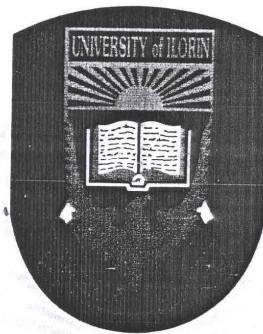


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Legislative Turnover and Lawmaking Effectiveness in Kogi State House of Assembly, 1999-2015

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LEGISLATIVE TURNOVER AND LAWMAKING EFFECTIVENESS IN KOGI STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, 1999-2015

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Abstract

The need to investigate the problem of high legislative turnover that has become a recurring feature of state parliaments in Nigeria necessitates this study. Thus, the paper examines membership turnover and its implications on law-making function in one of Nigerian State Assemblies, Kogi State House of Assembly, between 1999 and 2015. Data for the study were generated from primary and secondary sources. Content analysis and descriptive statistics (simple percentage) were employed to analyse the data. The study reveals that high membership turnover rates have negative effect on the performance of primary responsibility (law-making) of the legislature. The paper recommends that measures must be taken with an expected outcome of increasing the re-election rates of legislators to at least 50 per cent in order to retain institutional memory and capacity in Nigerian legislatures. The study also submits that quality of representation and legislative performance generally will improve if elections are based on transparent objective standards and if nominations of candidates are based on good performance and accountability rather than politics of patronage.

Keywords: Legislature, lawmaking, membership turnover, performance, Nigeria

Introduction

It is arguable to say that the legislature is the bedrock of democracy, because it epitomizes the existence of democracy in a state and also distinguishes a democratic government from an autocratic government. Mohammad (2007) supported this position when he averred that the existence of an independent legislative institution composed of representatives of the people is a distinctive hallmark of democratic government. Lafenwa (2006: 1) gave credence to this position when he argued that legislature is the engine of democracy, because laws made by it set agenda for the government and regulate the conduct of the people. Ornstein (1992: 2) also underscores the democratic significance of the legislature, thus no country can have a workable democracy with voices of opposition, accountable government, and adequate avenues for citizen to be heard without a vibrant and meaningful legislature and legislative process. This is in line with Omotola (2014: 4) who pointed out that the stability and consolidation of any democracy, be it developed or developing, old or young, has been largely linked to the strength of its legislature. Therefore, it is settled in the extant literature that the legislature has important roles to play in a democracy.

However, playing these roles is not given i.e. mere existence of a legislative arm does not automatically guarantee the effective performance of its democratic functions. Legislators must possess necessary experience to discharge their constitutional duties effectively. Perhaps, this informs different studies on legislative turnover by the legislative scholars across the globe. Thus, studies on membership turnover generally, are mainly confined to the United States (Norris, 1993: 316), except for a handful of advanced industrial democracies. Besides, previous studies on turnover by legislative scholars focus on effects of turnover on legislative institutionalization, determinants of turnover, rate of turnover over time as well as across states, it offers only modest insight into the effects of legislative turnover on performance. In fact, only two studies can be identified that touch on legislative turnover in Nigeria. This include Legislative Institutionalization: the Case of Sokoto State, 1999-2011, a chapter contribution by Ogundiya and Baba (2014), a section of their study examines the relationship between membership turnover and legislative performance in Sokoto State; and the article written by Onuigbo and Eme (2015) on 'Legislative Turnover in the National Assembly: A Study of the South East Zone, 1999-2015'. Obviously, these studies have left further research to be undertaken and information gap to be filled on implications of membership turnover on legislative performance in Nigerian legislature. This study, therefore, aims at expanding the scope of knowledge on membership turnover in Nigeria, using the Kogi State House of Assembly as a case study.

The paper is organised into six sections for clearer analysis. This introductory section is followed by conceptual and theoretical explanation of legislative performance. The third section examines membership turnover rate in Nigerian national and states assembly. The

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fourth section looks at the rates of turnover in the Kogi State House of Assembly. The fifth section examines the effects of membership turnover on the performance of Kogi state assembly on their primary role of law-making. Section six concludes the study.

