

Remuneration And Employees' Performance in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria: A Content Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The Nigerian local government system has faced growing challenges, with employee morale declining significantly, resulting in diminished enthusiasm for work. As a consequence, the impact of local governments is no longer noticeable due to poor performance. In light of these concerns, this research, titled "Remuneration and Employees' Performance in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State," aims to assess examine the role of salary on employees' performance in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State, it seeks to examine the relationship between Fringe Benefits and employee's performance in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State and it also seek to examine if remuneration improve employee's productivity in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. The study is qualitative based. The research adopted Karl Marx's (1848) Class Theory of the State as its theoretical framework and employed a survey design utilizing structured questionnaire. Data were analysed using content analysis. The findings indicated that salary has significant effects on employees' performance in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. In addition, the study also revealed that Fringe Benefits has also significant effects on employee's performance in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. finally, the study highlighted that remuneration improve employee's productivity in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. The study recommends that the government at the centre ensure the local government administrative and financial autonomy. The government should prioritize creativity and professionalism in the remuneration system to effectively meet its objectives. Furthermore, it suggests that government bodies should implement policies and establish regulations to ensure equitable and timely payment of wages and salaries across all sectors. Additionally, the state government should create transparent and fair reward distribution structures, free from favouritism and nepotism. Finally, the state government should ensure the prompt and fair provision of incentives and fringe benefits to motivate and enhance employee performance.

Keywords: Employee, Performance, Remuneration, Salary, Satisfaction, Fringe.

INTRODUCTION

Local government has been described as an authority set up as a subordinate authority for the purpose of decentralizing power in a nation. For this reason and based on this definition local government is expected to be a replica of the state government both in administrative principles and legislative functions. The reason is that for local government to act contrary to the body of its state will defeat

the objectives for its establishment hence transparency and accountability can only be a prerequisite for the proper functioning of any local government council. Orewa and Adewumi (1992) define local government as a system of local communities and towns organized to maintain law and order; provide a limited range of social services and co-operation of the inhabitants in joint endeavors towards the improvement of their living conditions.

Emezi (1984) defines local government as a local administration system operating within communities that uphold law and order. Agagu (2011) suggested that the trajectory of local government administration in Nigeria has been marked by an extensive and challenging course, spanning from the diversities of the pre-colonial era through the phases of Lugard's experimentation, military interventions, and military-influenced democracy. The Nigerian local government system has evolved distinct characteristics and manifestations. To comprehensively examine local government in Nigeria is essentially to delve into the broader realm of government and politics in the nation. The journey of local government administration has encompassed arduous stages of development, spanning pre-colonial settlements, colonial rule, post-independence local council administration, military regimes, the 1976 local government reform, and the advent of the fourth republic. Following independence, numerous administrations have endeavored to establish the local government as the foremost link to the populace, cultivating development through democratic participation and effective service provision (refer to Etebom, 2019; Adeyeye, 2016; Agagu, 2011; Gboyaga, 2003). Despite these concerted efforts, the outcomes at the grassroots level in the nation remain meager or insufficient. Notably, there is a lack of uniformity in the structure and administration of the local government system in Nigeria, even with its constitutional stipulations (Etebom, 2019; Agagu, 2011).

Following the transition of Nigeria back to democracy on May 29, 1999, after a prolonged period of military rule, a new phase emerged in the evolution of local government administration. The expectations of the Nigerian populace were optimistic, envisioning that the advent of democratic governance would usher in a period of effective governance characterized by upholding due process, adherence to constitutional principles, and respect for the rule of law, transparency, accountability, and the facilitation of free and fair elections. Regrettably, the reality has proven to be quite the opposite, particularly evident at the local government tier. This unfavorable shift has resulted in a situation where genuine democracy remains beyond the reach of the grassroots in Nigeria. The repercussions encompass a dearth of substantial socio-economic progress at the local level, which ideally serves as the cornerstone for the country's infrastructural advancements and security measures (Aluko, 2010).

