



## Staff Discipline and Performance of Kogi State Civil Service Commission

**Omada, Joshua<sup>1</sup>, Ayogu, Gabriel Igwebuike<sup>2</sup> Egbara, Edward Amechi<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Public Administration, Veritas University, Abuja, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Department of Public Administration and Local Government Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

*Corresponding Author's E-mail:* ayogug@veritas.edu.ng

### Abstract

Despite the Kogi State Government efforts to reposition the State Civil Service Commission for improved performance, staff commitment to duty has not significantly improved. Staff lateness and absence from duty posts, undue delay in promotion, underserved appointment and promotion in the Service among others are common. The study assessed the effect of staff discipline on the performance of the Kogi State Civil Service Commission. The general objective of the study was to assess the effect of staff discipline on the performance of Kogi State Civil Service Commission. This research work was anchored on bureaucratic theory. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study and the sample size was 120 staff of the Commission, utilizing the census sampling technique. The sources of data collection for this study were primary and secondary. Simple percentage was used to analyze responses generated from the questionnaire while the secondary data was subjected to intense analysis. We found out among others that despite the fact that there are several training and development programmes created for her staff of all ranks, the exercise fall short of established training and development standards in choosing staff for training. Of the 110 respondents, majority 65 (59.1%) identified connection to heads of units and politicians as against length of service (16, 14.5%), specific needs of the departments/units (10, 9.1%), and staff commitment to duty (19, 17.3%). The study concluded that consequent upon the neglect of established procedures in training and development of employees of the KSCSC as well as appointment and promotion, the practices have affected negatively the commitment of staff to their duties. The study then recommended among others that the Kogi State Civil Service Commission should sublet its training and development as well as appointment and promotion exercises to professional bodies, especially those outside the state to reduce possible undue influences.

**Keywords:** Staff discipline, staff performance, training/development, appointment/promotion, Civil Service Commission.

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## Introduction

Authors have recognized the correlation between discipline and overall performance of organizations. Employee performance is an important component in the organization, so organizations need to pay attention to factors that can improve employee performance (Tentama, Dewi & Meilani, 2020; Panjaitan, Sule, Kusman & Yunizar, 2021). Work discipline can affect employee behavior significantly, which will ultimately affect employee performance. Employees with work discipline have proven to have far better performance because they feel they have a responsibility to help achieve their organizational goals.

According to Salama, Al-Shobaki, Abu-Naser, AlFerjany and Abu-Amuna (2017), discipline in workplace entails understanding regulations, compliance and obedience to rules and timeliness of carrying out tasks. To enforce discipline in workplaces, employers have utilized query writing, reprimand, withholding of salaries or part-payment. Others include extant laws contained in the organizational policy books and bureaucratic chain of command in the structure.

Without these elements, employees' performance will be affected negatively. Employees' performance could be measured in terms of work quantity, work quality, effectiveness and work commitment would be poor (Mangkunegara & Octorend, 2022). In Kogi State Civil Service Commission, several committees have been set up to reform the Kogi State Civil Service for staff discipline and better performance. These included the Sally Tibet Screening Committee (2010), Deborah Ogunmola Screening Committee (2016) as well as General Olusola Okotima Steering Committee (2016). The committees were expected to come up with recommendations to eliminate over bloated civil service, ghost workers, remunerations, streamline recruitment/appointment processes and so on (Kogi State Civil Service Commission Annual Report, 2021).

However, despite the fact that civil service is the bedrock for effective preparation and execution of public policies, the body is usually enmeshed in debilitating issues which immobilize it. In Kogi State of Nigeria, it is an awful picture. According to an investigation by former Secretary to the Kogi State Government, Ayoade, the Kogi State Civil Service represents a dispirited civil service characterized by lackadaisical attitude to work, poor remuneration, lack of monitoring,

absence of proper supervision, eclipse of discipline and loss of sanity (Idris & Alegbeleye, 2015). No doubt, these could make any civil service a compelling and comprehensive failure.

Obahopo (2020) in what seemed more particularistic pointed out that the Kogi State Civil Service is ruined by problem of contract employment after retirement, irrespective of the fact that it is forbidden by the Civil Service Commission of the State. He argued that though there were circulars that no civil servant will be given contract employment, some still enjoy the abnormality. It is important to emphasize that keeping some civil servants when they have retired by age or year of service is a disservice to the qualified and hardworking staff which such non-retirement has stifled their ambitions of reaching the pinnacle of their careers. A case of study was when a former Kogi State Head of Service, against her own memo stayed in office two years after her official retirement age (Obahopo, 2020). This abnormality compelled the Kogi State Chapter of the Nigerian Labour Congress to protest against it.

