

INTEGRATED PERSONNEL PAYROLL AND INFORMATION SYSTEM (IPPIS) PANACEA FOR GHOST WORKERS SYNDROME IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC SERVICE

BY

IDRIS HARUNA

Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Federal Polytechnic Idah, Kogi State University, Nigeria
Phone No: 08139215150

ADAJA JOSEPH

Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Federal Polytechnic Idah, Kogi State University, Nigeria
Phone No: 08051169963

&

AUDU JOEL SAMSON

Registry Department

Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Federal Polytechnic Idah, Kogi State University, Nigeria
Email: joelsamsonaudu@gmail.com
Phone No: 08054836107

ABSTRACT

The ghost worker syndrome has been a menace across all tiers of government and has led to government spending billions of naira resulting from the money being siphoned through payments to non-existing employees. Consequently, the geometric annual increase in wage bill has become worrisome hence the Nigerian labour met has become saturated and the nation's economy being put in jeopardy. This paper therefore examines the effects of ghost workers syndrome and how the instrumentality of integrated personnel payroll and information system (IPPIS) could address the menace in the public service. The researchers elicit data from both primary and secondary sources. The data were analyzed using the simple percentage, frequency tables, mean score and spearman rank order correlation technique. The paper concludes that ghost workers syndrome is highly imminent in the public service thus, recommends that the integrated personnel payroll and information system (IPPIS) should be adopted in the public service to ensure a virile economy through enhance productivity.

Keywords: Personnel, Ghost Workers, Payroll, Information System.

INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian minister of finance in February, 2011 revealed that the pilot implementation of the integrated personnel and payroll information system (IPPIS) in sixteen ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) saved the nation over N12 billion between 2007 and 2010. This pilot implementation was necessitated considering the fact that government wage bill had constituted a huge chunk of recurrent expenditure at 58 percent of the annual budget.

More so, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo Iweala the Minister of Finance observed in 2014 that as part of measure aimed at cushioning the effect of drilling oil revenue accruing to the government resulting to 30 percent fall in the price of oil in international market, the government saved 160 billion naira by weeding out 60,000 ghost workers from the payroll. This is also excluding the 46,821 ghost workers identified in 215 ministries, department and agencies in 2013. Hence, the consistent staff screening in government ministries, departments, agencies both at the federal states and local governments is the manifestation of the level of ghost workers syndrome in the public service.

The Nigerian unemployment rate increased to 23.9 percent in 2011 from 21.0 percent in 2010, and averaged 14.6 from 2006. And in 2014 80 percent of Nigerians were unemployed. More so, this affects the socio-economic fortunes of the citizens and the rate of corruption is obviously the causes of this trend compare to other nations such as China with 4.1 percent rate of unemployment, united

kingdom with 5.5 percent unemployment rate and united states of America with 5.5 percent unemployment rate yet with low level of corruption (National Bureau of Statistics, 2015). For example the staff audit exercise conducted in federal capital territory in 2013 revealed that out of 26,017 on the payroll, 6000 were fictitious. Hence, the audit exercise further exposed the extent of monumental corruption, theft and financial irregularities that could be agreed if the electronic payroll system is fully implemented in the public service. Despite the provision of the financial regulations of 2009 part 1, (1503) (i) which stipulates that all public servants shall have their salaries and allowances paid through a named banks on completion of Treasurer form (4), it is obvious that such provision is handicapped to empower the organizations to carry out a centralized payroll system.

Though, Letswla and Egwemi (2013) noted that corruption did not begin today but ancient civilizations and traces of widespread illegality and corruption. Anwar (2006) sees local government created by federal government to draw administration closer to the people. The functions of local government fall under the efficiency service drive to remove the administrative bottleneck and bureaucratic complicities aimed at promoting governance, efficiency and service delivery (Iseol-Orunkanmi, 2014). But, achieving this according to Yojifigain (1996) and Derek, Laura and Stephen, (2005) requires managing resourceful personnel through adequate reward system but ghost workers syndrome in recent time have threatened this objective hence the application of integrated personnel payroll and information system with the expository evidence being show cased of its efficiency in curbing ghost workers syndrome will serve as an antidote to addressing this negative trend. It is against this backdrop that this research is being carried out.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nigerian unemployment rate has been on the increase, for example, it rose from 21.0 percent to 23.9 percent in 2011 and with over 60 million Nigerians being unemployed out of the total population of 168.8 million is not only worrisome but alarming. However, the scourge of ghost workers as another dimension of corruption in government is obviously responsible as Nigeria is still rated among the top list in the ranking of corrupt nations. This ugly trend has not only put the nation on the sorry state but has given the nation bad reputation among committees of nations.

