Review Article

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A Project on the Civil Service Crisis: The Prevailing Influence of Political Cadres Across Africa

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ABSTRACT

The civil service in many African nations has increasingly become a battleground for political patronage, where meritocracy is overshadowed by the influence of political cadres. This paper examines the growing crisis in public administration caused by the infiltration of political loyalists into key bureaucratic positions, often at the expense of professionalism, efficiency, and accountability. Using a continent-wide perspective, with case studies from various African nations, this study explores the historical roots, structural weaknesses, and political motivations behind this trend. The analysis highlights the implications of political cadre dominance on governance, service delivery, and economic development, while also considering potential reforms to restore integrity in civil service institutions. The findings underscore the urgent need for depoliticization, strengthened institutional frameworks, and merit-based recruitment to enhance governance and public sector performance across Africa.

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Introduction

The civil service plays a crucial role in governance, policymaking, and service delivery, acting as the backbone of state institutions. Ideally, it should function as a neutral and professional body that ensures continuity and efficiency in government operations, regardless of political transitions. However, in many African nations, the civil service has increasingly become entangled in political patronage, where appointments and promotions are influenced more by party loyalty than by competence or expertise. This has led to a decline in efficiency, transparency, and accountability, undermining public trust in government institutions.

The rise of political cadres individuals who owe their positions to political allegiance rather than merit has had far-reaching consequences for governance and economic development across the continent. Political interference in the civil service erodes institutional independence, weakens public administration, and fosters corruption, as officials prioritize partisan interests over national development. Moreover, the entrenchment of political appointees in key bureaucratic positions stifles innovation and discourages competent professionals, ultimately hindering efforts to build strong and effective institutions.

This paper examines the systemic challenges posed by political cadre dominance in African civil services, analyzing the historical roots of the problem, its impact on governance and service delivery, and the broader socio-economic consequences. Drawing on case studies from different African countries, the study highlights the urgent need for reforms that promote meritocracy, institutional autonomy, and transparency. By exploring potential solutions, including policy interventions and governance reforms, this paper advocates for a more independent and professional civil service that can drive sustainable development and good governance across the continent.

Figure 1: Showing Regions of Africa. Adapted from World Atlas.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it sheds light on the growing crisis in Africa's civil service, where political patronage and the dominance of political cadres have undermined professionalism, efficiency, and accountability in public administration. The study's findings will contribute to a broader understanding of the impact of political interest in civil service institutions and provide insights into how this phenomenon affects governance, service delivery, and socio-economic development across the continent.

- **Enhancing Good Governance and Institutional Integrity**
  By analyzing the infiltration of political cadres into civil service positions, this study will highlight the dangers of politicization and its effects on governance. Political patronage weakens institutional integrity by prioritizing political loyalty over competence, thereby compromising the efficiency of public service. The findings can help policymakers and governance experts develop strategies to strengthen institutional autonomy, promote merit-based recruitment, and reinforce ethical leadership in public administration [1].

- **Informing Policy Reforms**
  The study will provide valuable recommendations for governments, civil society organizations, and international agencies on how to address the challenges of political interest in civil service management. Previous studies suggest that depoliticization and adherence to merit-based hiring practices improve efficiency and accountability in public institutions. It will advocate for legal and policy frameworks that ensure transparent and accountable recruitment and administrative processes.

- **Improving Public Service Efficiency and Accountability**
  A professional and independent civil service is essential for effective service delivery. Studies indicate that politically motivated appointments lead to inefficiency and corruption, ultimately reducing public trust in government institutions. By exposing the inefficiencies caused by political patronage, this research will help inform strategies to restore professionalism, improve public sector performance, and enhance the overall quality of governance.

- **Contributing to Academic and Policy Debates** This study will add to the existing body of knowledge on governance, public administration, and political economy in Africa. The politicization of civil service has been widely discussed in academic literature, with scholars emphasizing its negative impact on state capacity and governance quality. It will serve as a reference for scholars, students, and policymakers interested in understanding the complexities of civil service reforms and political interference.

- **Strengthening Democratic Institutions**
  The study underscores the need for democratic principles in public administration. Weak institutional frameworks allow political elites to exploit civil service structures for personal and party gains, weakening democracy and governance effectiveness (Kelsall, 2013). By highlighting the negative effects of political cadre dominance, this study will encourage discussions on strengthening democracy, rule of law, and the separation of powers to safeguard the integrity of civil service institutions.