Furthermore, in the Kogi State Civil Service, there have been issues of fake certificate, falsification of age and fake advert for employment. It was alleged that some staff who lacked required educational qualifications printed degrees of educational institutions they never attended to secure promotions. It is also alleged that others falsify their age by swearing court affidavit of age to illegally remain in service. As it is difficult to cheat nature, as their age begin to tell on such staff, their energy and performance lower at the expense of the state civil service. Even more disturbing is the problems of poor and delayed staff salaries to Kogi State Civil Servants. This is equally an extension of never-ending verification/screening exercise carried out in the state civil service, especially when a new administration takes over in the state. It is disheartening to state that in Kogi State, civil servants, especially those affiliated to the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and Local Government Areas (LGA) in general have been subjected to dehumanization and oppression with regards to the payment of their salaries. The amount being paid as monthly take-home has shifted from being ridiculous to sheer wickedness (Jimoh, 2022). For instance, January 2022 salary was paid in March. The worst is that civil servants were paid as little as three thousand Naira.

Not to be mentioned are cases of keeping multiple jobs, lateness or absence from places of work, perverse recruitment and selection processes in appointment and promotions etc. These equally



work to worsen the performance of Kogi State Civil Service Commission and the state civil service in general. Transfers, promotions and appointment processes are strange to the processes in the Service Handbook. Contacts and connections in religion and tribes determine who gets what in the service. Irrespective of the fact that literatures exist on the relationship between employees' discipline and performance in organizations, sufficient work has not be done in this regard in Kogi State, particularly the state's civil service commission. This indeed was a gap which this study, "effects of staff discipline on the performance of Kogi State Civil Service Commission", attempted to fill in.

### **Research Questions**

This study was be guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the effects of staff discipline in Kogi State Civil Service Commission on training and development of Kogi State civil servants?
2. How has staff discipline in Kogi State Civil Service Commission affected appointment and promotion in Kogi State Civil Service?
3. To what extent did staff discipline in Kogi State Civil Service Commission affect punctuality and regularity of Kogi State Civil Servants in their duty posts?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The broad objective of this study was to assess the effect of staff discipline on performance of Kogi State Civil Service Commission. Specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Find out the effects of staff discipline in Kogi State Civil Service Commission on training and development of Kogi State civil servant.
2. Explore how staff discipline in Kogi State Civil Service Commission affected appointment and promotion in Kogi State Civil Service.
3. Assess the effects of staff discipline in Kogi State Civil Service Commission on punctuality and regularity of Kogi State Civil Servants in their duty posts.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research work was anchored on bureaucratic theory. This theory was propounded and popularized by Max Weber in 1946. One of the points of argument of this theory was evident in Max Weber's rational-legal authority, which became the defining feature of organizational structures, especially government bureaucracies, to this day. It steered organizational setups to rational based considerations, which are in line with the science of administration idea.

Key features of the ideal type of bureaucracy that Weber presents are division of labor, hierarchal order, written documents, well-trained staff and experts, full working capacity of the officials, and application of impersonal rules. Hence, for the performance of the Nigeria public service and the Kogi State Civil Service Commission in particular, the ideals of the Weber Bureaucracy; hierarchy, meritocracy, rules, discipline etc need to be respected and observed. Staff appointment and promotion, training and development should be strictly on organizational staff need and according to its human resource plan. Also, these decisions should be based on extant laws and merit to ensure staff discipline.

### **Concept of Staff Discipline**

Dumisan, (2022) define discipline as a system of rules and mechanism for ensuring that disciplinary codes are followed. This implies that every organization has its rules and regulation "dos and donts". Observance of these sets of rules in itself is discipline. However, in the view of Ajumogobia (2017) in a seminar presentation assert that discipline in the work place does not mean strict and technical observance of rules and regulations for the survival of the organizational system. Rather, it implies a situation where workers are expected to cooperate and behave in a normal and orderly way, as any reasonable person would expect an employee to do. This has become imperative since the goal of every organization or establishment is to enhance workers' satisfaction that would lead to higher productivity and profitability. This can only be realized where there are sets of rules and regulations that would govern the conduct of people at work. The absence of these rules and regulations will lead to anarchy, workers dissatisfaction which is antithetical to the basic principles that informed the establishment of such an organization in the first place. Workers who display unethical behaviour are capable of infesting others with good morals (Vonai, 2023).



## Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The sample size for the study was 120 staff of Kogi State Civil Service Commission. This sample was based on census technique considering the small population. All the staff of the Commission was adopted for the study. The sources of data collection for this study were primary and secondary. The primary data for this study was obtained through questionnaire administered to the staff of Kogi State Civil Service Commission. The principal sources of the secondary data for this study was obtained through the review of relevant literature or use of materials from textbooks, website pages, journals, newspapers and magazines, periodicals, government publication/documents, workshop papers and official administrative documents. We visited the Commission's Office where we administered the instrument and made physical observations. In order to ensure the validity of the instrument used for this study, the instruments were subjected to content validity measurement, which involved face validity and predictive validity. In addition, the Post-Graduate Board of the Public Administration Department, Veritas University Abuja studied the instrument items to make sure that all aspects considered relevant to the study are adequately covered. Data that were collected were presented using tables. These tables showed the frequency and percentages of responses from the questionnaire respondents. Simple percentage was used to analyze the responses generated from the questionnaire while the secondary data was subjected to intense analysis.

## Data Presentation and Analysis of Findings:

**Table 1: Response Rate**

Total Questionnaire Administered	120
Properly Completed and Returned Questionnaire	110
Percentage (%)	91.7

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2023.

Table 2 above gives a response rate of 91.7%, implying a very good response rate for the study. Four (4) questionnaires were not returned at all while six (6) were rejected because of very poor handling by the respondents. The unreturned and rejected questionnaires represented about 8.3%.



So a total of 110 questionnaires correctly filled in and returned in good condition were accepted for further analysis.

### Staff Discipline in Kogi State Civil Service Commission

**Table 2: Kogi State Civil Service Commission utilizes the following measures in staff discipline.**

Disciplinary Measures	Frequency
Reprimand	60
Warnings/query	10
Punitive posting/transfer	15
Withholding of salary	5
Demotion	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2023

The respondents reacting to a statement on the how the Kogi State Civil Service Commission react to issues of indiscipline, maintained that reprimand, warnings, query, punitive posting/transfer, withholding of salary and demotion are various ways the Commission responds to cases of indiscipline. Out the 110 respondents 60 (54.5%) identified reprimand, 10 (9.1%) identified warning, 15 (13.6%) identified punitive posting/transfers, 5 (5.5%) opted for withholding of salary and 20 (18.2%) identified demotion. No respondent chose others. Judging from the percentages of the responses, even though the above methods are utilized in enforcing discipline issues in KSCSC, reprimand at 60 (54.5%) mostly applies. The reprimands range from oral to written depending on the nature and frequency of the misbehavior.

**Table 3: Indiscipline in Kogi State Civil Service Commission involves.**

Discipline issues	Frequency
Lateness and absenteeism.	67
Selling items in offices	10
Biased selection of staff for training	13
Appointment and promotion not based on merits	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2023

In an effort indicate the forms of indiscipline in KSCSC, the researcher asked the respondents to identify the kind of attitudes regarded as indiscipline in the Commission. Of the 110 respondents,

67 (60.9%) identified lateness to work and absenteeism, 10 (9.1%) picked selling items in offices, 13 (11.8%) identified biased selection of staff for training and 20 (18.2%) identified appointment and promotion not based on merits. From the responses, it then showed that indiscipline manifests in the Commission in various forms. The most common among them therefore is lateness and absenteeism with a total of 67 (60.9%) of the respondents.

### Functions of Kogi State Civil Service Commission

From the State Civil Service Handbook and KSCSC Annual Report (2021), the Commission is created to perform the under listed mandates:

- a. Oversees the development and administration of the state's civil service system.
- b. Appointment, discipline and removal of persons holding or acting in offices within the civil service.
- c. Regulates the employment and working conditions of civil servants.
- d. Oversees hiring and promotion of civil servants.
- e. Promotion of ethical values in the civil service.
- f. Organizing training and development programmes for civil servants in the state.