Conceptual and Theoretical Explanation of Legislative Performance

The term 'legislature' has been given different names across nations of the world. It is referred to as parliament in Britain, National Assembly in Nigeria, Congress in United States, Diet in Japan, Bundestag in Germany, and Duma in Russia. Legislatures are, generally speaking, elective and accountable bodies. Their members are elected as legislators and they can be replaced at regular intervals if their constituents dislike what they or their political party are doing in the legislature. Carey (2006) conceptualizes the legislature as a body with large membership that offers the possibility both to represent more accurately the range of diversity in the polity and to foster closer connections between representatives and voters. Lafenwa (2009) defines the legislature as an official body, usually chosen by election, with the power to make, change, and repeal laws; as well as powers to represent the constituent units and control government. Awotokun (1998) conceptualizes the term legislature from a functional perspective. He defines the legislature as the organ of government made up of elected representatives or a constitutionally constituted assembly of people whose duties among other things are to make laws, control executive activities and safeguard the interest of the people.

Membership turnover is regarded as the outcome of a representative elite production process. As Best and Cotta (2000) argued, this process takes place at "the intersecting point between the supply of candidates, the demand of selectorates and the choice of the voters" (Best and Cotta 2000: 9). Candidates are those individuals who enter the competition for office. Selectorates are collective actors or political parties, who select candidates according to internal procedures and criteria.

Conceptually, legislative turnover is defined as the proportion of new members out of the total membership in a legislative chamber. Unless the size of the chamber has been changed, the number of new members is equal to the number of old members who have left parliament. A representative is considered to be "new" if he did not serve in the session immediately prior to the one under examination. Matland and Studlar (2004: 92) also perceive legislative turnover as 'the proportion of membership that changes from one general election to the next'. For the exact calculation of turnover rates, however, Manow (2007) offered a more precise definition. Manow (2007: 196) propose to define turnover as the share of those who either do not return to the subsequent parliament or are not re-elected.

This leads to a broad and a narrow definition of turnover. Legislative turnover is either defined broadly as comprising all who have been members of parliament but are no longer

members of parliament, or it is defined more narrowly as comprising all who have been elected to parliament but failed to be re-elected to parliament (Manow, 2007: 197). Using Germany instances, Manow (2007) posited that whereas the first proposed definition includes all those who were not elected but became members of parliament during the term (in Germany the so-called Nachruicker, i.e. substitutes who replace MPs who leave parliament during the term for whatever reason), the second definition excludes them. The difference is non-trivial. For instance, during the 12th term of the Bundestag (1990/94) 10 members of parliament died and 27 resigned and these vacancies were filled from party lists. This definition, though fits the German environment, does not fit ours because of the First Past the Post in operation in Nigeria as opposed to Proportional Representation and First Past the Post combination operating in Germany.

For the purpose of this study, legislative turnover refers to the number of lawmakers who failed to win both at the intra and inter party elections irrespective of the fact that they were members of the outgoing parliament. For example in Nigeria, the Seventh Senate recorded a high turnover of its members as only 33 out of the 109 Senators returned to the Eighth Senate after the general elections, 76 senators lost their bid to come back.

There are different theoretical perspectives to legislative performance, to understand these perspectives certain questions need to be raised and answered. These questions include: what are the various activities outlined for legislature in a democracy? What constitute the required legislative capacity necessary for effective legislative performance? And what are the impediments for effective legislative performance in a democracy? These issues constitute some of the major concerns raised and addressed by some theoretical discourses on legislative performance. However, some of these perspectives are basically concerned with individual members of the legislature while other perspectives focus on the legislative institution itself. In addition to these dominant perspectives, some scholars look at the legislative performance from the stand point of environmental influence on legislature. All these views are important in understanding the theoretical background of legislative performance.