- **Guiding Civil Society and Advocacy Efforts**
  Civil society organizations, watchdog groups, and advocacy movements can use the findings of this study to push for reforms that promote transparency, reduce corruption, and protect civil servants from political pressures. Research indicates that independent civil society movements play a crucial role in holding governments accountable and ensuring the implementation of governance reforms.

Accountability of civil service institutions in Africa.

This objective seeks to analyze how political patronage affects the functionality of public administration by prioritizing loyalty over merit. The study will investigate the extent to which cadre deployment influences governance quality, service delivery, and institutional integrity across different African nations.

To assess the effectiveness of existing policy frameworks and governance structures in mitigating political interest in the civil service.

This objective aims to evaluate the legal and institutional mechanisms designed to ensure a professional, independent, and transparent civil service. The study will identify gaps in policy implementation and recommend strategies for strengthening public administration through merit-based recruitment and depoliticization initiatives.

Theoretical Framework
The accountability of civil service institutions in Africa can be analyzed through several key theoretical perspectives that explain the impact of political patronage, governance structures, and institutional integrity on public administration. This study will be guided by the following theories:

- **Principal-Agent Theory**
  The Principal-Agent Theory (PAT) is a widely used framework in governance and public administration that explains the relationship between policymakers (principals) and civil servants (agents). In an ideal setting, civil servants are expected to implement policies efficiently and transparently on behalf of elected officials. However, political interference, including cadre appointments and patronage, disrupts this relationship by creating conflicts of interest (Eisenhardt, 1989). This theory helps in analyzing how political leaders manipulate civil service institutions to serve personal or party interests rather than the public good. The study will use PAT to assess mechanisms that can strengthen accountability and reduce political interference in Africa's civil service.

- **Institutional Theory**
  Institutional Theory focuses on how political and administrative institutions shape governance, service delivery, and policy implementation. Weak institutional frameworks allow for the infiltration of political cadres into civil service positions, undermining meritocracy and professionalism. By applying this theory, the study will examine the structural weaknesses in Africa's civil service systems that facilitate political interference and propose institutional reforms that enhance public sector accountability.

- **Public Choice Theory**
  Public Choice Theory argues that political actors, including bureaucrats and politicians, are motivated by self-interest rather than public welfare. This theory is relevant to understanding how political patronage leads to inefficiencies in civil service institutions, as politicians prioritize loyalty and electoral gains over administrative competence. The study will use this theory to explore how political cadre deployment affects governance quality and service delivery.

- **Good Governance Theory**
  Good Governance Theory emphasizes principles such as transparency, accountability, rule of law, and meritocracy in

public administration. This framework will be used to assess the effectiveness of existing policy frameworks in ensuring accountability in civil service institutions. It will also provide insights into best practices for governance reforms that promote a professional and depoliticized public sector.

Application of Theories to the Study
Principal-Agent Theory will help analyze the accountability challenges arising from political cadre appointments.
Institutional Theory will be used to examine structural weaknesses in public administration.
Public Choice Theory will provide insights into how political self-interest undermines civil service efficiency.

Good Governance Theory will guide the study in identifying policy solutions for strengthening accountability and transparency in civil service institutions.
By integrating these theoretical perspectives, this study will provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing accountability in Africa's civil service and propose reforms to promote good governance and institutional integrity.
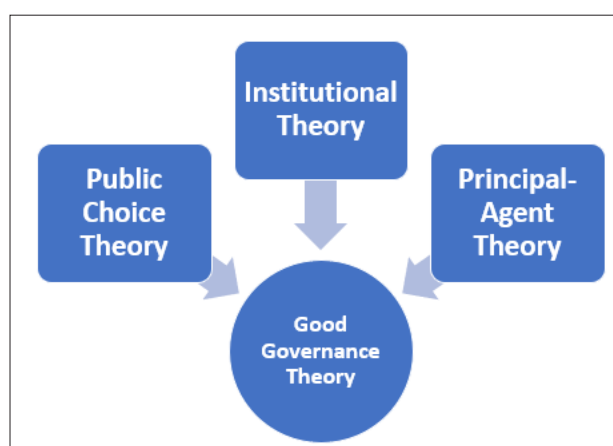
Figure 2: Conceptual Framework- Source Author 2025

Civil Service in Northern Africa: A Recent Perspective
The civil service in Northern African countries Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Sudan, and Mauritania has long been shaped by historical, political, and socio-cultural factors. Over the past few decades, this region has experienced an increasing politicization of public administration, with political cadres often being favored over merit-based recruitment and professionalism. This phenomenon is deeply rooted in the governance structures of these nations, influenced by a complex interplay of Arab culture, Mediterranean heritage, and post-colonial state formation.