**Table 4: Functions Performed by KSCSC**

Functions	Frequency
Oversees the development and administration of the state's civil service system	14
Appointment, discipline and removal of persons holding or acting in offices within the civil service.	45
Regulates the employment and working conditions of civil servants	10
Oversees hiring and promotion of civil servants	5
Promotion of ethical values in the civil service	8
Organizing training and development programmes for civil servants in the state	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2023

However, the respondents were divided in what constitute the major functions of the Commission. Out of the 110 respondents, 14 (12.7%) maintained that overseeing the development and administration of the state's civil service system constituted the major duty of the KSCSC, 45 (40.9%) identified appointment, discipline and removal of persons holding or



acting in offices within the civil service, 10 (9.1%) identified regulation of the employment and working conditions of civil servants. Others include 5 (4.5%) identified overseeing hiring and promotion of civil servants, 8 (7.3%) promotion of ethical values in the civil service, 28 (25.5%) chose organizing training and development programmes for civil servants in the state. It can be seen from the percentage that mandates of the KSCSC is majorly overseeing the development and administration of the state's civil service system (45, 40.9%). This is closely followed with the position of respondents 28 (25.5%) that the mandate is organizing training and development programmes for civil servants in the state. No doubt, training and development of civil servants is a core function of any civil service commission.

### **Staff discipline and performance of Kogi State Civil Service Commission.**

**Table 5: Staff training and development programmes in Kogi State Civil Service Commission**

<b>Programmes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Study leave.	7
Job rotation.	19
Seminars, workshop, and conferences.	70
Production and review of the state civil service Handbook.	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2023

The KSCSC Report (2021) indicated that there are several training and development programmes created for her staff of all ranks. These included but not limited to study leave, job rotation, seminars, workshop, and conferences as well as production and review of the state civil service Handbook. However, when the respondents were given the opportunity to identify the mostly applied training and development programme, 7 (6.4%) maintained study leave, 19 (17.3%) identified job rotation, 70 (63.6%) seminars, workshop, and conferences and 14 (12.7%) identified production and review of the state civil service Handbook. These results indicate that though KSCSC put in place study leave, job rotation, seminars, workshops and conferences and produces as well as reviews the state civil service handbook. However, majority with 70 (63.6%)



of the respondents identified seminars, workshops and conferences the key staff training and development programmes of the Commission.

**Table 6: Determinants of choice for staff training and development programmes in Kogi State Civil Service Commission**

Determinants of Choice	Frequency
Length of service and seniority.	19
Specific needs of departments/units.	16
Staff commitment to duty.	10
Connection to heads of units and politicians.	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2023

In an attempt to assess how discipline affect staff training and development programmes of KSCSC, we asked the respondents to identify what determines the choice of staff for training and development programmes in the Commission. Of the 110 respondents, majority 65 (59.1%) identified connection to heads of units and politicians as against length of service (16, 14.5%), specific needs of the departments/units (10, 9.1%), and staff commitment to duty (19, 17.3%). Therefore, we can conclude that those usually selected for training and development programmes have connections and contacts to heads of units and politicians instead of merit and needs.

**Table 7: Measures by Kogi State Civil Service Commission to ensure effective staff training and development:**

Measures	Frequency
Mandatory report after training programmes.	75
Posting reflecting training experiences gained.	15
Utilizing training outcomes in promotions.	9
Regular and prompt payment of training allowances.	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2023

In order to ensure effectiveness in its staff training and development programmes, we wanted to know what the KSCSC is doing in this regard. The respondents were expected to choose from the options ranging from mandatory report after training programmes, posting reflecting training experiences gained, utilizing training outcomes in promotions and regular and prompt payment of training allowances. Though the respondents indicated that these requirements exist in the



Commission, some are not very popular requirement, hence their effects on effective staff training and development.

Of the 110 respondents, 75 (68.2%) maintained that participants in training and development programmes are required to make a mandatory report after training programmes, 15 (13.6%) were of the opinion that participants' posting reflected training experiences gained. Furthermore, 9 (8.2%) of the respondents argued that KSCSC utilizes training outcomes in promotions and 11 (10%) maintained that regular and prompt payment of training allowances were made to staff training beneficiaries in KSCSC. These results suggested that while participants of staff training and development programmes in the Commission prioritized training reports, participants' posting did not usually reflect training experiences gained, training outcomes were not utilized significantly in promotions and regular and prompt payment of training allowances were not made to staff training beneficiaries

### **Staff discipline in appointment and promotion of Kogi State civil servants.**

**Table 8: Appointment of staff into Kogi State Civil Service Commission is based on:**

<b>Basis/criterion for appointment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Educational qualification.	10
Experience.	8
Needs or vacancies	13
Applicants' contacts.	53
Religious and ethnic affiliations	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2023

