

STAFF AUDITING EXERCISE AND PERFORMANCE IN KOGI STATE CIVIL SERVICE IN NIGERIA**S. S. AVIDIME, PhD.****Department of Political Science
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The paper investigated the impact of staff auditing exercise and performance of Kogi state civil service. The objective was to ascertain the relationship between the exercise and civil servants' performance in Kogi State. The study employed primary source of data through the use of questionnaire, distributed and collected from a sample of 300 respondents in Dekina Local government, Okene Local government and Kabba/Bunu Local government. (100 in each Local government). Descriptive and inferential statistical technique tools such as tables, percentages were used to present and analyze the data, while the chi-square technique was applied to test for the hypothesis. The result revealed that the staff auditing exercise has not significantly contributed to civil servants' performance in Kogi State. It is thus recommended among others that there is need for the Government and its authorities to develop a formal performance management scheme at all its Ministries and establishments, so as to help the government assess its performance in terms of its strength and weakness.

Introduction

In every organization, there is the need to influence the amount of effect that workers will put into their job for better performance. An organization is a structural process in which people and physical sources are properly arranged to carry out plans to accomplish objectives. All organizations are concerned with what should be done to achieve sustained high levels of development through people. The public service is the part of the economy that is owned and controlled by government, and provides basic services to the citizens. It is the means by which the government relates and delivers amenities to the public. Such amenities include, but are not limited to welfare, infrastructure, security, social justice, education, health care and a means of regulating or deregulating the economy (Okoduwa 2007).

Individuals who work in government departments and agencies are known as public servants. During the colonial administration in Nigeria, bureaucrats were concerned with the maintenance of colonial law and order and collection of taxes and levies. As indicated earlier, the public service in Nigeria is still fairly new; the civil service was regionalized in 1954, in consent with the requirements of a federal system.

These regional civil services were more effective than the federal civil service even after independence, partly because of ethnicity. Nigeria has a rich ethnic background with over two hundred and fifty ethnic groups. As a result, groups with the same ethnic background were able to have a viable and efficient civil service.

The western regional civil service in Nigeria was deemed one of the best and a model to be emulated across Anglophone Africa, it was likened to the British civil service and was very efficient and effective in the delivery of services to the public (Olowu 2001). At independence, the role of the civil service changed and was centered on assisting the new government to plan and accelerate the pace of Nigeria's socioeconomic development. However the nationalization of 12 the civil service experienced some difficulties in becoming efficient and effective, due to

the lack of a homogenous identity unlike the regional civil service (Okotoni 2001). From the time of independence till the military takeover, there were some issues in the administration. After the military takeover of the government, the civil service became more dominant in the public policy process. The civil service rose to the challenge of the political change the country was experiencing and the top civil servants assumed political responsibilities.

These bureaucrats were responsible for policy formulation and implementation, while the military were preoccupied more with the civil war and managing coup d'états. The civil service was praised for being effective in ensuring a speedy recovery after the civil war, and in transforming the country into the new era of economic prosperity after the discovery of oil (Okotoni 2001). This era also witnessed the emergence of higher level of civil servants, who were known as Super Permanent Secretaries. They were influential and had bureaucratic power to make policy decisions. This lasted for a couple of years but in the last 1970s, the authority and power of the civil service started declining. One of the major reasons for the decline of the public service was the corruption between political officials and civil servant was the high level of corruption leading to a massive dismissal of civil servants. Also, some of the positions in the civil service political neutrality and a merit system, but it resulted in ethnic favoritism and corruption (Olowu 2001). The nationalization of the civil service has not been successful over the years because the reforms enacted to enhance transformation and growth to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the service has been unsuccessful.

A host of factors have been attributed to the failure of the civil service in nationalizing and properly working at an efficient pace in the delivery of public services. These reforms include; transitioning of government from a number of regime changes 13 that had negatively affected the efficiency and the effectiveness of government, and the lack of merit in the hiring and promotion of civil servants who are hired based on political affiliations, which lead to limited accountability to the public (Suleiman 2009). It is based on the forgoing that this is poised at examining staff auditing exercise and performance in kogi state civil service in Nigeria.