Combating this will only be sensible through massive recruitment which could only be possible through saving the huge illusionary personnel cost and also vigorously tackling the monumental corruption that is inherent in the public service by the implementation of the integrated personnel payroll and information system, this is the thrust of this paper.

THE GAP IN LITERATURE

Knowledge is lacking regarding the effect of unemployment resulting from ghost workers syndrome as previous researches only focused on the effects of unemployment but the dimension of how the implementation of integrated personnel payroll and information system especially in the local government administration has not been given imminence, thus, creating a gap that needs to be filled by means of empirical study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this paper is to explore how the implementation of integrated personnel payroll and information system could address the ghost workers syndrome in Nigerian local governments. The specific objectives are:

1. To ascertain the effects of unemployment to the Nigeria economy.
2. To identify the causes and effects of corruption in the local government administration.
3. Appraise the extent to which poor remuneration has affected employee productivity in the local government.
4. Make sound recommendations that would guarantee a motivated workforce and improved productivity in Nigerian local government.

RESEARCH PROPOSITION

Integrated personnel payroll and information system would address the ghost workers syndrome in the Nigerian local government.

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested for the study.

- Ho₁: There is no relationship between the ghost workers syndrome and low productivity in the local government administration.
- Ho₂: Corruption has not threatened the effective implementation of policies in Nigerian local government.
- Ho₃: The implementation of integrated personnel payroll and information system will not address ghost workers syndrome.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research would be a useful instrument to local government service commission as it will expose the relevance of IPPIS in addressing the problem of ghost workers in the local government system. More so, the findings and recommendation of this research will be of utmost importance to policy makers, government and private employees, development partners and potential researchers especially as it relates to addressing corruption in Nigerian local government, creating virile economy through improved and a well motivated workforce and strategic employment generation.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This paper examines the causes and effects of ghost workers in Nigerian local government administration and how this trend could be address through the implementation of integrated personnel payroll and information system. The research shall focus on Kogi State local government service commission and the period between 2010 through 2014 shall be covered. This period was covered since that was when the idea of integrated personnel payroll and information system (IPPIS) became imminent in the Nigerian public service.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Salaries according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria Financial Regulations (2009) part I (1501) is the personal emolument paid to an employee of an organization, usually monthly for services rendered at a predetermined rate of pay. More so, part II (1518) of the financial regulation pointed out that the standard payroll system shall be applied in all offices, unless otherwise provided under financial regulation (1519), shall be such as to ensure that records shall be made in single operation. Tan, Andrew and Malcolm (2003) pointed out that the most essential computer application in organization is payroll management as it calculates each employees monthly basic pay, bonuses, tasks, national insurance and pension contributions.

More so, primarily aligning an organizations payment system with its business objectives is pivotal hence, if improved productivity is sought, a payment system which rewards efficiency and discourage ghost workers syndrome would be more appropriate (Derek, Laura, Stephen, 2005). World Bank (2002) sees integrated personnel payroll system to involve coordinating network of institutions and organizations compensation system through the modernization of information and record systems.

Though Salisu (2011) sees public service as a paid non-elective office in an executive arm of government, the public service is principally charged with the responsibility of implementing the machinery of governance and is role cannot be over- emphasized. Okoh (2003) sees the public service as the major institutional instrument used by government to implements its policies and programmes hence, it is the management arm of government charged with the responsibility of driving government machinery to the pre-determined end.

