with rationalization for self-preservation, while the "opportunities" for unethical or corrupt enrichment may become identified as divine providence. Social scientists may also argue that once a public servant crosses this Rubicon, other decisions involving public assets will be processed through the same prism of self-interest rather than public service.

More often, UNDP (2014:54) credited development achieved in many countries to the ability of their civil service to effectively translate the policies of their political leaders into concrete services. Therefore, the Punch Editorial (2015:26) argued that it is not possible to for any state to deliver development programmes and projects like roads, dams, hospitals, schools, waterworks and housing with a demoralized civil service. The consequences are:

- i. Paralysis of the civil service,
- ii. National development crisis through non delivering of public programmes,
- iii. Institutional failure,
- iv. Demoralization, and
- v. Unsafe haven for career building and development.

INPUT OF THE PAPER

Strategically, choices in the design and implementation of civil service reform are the determinant of its success or failure. Therefore civil service has been referred to as an institution that has lost focus without recourse to its operation which is dependent on the government in power. In other words, if the government in power within a given dispensation is "ill" the civil service will as well be. It therefore meant that attempts at civil service reform with the exclusive discipline of the government in power will amount to an exercise in futility. This is because; a sharp distinction cannot be drawn in the functions of the political executive and the civil service.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The adopted research method used in this paper is fundamentally content analysis. Literatures ranging from newspaper and journal articles, textbooks, internet materials to government publications are used. These academic resources are complimented with the observation method of data collection.

KOGI STATE CIVIL SERVICE: A CALL FOR REORGANIZATION

The Nigerian civil service evolved from the colonial service with its historical British roots of an independent, non-political and merit based administrative machinery for governing the country. Each region, then had its civil service in addition to the federal the civil service. Therefore;

We asked some fundamental questions... How did our public did our public service evolve from inception at independence to excellence and now to its current abysmal state of ineffectiveness? How can the public service be reformed, re-skilled and right-sized to provide the basic social services that will earn the public trust? El-Rufai (2013:315).

At a time, there exists the need to change the form, procedure, structure, etc of the civil service for more efficiency and in turn fuel the fires of the country's development (Abonyi, 2005: 215-216, in Okoli, 2010:146). Confronting these challenges implied that the political, social and economic environment needed to be altered considerably in order to inject some confidence in the Kogi state civil service by the citizens and that the service remains the platform upon which to redirect Kogi State to the path of development. Following this premise, it is recommended that:

- i. A shift from arbitrary retrenchment/retirement to re-strengthening the Kogi state civil service is a sure way to standardize the system.
- ii. Kogi state civil service needs to move from simply piloting traditional-political approaches in service delivery to transformed services on a developed scale. Over the coming years, state/local government civil service will need to be much bolder, working together to promptly bring approaches such as prevention, early intervention, pro-active budgeting into mainstream of the system.
- iii. Training and retraining of personnel cannot be alternated if the entrenchment of the ethics in the state civil service is prioritized. This will ensure capacity building and social entrepreneurship amongst the civil servants in the state.
- iv. Kogi state civil service should move from place-shaping to the execution and implementation of development programmes.
- v. Genuine overhauling of the headship of most of the offices/agencies so as to bring in young, vibrant technocrats that represented the best in their various professions is one of the panaceas to position the Kogi state civil service on the path of efficient service delivery.
- vi. Citizens and communities must be helped to make better choices for themselves by providing them with information and advice on the major policies of the government, and by building up intangible assets like trust and social capital.

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APPENDIX I



APPENDIX II