Staff Auditing in the Nigerian Civil Service

The Federal Government payroll has been rid of 50,000 ghost workers, saving the country a huge amount of N200 billion. The flagship program of the Muhammadu Buhari administration to rid the system of fraud and instill good governance is on course. Through a notable initiative, the Efficiency Unit of the Federal Ministry of Finance, the government has embarked on the continuous auditing of the salaries and wages of government departments (Premium Times, 2016). The Senior Special Assistant to the President on Media and Publicity, Garba Shehu, said the amount is from N13 billion that has been taken off the payroll monthly from February to December 2016.

Head Count Exercises

A major program implemented by the government of Nigeria to eliminate ghost workers from its payroll was head count exercises for civil servant in 1986 and 1988 at a time the population of public servants was believed to be too large (World Bank, 1999). Since the early 1980s, many developing countries have attempted to produce an accurate count of their civil servants as a precursor to reforms aimed at containing or reducing the number of public employees and/or reforming public sector pay. These initiatives, variously described as censuses, enumerations, headcounts, staff audits, payroll verifications, and payroll

reconciliations, have been conducted in widely varying contexts, to meet a number of different objectives, using a range of methodologies. Many of these reforms have been funded by the World Bank.

Research Method

The methodology for the study is mainly of field survey. The population consists of respondents drawn from residents of Dekina Local government, Okene Local government and Kabba/Bunu Local government. The choice of the Local governments stems from the widely acclaimed popularity of the Local governments in the state and the fact that the local governments are cut across the 3 senatorial districts of Kogi state. The study employed primary source of data through the use of questionnaire, distributed and collected from a sample of 300 respondents (100 in each Local governments), selected using purposive sampling technique. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools such as tables and percentages will be used to present and analyze the data, while Chi-square technique was employed to test the possibility of any relationship between the staff audit and screening exercise and performance of civil service in the state.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

A total of 300 questionnaires were administered to respondents in 3 Local governments of Kogi state. The sample size was selected based on purposive random sampling technique in the following order; 100 from each of the Local government. 100% respond rate was recorded.

Data Analysis

Though the questionnaire and interview questions covered various issues, only the relevant findings are presented as follows:

Table 1: Gender Distribution of the Respondents

	Dekina LGA	Okene LGA	Kabba/Bunu LGA	Total	Cum. %
Male	65	54	58	177	59
Female	35	46	42	123	41
TOTAL	100	100	100		

Source: Author's survey, 2018

Table 1 above shows that a total of 59% of the respondents were males, while 41% were females. Specifically, the questionnaires were responded to by 177 male respondents and 123 female respondents in the three studied Local government area of State.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

	Dekina LGA	Okene LGA	Kabba/Bunu LGA	Total	Cum. %
U – 25	12	23	11	46	15
26-35	32	21	22	75	25
36-45	23	24	30	77	26
46 and above	33	32	37	102	34
TOTAL	100	100	100	300	100

Source: Author's survey, 2018

From table 2 above, it is shown that 15% of the total respondents are under 25 years of age. 22% of the respondents are between the ages 26-35 and 26% are within ages 36-45, while a total of 34% of the respondents indicated to be 46 years and above.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents based on Educational Qualification

Qualification	Dekina LGA	Okene LGA	Kabba/Bunu LGA	Total	Cum %
SSCE	06	08	03	17	6
NCE/OND	22	29	19	70	23
B.Sc./BA/HND	37	24	58	119	40
MSC	35	39	20	94	31
PHD	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	100	100	100	300	100

Source: Author's survey, 2018

The table 3 above shows the educational qualification of the respondents. The educational qualifications vary from SSCE to NCE/OND, B.Sc./ B.A/HND, MSc and Ph.D. Analysis shows that most have educational qualification of B.sc/ B.A/HND (40%) followed by MSC, NCE/OND and SSCE which are 31%, 23%, and 6% respectively; while no respondents possess PHD. This thus implies that majority of the respondents interviewed are educated elite who have undergone some forms of tertiary education; as indicated by the 40% first degree certificate holders. Thus, their responses to the questionnaire can be relied upon to represent their genuine perceptions and opinions about the theme of the study.

Table 4: Distribution of the Respondents on whether they participated in the staff audit exercise.

Q1. Do you participate in the just concluded staff audit exercise?

Response	Dekina LGA	Okene LGA	Kabba/Bunu LGA	Total	Cum %
Yes	100	100	100	300	100
No	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL					

Researcher's survey, 2018

The table above represents the distribution of the respondents on whether they participated in the staff audit exercise in the state. From the analysis, it was discovered that all respondents indicated to have participated in the screening and auditing exercise in the state. Explicitly, it is discovered that 100% respondents sampled participated in the audit exercise. Thus by implication, it means all interviewed respondents in the 3 Local governments sampled undergone the exercise and so, their responses to the questionnaire can be relied upon to be valid.

