

IMPLICATIONS OF POLITICS ON RECRUITMENT INTO STATE CIVIL SERVICE IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the impact of politics in civil service and its influence on staff recruitment and selection exercise, using Ondo state as a case study. Data were drawn from secondary sources. It hinges the phenomena on spoil system theory; and provides a pragmatic perspective on the subject matter by analyzing the encompassing factors in recruitment process vis-à-vis the Nigerian experience. It further interplays politics on the recruitment process, thus showcasing consequences of politics on recruitment and selection putting Ondo state in perspective. The paper concludes that there is high level of political manipulation and interference by the political elites in the selection and appointment of staff into the civil service.

Keywords: Politics, Recruitment, Corruption, Staff performance.

Introduction

The centrality of recruitment and selection exercise in the Nigerian civil service cannot be overemphasized. It lies at the heart of the problem of personnel administration (Basu, 1994). In public organization the responsibility for the recruitment and selection is shared function between the personnel department and the line managers. It is instructive to note that the emphasis of the civil service is on uniformity, standardization and transparency in the recruitment and selection processes. In spite of the foregoing, it has become an apparent practical reality that the Nigerian civil service recruitment and selection exercise has been politicized with consequential and dysfunctional effects on the institutional and employee enhanced productivity, quality decisions, and programme exercise and quality public service delivery (Ejumodo, 2011).

Politics of the recruitment according to Osakwe (2007) is the recruitment and selection that are based on political patronage or determined by the political class. It is the use of other criteria other than merit, qualification and technical know-how in the recruitment and selection process. To Omeje and Ndukwe (2009), politicization of recruitment is the

unconventional practice of employing political interest by those in the public offices to fill existing and non-existing vacancies in the public service without following due process. This is therefore the process of recruitment and selection that is based on other mundane factors other than merit and competence criteria. Meanwhile, concerned members of the public have expressed utter displeasure on the development and have attributed it to factors such as inadequate and invalid standards for evaluating job candidates, sources of attracting potential applicants, transparency and independence of the recruiting authority. Others include environmental factors such as social, political, technological and economic demands (Biobele, 2007).

Politics has encroached and permeated the recruitment and selection processes in Ondo State civil service. The political heavy weights more often than not take advantage of their privileged positions to reward their political thugs who worked strenuously to see them emerge victorious during the electoral process with appointment into the state civil service. Similarly, There are cases where recruitment and selection into the state civil service are based on the concept of "god-fatherism", which throws merit criteria to the wind.

Furthermore, another trend in meddling politics in the recruitment and selection processes is the need to compensate party loyalists. In this situation, principal officers of the party are usually given opportunity to nominate a give number of persons for appointment into the service. Members of the state house of assembly, commissioners, and special advisers to the governor are also privileged to nominate people for the same purpose. The basis for this kind of appointment is always political affiliation.

More so, it is no longer news that the transition to a new government always heralds appointments of people from the same locality, relations, friends and associates of the governor in to the public service. That explains why whenever there is a change of government; the dialect of the new governor assumes the lingua franca in the state government house. This shows that the people from the same locality with the number one citizen are likely to be given undue consideration for appointment even when there is obvious employment embargo.

Methodological Scope

This paper focuses on the impact of politics in Ondo State civil service and its influence on staff recruitment and selection exercise. The choice of Ondo State was informed by the formidable status of the State and as one of the first to be observed to have, in recent times, reflected some elements of politics in recruitment into its civil service. It however relies heavily on secondary sources of data collection. The two (2) concepts appear axiomatic, thus deserving no further elucidation rather an extensive review of existing literatures of the subject of discourse.