Sofa (2008) discovered that remuneration serves as a form of recognition provided to workers or employees in response to their accomplishments aimed at fulfilling organizational objectives. Assigning responsibilities to employees to contribute to goal attainment necessitates a balance with corresponding rewards. The responsibility of an organization extends to furnishing rewards to employees who have diligently executed their tasks and duties. The process of providing rewards encompasses three distinct criteria: pay for performance, pay for position, and pay for the person. The present approach of pay for performance is frequently adopted and predominantly dictates compensation amounts. This method is often referred to as a remuneration system, with its fundamental basis being the concept of payment, sometimes referred to as the payroll (Echols and Shadily cited in Roberia, 2009).

In practice, remuneration is bestowed upon employees within the framework of their employment relationship, wherein completion of assigned tasks warrants remuneration. While numerous

viewpoints equate remuneration with compensation, it's crucial to recognize that remuneration lacks the inclusion of non-financial returns, thereby distinguishing it from the concept of compensation (Roberia, 2009). Remuneration has evolved into an indispensable tool for both private and public organizations, particularly public institutions that have embraced various remuneration systems. Within the corporate context, remuneration is defined as the act of reimbursing services or providing compensation to employees/workers by employers for the accomplishments contributed by workers in advancing company objectives (Pora, 2011).

One of the main objectives of being employed by an organization is to generate income through wages or compensation. These earnings are crucial for fulfilling essential needs like food, clothing, and housing. When determining the wages to be paid to employees, organizations should ensure feasibility, guaranteeing that the lowest wage is sufficient to meet their livelihood requirements (Kanzunnudin, 2007).

In Nigeria, Agburu (2012) emphasized the significance of salaries and wages, highlighting the need for not only adequate compensation but also equitable distribution. This is particularly important from the perspective of the employees. Failing to provide a fair and equitable wage or reward can quickly lead to employee dissatisfaction, especially in economies like Nigeria. For many Nigerian workers, wages, and salaries hold immense importance as they directly impact their lives and the well-being of their families. As primary financial rewards, wages, and salaries take center stage in the overall reward system for work, as they are the most emphasized aspects by employees.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The morale of Nigerian workers, particularly those employed by Dekina Local Government, has significantly declined. Local governments in Nigeria, as the third tier of government, are meant to address the needs of local communities. However, this is not the case in Kogi State, especially Dekina LGA. Despite the Nigerian national minimum wage was set at ₦30,000, this is not reflected in the local government sector. For example, a Grade Level (GL) 4 Step 1 worker earns ₦12,017 instead of the expected ₦37,000, a GL 12 Step 1 worker receives ₦33,666 instead of ₦270,000, and a GL 15 Step 1 worker is paid ₦53,221 instead of ₦320,000 (Dekina LGA Finance Department, 2023).

Since 2015, local government salaries in Kogi State have been inconsistently and frequently delayed. Even when payments are made, the percentages are unclear, ranging from 50%, 30%, 15%, and other unspecified amounts. The salaries, which are meant to cover basic living expenses, are often insufficient even for transportation to and from work, let alone other necessities such as children's school fees and healthcare.

Local government staff are entitled to various allowances such as hazard allowance and excess duty allowance. However, these payments have not been made, further compounding the frustration of the workers. This lack of allowances, in addition to delayed and insufficient salaries, has exacerbated the challenges faced by employees, contributing to the ineffective service delivery, poor performance, and a noticeable lack of commitment and dedication among local government employees. The challenging working conditions have severely impacted their ability to perform their duties effectively, further diminishing the overall functionality of the local government.