One of the famous studies that provide the theoretical explanation on the legislative performance is the one by Mezey (1979). His analysis of legislative performance across legislature of the world is considered as a landmark comparative study on legislatures (Baba, 2009). Legislatures are classified into minimal, marginal, active, reactive and vulnerable. This classification was basically based on the perceived contribution of various legislative institutions in governance and democratic process. Some of the benchmark for assessing the performance of legislatures which form the basis for above classification includes:

- I. which of the actors (executive or legislators) initiate bills that eventually becomes Law;

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- ii. the policy making power of legislature and;
- iii. the level of support for legislatures by the political elite and public.

Membership Turnover Rate in Nigerian National and States Assembly

Periodic elections are held in Nigeria, as in most representative democracies world over for the purpose of re-electing legislators or electing new ones by the electorates. This section explores the rate of membership turnover in Nigerian National and State Assemblies from 1999-2015.

The Nigerian legislature has one of the lowest retention rates globally. This argument is supported by the National Institute for Legislative Studies (NLS) in its recent research titled:

“Continuity and Change in Nigeria's Elections: A Collection of Essays” conducted in 2014 which revealed that Nigeria has the highest turnover rate of lawmakers in the national parliaments of the world with a turnover rate of 70 per cent compared to USA 10 per cent, South Africa 47 per cent, Ghana 56 per cent, Kenya 64 per cent, Uganda 50.5 per cent and, 51 per cent for Benin Republic.

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The 2003 senatorial election in Nigeria recorded an average turnover rate of 67.9 per cent and 32.1 per cent retention rate. Only 35 senators were re-elected out of 109 incumbent senators, putting the number of new senator at 74 at the beginning of new legislative session in 2003. Similarly, in the elections that were held in 2007 and 2011 respectively; 27 senators were re-elected in 2007 out of 109 incumbent senators giving a turnover rate of 75.2 per cent and retention rate of 24.8 per cent while 35 senators were re-elected in 2011 out of 109 incumbent senators giving a turnover rate of 67.9 per cent and retention rate of 32.1 per cent.

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Similar trend of turnover rate was observed in the Nigerian Federal House of Representatives elections held in 2003, out of 360 incumbent members, 108 members were re-elected (30 per cent retention rate) and 252 were new members (70 per cent turnover rate). In the 2007 Federal House of Representatives election, 110 members were re-elected (29.1 per cent retention rate), 250 are new members (69.9 per cent turnover rate). In the 2011 election, 103 members were re-elected (28.7 per cent retention rate), and 257 new members (71.3 per cent turnover rate) (Onuigbo and Eme, 2015: 18).

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Membership Turnover Rates in Kogi State House of Assembly

The simplest method to calculate or measure legislative turnover is by counting the number of new members immediately after a general election. The turnover rate would be the proportion of legislators who were not members at the end of the previous legislative session and the retention rate are members of previous legislative session who are also members of the new legislative session after elections. This method does not account for

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the membership turnover as a result of death or tribunal defeat that may warrant legislators' replacement within session.

Elections are held periodically in Nigeria, as in most representative democracies world over for the purpose of re-electing legislators or electing new ones by the electorates. The available data on legislative turnover rate revealed that Kogi State legislature has one of the highest turnover rates in the North Central geo-political zone of Nigeria. This section therefore, looks at the rate of legislators' replacement or membership turnover in Kogi State House of Assembly.

Although, this study covers 1999-2015, it is informative to make reference to the Kogi state 1st House of Assembly, 1992-1993 in the aborted third republic. The 1st Assembly had thirty-two Hon. members while the subsequent House of Assembly members' of the Kogi State from 1999 till date are twenty-five members. Thus, of all the thirty-two members of the 1st Assembly, no single member among them was re-elected into the 2nd Assembly, 1999-2003 in Kogi State. This implies that all the twenty-five members of the Kogi state 2nd House of Assembly were greenhorn. This scenario was also observed in other states' legislatures across the country and the National Assembly inclusive, where the majority of members, if not all, were elected into the legislature for the first time.

By June 2003, a new House emerged after the 2003 general elections, which was dominated by greenhorns with just two ranking members. This indicates that only two legislators (8 per cent) out of twenty-five incumbent legislators were returned to the House after the 2003 general elections and the remaining twenty-three members (92 per cent) were greenhorns.