Empirical Analysis

This section provides a pragmatic perspective on the subject matter by analysing the encompassing factors in recruitment process vis-à-vis the Nigerian experience. It further interplays politics on the recruitment process, thus showcasing consequences of politics on

Recruitment and Selection putting Ondo State in perspective. At the end, there seems to be clear discourse on the influence of politics and recruitment

i. Factors in Recruitment Process and the Nigeria Experience

Recruitment policies and practices: The calibre of people recruited into an organization no doubt, determines to a large extent their contribution to the organization and the success or failure of the organization. Wrong recruitment and selection practices such as ethnic, religious, political and other considerations have created a situation where we have "garbage in and garbage out", or putting square pegs in round holes. The Nigerian public service is not an 'exception. What we have in virtually any party members and offered them employment without recourse to standards, rules and regulation. The permanent secretary to the ministry secretary to the commission etc. are usually side lined and rendered redundant, only to be victimized, if he/she complains. This culminates in low productivity.

Nepotism: One of the banes of the Nigerian service is the recruitment of mediocre or totally unsuitable candidates in preference to candidates of high merit. The reason for this ugly situation can be traced directly to favouritism by those in high positions such as the chairman, commissioners and so on, to their relatives.

Paper Qualification (undue emphasis on): one fact, which is seldom realized today, is that more paper qualification is not a true test of the merit which the qualification proclaimed in the certificate is supposed to carry. It is not usually today to find two young graduates holding the same degree qualification but while one can write down his thoughts and ideas in logical sequence and in correct grammar, the other can hardly write one sentence correctly without elementary errors of spelling, grammar and in totally unintelligible prose. Yet they both hold the same degree qualification. This is why it is frightfully important that the process of recruitment or appointment should be an instrument for the promotion of efficiency in the public service. Federal character principle/Quota system: It is a common knowledge that due to cultural diversity and sentiment, every group and tribe, want to occupy public service position, whether qualified or not.

Mutual conspiracy: In the civil and public services, various commissions undertake the recruitment of various categories of staff- accounts, technical officers etc or other bodies in the case of other systems within the public service. While every member of the commission or board helps on merit system, yet some among the members make conscious effort to ensure that their own candidates are appointed. These candidates y be blood relations or relations of family friends or persons from the same town or Clair interviews are followed by discreet disclosure of interest, which soon become a mutual among the members, trading of candidates then ensure, whereby the results are outcome rub my back and I rub your own.

Improper recruitment: this factor occurs in ministries or in organizations, where certain persons are recruited or employed in organizations without recourse to the laid down ruled of recruitment. These persons when eventually employed neither found not to be qualified nor their credential relevant to the position they are seeking for. This makes for low productivity in the organization. There is no discipline in such situation where the new employee only pays loyalty to his or her God-father in the corridors of power. Those who are

better qualified but are placed for below the new employee is discouraged and will no longer give their best in achieving maximum productivity.

Statism: This factor affects recruitment in Nigerian public enterprises especially in our present days. Many states in the federation have adopted the policy of non-indigene ship. For instance, if there is vacant positions in Ondo State Civil Service, the Board of director in the management of this public enterprise may not like to employ or recruit any person i.e. not from Ondo state, even when such persons are more qualified than Ondo indigenes, the position will not be given to non-indigenes because they are not from the state, the board of director may like to recruit only people from their state (Ondo) to man such positions even when those people are mediocre. As a result of that, this factor account for inefficiency in our present public enterprises today.

Gender Discrimination: Gender discrimination in recruitment here in Nigeria is still prevalent. Females with the same qualification with their male counterparts are still being discriminated upon. Women are not given equal opportunities with men even when they have been found better managers than the men. There is still that mentality that women are the weaker sex and therefore cannot perform efficiently. A woman like Dr. (Mrs.) Dora Akunyili of NAFDAC has proved beyond reasonable doubt that she can deliver.