The Nigerian government regards the implementation of a computerized system as the most fundamental component of addressing the huge personnel cost and it will improve effectiveness and efficiency in government transactions and enhance confidence in personnel costs and budgeting thereby improving management reporting and information. More so, the integrated personnel pay and information system will help ministries, departments and Agencies (MDAs) avoid infractions of regulatory bodies as a result of ghost workers as answer dimension of corruption especially in the local government administration. More so, it will help to improve efficiency and block all leakages in the payroll system. Therefore, such policy would create a synergy between government and employees in combatting corruption.

PUBLIC SERVICE: A CATALYST TO THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

Salisu (2011) viewed the public service to consist of the federal civil service, the 36 autonomous state civil services, the unified local government services husbanding 774 local authorities excluding the military, the legislative and judicial arms of the state as well as the federal and state parastatals. The public service plays a very significant role in the socio-economic development of the nation. Olusanya, (1997) posits that the public service is charged with the provision of people needs through the representation of government resources. Hence, the intellectual capability of the public services are explore in achieving the shoot, medium and strategic goals of the nation in creating a virile economy, improved social and political network and drive through enhanced productivity and egalitarian society.

More so, the public service is charged with the responsibility of public direction and vehicle for creating deep-rooted government policies and programmes targeted at improving the welfare of the citizens through provision of employment, creation of roles, maintaining orderliness, equity, basic infrastructural facilities and promotion of ethics, norms and efficiency (Ajayi, 1998). Therefore, the role of public service in the socio-economic development cannot be over emphasized.

INTEGRATED PERSONNEL PAYROLL AND INFORMATION SYSTEM: THE JOURNEY SO FAR

The integrated personnel payroll and information system and Government integrated financial management and information system have been able to enhance accountability and transparency in the management of government resources. More so, the federal ministry of finance observed in 2013 that the (IPPIS) has enhance efficient personnel cost, planning and budgeting as personnel cost was based on actual verified aim and not estimates.

Consequently, it has broadened employment opportunities, reduces corruption in the public service and reduced personnel costs. The efficiency in transacting government business is enhanced. More so, it has enhanced the confidence in payroll costs and budgeting, greatly improve management reporting and information, rebuilding public confidence provide opportunities for an improved infrastructural facilities, create conducive work atmosphere and job security (Hall and Torington, 1998, Uzochukwu, 2015). Though, the envisaged challenges by the employees include; job act, bureaucratic bottleneck, decayed infrastructure, wickedness unionism, and reduced fortune for recruitments; government insensitivity and commitment in vigorously pursuing its policies in the past. But Mayo (2011) assessed the success so far and concludes that it success can be consolidated by adopting it at all levels of government especially the local government to address the scourge of ghost workers in the system.

Table 1: Unemployment Rate by Level of Education, Age group, Sector and Gender

Educational Level	Nigeria								
	URBAN			RURAL			TOTAL		
	Male	Female	Sales	Male	Female	Sales	Male	Female	150% sales
Below primary	12.4	12.7	13.2	21.8	30.0	27.5	21.5	23.4	22.7
Primary	10.3	14.7	12.7	18.0	25.8	21.7	15.6	24.9	18.7
JSS	13.4	16.9	15.2	22.6	29.4	25.6	10.5	24.2	21.7
Vocational/ Commercial	10.7	18.5	14.4	21.6	27.5	24.5	15.2	22.4	18.7
SSS	14.2	17.3	15.6	27.2	30.3	28.4	21.3	23.4	22.1
NCE/ND/ Nursing	18.3	18.5	18.9	25.3	28.0	26.2	21.9	22.7	22.2
BA/BS/B.ed/ HND	19.1	26.7	21.7	29.5	34.0	30.8	12.0	28.8	24.6
M.SD/MA/M.AD	10.1	14.3	11.1	19.4	27.0	2.9	12.0	17.5	13.7
Age Group									
25-24	32.2	30.9	31.5	36.7	38.0	37.3	35.6	36.1	35.9
25-34	16.4	19.0	17.8	21.2	31.0	26.5	19.5	26.7	23.3
35-44	8.5	13.8	11.0	14.5	26.8	20.3	12.3	26.8	16.8
45-54	8.6	11.7	10.0	13.5	22.4	17.1	11.8	18.2	14.4
55-64	10.6	13.1	11.6	16.5	21.9	18.3	14.6	18.4	16.0
National	13.3	17.1	15.2	19.9	29.2	24.2	17.7	24.9	21.1

Source: National Manpower stock and employment Generation survey (2014).