In June 2007, another House emerged (Kogi State 4th House of Assembly, 2007-2011) after the 2007 general elections. This House was also dominated by greenhorns, though there was little improvement in the number of ranking members from two ranking members in the previous 3rd Assembly, 2003-2007 to five ranking members in the 4th Assembly constituting 20 per cent of the twenty-five House members and putting the turnover rate at 80 per cent.

In the 5th House of Assembly of Kogi State, 2011-2015 the number of ranking members and greenhorns were not different from the 4th Assembly. Out of twenty-five legislators that formed the new House in June, 2011 after the general elections, five members (20 per cent) were re-elected into the House while twenty members (80 per cent) were newly elected members.

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Table 1

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The table 1 below summarizes the retention and turnover rates of Kogi State House of Assembly from 1999-2015. It also indicates the average retention and turnover rates of members in Kogi State during the periods under consideration as 12 per cent and 88 per cent respectively.

Table 1: Retention and Turnover Rates of Kogi State House of Assembly, 1999-2015

Legislative Sessions	Incumbents' Legislator	Re-elected Member	Retention Rate	New Member	Turnover Rate
2nd Assembly, 1999-2003	25	Nil	Nil	25	100%
3rd Assembly, 2003-2007	25	02	8%	23	92%
4th Assembly, 2007-2011	25	05	20%	20	80%
5th Assembly, 2011-2015	25	05	20%	20	80%
Total/Average Retention & Turnover Rates	100	12	12%	88	88%

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2017

The table 1 above shows the high turnover rates of legislative members in Kogi State House of Assembly from one general election to another. This scenario is seen as one of the fundamental factors responsible for the poor performance of legislators by some legislative scholars, not only in Nigeria but also across legislatures in the world (Ogundiya and Baba, 2014; Oni, 2013; Fashagba, 2009; Matland and Studlar, 2004). The above stated assertion by some scholars is the main thrust of the next section.

Effects of Turnover Rates on Lawmaking Function in Kogi State House of Assembly

This section examines the effects of membership turnover on lawmaking function of the legislators in Kogi State House of Assembly from 1999 to 2015. In the previous sections some of the conceptual issues on legislature, membership turnover and theoretical perspectives on performance of legislatures were examined. From the empirical point of view, therefore, how does the membership turnover influence the performance of the Kogi state legislators on their primary function of law making? The legislature in Kogi state like any other States Assembly in Nigeria is empowered by the constitution to make laws. This function is often seen as the key role of the legislatures and indeed the most challenging one. Legislature is the main mechanisms through which modern states make

laws, regulations and grundnorms that form the basis on which state are governed.

Law making function is perhaps what distinguishes a legislative institution from other organs of government. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999, CFRN) empowers the State Assemblies to make laws. According to section 4 (6) (7) of the 1999 constitution:

(6) The legislative powers of a state of the federation shall be vested in the House of Assembly of the state.

(7) The House of Assembly of a state shall have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the state or any part thereof with respect to the following matters, that is to say,

(a) any matter not included in the exclusive legislative List set out in part I of the second schedule to this constitution;

(b) any matter included in the concurrent legislative list set out in the first column of part II of the second schedule to this constitution to the extent prescribed in the second column opposite thereto; and

(c) any other matter with respect to which it is empowered to make laws in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.

In addition, section 100 (1) of the 1999, CFRN also stated thus:

The power of the House of Assembly to make laws shall be exercised through bills passed by the House of Assembly and, except as otherwise provided by this section, assented to by the Governor.

To this end, the legislature has overriding powers in law-making. Perhaps, it is in the light of this that Esebagbon (2005) argues that:

The principal function of the legislature under the 1999 Constitution is to make laws. It is in the exercise of this function that legislative assemblies

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acquire this distinctive character and take their rightful place within the structure of government. It is this law making power that places the legislature as an independent organ of government that is of coordinate status with the Executive and the Judiciary. The legislature exercises its main constitutional functions through legislation (Esebagbon, 2005: 5).