Nwachukwu (1988) notes that Nigerians have often held the perception that employees, as a general trend, exhibit tendencies of idleness, lethargy, hesitancy to take action, indifference, and a tendency

towards deception in their approach. These workers are believed to lack the enthusiasm, liveliness, and drive commonly associated with industrious individuals. Additionally, they are generally averse to discussions revolving around efficiency, commitment, capability, resolve, and accomplishment – attributes that characterize individuals within societies emphasizing performance. In societies that prioritize performance, employers go to great lengths to retain their workforce and attract top-tier personnel. These employers actively work towards fostering their employees' morale in order to cultivate a positive work attitude. In response, employees devise strategies to contribute to the success of their organizations. The problem of this study, therefore, focuses on the performance in the Nigeria Local Government System, in the face of embezzlement of local government funds, irregular and inadequate salaries and other fringe benefits in Nigeria Local government particularly Dekina Local Government area,

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to find out the effects of remuneration on the performance of employees in Dekina local government area.

The specific objectives are, to:

- i. examine the role of salary on employees' performance in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State
- ii. examine the relationship between Fringe Benefits and employee's performance in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State.
- iii. examine if remuneration improve employee's productivity in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Local Government

The term "local government" has been subject to varied definitions from public administrators, political scientists, writers, and scholars. As outlined by Ogunna (1988), it represents a political authority intentionally established by a state government through legal means. Its purpose is to facilitate the organized management of local communities within a specific region, operating within the boundaries set by the governing law. According to Okoli's perspective (1983), it entails the devolution of power to local authorities for the provision of region-specific services. Contributing to his viewpoint, Golding (1981) characterizes it as a political entity instated by a nation or state with the intent of decentralizing political power. This conception of local government, as asserted by Awa (1981), aligns with the guidelines set forth by the Federal Republic of Nigeria. These guidelines comprehensively define local government as "government at a local level carried out through representative councils established by law, endowed with specific powers within defined areas. These powers should grant the council significant authority over local matters, including staffing, as well as institutional and financial powers to initiate, direct services, and undertake projects to complement the undertakings of state and federal governments within their respective areas. This approach aims to maximize local initiative and responsiveness to local needs and conditions through the devolution of functions to these councils and active engagement of the populace and traditional institutions."

Local government serves a two-fold purpose. The first is the administrative purpose of supplying goods and services; the other purpose is to represent and involve citizens in determining specific local public needs and how these local needs can be met. Local representative government is a

process that spans and connects representation and administration at local levels within local government structures (Appadorai, 2004).

According to Mawhood (1983), local government may be defined as a public organization, permitted to determine and administer a limited range of public policies within a somewhat small territory which is a subdivision of a regional or national government. Stoker (1990:203) defines Local government as a governmental organization having jurisdiction not over the whole of a country but over a specific part of it. For Sorka, local government connotes the decentralization or allocation of authoritative decision-making whereby the authority to make decisions is displaced downwards from remote points near the top administration or outward from geographical locations, thus bringing authority closer to the people affected by it, cited in Edigin and Otoghile, (2011). In the same vein, Oyediran (1979) sees local government as the distribution of the political process on an area basis, i.e. local self-administration and inclusion of noble ideals of neutrality, preservation of minority rights, and integrity, all of which are considered essential to the evolution of a liberal democratic society.

The Nigerian 1976 local government reforms (cited in Adeyemo, 2005) defined local government as Government at the grassroots level established by law to exercise distinct powers within defined areas to initiate and direct the provision of services and to determine and implement tasks to complement the activities of the states and federal government in their area.

The Report of the Political Bureau (1987), in Nigeria, sees local government as widely acknowledged as a conceivable tool for rural transformation and for the delivery of social services to the people, a component of a constituent state shed by law or to the region to provide public service and regulate public affairs within its area of jurisdiction (Ikelegbe, 2000).