Table 5: Distribution of the Respondents rating of audit exercise Q2. How would you rate the audit exercise?

Responses	Dekina LGA	Okene LGA	Kabba/Bunu LGA	Total	Cum. %
Effective	17	15	14	46	15
Highly effective	09	18	20	47	17
Non-effective	72	51	49	172	57
Undecided	02	16	17	35	11
TOTAL	100	100	100	300	100

Researcher's survey, 2018

Also, from table 5 above, it is evidenced that 57% of the total respondents, representing about 172 of 300 sampled respondents agreed that the implementation of the audit and screening exercise conducted by the government is not effective, while about 15% and 17% are of the opinion and 11% are undecided that the exercise has been effective. This therefore means that majority of respondents representing about 57% believe the audit exercise has been grossly effective.

Q3. Has the staff audit exercise improved your efficiency and work performance?

Responses	Dekina LGA	Okene LGA	Kabba/Bunu LGA	Total	Cum.%
Yes	21	26	20	67	22
No	69	54	65	188	63
Undecided	10	20	15	45	15
TOTAL	100	100	100	300	100

Researcher's survey, 2018

The above table presents the distribution of the respondents based the effectiveness of the audit exercise conducted by the Kogi state government for all civil servants in the state. From the table, a total of 188 respondents (63%) cutting across the 3 sampled Local governments indicated that the audit and screening exercise of the government has not in any way improve efficiency and work performance, however, a 22% of the respondents believe the exercise has indeed improved efficiency and performance of civil servant in the state.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis tested in this paper is to find out whether staff audit and screening exercise has improved efficiency and performance in Kogi state civil service. The hypothesis is thus stated as follows:

H₀: Audit and Screening exercise has not contributed to civil service efficiency and performance in Kogi state.

H₁: Audit and Screening exercise has contributed to civil service efficiency and performance in Kogi state.

Responses	Dekina LGA	Okene LGA	Kabba/Bunu LGA	ROW TOTAL
Yes	21	26	20	67
No	69	54	65	188
Undecided	10	20	15	45

COLUMN TOTAL **100** **100** **100** **300**
Researcher's survey, 2018

Contingency Table

Observed (O)	Expected (E)	Residual (O-E)	Square Residual (O-E)²	of Square Residual/Over Expected $\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$
21	23	-2	4	0.173
26	23	3	9	0.391
20	23	-3	9	0.391
69	57	12	144	2.526
54	57	-3	9	0.158
65	57	8	64	1.123
10	20	-10	100	5
20	30	-10	100	3.333
15	20	-5	25	1.250
		X² =		14.368

Source: Researcher's computation, 2018

$$DF = (r-1) (c-1)$$

$$= (3-1) (3-1)$$

$$= 4$$

Chi-square Tabulated at 5% significance level = 15.5073

Therefore; X² cal. = 14.368

X² tab = 15.507

Since the Chi-square calculated is less than the tabulated i.e. X²(cal) = 14.368 < X²(tab) = 15.507, the decision is therefore to accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis and conclude that the audit and screening exercise has not contributed to civil service efficiency and performance in Kogi state.

Concluding Remarks and Recommendation

The finding as revealed that the audit and screening exercise conducted in the state has not contributed to performance in of civil servants in Kogi state. In conclusion therefore, this finding agrees that the audit and screening exercise does not have any impact on the performance of civil servants in Kogi state.

Based on the results of this research and in view of the suggestions of the respondents on ways to guarantee a better and efficient performance of civil servants in state; the following recommendations are put forward:

Government should put serious emphasis on merit in recruitment and selection processes as this will enhance qualified personnel being recruited, thus guarantee efficiency in service delivery and capable of improving substantially the overall performance of workers Also, standardize reward system such as, regular promotion based on merit, commensurable pay, incentives, praises and friendly working conditions should be considered by the

Government as factors that motivate employees to perform well and sustenance of their loyalty to the work.

Authorities should equally put in place a platform for regular civil servants' performance and screening exercise so as to help the government in evaluating workers' performance.

Lastly, there is need for the Government and its authorities to develop a formal performance management scheme at all its Ministries and establishments, so as to help the government assess its performance in terms of its strength and weakness.

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