Ethnicity: In the state level one sees a situation where it is only those from the same locality that occupy a place. People from different locality are not welcomed. Even though those from other localities are more qualified to occupy such position they are relegated to the background. All these happen because the personnel management is not allowed to exercise its power to recruit the right calibre of people to occupy the right positions. In fact, the Nigerian public service has been exposed to certain influences, which have in turn affected its effectiveness.

ii. Consequences of Politics on Recruitment and Selection: Ondo State in perspective

The following constitutes the impact of politicization of recruitment and selection in the Civil Service. Simply put, the major consequences of politics of recruitment and selection are corruption. Corruption occurs when there is deviation from acceptable standard of behaviour. Once recruitment and selection are politicized, merit and other scientific principles are flung overboard in favour of political and other unethical considerations. The end result is die appointment of corrupt officers who thereafter encourage and abate corruption in the system. However, it should be noted that corruption is not always the end result when recruitment and selection process takes place. There certain circumstances where merit and other procurer are strictly adhered to which brings about a desirable and expected results as observed some scholars.

Low productivity sets in when an organization fails in its task to meet its set objectives or outputs over a given period of time. However, when unqualified and bunch of touts are appointed to man sensitive positions in the service, the tendency is that productivity will always be at its lowest ebb. However, the above words to an extent is true, but there are goods one among them in which much political interference doesn't earn them opportunity for their

God given talents to be displayed. Many of those who were recruited through back doors sometimes perform excellently than those choose through merit.

Inefficiency is the absence of competence or the ability to do anything well or to achieve desired result without wasted energy (Omeje and Ndukwe, 2009). The major factor that brings about inefficiency in the service is the appointment of unqualified and wrong type of staff into certain positions on the basis of political considerations. Most of the managing directors and heads of government establishments appointed on political ground do not possess the needed experience, skills, abilities and qualification, hence; they are mere puppets and stooges who are ever ready to accept unwholesome instructions from their political godfathers which invariably engender inefficiency in the service. Also, overstaffing is bound to occur when there is no recourse to strategic manpower planning and manpower need in the service. The situation whereby politicians wake up and impose a given number of staff on the service does not augur well with the staff strength of the service. The result is usually over bloated service, a scenario where six or seven officers are attached to a table and two chairs.

When a line manager (head of department) has no stake in the appointment of staff, the manager should not expect total respect for laid down rules from staff. This is due to the fact that the politically favoured staff in appointment will visibly show their unalloyed loyalty to their political heavy weights while at the same time flouting with impunity conspicuous laid down civil service rules. The argument is simple; they are highly connected and no amount of acts of indiscipline such as lateness to work, truancy, abscondment, laxity, outright absenteeism etc. can attract punitive measures against them.

Over politicization of recruitment and selection gives rise to appointment and placement of mediocre at the expense of the most qualified applicants. When this happens, the civil service is compromisingly stocked with bunch of good for nothing staff that lacks the wherewithal to turn around the civil for better public service delivery. Other impacts of politics of recruitment and selection include low staff morale, disunity, and poor Leadership among others. Every segment of the public service in Nigeria is a situation where the chairman of board or commission, commissioner of a ministry compiles the names of his relations, friends, and political associates.

Meanwhile, a lot has been discussed with respect to attendance consequences of much political interference in the recruitment and selection process such as low productivity, corruption, mediocrity overstaffing to mention but few. However, research by scholars has it that not all ills aforementioned always be the outcome of recruitment process. There is an indication that there are some who came through back doors that are more productive and excellent in public service activities. These individuals are deprived on the ground that politicians don't give them a breathing space to be absorbed into the service in order to know their place and where they belong. They are sometimes also robbing the display and practical ability of their natural talent.

iii. Influence of Politics on Recruitment

David and Paul (2009) took a critical look at the ways through which political office holders manipulated recruitment into the public service of Ondo State between 1999 and 2003. It holds

that the phenomenal rise in the size of the public service of Ondo state during this period was due largely to political exertion; something akin to the spoils systems in the 18th century United States. The cost implication of this increase was adjudged disturbing as 65.31% of the revenue accruable to the State goes to the payment of the emolument of these public servants who constitute just 1% of entire population. The paper notes the complacency of the top echelon of their service as regards the abandonment of the merit system in recruitment in to the pub service during this period. It concludes that the implications of this phenomenal rise in the size of the public service, including the manner of accomplishing it are of far-reaching implications for the public service and the society.