The Politicization of Civil Service in Northern Africa
The dominance of political loyalists in civil service appointments has been a major issue in the region. Governments often use public sector jobs as instruments of political patronage, rewarding allies and consolidating power. This has been evident in countries such as Egypt and Algeria, where ruling parties have historically appointed loyalists to key bureaucratic positions. The result is a bloated and inefficient public sector, where political allegiance often takes precedence over competence.

In Libya, the aftermath of Muammar Gaddafi's rule led to a fragmented governance system, with various political factions attempting to control state institutions. The lack of a unified administrative structure has further exacerbated inefficiencies in

public service delivery. Similarly, Sudan's civil service has struggled with political interference, particularly under the long reign of Omar al-Bashir, where key appointments were made based on loyalty to the ruling National Congress Party rather than expertise.

Structural Weaknesses and Bureaucratic Challenges
The Northern African civil service sector is often characterized by poor institutional frameworks, lack of transparency, and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Tunisia, despite being regarded as one of the more stable democracies in the region post-Arab Spring, still faces challenges in ensuring a meritocratic public sector. The presence of political appointees in key administrative positions has hindered efforts to implement effective governance reforms.

In Morocco, the monarchy has maintained significant influence over public administration, with strategic civil service appointments serving as a means to maintain political stability and control. This has limited opportunities for technocratic leadership and hindered administrative modernization. Meanwhile, Mauritania's governance has long been marked by elite domination, where civil service appointments are used to sustain political alliances and tribal affiliations rather than ensure efficient service delivery.

Impact on Governance and Economic Development
The infiltration of political cadres into civil service has had far-reaching consequences on governance and economic development in Northern Africa. The lack of a professionalized bureaucracy undermines the implementation of policy reforms, leading to inefficiencies in service delivery. In Egypt, for example, excessive bureaucratic red tape and corruption have stifled economic initiatives and foreign investments. Similarly, in Algeria, the dominance of political loyalists in public administration has led to mismanagement of state resources and slow economic diversification efforts.

The situation is exacerbated in post-conflict states like Libya and Sudan, where political instability has weakened governance structures. Civil service institutions remain fragile, with limited capacity to provide essential public services, further deepening socio-economic disparities. These challenges highlight the urgent need for reform to restore integrity and professionalism in public administration.

Potential Reforms and the Way Forward
To address the crisis in civil service governance in Northern Africa, several key reforms are necessary:
- **Depoliticization of Public Administration:** Governments should establish clear legal frameworks to prevent political interference in civil service appointments.
- **Merit-Based Recruitment and Promotion:** The adoption of transparent recruitment systems, based on qualifications and experience, is essential for enhancing efficiency and professionalism.
- **Institutional Strengthening:** Strengthening oversight institutions and promoting accountability can help curb corruption and improve service delivery.
- **Capacity Building and Training:** Investing in continuous professional development for civil servants can enhance their competencies and effectiveness.
- **Public Sector Digitalization:** The adoption of e-governance initiatives can reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies and limit opportunities for political interference.

Conclusion

The crisis in civil service across Northern Africa reflects a broader challenge facing many African nations political cadre dominance in public administration. While the region's governance structures are influenced by historical and cultural contexts, the increasing politicization of the civil service has hindered effective governance, economic development, and public service delivery. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive reforms aimed at promoting meritocracy, transparency, and institutional resilience. Without these changes, Northern African nations risk further administrative inefficiencies, governance failures, and socio-economic stagnation.

Historical Evolution of Civil Service in Western Africa

The civil service systems in Western Africa have roots in the colonial administrative structures imposed by European powers. Countries such as Nigeria and Ghana inherited bureaucratic frameworks modeled after British governance, while Senegal, Mali, and Côte d'Ivoire adopted the French administrative system. During the post-independence era, governments sought to Africanize the civil service by replacing expatriates with local professionals. Initially, this transition was characterized by competence-driven appointments. However, over time, political interests increased, leading to the recruitment of party loyalists rather than skilled professionals [2].