The table above showing the distribution by educational qualification indicates that the unemployment rate by level of education was highest among BA/B.Sc/HND holders with a figure of (24.6%) followed by those who had below primary education (22.7) and those with NCE/OND/Nursing Certificate with (22.2%), JSS (22.7%), SSS (21.7%), Primary, vocational/Commercial (18.7%) while MSC/M.A/M.adm (13.7%). And the age group shows that 15-24 (35.9%), 25-34 (23.3%), 35-44 (16.8%), 55-64 (16.0%) and 45-54 is (14.4%).

METHODOLOGY

The survey research design was adopted in this study. This design was employed because of its expository flexibility for the purpose of carrying out the research. The focus group is the employees of Kogi State local Government service commission. Primary and secondary data were employed; the primary data were collected through the administration of questionnaire while secondary data were gained from related research works, textbooks, journals, magazines and virtual library. The sample size is 393 out of a population of 24671 based on judgmental sampling. The Yaro Yaman statistical formula for the determination of sample size was used. The formula is:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

where: n = Sample size
N = Population
e = error margin
I = constant

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Hence, } n &= \frac{24671}{1 + 24671 (0.05)^2} \\ &= \frac{24671}{1 + 24571 (0.0025)} \\ &= \frac{24671}{1 + 61.7} \\ N &= 393 \end{aligned}$$

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research utilized the social survey techniques for the study. The design involves collecting data through questionnaire. This method is flexible and less expensive. Thus, it gives the respondents a great level of confidence by being anonymous in making decision since some respondents may not have a face to face contact with the researchers. Hence, the paper chooses 95% confidence level.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The main research instrument of the study was the questionnaire. It was most appropriate to this study since the researchers sought to explore the possibility of applying the instrumentality of IPPIS in drawing the ghost workers syndrome in the public service. Accordingly, public service accountability questionnaire (PSAQ) was used to collect primary data for the study from the respondents.

More so, the modified likert 5-point scale was used to compute the total mean scores. The like 5-point scale is expressed as:

Very High Extent (VHE) = 5
High Extent (VE) = 4
Moderate Extent (ME) = 3
Small Extent (SE) = 2
Very Small Extent (VSE) = 1
None at all (NA) = 0

The questionnaire design was in three sections. Section A was on the demographic information of the respondents, section B was on the effects of ghost workers syndrome on employees performance while section C was on the extent to which ghost workers syndrome affects the Nigerian economy.

METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Appropriate statistical tools were employed to analyse the data for the study. The statistics constituted of simple percentages frequencies and means score: To analyze the data and answer the research questions, while the descriptive statistics of simple percentages, frequencies and means scores were adopted.

The hypotheses were tested using the spearman rank order correlation coefficient which is expressed thus,

$$r_s = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2-1)}$$

where:

- r_s = spearman rank order correlation coefficient
- d^2 = summation of squared differences X and Y variable
- n = number of ranked subjects.

RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

To estimate the reliability of the research instrument employed for data collection, the instrument was administered twice to employees and management staff of Kogi State local government service commission numbering twenty. This exercise which was carried out with the aid of two field assistants also helped in the second administration of the instrument two weeks after the first exercise and the resulting scores were correlated using the product moment correlation approach with the result as $r = 0.82$ indicating that it was reliable.

STUDY AREA

The study focused on the staff of Kogi State Local Government Service Commission with its headquarter in Lokoja. The present Lokoja is situated at the confluence of the rivers Niger and Benue and nestles at the foot of mount Patti. It was said to have been founded in 1860 by Dr. William Baikie who made his mind to found a settlement at the site of the land between the confluence and the mountain when he took a clear view of the area during his Benue expedition in 1854 (Ocheja, 2010). Lokoja was the first British settlement in the northern of Nigeria, and it rapidly developed in the 1860s as a result of the European economic activities and later, political activities, especially at the turn of the century.