Ibrahim (2014) identified the irregularities of recruitment and selection exercise in the Nigerian Public Service being the government's tool for increasing the workforce and filling in the vacant positions of those who left the service. He further identified that sentiment and other primordial issues like ethnicity, nepotism and favouritism given more consideration in terms of employment than merit. This adversely led to labour mover and increased costs of governance. The major challenges identified are constant interference which manifested out of the desire of the politicians to get their relatives in the service; recruitment purely based on skills rather than good attitude and the principle of federal character that further compounded the problem in the form of ethnic balancing. The paper concludes that in order to refurbish sanity in the exercise, the Nigerian Public Service should lay more emphasis on meritocracy irrespective of applicant's background ailor affiliation and the issue of political obstruction should be brought to a halt. Candidates to be considered for recruitment should have good and moral attitude in addition gills and recruiters be accorded the desired independence and freedom as this will to use appropriate methods of conducting the exercise in order to get it right.

According to Bernard and Okofu (2014), recruitment selection of staff in any organization be it public or private sector is of paramount impair to the organization. This is so because it is the staff that turns the vision and mission the organization into reality. Thus, the objectives of any organization can only be realized ought the effective coordination of the human resource (staff) of the organization. The paper attempts an examination of the process of staff recruitment and selection in the public service of Nigeria. The results obtained showed that merit is often jettisoned on the altar of ethnicity and religion in recruitment into the public service in Nigeria. Since the public service is directly controlled and regulated by the government, the Nigerian Federal Character Principle was largely complied with. The study also reveals that though there are stipulated periods for recruitment and selection into the public service, these are often side-lined. The paper concludes by recommending that for government to operate the most efficient administrative service that would be beneficial to all, her recruitment and selection policies into the Nigerian public services should be unfettered. It should be able to absorb the most qualified, technically sound, discipline and committed human resource that would in turn help government achieve the objectives of governance.

Okeke and Subban (2015) emphasized on how corruption, insecurity, education and ethnicity (amongst others) have served as obstacles to national development in Nigeria. These obstacles have posed serious developmental challenges which are evident in the dysfunctions in the

management system leading not only to ineffective and inefficient delivery of public services, but also the instability of the socioeconomic and political wellbeing of the nation. However, their article attempts a re-examination of various government policies aimed at national development — particularly, human resources development. Human resources play a collectively vital role in the success or failure of any organization or nation. As such, the article revisits recruitment policies, processes and procedures drawing insight from federal government ministries in Nigeria. Within emerging economies, there are few (albeit growing) studies linking recruitment policies and efficiency of the workforce to the realization of official goals and objectives. The results of the study provide insight into strategies for building human resource capacity and repositioning the Nigerian public sector (and Africa at large) towards resolving various enervating developmental challenges.

Briggs (2007) probed into the problems of recruitment in Nigerian federal civil service and to determine the extent of the utilization of job description and job specification in the recruitment process. The survey identified factors such as increasing pressures for employment, utilization of informal sources of recruitment. long military era, federal character principle, lack of independence of the service commission and delegation of recruitment functions as the prevalent problems affecting recruitment in Nigerian federal civil service. As results of these problems, job description and standard personnel requirements were not adequately used in the recruitment process, especially at the lowest category of grade levels. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the federal government should promulgate laws that will protect employees in the private sector in order to reduce consistent pressures for employment in the public sector. Subjective and informal sources of recruitment should be de-emphasized, and instead sources from educational institutions and professional organizations should be encouraged. The number of federal civil service commissioners should be increased with the establishment of zonal and state offices. It was also recommended that the remuneration of the federal civil servants should be increased. Federal civil service should utilize job description when embarking on actual recruitment exercise and personnel requirements should be developed to match position classification in the service.