Political Cadres and the Decline of Professionalism

One of the most significant challenges facing the civil service in Western Africa today is the appointment of political cadres. This practice is particularly prevalent in Nigeria, where civil service recruitment and promotions are often influenced by political connections rather than merit [3]. Similarly, in Ghana, ruling parties have historically placed their supporters in key bureaucratic positions, resulting in frequent administrative reshuffles following elections [1]. The situation is not different in Senegal, Mali, and Côte d'Ivoire, where public administration is deeply intertwined with party politics.

The prevalence of political patronage has led to several adverse effects:

- **Loss of Meritocracy:** Skilled professionals are often overlooked in favor of individuals with political affiliations.
- **Corruption and Inefficiency:** Political appointees may use their positions to advance personal or party interests rather than national development.
- **Policy Inconsistency:** Frequent changes in personnel disrupt continuity in governance and policy implementation [4].

Structural Weaknesses and Political Motivations

The weakness of civil service institutions in Western Africa is deeply rooted in several factors, including lack of transparency in recruitment processes, inadequate legal frameworks, and insufficient oversight mechanisms [5]. Additionally, political leaders often use public sector appointments as tools for rewarding supporters and consolidating power. This is particularly evident in Mali and Côte d'Ivoire, where post-conflict governments have sought to accommodate former rebels and political allies by granting them positions in the civil service [6].

Impact on Governance and Service Delivery

The politicization of the civil service has had severe consequences on governance and public service delivery. Key areas affected include:

Economic Development: A politicized civil service discourages foreign investment due to concerns about corruption and lack of regulatory consistency.

Public Trust: Citizens lose confidence in government institutions when civil servants are seen as party agents rather than neutral administrators [7].

Policy Implementation: Development programs suffer setbacks due to the incompetence of politically appointed administrators [8].

The Need for Reform

To restore integrity in the civil service, several reforms are necessary:

- **Merit-Based Recruitment:** Establishing independent civil service commissions to oversee transparent and competence-based hiring processes.
- **Institutional Strengthening:** Enhancing legal frameworks to prevent political interference in public administration.
- **Capacity Building:** Investing in continuous training and professional development for civil servants.
- **Accountability Mechanisms:** Strengthening anti-corruption agencies to monitor and penalize instances of political favoritism in recruitment and administration.

Conclusion

The crisis in the civil service across Western Africa, exacerbated by political patronage and cadre appointments, has undermined governance and service delivery. The infiltration of party loyalists into bureaucratic positions at the expense of professionalism has led to inefficiency, corruption, and weakened public trust. Urgent reforms are required to depoliticize the civil service, restore meritocracy, and strengthen institutional frameworks. Without these changes, the civil service will remain a tool for political expediency rather than an engine for national development.

Historical Context and Structural Weaknesses

The roots of the crisis in the civil service of Central African nations can be traced to colonial administrative structures, which prioritized control over development [9]. Post-independence governments largely inherited centralized bureaucracies that lacked strong institutional safeguards against political manipulation. In the DRC, for instance, Mobutu Sese Seko's regime institutionalized clientelism, where civil service positions were rewards for political loyalty rather than competence [10]. Similarly, in Cameroon, the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) has long used public sector appointments to consolidate political dominance [11].

The Dominance of Political Cadres in Civil Service

Across Central Africa, the appointment of political loyalists in administrative positions has resulted in inefficiency and poor governance. In Chad, the government has been accused of appointing individuals based on ethnic and political affiliations, leading to widespread corruption and bureaucratic inertia [12]. The Central African Republic, a country that has experienced prolonged political instability, has also seen its civil service become a tool for rewarding political allies rather than an institution for effective governance [13].

The politicization of the civil service has had detrimental effects on service delivery. In Cameroon, for example, public administration suffers from inefficiency due to the appointment of underqualified political appointees in key sectors such as health and education [14]. The DRC's bureaucracy remains plagued by ghost workers—individuals who receive salaries without performing any official duties due to patronage networks embedded within the civil service [15].

Implications for Governance and Economic Development

The dominance of political cadres in civil service has led to weak institutional capacity, poor policy implementation, and economic stagnation. Countries like Chad and CAR, despite their rich natural resources, struggle with high levels of poverty and underdevelopment due to administrative inefficiencies and mismanagemen [16]. The lack of a merit-based civil service has also discouraged foreign investment, as international businesses perceive these bureaucracies as corrupt and unreliable [17].