The town stated as a cosmopolitan settlement which accepted people from various parts of what is now Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Europe (Mohammed, 1984). The significance of the town is not only due to its geographical location as the confluence of Rivers Niger and Benue, but also to the historical fact that it was not first colonial tourist attractions. Today, Lokoja is the capital cities of Kogi State with a population of about 282,254 according to the 2006. population and housing census. It is one of the seven local government areas in Kogi West senatorial district. The major occupations of the people are farming, fishing and trading.

Table 2: Questionnaire Administration and Retrieval

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentages
Number of questionnaire distributed	393	100%
Number of questionnaire returned	366	93%
Number of questionnaire not returned	27	7%

Source: Field research (2005).

Table 2 shows that three hundred and ninety three (393) questionnaire were distributed but only three hundred and sixty six (366) representing 93% were returned while twenty seven (27) representing 7% were not returned. Hence, the questionnaire retrieval rate is (93%).

Table 3: Demographic Profile of Respondents

S/N	Variables	Option	Frequency	percentages
1.	Age (in years)	18-34	102	28%
		35-44	140	38%
		45-54	69	19%
		55 and above	55	15%
		Total	366	100%
2.	Gender	Male	198	54%
		Female	168	46%
		Total	366	100%
3.	Religion	Christianity	150	41%
		Islam	194	53%
		Others	22	6.0
		Total	366	100%
4.	Marital status	Single	130	36%
		Married	222	60%
		Divorced	08	2%
		Widows	06	2%
		Total	366	100%
5.	Employment status	Management	06	2%
		Senior	135	37%
		Junior	225	61%
		Total	366	100%
6.	Lenage of service (in year)	1-10	87	24%
		11-20	180	49%
		20-30	78	21
		31-35	21	6%
		Total	366	100%
7.	Academic qualification	Primary	46	13%
		Secondary	98	27%
		Post secondary	209	57%
		Atleast	13	4%
		Total	366	100%

Source: Field research (2015).

Table 3 shows that most of the respondents ages between 35-44 years with a total 140 (38%) while 102 (28%) are between the ages of 18-34 years, 59 (19%) age between the ages 45-54 years while 55(15%) are of the age of 55 years and above.

More so, most of the respondents are male with a total of 198 (53%) while 168(46%) are female. The religious background of the respondents shows that most the respondents 194 (53%) are Muslims, 150 (41%) are Christians while 22 (5%) are of other religion.

The marital status of the respondents revealed that 222 (60%) which is the highest frequency of the respondents are married, 130 (36%) are single, 8 (2%) are divorced and 6 (2%) are widowed. More so, 225 (61%) of the respondents which is the highest frequency are junior staff, 135 (37%) are senior staff while 6 (2%) are management staff. Most of the respondents have been working between the period of 11-20 years with the frequency 180 (49%), 87 (24%) between 1-10 years, 78 (21%) between 21-30 years while 21 (6%) between 31-35 years.

Table 4: Effects of Ghost Worker Syndrome on Employees Performance

S/N	Distributes	VHE 5	ME 4	ME 3	SE 2	VSE 1	NA 0	TS	X
1.	Low morale	177	147	25	5	10	2	1568	4.28
2.	Encourages corruption	187	74	81	15	7	2	1511	4.13
3.	Reduced carrier prospects	150	125	52	27	7	5	1467	4.01
4.	Efficiency is affected	177	123	49	5	10	2	1544	4.22
5.	Training opportunities is reduced	147	101	103	7	5	2	1467	4.01
6.	Irregular payment of salaries	170	147	25	12	8	4	1545	4.22
7.	Political interference	161	71	83	40	7	4	1425	3.89

Source: Field Research (2015).