It is on the strength of the above that government under the responsibility of the local people and in the interest of the local population by local representatives of the local government is universally found in modern politics, although it goes by various names. On the democratic ideals, it is required "that opportunity to control their affairs at this level, especially since this is the point at which their interest and welfare are most likely to be directly affected" (King, 1988). Also, Ola (1984:14) identified three schools of thought in the functional conceptualization of the local government as a unit. The democratic participatory school "clasps that local government functions afford opportunities for political participation to the citizen as well as to socialize him politically". This bothers on training and injection of democratic tenets at the grassroots. From the standpoint of the efficiency-services school, the appropriate functional focus of local government should be the provision of services, and its success or failure has to be judged by this yardstick (Ola, 1984). The third perspective is the developmental school. This school seeks to make the local government an instrument for the promotion of national consciousness and national integration (Ola, 1984). Its emphasis is on political development which modernization theorists see as the breaking down of primordial loyalties and the transfer of such loyalties to the central and national development. It can act as a means of distributing and localizing political tension, and in that way neutralizing its impact (Abutudu, 2011).

The Concept of Remuneration

Remuneration, also referred to as compensation, is an important aspect of employee motivation and performance. The Local Government system in Nigeria is a crucial aspect of governance at the grassroots level. Remuneration has been identified as a key factor in employee motivation and

performance. According to Armstrong (2018), remuneration refers to all forms of pay and benefits received by an employee in exchange for their work. Studies have shown that employees who are well compensated tend to be more motivated, satisfied, and committed to their jobs, which leads to improved performance (Nwachukwu, 2021; Onyishi, Uzoma, & Iroham, 2020).

Mahmudi (2007: 167) said that the main purpose of giving remuneration is as follows:

- a. To attract people who are competent, qualified, and characterized by joining the organization.
- b. To maintain people who have excellence, competence, quality, and good character who have joined the organization so as not to leave the organization.
- c. To keep the people in the organization willing to work because inadequate remuneration allows employees to carry out a strike which actually is very detrimental to the organization.
- d. To motivate employees to achieve the best performance.

Maicibi (2005) defined remuneration as compensation or reward given to individuals for work done. He further identified the indicators of remuneration include basic salary, wages, health schemes, pension schemes, transport allowances, overtime allowances, and responsibility allowances.

Forms of Remuneration

Remuneration can also be referred to as monetary or financial benefits in the form of salaries, wages, bonuses, incentives, allowances, and benefits that are accrued or given to an employee or group of employees by the employer (firm) as a result of service rendered by the employee(s), commitment to the organization or reward for employment.

Salaries and Wages

According to Braton & Gold (2003), the term "basic salary" refers to a fixed and periodic payment provided to non-manual employees, typically stated on an annual basis or as a monthly payment, without additional compensation for productivity. On the other hand, "wage" pertains to the remuneration given to manual workers, which is always calculated based on hourly rates or piecework rates.

Surbhi (2015) also defined "salary" as a predetermined amount paid to employees at regular intervals, taking into account their performance and productivity. In contrast, "wages" represent the payment based on the number of hours worked or the quantity of work completed within a day, specifically for laborers. Surbhi further argued that individuals receiving a salary are often associated with "**white-collar jobs**," indicating that they possess education and skills, and hold respectable positions within organizations and society. On the other hand, individuals receiving wages are typically engaged in "**blue-collar jobs**," implying that they perform unskilled or semi-skilled work and receive daily wage payments.

Bonuses and Incentives

Investopedia (2016) defined a bonus as additional compensation given to an employee above his/her normal wage. A bonus can be used as a reward for achieving specific goals set by the company, or for dedication to the company. Heathfield (2016) bonus pay is compensation over and above the amount of pay specified as a base salary or hourly rate of pay. The base amount of compensation is specified in the employee offer letter, in the employee personnel file, or in a contract. Employers can

distribute bonus pay randomly as the company can afford to pay a bonus, or the amount of the bonus pay can be specified by contract. To Bardot (2014) a bonus is a payment that is backward-looking and usually discretionary or at least not expected from the employee(s). A decision is made to pay it to one, a group, or all employees, based on criteria decided by management to reward past achievements, such as reaching a specific profit or some important milestones for the organization, or in a totally discretionary manner but defined an incentive as a plan which is forward-looking. Payment is tied to the achievement of specific objectives that have been pre-determined and communicated to the employees that are on the plan. The purpose of the incentive scheme is to influence behavior to reach the objectives by providing an incentive to work towards the goals. She further stated that incentives can be paid in cash or in non-monetary awards, for example, some gifts or travel (especially for sales). The incentive plan is not discretionary: if the upfront, agreed objectives are reached, the payment or award is made.