According to Gberevbie (2010), institutions are established to accomplish specified goals. To achieve these goals, the human resource is seen as one of the most crucial factors, without which the goals are as good as dead. The study empirically examined strategies for employee recruitment, retention and performance in the Federal civil service (FCS) of Nigeria. The results showed that the strategies for employee recruitment into the civil service are mainly based on Federal character principle (equal representation of people from different sections of the country), merit, political consideration and government discretion. In terms of strategies for employee retention, the study found that the service lagged behind in providing adequate incentives to retain its workforce for performance compared to what is obtainable in the private sector. It therefore recommends that while Federal character principle may be necessary as strategy for employee recruitment into the FCS because of Nigeria's multicultural, ethnic and religious diversity, its application should however be carried out to reflect merit within the principle. In addition, appropriate incentives should be provided to retain competent employees for performance.

According to Ugoji and Olatunji (2013), the processes through which personnel are recruited into organisation and the impacts of the personnel recruitment on the organisational development. The findings of the study revealed certain recruitment procedures adopted in organisations. It also revealed that the recruitment procedures used in the organisation influence personnel behaviour and performance to a large extent. It further established those factors militating against recruitment processes in organisations as well as its consequences on the personnel and organisational development. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were proffered that recruitment processes and procedures must be developed which all applicants must pass through; that all applicants must all be treated equally, and that what constitute qualification and merit must be well spelt out to include applicant ability to “deliver” and not just ‘paper’ qualification.

According to Onwe and Emma (2015), recruitment and selection exercise has been long recognized as the most important human resources functions designed to attract and subsequently choose the best applicants to be appointed and placed on job openings in organization. There is a growing realization that the recruitment and selection exercise has the potency to make or mar the success of any organization. It was revealed that politics is a regular feature in the Nigerian civil service recruitment exercise. The effects of the exercise have been identified as the bane of the service which includes — corruption, inefficiency, low productivity, indiscipline, etc. on the basis of the foregoing, the study posited that recruitment and selection exercise should be credibly handled by experts, hence the civil service commission should be composed of experts in human resource management. Also, the autonomy of the civil service commission should not only be in principle but in practice. The implication of the above is that lack of interference in the operations of the commission will enable it objectively and efficiently discharge its responsibilities without fear and favour to ensure efficient public service delivery.

Theoretical Framework:

Implications of Spoils System Theory

The spoil system theory was adopted in explaining the phenomena understudy in a bid to provide a clearer understanding of the two (2) interplayed concepts. The analysis of the patterns of employment into the public service by the Adefarati Administration succinctly reflects the attributes of the spoils systems prevalent in 18th century United States. The spoils systems, according to Gladdens (1972), “was brought about by the electoral victory of the Republican Party and the subsequent pressure from Party faithful who opined that they had a right to appointments hitherto held by Federalists”. He further noted that “Contrary to the established standard of administration prior to the time, the Republicans evolved a new doctrine that administration was an activity that any reasonably equipped citizen would be able to perform quite adequately”.

The full acceptance of the spoil system, he argued, came with the advent of Andrew Jackson to the Presidency in 1829 and it lasted till about 1861. Highlighting the consequences of the spoils system, Gladden (1972), observed that “The system produced counteracting trends, because, the extension of the franchise and the growth of political parties heightened the desire of the ordinary citizen to hold office and converted the transferable office into a currency suitable for meeting obligations due to party supporters for their election *efforts*”. He

concluded that the American public service consequently became valuable spoils for the victorious party. Stillman (1996) observed that through the spoils system 'there was steep decline in efficiency through the injection of semi-literate and the creation of useless office... lazy clerks were in excess, while the few energetic ones which the indiscriminateness of spoils did not keep out often, found it difficult to discover anything useful to do'. He thus concluded that 'the American public service was bedevilled with crass incompetence, graft, favouritism and partisanship'. Gladden (1972) noted that in spite of the short comings of the spoils lent party supporters continued to entertain the hope for patronage. And when one of such seekers felt disappointed, he resorted to shooting President James Garfield in 1881. It aims to emphasize that prior to this tragic incident, the campaign against the spoil