Table 4 shows the effects of ghost workers syndrome on employees' performance. The major effect is low employees morale with the total score of 1568 and means score of 4.28 followed by irregular payment of salaries and total of 1545 and mean 4.22. Low efficiency is the third factor with a total of 1544 and means score of 4.22. The next factor is corruption with the total score of 1511 and mean scores of 4.13. The next factors are reduced carrier prospects and reduced training opportunities which have 14.67 as total scores and 4.01 as means scores respectively. Finally, political interference with the total of 1425 and mean scores of 3.89.

Total 5: Extent of the Influence of Ghost Worker Syndrome on Nigerian Economy

Attributes	Number of Respondents	Percentages
Very High Extent	187	51%
High Extent	140	38%
Moderate Extent	17	5%
Small Extent	12	3%
Very Small Extent	3	1%
None at all	7	2%
Total	366	100%

Source: Field Research (2015).

Table 5 shows that 51% of the respondents said that the influence of ghost workers syndrome on Nigerian economy is to a very large extent, 38% said high extent. More so, 5% revealed that it was to a moderate extent, 3% said small extent while 1% said to a very small extent. Finally, 2% of the respondents indicate that there was no influence at all. The implication is that ghost workers syndrome affects Nigeria.

Table 6: Test of Hypothesis

Responses	Observation X	Rx	Observation Y	Ry	Rx - Ry	D ²
Very Large Extent	177	1	187	1	0	0
Large Extent	123	2	140	2	0	0
Moderate Extent	49	3	17	3	0	0
Small Extent	5	5	12	4	1	1
Very Small Extent	10	4	3	6	-2	4
None at all	2	6	7	5	1	1
Total	366		366			6

Source: Field Research (2015).

$$r_s = \frac{1-6 \sum d^2}{n(n^2-1)}$$

$$r_s = \frac{1-6 \times 6}{6(6^2-1)}$$

$$r_s = \frac{1-36}{6(35)}$$

$$= 1 - \frac{36}{210}$$

$$1 - 0.17 = 0.83$$

$$Z_{cal} = r_s \sqrt{n-1} = 0.93 \times 2.24 = 1.86$$

Decision:

The study rejects the null hypothesis since the value of Z_{cal} shows $r_s = 1.86$ which ≥ 1 hence there is perfect relationship between ghost workers syndrome and low productivity in the public service.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

The paper revealed that there is relationship between ghost workers syndrome and employees productivity. This is manifested on the negative influences being experience resulting to low employee morale, monumental corruption, reduced employee carrier prospects and dampened efficiency. Though, the employees are eager to advanced themselves towards improved efficiency at there are little or no opportunity for such intellectual advancement due to their low economic power and irregular payment of salaries. This is because of the over bloated wage bill because of fictitious names of employees. Finally, the political influence of local government administration also constraints its effectiveness and efficiency thus, the introduction of integrated personnel payroll and information system (IPPIS) would go a long way to address this negative trends.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The researchers recommend that this study be replicated in other geo-political zones of Nigeria, this will create avenue for comparative analysis on the degree of ghost workers syndrome and the perspective of employees on the implementation of IPPIS in local government administration.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the result of the data analysis and subsequent findings by the researchers, the paper concludes that ghost workers syndrome is highly imminent in the public service and it has only not affected employees performance but has also threaten the nation's economy. Consequently upon the findings and conclusion, the paper recommends that:

1. Integrated personnel payroll and information system should be introduced to address the ghost workers syndrome in the local government service commission.
2. The employees at the local government should be paid their monthly salaries as at when do to keep them motivated for effective performance.
3. Employees audit should be carried out through an automated system to ascertain the actual staff strength in the local government service commission.
4. The issue of joint allocation with the state government account should be stopped so as to give the local government administration full autonomy.
5. Corrupt officers found guilty of any fraudulent offences relating to ghost workers should be sanctioned so as to serve as deterrent to others.
6. The employees should be given adequate training so as to enhance their performance and basic infrastructural facilities be provided to create a conducive working atmosphere for the employees.
7. Employees promotion, appointment, discipline, transfer and reward should be strictly based on merit rather than nepotism or political influence.

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