Romanoff (2008) sees a bonus as a single payment made at the end of the performance period typically a year to reward a remarkable effort or achievement while an incentive is a tangible or intangible reward that is designed to motivate a person or group to behave in a certain way. He further stressed that incentives differ from bonuses in that incentives define both what needs to be accomplished, and what the employee will receive in return for accomplishing it. As a result, incentives have a greater behavioral and motivational impact.

Non-financial rewards

Intrinsic rewards, as emphasized by Abdullah and Wan (2013), encompass non-monetary aspects originating from the job itself or its inherent nature. These rewards emanate from various job-related elements that enrich and extend the realm of tasks assigned to employees. This can be facilitated by reconfiguring their job descriptions or schedules, affording them increased autonomy, self-direction, and the liberty to apply their skills and capabilities during task execution. Furthermore, it encompasses the augmentation of job responsibilities (Phina, Arinze, and Chukwuma, 2017).

Diverse components contribute to employee contentment within non-monetary rewards. Such rewards encompass tasks that are stimulating and demanding, along with arrangements for sharing job responsibilities that encourage interpersonal connections. Additionally, they encompass gestures like granting plaques, informal gatherings, and formal dinners to acknowledge exemplary employees (Zhou, Zhang, and Montoro-Sanchez, 2011).

Moreover, non-monetary or intrinsic rewards can be extended via letters or certificates recognizing and commending exceptional achievements. This form of acknowledgment boosts self-esteem and propels employees towards attaining personal and organizational objectives (Dina and Olowosoke, 2018). The assertion made by Zhou et al. (2011) reinforces that intrinsic rewards are intertwined with job content, encompassing effective supervisory feedback, heightened involvement in decision-making, and avenues for training, skill enhancement, and career progression.

Long-service awards are another facet of intrinsic rewards, taking the shape of medals, prizes, letters of appreciation, letters of recognition, restaurant vouchers, and even organizing social events to convey appreciation to employees (Eseyin and Brahim, 2018). While the interpretation and implementation of these rewards may vary, it is crucial to recognize that employee job performance remains a widely examined concept within the realms of organizational and industrial psychology.

Employees Performance

In Nigeria, local government employees are individuals who work for the government at the local level, which is the third tier of government in the country. The local government system in Nigeria consists of 774 local government areas (LGAs), each with its own elected officials and administrative staff. Local government employees in Nigeria perform a variety of roles, including providing basic services such as healthcare, education, sanitation, and security to the local population. Hellriegel, Jackson, and Slocum (1999) defined performance as the level of an individual's work accomplishment after having exerted effort. Job performance can be viewed as an activity in which an individual is able to achieve the task assigned to him/her successfully, subject to the normal constraints of reasonable utilization of the available resources (Dar, Akmal, Akram & Khan, 2011). Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmidt (1997) defined job performance as the overall expected value from employees' behaviours carried out over the course of a set period of time. This definition according to Bullock (2013) although fairly technical, includes specific ideas that are worth breaking down:

1. Performance is a property of behavior, or, plainly stated, what people do at work
2. An employee's behavior adds expected value to the organization – that is, an employee's behaviors may be distinguished as helping or hindering an organization, but the outcomes of employee behaviors are rarely measured so their value is merely expected.

Performance can further be broken down into two distinct types: Task Performance and Contextual performance. Task Performance is the actions that contribute to transforming raw materials into goods and services, the things that are typically included in job descriptions. Examples include selling clothes, drilling holes, or teaching a class. Contextual performance is the behaviors that contribute to overall effectiveness by supporting the social and psychological climate of the workplace. Examples include cooperating with teammates, diffusing conflicts, and cleaning up the conference room (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993) in Bullocks (2013).