Systems and the clamour for increased efficiency and economy in the public service had mounted. However, as observed by Stillman (1996), opposition to the clamour for such a reform was intense. The opposition, according to him, was from party organizers who could not bear the thought of losing valuable spoils and from the many that benefited from the maintenance of the status-quo. The assassination of President Garfield in 1881 thus provided the opportunity to decisively address the monstrous spoils system. Consequently, the civil service Act of 1883, otherwise referred to as the Pendleton Act, was enacted. The Act, amongst others, recognized the Civil Service Commissioning the United States in matters of appointment and promotion. It prescribed competitive examination for appointment and promotion. It also specified that appointment in the classified service should be done from amongst those with the highest grades. Another significant provision of the Act was its entrenchment of the principle of geo-political representation, akin to Nigeria's extant Federal Character principle in appointments. The Act also banned political interference in all of the civil service processes. Like all laws, the Act stipulated sanctions against violations of its provisions (Gladden, 1972).

While it might be too early to evaluate the possible consequence of the abandonment by the Adebayo Adefarati administration, of the merit system of entry in to the public service, it is reasonable to draw from the experiences of the past in conjecturing the possible immediate and future implications of this act. The political experiment of the Second Republic in Nigeria (1979 - 1983) provided a worthy reference on the application of the spoils system in the public service. About this, Chinweizu opined, "the public service became an adjunct of party patronage machines" (The Guardian, November 24, 1985). The consequences of this, according to Erero (1988), is that "since the degree of partisanship and constituency strength determined the selection of those to occupy future leadership positions without considering competence, poor policy articulation, implementation and evaluation will not be unlikely". Adebayo (1997) agreed no less when he argued that the operation of the spoils system in the Second Republic frustrated the public service and made the task of management virtually impossible (because) the operation of spoils politics was incompatible with and is an obstacle to the achievement of efficiency in public administration. These observations are applicable to the public service of Ondo State for obvious reasons. First, the abandonment of the public service procedure, which correctly evaluates the competence of candidates at the point of entry into the public service, would inadvertently have opened the gate of entry into the service for incompetent persons.

While it is true that such entrants could be “brushed up” through the internal training modules in the service, it must be appreciated that the modules were developed using some fundamental benchmarks of competence determinable at the point of entry. The incompetence of these officers would invariably manifest poor policy circulation, implementation and evaluation. The preponderance of this phenomenon would, the long run, impact negatively on the efficiency of service delivery in the public service of State thus eroding the confidence of the public in the service. Interestingly, democracy i about service delivery, aggregating as it were, the desires of the masses, reducing these to policy packages and translating them into tangible actions for the people through instrumentality of the public service.

The loss of public confidence constitutes a serious danger to the democratization project. Available record , 2003), put the monthly revenue accruable to the State from Statutory Allocation, share of Mineral Derivation Fund, Value Added Tax and Internally Generated at about N1.2billion out of which, a total of N646,774,240.00 was spent on cost. Running cost also amounted to N137, 000,000.00 per month. This left the with just 34.7%of the total monthly revenue for capital expenditures on roads, water, d other infrastructural facilities. Chief Adefarati’s successor as Governor, Dr. Olusegun Agagu lamented this development in his ‘State of the State’ address when he declared that the State was made to carry a very heavy administrative structure over weak economic and infrastructural base (Agagu, 2003). As of now, the public service in Ondo State is an admixture of the competent and the incompetent, which poses a great threat to public policy and service delivery. Unfortunately, the present state of the Ondo State public Service has resulted in the underemployment, especially, of the junior cadre; a sizeable percentage of which are with high political affinity. This is certainly danger to public accountability as it is doubtful whether this large army of ‘political’ public servants will possess enough discipline to resist temptation of any kind.

Concluding Remark

Except for the appointments into the public service in Ondo State between May and December 1999, subsequent appointments were not based on any realistic appraisal. Rather, such appointments were either to fulfil electoral promises or to secure political patronage. Against this, Wilson (1887) had cautioned when he said: “Although politics sets the task for administration, it should not be suffered to manipulate its offices”. It is against this backdrop that the political elite need to be reminded that the gains of democracy might as well continue to be elusive if the task of public administration, the original conveyor of democratic benefits, is made to suffer through improper flooding of the service with incompetent ‘political’ individuals. In the case of Ondo State, during the period under review, positive resistance by way of objective advice from the top echelon of the public service to the political leadership on the dangers of polluting the public service is unknown, (at least no such advice, upon investigation, could be located in any File at the Department of Establishment and Service Matters of the Office of the Head of Service).