The researcher wanted the respondents to express their opinion on how appointment/recruitment, which is a critical function of the KSCSC was carried. This is to certain whether the process follows laid down procedures and rules, which represent discipline. In reaction to what determines appointment into the Commission, 10 (9.1%) of the respondents showed that educational qualification is the key determinant, 8 (7.3%) of respondents indicated that experience is the most considered factor, 13 (11.8%) identified needs or vacancies as key. However, 53 (48.2%) of the respondents indicated that applicants contacts determine their chances for appointment more than every other factors. On the other hand, 26 (23.6%) of the



respondents believed that the key determinant is ethnic and religious affiliations. Therefore, we conclude that appointment in KSCSC is determined by applicants' contacts with political and administrative leaders with respondents 53 (48.2%) out of the 110 persons sampled. This is closely followed by ethnic and religious affiliation of applicants that had 26 (23.6%).

**Table 9: Promotion of staff in the Kogi State Civil Service Commission is based on**

Criterion for Promotion	Frequency
Educational qualification.	10
Years of service.	8
Relevant training experience.	13
Affiliations to heads of units and politicians.	53
Religious and ethnic considerations	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2023

In a similar vein, the research sought to find out how promotion is conducted in the Commission. This is aimed to find out the key determinant of promotion from one rank to another in the Commission. In reaction to what determines promotion into the Commission, 10 (9.1%) of the respondents showed that educational qualification is the key determinant, 8 (7.3%) of respondents indicated that years of service is the most considered factor, 13 (11.8%) identified relevant training experience as key. However, 53 (48.2%) of the respondents indicated that applicants affiliations to heads of units and politicians determine their chances for promotion more than every other factors. On the other hand, 26 (23.6%) of the respondents believed that the key determinant is ethnic and religious considerations. Therefore, we conclude that like appointment in KSCSC, promotion is also determined by applicants' contacts with political and administrative leaders with respondents 53 (48.2%) out of the 110 persons sampled. This is closely followed by ethnic and religious affiliation of applicants that had 26 (23.6%).

### Staff discipline and commitment of civil servants to duties

**Table 10: Punctuality and regularity of Kogi State civil servants in their duty posts:**

Reasons for improved commitment	Frequency
Increased use of query, warnings and reprimands.	20
Exemplary attitudes of heads of units to duty.	48
Requisite training and development programmes organized.	42
Others (specify)	-



<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>
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**Source:** Fieldwork, 2023

The responses of the respondents indicated that use of query, warnings and reprimands, exemplary attitudes of heads of units to duties and requisite training and development programmes influence commitment of KSCSC staff. However, of the 110 respondents, 20 (18.2%) were of the opinion that increased use of query, warnings and reprimands lead to staff punctuality and regularity to their duty posts, 48 (43.6%) of the respondents believed it was exemplary attitudes of heads of units to duty. In addition, 42 (38.2%) of the respondents maintained punctuality and regularity of staff improved because of requisite training and development programmes organized. None of the respondents mentioned other factors not captured in the options. So, the researcher concluded that punctuality and regularity of the Kogi State civil servants in their duty posts could improve with was exemplary attitudes of heads of units to duty (48, 43.6%).

### Conclusion

Staff discipline which entails use of rules, rewards, sanctions, training etc to secure commitment is the duty of every person in the Kogi State Civil Service Commission. The study concluded that these disciplinary measures are not significantly being utilized in the Commission. The offenders are junior, middle, senior and management staff. Hence, it has affected the performance of the functions KSCSC negatively. Staff training and development, appointment and promotion do not significantly follow the rules/standards set for them. However, when these measures are applied, they improve staff commitment manifesting in punctuality and regularity in their duty posts, but are most often not utilized.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. The Kogi State Civil Service Commission should embark on strong awareness campaigns to sensitize its staff, especially senior cadre on the need to follow merit in all its services.
2. The KSCSC should strictly employee staff disciplinary measures such as use of query, warnings and reprimands on erring employees without bias.



3. The management staff and heads of units in KSCSC should imbibe the spirit of exemplary attitudes to duties. They should be seen to practice what they preach in daily activities in the Commission.
4. The Kogi State Civil Service Commission should sublet the training and development exercises to professional bodies, especially outside the state to reduce possible undue influence from politicians.

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