Moreover, the erosion of civil service independence has fueled political instability. In the DRC and CAR, where governance structures are fragile, the appointment of political loyalists in public administration has exacerbated tensions between different factions, sometimes leading to violent conflicts [18].

Potential Reforms and the Way Forward

To restore integrity in the civil service, Central African nations must prioritize depoliticization, transparency, and merit-based recruitment. Strengthening legal frameworks to insulate public administration from political interference is essential. Cameroon and Chad, for example, could benefit from independent civil service commissions to oversee appointments and promotions based on competence rather than political allegiance [19].

Training and capacity-building programs should also be implemented to enhance professionalism within the bureaucracy. In addition, digital governance initiatives—such as e-governance platforms could help curb corruption and improve efficiency by reducing human interference in administrative processes [20].

Conclusion

The civil service in Central Africa remains deeply entangled with political patronage, undermining governance, service delivery, and economic progress. The dominance of political cadres has weakened bureaucratic structures, leading to inefficiency and corruption. Addressing this crisis requires strong institutional reforms, transparent governance mechanisms, and a renewed commitment to meritocracy. By depoliticizing the civil service and fostering professionalism, Central African nations can create more effective and accountable public administration systems.

Political Influence and Patronage in Civil Service

The civil service in Eastern Africa has increasingly been utilized as an instrument for political patronage. Governments have often appointed political loyalists rather than individuals selected through a merit-based process. This trend is particularly evident in Uganda, where political appointments in civil service positions have been made based on loyalty to the ruling party rather than competency [21]. Similarly, in Kenya, reports indicate that successive administrations have prioritized party-affiliated individuals, especially in key administrative roles, thereby undermining the principles of neutrality and efficiency in public service [22].

Structural Weaknesses and Administrative Challenges

Structural weaknesses in the civil service have exacerbated the problem. A lack of robust legal frameworks, weak enforcement of regulations, and poor human resource management have allowed political interest to flourish. Ethiopia's civil service, for example, has faced significant challenges due to political favoritism, where ethnic-based appointments have become the norm, further entrenching division and inefficiency within the public sector [23]. Similarly, Tanzania has struggled with corruption and nepotism, with key appointments often determined by political considerations rather than professional qualifications [24].

Impact on Service Delivery and Governance

The infiltration of political cadres into the civil service has had dire consequences for governance and service delivery in Eastern Africa. In Somalia, where state institutions are already fragile due to prolonged conflict, the appointment of political allies over competent professionals has weakened government institutions, leading to inefficiencies and poor policy implementation [25]. In Kenya, bureaucratic inefficiencies and corruption within the civil service have hindered public service delivery, particularly in crucial sectors such as healthcare and education [26]. These issues have led to widespread dissatisfaction among citizens, contributing to political instability and diminished trust in government institutions.

Economic Consequences of Politicized Civil Service

The economic ramifications of a politicized civil service are substantial. With appointments based on political affiliation rather than merit, economic policies often lack continuity and effectiveness. In Uganda, political patronage in civil service has resulted in mismanagement of resources, leading to budgetary inefficiencies and reduced foreign investment [27]. Ethiopia's economy has also suffered due to the exclusion of qualified professionals in favor of politically aligned individuals, reducing the effectiveness of key economic policies [28].

Reforms and Recommendations

To address the crisis in civil service across Eastern Africa, several reforms are necessary. First, strengthening legal and institutional frameworks to ensure a merit-based recruitment system is essential. Kenya has made strides in implementing civil service reforms, but challenges remain in enforcement and political will Second, increasing transparency in appointments and promotions through independent oversight bodies can help mitigate political interference. Uganda and Tanzania could benefit from adopting a more robust civil service commission with greater autonomy. Third, professional development programs should be introduced to enhance the competency of civil servants and reduce reliance on political loyalty as a criterion for appointment [22].

Conclusion

The civil service in Eastern Africa faces a deep-seated crisis fueled by political patronage, corruption, and inefficiency. The dominance of political cadres in public administration has weakened governance structures, diminished service delivery, and negatively impacted economic development. Without urgent reforms that prioritize meritocracy, accountability, and institutional integrity, the region risks continued governance failures and economic stagnation. Addressing these challenges requires political commitment, institutional strengthening, and a shift towards professional and transparent civil service systems.