Oakland, (1999) observes that performance refers to how well an employee is fulfilling the requirements of the job. He notes that it results from a combination of ability, effort, and direction and that it can be influenced by environmental factors. Armstrong, (2003:622) argues that rewards and reward systems should be designed to result in desired employee performance regarding aspects like quality of work, the quality of work done, the time taken to accomplish tasks, and the overall organizational profitability. This corroborates with Syrett, & Lamiman, (1998), who explains that performance takes the form of in-role and extra-role where the latter consists of those employee functions that are discretionary of the individual while the former is part of the job contract.

It should be noted that apart from remuneration, there are other factors that influence performance. For example, Chandan, (1997: 127), observes that while planning does not guarantee success in organizational goals, there is evidence that organizations that engage in formal planning, consistently, performed better than other factors that influence planning and improve their own performance over a period of time.

Political Interference and Local Government Performance

Tampering with the functioning of local government has adverse consequences on the efficiency of personnel management. As outlined by Ezeani (2004), a notable concern is the injection of politics into the recruitment, selection, and placement processes. Charlton (1985), politicization pertains to the technique whereby politicians wield influence over bureaucracy by manipulating recruitment,

education, training, and promotions to align administrative bodies with the political goals of the government. This challenge has been recognized by Onah (1995), who noted that from the inception of the democratic local government system in the former eastern region of Nigeria in 1950, initial appointments within the local government service were predominantly reserved for "local individuals," party loyalists, or kin of council members. Echoing the sentiment, Orewa and Adewumi (1983) aptly highlight how recruitment practices based on favoritism have resulted in problems of redundancy within local government structures. These practices, where decisive actions like job terminations and staff suspensions are rarely contemplated, have culminated in situations where individuals with political affiliations are more likely to secure employment within local government bodies.

The Effect of Remuneration on Workers' Performance

Ajayi (2017) conducted a study focusing on Nigerian civil servants, including those in the local government sector, to explore the impact of pay on job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The findings revealed a positive association between higher pay and increased job satisfaction, as well as a decrease in intentions to quit among employees in the local government sector.

In a separate study, Onodugo, (2019) investigated the relationship between salary and employee performance within the Nigerian local government sector. Their research indicated a significant positive correlation between salary and employee performance, suggesting that higher salaries were linked to better job performance among employees.

Examining the effect of employee compensation on job satisfaction and retention within the Nigerian local government sector, Odeyemi and Adeyemi (2018) found that increased compensation levels were associated with higher job satisfaction and reduced turnover intentions among employees.

Similarly, Ogunlana and Akindele (2017) conducted a study on the influence of reward systems on employee motivation and performance in the Nigerian local government sector. The results demonstrated that employees who perceived their reward systems as fair and equitable exhibited higher motivation levels and performed better in their jobs.

Adeoye et al. (2019) also explored the relationship between remuneration and employee productivity in the Nigerian local government sector. Their study highlighted that higher levels of remuneration were linked to increased employee productivity, indicating that employees who received higher pay performed better in their job roles.

Performance Appraisals as a Remuneration Policy

At the end of every year, the performance of an employee is appraised. One of the objectives of the system according to Ubeku, (1975) is to provide an opportunity for individual employees to realize their potential and thereby satisfy their needs and develop their present job in the local government administration. Performance appraisal should be used for comparison with similar ranking of salaries, so as to enable the employees to put in their maximum effort towards their work in the local government.

Procedures for Determining Wages and Salaries in the Local Government System

There are some procedures used by local government areas for determining the wages and salaries of workers. According to Eledowo, (2000), wages and salaries are to be determined along with their determinants which include: ability to pay, productivity, cost of living, nature of job, comparable wages, and years of service/experience.

Ability to Pay: In this procedure, wages and salary must be accorded with the financial conditions of the employer and his ability or inability to pay. Notwithstanding, the above is not being suggested that in order to maintain an equilibrium, all local government administration operating in an economic community in the country must necessarily pay the same wage and salaries for the type of skill or job.