This therefore renders the higher echelon of the service culpable as this merely reflects the abdication of their responsibility of advising and alerting political office holders to the dangers inherent in policies. This perhaps confirms the public choice prognosis that bureaucrats in fact want ever bigger bureau due to their own self-interest rather than the public interest. However, it is a well-known fact that effective civil service is indispensable for

overall socio-economic and political development of any nation. If the service lacks competent and qualified staff, it might dishonourably fail in its function to professionally advice and translate political decisions to concrete actions for the overall welfare of the masses.

Recruitment and selection are therefore a critical aspect of personnel management in that they represent laid down policies and procedure through which competent and qualified prospective employees are attracted, selected and thereafter placed in various positions in the service. However, when recruitment and selection exercise do not adhere to the principles of systemic manpower planning, scientific principles, objectivity and merit, they end up producing unqualified and incompetent employees who can grind the service to a halt. It was revealed in the study that despite the indispensability of credible and merit based recruitment and selection exercise in enthrone efficiency and high productivity in public service delivery, the Ondo State civil service is highly politicized. In fact, there is high level of political manipulation and interference by the political elites, top administrators her stakeholders through the exploitation of such factors as ethnicity, nepotism, favouritism, institutional and top government connection in the selection and appointment of staff into the service with its attendant dysfunctional, inconsequential and negative implications for human resource competence, capability, quality decisions and service delivery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

However, the following recommendations are put forward to ensure recruitment and selection exercise insulated from political interferences: Within the framework of the social responsibility of the public service, the admonition of Maduabum (2002) is apt. In the words: Adeyemo and Osunyikanmi (2009) "while the civil servant must carry out decisions and policy laid down by the political boss, he must resist illegitimate political demands and pressures, the civil servant must learn that it is in his own interest to resist political encroachments upon the internal self-regulation of the civil service systems". Government should therefore embark on an immediate census of those who were recruited into the service during this period, so as to determine their statuses, postings and schedules. Conscious effort should be made to evolve special training packages for them with a view to enhancing their competencies and re-orientate them towards Public Service norms most especially the ineffective ones who might have been fraudulently employed into the service. This is to imbue them with current skills in the exercise.

There is also the need to evaluate the extant expectation of the public so as to determine areas of critical need. These officers could therefore be retrained and redeployed to these areas of need to make them more productive and as such, justify their pay. It is unlikely that the people of Ondo State will in the immediate be relieved of the heavy burden and cost that the spoils system has foisted on them through the unreasonable increase of the public service. As it stands now, 65.31% of revenue accruable to the State goes to the payment of the emolument of these public servants who constitute just 1% of the entire population. In addition, recruitment and selection are core human resources management functions and should be competently handled by experts in the field of human resources management. Therefore, the civil service commission should be composed of professionals in human resources management. This will reposition the commission to effectively play its personnel functions.

Similarly, the appointment of chairman, commissioners and staff of the Ondo State civil service commission should not be based on political patronage. Rather, qualification, merit, experience and good track records should form part of the criteria for their selection and subsequent appointment. In as much as we recognize the importance of ethnic balancing through the instrumentality of the principles of Federal and state character, local government spread, etc we should not lose sight of merit, qualifications and experience in the selection and appointment of staff from the local government areas that make up the state.

Recruitment and selection exercise in Ondo state should resultantly be performance, merit and action based with the potency of generating and sustaining the requisite skilled, knowledgeable and developed human resources that will be properly grounded in the acceptable civil service norms and standards. The autonomy of the civil service commission should not only exist in principle but in practice. The commission should be allowed free hand to carry out its constitutional assigned functions.

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