It is arguable to say that law is indispensable to any democratic society. Thus, this section examines the effects of membership turnover on law-making function in Kogi State House of Assembly. The number of bills passed and their initiators in the House, from 1999 - 2015 were used as performance indicators. Besides, key actors in the business of law-making were also interviewed to know their views on the effect of membership turnover on law-making function of the Assembly.

Table 2: The List of Bills Passed by the Kogi State 2nd House of Assembly, 1999 - 2003

S/N	Title of the Bills	Initiators	Year
1	Re- Submission of a Bill for the Establishment of Kogi State Agency for Poverty Reduction	Executive	Not Available
2	A Bill for a Law to make Provision for the creation of Additional Local Government Areas in Kogi State and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	12th February, 2002
3	A Bill for a Law to amend Kogi State Local Government Law that made provisions for the Establishment, Composition, Structure, Finance and Functions of Local Government Areas in Kogi State and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	2002
4	A Bill for a Law to make Provision for the Revenue and the Expenditure of Local Government Councils in Kogi State.	Executive	2003

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Source: Researchers' Compilation from Official Document of Kogi State House of Assembly

In the 2nd House of Assembly of Kogi State, 1999-2003, four executive bills were passed into laws as represented in the table 2 above. Obviously, the law making out-put of the Kogi State 2nd House of Assembly is very low. Perhaps, this could be attributed to lack of institutional memory and relevant experience by the members. All the twenty-five legislators in the Kogi State 2nd Assembly were greenhorns.

Table 3: The List of Bills Passed by the Kogi State 3rd House of Assembly, 2003-2007

S/N	Title of the Bills Passed	Initiators	Year Passed
1	A Bill for a Law to make Provisions for Contracts and Debts Evaluation and Recovery of Public Funds and Property and a Bill for a Law to amend the High Court of Law to specify the member of Judges constituting the High Court of Kogi State (High Court Amendment Law 2004)	Executive	1st November, 2004
2	A Bill for a Law to make Provisions for the Establishment of Kogi State Directorate for Science and Technology Development	Executive	2004
3	A Bill for a Law to make Provisions for Local Government Elections and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	2004
4	A Bill to make Provisions for A Law for Contract and Debts Evaluation and Recovery of Public Fund and Property	Executive	2004
5	A Bill for a Law to make Provisions for the Establishment of Kogi State Revenue Court	Executive	16th September, 2004
6	Re- forwarding of 3 Clean copies of a Law to make Provisions for the State House of Assembly Commission and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	13th June, 2005

Source: Researchers' Compilation from Official Document of Kogi State House of Assembly

The Kogi State 3rd House of Assembly, 2003-2007 had two ranking members, 8 per cent of 25 members and the House passed six executive bills into law, a performance that is relatively better than the 2nd Assembly that had 100 per cent greenhorns. However, this performance is not commendable. Six laws were too small to make in four years for any functional legislature. Though, this could be as a result of insignificant number of ranking members to the twenty-three newly elected members of the House.

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Legislative Turnover and Lawmaking Effectiveness in Kogi State House of Assembly, 1999-2015

Table 4: The List of Bills Passed by the Kogi State 4th House of Assembly, 2007 - 2011