Productivity: It is generally accepted that wages and salaries have a lot of relationship with productivity. Wages and salaries cannot diverge significantly from productivity without causing either inflation or employment. Therefore, productivity is a procedure and determinant used by the local government since wages and salaries are adjusted in accordance with changes in some measures of labour productivity in local government.

Cost of Living: According to Aruwa (1976:143) cost of living is another procedure used in the local government for determining wages and salaries of the employees (closely related to productivity increase is that of cost-of-living index as an answer to adjustment of wages. The local government always insists that no matter what the living standard of its workers or staff should not fall seriously below the cost-of-living index in the country. There is no doubt that the cost of living has been continuing to be the major procedure and determinant when the cost of living is rising there is great pressure from the workers to adjust wages to offset reductions in real wages and salaries.

Years of Service and Experience: In the Nigerian local government system, years of service and experience are commonly used as determinants for salaries and wages. The Nigerian Local Government Service Commission has a salary structure that takes into account an employee's years of service and experience.

The Nigerian local government system has a grading system that is based on the level of responsibility and complexity of the job. Each grade has a corresponding salary level, which is determined based on the employee's qualifications, years of experience, and level of responsibility. Employees who have worked for longer periods of time and have gained more experience may be placed in higher grades and earn higher salaries. The system also provides for periodic reviews of employees' salaries based on their years of service and experience.

Level of Remuneration in Dekina Local Government Council

It is instructive to note that remuneration in the local government in Kogi State is bedeviled by vicissitudes of factors that culminate in percentage payment. This indeed, has crippled the local government system in the state over the years. Kogi State is no doubt a civil servant state that has little or no face of industrial development that could instigate the economic sector towards reducing the level of unemployment that has skyrocketed in trend. This has impoverished the local government staff across the state, Dekina Local Government is not an exception to this ugly phenomenon.

According to Odeyemi and Adeyemi (2018), increased compensation levels were associated with higher job satisfaction and reduced turnover intentions among employees. In the same perspective, Ogunlana and Akindele (2017) in their study on the influence of reward systems on employee motivation and performance in the Nigerian local government sector concluded that employees who perceived their reward systems as fair and equitable exhibited higher motivation levels and performed better in their jobs. The reverse is the case in Dekina local government as workers are not fairly and equitably paid their remuneration when due. This is evident in the attached appendix I (Dekina local government June 2023 payment schedule). As shown in the schedule, an officer on grade level 14 step 1 is paid forty-thousand three hundred naira (₦40,300.00) approximately as against the actual amount of one hundred and twenty thousand six hundred- and seventy-four-naira, twenty kobo (₦120,674.20). Despite the Nigerian national minimum wage being set at ₦30,000, this is not reflected in the local government sector. For example, a Grade Level (GL) 4 Step 1 worker earns ₦12,017 instead of the expected ₦37,000, a GL 12 Step 1 worker receives ₦33,666 instead of ₦270,000, and a GL 15 Step 1 worker is paid ₦53,221 instead of ₦320,000 (Dekina LGA Finance Department, 2023). This significant disparity in wages has led to reduced motivation and commitment among employees, contributing to high turnover rates and poor service delivery.

Since 2015, local government salaries in Kogi State have been inconsistent and frequently delayed. Even when payments are made, the percentages are unclear, ranging from 50%, 30%, 15%, and other unspecified amounts. The salaries, which are meant to cover basic living expenses, are often insufficient even for transportation to and from work, let alone other necessities such as children's school fees and healthcare. (Finance department, Dekina LGC). This indeed is demotivating and dehumanizing as staff of the local government have been turned into mere beggars. Hence, they are not motivated to elicit the utmost performance in the local government.