S/N	Title of the Bills Passed	Initiators	Year Passed
1	A Bill for a Law to Provide for the establishment of Private Hospital and other Health Institutions	Executive	2008
2	A Bill for Law to amend the Law for the Establishment of Kogi State Environmental Protection Board	Executive	2008
3	A Bill for a Law to Provide for Special Grants for former Kogi State Chief Executives and for related purposes	Executive	2008
4	A Bill for a Law to establish Kogi State Broadcasting Corporation and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	5th March, 2009
5	A Bill for a Law to establish the Agency for Community and Social Development Project (OSDP)	Executive	2009
6	A Bill for a Law to establish the College of Education (Technical) Kabba in Kogi State	Executive	2010
7	A Law to Provide for the Urban and Regional Planning Activities in Kogi State and all other Purposes Connected therewith	Executive	2010
8	A Bill for a Law to make Provisions for the Revenue and Expenditure of Kogi State Government for the Year Ending 31st Dec., 2010	Executive	2010
9	A Bill for a Law to amend the Law for the Establishment of the Kogi State College of Education (Technical) Kabba in Kogi State	Executive	1st August, 2011
10	A Bill to make Provisions for a Law to amend the Kogi State Local Government Law 2 008 and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	1st August, 2011
11	A Bill for a Law to make Provisions for the Revenue and Expenditure of Kogi State Government for the Year Ending 31st Dec., 2011 (Appropriation Bill)	Executive	14th March, 2011
12	Forwarding of 3 Clean Copies of a Bill for a Law to establish Kogi State Broadcasting Corporation and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	
13	A Bill for a Law to Provide for the Pension Rights of former Chief Executives of Local Government Council	Executive	29th November, 2011
14	A Bill for Law to Establish Task Force on Environmental Sanitation Kogi State and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	27th July, 2011
15	A Bill for a Law to make Provisions for the establishment of the Local Government and State Joint Account Disbursement Committee	Executive	28th November, 2011

Source: Researchers' Compilation from Official Document of Kogi State House of Assembly

The Kogi State 4th House of Assembly, 2007 – 2011 passed fifteen Bills into law, a performance that is better than the two previous assemblies. This improved performance in law-making function of the 4th Assembly could not be divorced from the institutional memory and experience of the five ranking members that were re-elected into the Assembly in 2007. Though, the 4th Assembly did not record any private member's bill just like the previous Assemblies in the State, yet there was a noticeable improvement in its law making function.

Table 5: The List of Bills Passed by the Kogi State 5th House of Assembly, 2011 – 2015

S/N	Title of the Bills Passed	Initiators	Year
1	Kogi State Fiscal Responsibility Bill	Executive	2012
2	A Bill for a Law to provide for Pension Rights of Local Government Chief Executives	Executive	2012
3	Bill for a Law to amend the Law for the Establishment of a Customary Court of Appeal in Kogi State and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	2012
4	A Bill for a Law for the Establishment of Kogi State Economic Intelligence Council and Allied Matters	Executive	2012
5	A Bill for a Law to Establish Kogi State Road Maintenance Agency and other Allied Matters	Executive	2012
6	A Bill for a Law to Establish Kogi State Freedom of Information	Member	2nd February, 2013
7	A Law to make provisions for the Revenue and the Expenditure of Local Government Councils in Kogi State for the Year ending 31st Dec., 2013	Executive	2013
8	A Bill for a Law to make Provisions for the Establishment, Functions and Powers of Kogi State Sanitation and Waste Management Board and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	2013
9	A Bill for a Law to Establish Kogi State Hajj Commission	Executive	2013
10	A Bill for a Law to Establish Christian Pilgrims Commission	Executive	2013
11	A Bill for a Law to amend the Law for the Establishment of the State Agency for Community and Social Development and other Matters Related thereto	Executive	2013
12	A Bill for a Law to provide for the Kogi State Gender and Equal Opportunities	Member	2013
13	A Bill for a Law to provide for the Establishment of Kogi State Debt Securities (Issuance) Law 2013 and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	2013
14	Local Government Councils Year 2013 Appropriations Bill for Assent	Executive	2013

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Legislative Turnover and Lawmaking Effectiveness in Kogi State House of Assembly, 1999-2015