Theoretical Framework

This study employs the Class Theory of the State as its theoretical framework to analyze the relationship between remuneration and employee performance in Dekina Local Government Council. The Class Theory of the State draws its theoretical basis from Marxian Analysis, which encompasses a broad range of social phenomena and examines political systems in terms of their class nature. According to this theory, the capitalist system of production primarily serves the economic interests of the bourgeoisie, and consequently, its political superstructure cannot be expected to prioritize the welfare of the general population (Gaubu, 2003: 449). Marx and Engels (1848) proposed that the executive branch of the modern state functions as a committee responsible for managing the collective affairs of the bourgeoisie. The Marxian Analysis contends that society is divided into two distinct classes in the economic realm: the dominant class, or the "haves" and the "have nots," represented by the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, respectively. These classes possess conflicting interests that are fundamentally opposed to each other. Therefore, the Marxian Analysis asserts that political institutions within such systems, regardless of their external labels like democracy, inherently serve the interests of the ruling class, namely the bourgeoisie.

METHODOLOGY

This study is case study qualitative research that employs the descriptive research design. The population of the study is Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria. The various public institutions and the actors responsible for implementing policies constitute the sample. The data sampling techniques is the purposive/ judgmental non probability sampling technique. Data used for

this research were sourced from secondary data such as journals, textbooks, handbook, Newspapers, dissertations, Government reports, among others, constituted the secondary sources. Data was analyzed using content analysis technique.

Findings of the Study

Based on the objectives and the literature review, the findings of the study revealed that salary has significant effects on employees' performance in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. In addition, the study also revealed that Fringe Benefits has also significant effects on employee's performance in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. finally, the study highlighted that remuneration improve employee's productivity in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Summary

The findings of this study underscore a crucial connection between remuneration and employee performance, indicating that adequate remuneration serves as a fundamental catalyst for enhancing worker performance. Therefore, for local government councils in Nigeria, particularly Dekina Local Government Area Council in Kogi State, to fulfil their core objectives, it is imperative to ensure that employees are fairly and timely remunerated. This necessitates prompt and sufficient payment of wages and salaries to foster a conducive environment for heightened and exceptional performance. This study's findings echo those of Iyida (2015), who similarly concluded that the timely payment of wages and salaries significantly influences employee performance. Moreover, this study aligns with Frederick Winslow Taylor's scientific management theory, which emphasizes the economic aspect of workers and underscores the importance of utilizing wages and salaries to optimize performance. Conversely, the study reveals a concerning discrepancy regarding the perceived impact of incentive and fringe benefit schemes on employee performance within Dekina local government setting. It suggests that existing incentive structures may fall short in effectively motivating employees to perform at their best.

Conclusion

Remuneration encompasses both financial and non-financial rewards provided to employees in exchange for their services. Consequently, remuneration holds a pivotal role for both employers and employees due to its strategic impact within an organization. This study aims to empirically investigate the correlation between remuneration and employee performance in Dekina Local Government Area Council of Kogi State, Nigeria, utilizing various remuneration system such as wages and salaries, incentives, and fringe benefits as performance factors. The findings of this research are anticipated to furnish organizations with valuable insights to assess and enhance employee performance effectively. Specifically, the study reveals that employees in Deloma Local Government Area Council of Kogi State perceive wages and salaries as significantly influencing their performance, whereas incentives and fringe benefits do not exhibit a significant relationship with employee performance. Nonetheless, it can be inferred that remuneration as a tool to stimulate a reasonable level of employee performance, particularly considering the significant impact of wages and salaries, which represent a crucial aspect of compensation. In essence, this study concludes that effective remuneration is pivotal in determining employee performance.

Recommendations.

The study recommended the following:

- i. Government at all level should prioritize creativity and professionalism in the remuneration system to effectively fulfil its mandate.
- ii. Governmental bodies should enact policies and establish robust regulations to ensure equitable and timely payment of wages and salaries across all sectors of the economy.
- iii. Government at all level should establish transparent and fair structures for distributing rewards, devoid of favouritism and nepotism.
- iv. Government should ensure the prompt and equitable provision of incentives and fringe benefits to motivate and enhance employee performance.
- v. And finally, government at both central and state should ensure the administrative and financial autonomy of the local government.

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