15	A Bill for a Law for Establishment of Kogi State Statistical System and Kogi State Bureau of Statistics	Executive	2013
16	A Bill for a Law to promote and protect the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Kogi State and other Related Matters	Member	2013
17	Public Procurement Law 2014	Executive	2014
18	A Bill for a Law to establish the Kogi State College of Education, Ankpa and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	2014
19	A Bill for a Law to provide for the Establishment of the Local Government Service Commission for Kogi State and for other Purposes connected therewith	Executive	2014
20	A Bill for a Law to proscribe prohibit the establishment/Formation, Membership, Existence and activities of Secret Cults and Society in Kogi State; including Educational Institutions and other Matters Connected therewith	Executive	2014
21	A Bill for a Law to Establish Kogi State Market Development Board	Executive	2014
22	A Bill for a Law to Establish the State Council on Public Procurement and Procurement Bureau (State Procurement Bills)	Executive	2014
23	A Bill for a Law to Harmonize Rates and Levies Collectable by Local Governments in Kogi State	Executive	2014
24	A Bill for a Law for Establishment of Kogi State Statistical System and Kogi State Bureau of Statistics	Executive	2014
25	A Bill for a Law to provide for the Establishment, Composition, Structure and Functions of Local Government Areas in Kogi State and other Matters connected therewith	Executive	2014
26	A Law for Establishing a Public Private Partnership Bureau for Kogi State of Nigeria, Improved Public Private Partnership, Infrastructure Development and Service Delivery in Kogi State and for other connected purposes and its schedules	Executive	2014
27	Eliminate all forms of discrimination based on HIV status and create a supportive Environment so that people living with HIV and AIDS are able to continue working under normal condition as long as they are medically fit to do so	Member	2014

28	A Bill for a Law to provide for the Establishment of Kogi State College of Health Sciences and Technology and for other purposes connected therewith	Executive	2014
29	A Bill for a Law to Establish the Kogi State Micro-credit Agency charged with the responsibility of providing Recovery Loans to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and other matters connected therewith	Executive	2014
30	A Bill for a Law for the Prohibition of Kidnapping and other Related offences connected therewith	Executive	2015
31	A Bill for a Law to Establish the Kogi State Newspaper Corporation and other matters connected therewith	Executive	2015
32	A Law to make provision for the Revenue and Expenditure of Kogi State Government for the Year ending 31st December, 2015	Executive	2015
33	A Bill for a Law to make provision for and Administration of Revenue due to Local Government of Kogi State and Local Government Councils in the State and Establish relevant Administrative Structures of Kogi State Board of Internal Revenue and for matters connected therewith	Executive	
34	A Bill for a Law to provide for the Establishment of Kogi State College of Health Sciences and Technology and for other connected purposes	Executive	
35	A Bill for a Law to provide for Kogi State Small Scale Industry	Executive	
36	A Bill for a Law to amend the law for the Establishment of Kogi College of Education (Technical) Kabba in Kogi State	Executive	
37	A Bill for a Law to Establish the Agency for Community and Social Development Project (CSDP)	Executive	

Source: Researchers' Compilation from Official Document of Kogi State House of Assembly

The Kogi State 5th House of Assembly, 2011-2015 passed thirty-seven bills into laws. This is unprecedented performance in its law making functions compared to the performance of the four previous legislative sessions in the Kogi State House of Assembly (KSHA). Besides, four out of these thirty-seven bills were initiated by members. However, this performance could not be attributed to the five ranking members of the 5th Assembly alone because the 4th Assembly also had the same number of ranking members and only fifteen bills were passed into laws which were less than half of the bills

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passed into laws in 5th Assembly as shown in tables 4 and 5 above. The researchers sought for reasons behind the low performance of the fourth Assembly in their interview with the law-makers and the legislative staff of the KSHA. Some of the reasons adduced for it include: members' level of education, their experience from private sector, quality of legislative aides, executive-legislative relation, and the available resources among others.

Table 7: Distribution of the Bills Passed and their initiator by the Kogi State House of Assembly across the Legislative Sessions, (1999-2015)

Legislative Sessions	No. of Bills Passed	Executive Bills/ %	Private Bills/ %
2nd Assembly (1999-2003)	04	04 (100%)	Nil (0%)
3rd Assembly (2003-2007)	06	06 (100%)	Nil (0%)
4th Assembly (2007-2011)	15	15 (100%)	Nil (0%)
5th Assembly (2011-2015)	37	33 (89%)	4 (11%)
Total	62	58 (93%)	04 (7%)

Source: Researchers' Compilation from Official Document of Kogi State House of Assembly

The number of Bills passed by the House and their initiators as identified and analyzed above is not enough to explain everything about the effects of high legislative turnover rates on the law-making performance of the House. Therefore, researchers complemented this with the interview of law-makers and the legislative staff of KSHA to seek more insight on the issue.

One of the interview questions is stated thus: Does experience matter for a legislator to initiate and pass bill into law? The majority leader, KSHA stated that:

The new members don't know the process of initiating a bill. Even in writing motions and matters of public importance they don't know them. They need to really undergo a lot of trainings like what are the rules of the house and how do you package your bill to make it acceptable. For instance a new member brought a bill to repeal the masquerade laws and it becomes a laughing stock. That how can a government say a masquerade should not come out and that law has been there as far back as 1984 and you are just bringing it because you are in the House of Assembly and you want us to repeal the law. The bill dies on the arrival. To get a bill that will pass through the 1st, 2nd and 3rd reading and finally to be

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accepted by the governor it demands a lot of experience, knowledge and technical know-how. Though, the Assembly has the legal and research departments that can put us through. Honestly, I wouldn't deceive you, how many members have the time to visit legal department to say please I want to sponsor a bill and how many members will say please I want to research about certain things not even this House of Assembly alone, but also all over the country. How many members will have the time to say this is what I want to do? It is little or very few member that will create or have opportunity to think deeply that, this is what I am supposed to do in the House. We are carried away with a lot of political pressure here and there. From the constituency to the executive, but the constituency takes the greater percentage (Interview, Hon. Kolawole, 2017).

Deputy Clerk, KSHA also explained that:

Experience is very important because there is what we call a high ranking legislator or 2nd timers. If you enter a system for the first time you are bound to see so many things as strange until after some time. The experience they gathered in the first time could be put to use if they are elected for the 2nd time that is why it is very difficult for the first timer to sponsor a bill because he does not know the procedures (Interview, Andas, 2017).

Secretary to the Committee on House Services, KSHA also supported the experience thesis that "it matters, because what you have been doing before you will definitely improve on it. Practice makes perfection (Interview, Jiya, 2017).

This led to another interview question, how long does it take a new member to learn the legislative work? These are some of the respondents' view:

As a first timer it took me almost a year before I could know the terrain I am working on and the staff in the office kept educating me on what to be done and how to do it but if I am a second timer, I don't need all these and that is why second timers are always ranking officers. The knowledge and experience is there (Interview, Hon. Kolawole, 2017).

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Contrary to what Hon. Kolawole (2017) said, the Clerk, KSHA argued that:

This depends on the quality of person. If a well-qualified person in term of educational qualification, experience, and wisdom is elected, it will be very easy to integrate. For example anybody that passed through four corners of university should be able to integrate than when you bring lesser mind into the system, he may not even be able to integrate because of the knowledge and experience that are not there. For those who have acquired knowledge and experience within a short time they will integrate because there are so many facilities around in the legislative house to make them integrate so easily, such as legislative aides that they need and other technocrats who are trigger ready, always anxious to put the legislators' through (Interview, Andas, 2017).

As a result of high legislative turnover, the Kogi State House of Assembly lacks experienced legislators that are better informed and equipped with necessary legislative skills and knowledge to function effectively and efficiently as an autonomous organ of government in the performance of their primary responsibility of law-making. This is not peculiar to KSHA alone, it is also affecting the National Assembly and other States' Legislatures across the country. Following the analysis above, this study reveals that high membership turnover rates have negative effect on law-making function in Kogi State House of Assembly.

Conclusion

This study had examined the membership turnover rates and its implications on law-making functions of Nigerian legislature using Kogi state house of assembly as a unit of analysis. It was found that high membership turnover rates have negative effect on the performance of primary responsibility (law-making) of the legislators. To address this scenario, the researchers recommend that measures must be taken with an expected outcome of increasing the re-election rates of legislators to at least 50 per cent in order to retain institutional memory and capacity in Nigerian legislatures. Accordingly, the quality of representation and legislative performance generally will improve if elections are based on transparent objective standards and if nominations of candidates are based on good performance and accountability rather than politics of patronage.

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