Historical Context and Structural Weaknesses

The colonial history of Southern African nations heavily influenced the structure of their civil service systems. The bureaucracies established by colonial administrations were primarily designed to serve the interests of the colonial elite, with limited local participation [29]. Upon gaining independence, newly formed governments sought to restructure the civil service to reflect indigenous leadership and national interests. However, these changes often led to the politicization of the bureaucracy, as ruling parties installed loyalists in key positions rather than prioritizing merit-based recruitment.

For instance, in Zimbabwe, the ruling party ZANU-PF has maintained significant control over the civil service since independence in 1980. Civil servants are often expected to align with the party's ideology, with employment opportunities and promotions frequently tied to political loyalty rather than competency [30]. Similarly, in Zambia, successive governments have been accused of replacing technocrats with party loyalists, leading to inefficiencies in public administration [31].

The Role of Political Patronage

Political patronage is a defining characteristic of civil service operations in much of Southern Africa. In South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) has faced criticism for cadre deployment, where party members are strategically placed in government institutions, sometimes without the necessary qualifications [32]. This practice, while often justified as a means of ensuring policy implementation aligned with the ruling party's objectives, has led to instances of mismanagement and corruption.

In Namibia and Botswana, civil service institutions have historically been viewed as relatively professional compared to their regional counterparts. However, there are concerns that political interests is increasing in these nations as well. Namibia's ruling SWAPO party has been accused of appointing party-affiliated individuals to senior bureaucratic roles, undermining the efficiency of state institutions [33]. Botswana, once regarded as a beacon of good governance in Africa, has also seen rising allegations of political influence within its public sector, raising concerns about the erosion of its historically strong civil service [34].

Implications of Political Cadre Dominance

The dominance of political cadres in civil service has several negative implications for governance and development. These include:

- **Reduced Efficiency and Productivity** – The replacement of experienced civil servants with political loyalists often leads to inefficiencies in service delivery.
- **Corruption and Mismanagement** – Political interest in civil service appointments can foster corruption, as individuals may prioritize party interests over public welfare.
- **Erosion of Public Trust** – Citizens lose confidence in government institutions when they perceive them as extensions of ruling parties rather than impartial service providers [30].
- **Economic Consequences** – Weak public administration discourages foreign investment and economic growth, as political favoritism undermines regulatory efficiency and governance stability [31].

Recommendations for Reform

Addressing the crisis in civil service across Southern Africa requires deliberate reforms, including:

Merit-Based Recruitment and Promotion – Governments should strengthen policies that prioritize qualifications and experience over political affiliations in civil service hiring [32].

Strengthening Institutional Frameworks – Independent public service commissions should be empowered to oversee recruitment processes and prevent political interference [33].

Enhancing Transparency and Accountability – Governments should implement stringent anti-corruption measures and promote public sector audits to curb malpractices [16].

Depoliticization of Civil Service – Legal frameworks should be reinforced to prevent ruling parties from using state institutions for political advantage [34].

Conclusion

The civil service in Southern Africa remains a critical institution for governance and national development. However, the infiltration of political cadres into bureaucratic roles has compromised efficiency, professionalism, and service delivery. By implementing robust reforms focused on meritocracy, transparency, and institutional integrity, governments can restore the effectiveness of public administration. Ensuring an independent and competent civil service is essential for sustainable development and the long-term stability of the region.

Analysis

The topic suggests a deep-rooted issue in Africa's civil service, were political influence overrides professionalism.

The phrase "A Reign of Political Cadres" indicates the dominance of political loyalists in bureaucratic structures.

The study likely explores how this crisis affects governance and service delivery across African nations.

Core Issues Highlighted in the Abstract:

- **Political Patronage in Civil Service:** Instead of hiring based on merit, appointments are influenced by political affiliations.
- **Decline in Professionalism and Efficiency:** Qualified individuals are sidelined, leading to reduced competence in government institutions.
- **Structural Weaknesses and Historical Context:** The study traces the origins of this issue, examining why institutions remain vulnerable to political interest.
- **Governance and Economic Impact:** Inefficiency in public administration affects policy implementation, service delivery, and economic progress.
- **Need for Reform:** The study calls for depoliticization, stronger institutional frameworks, and merit-based hiring practices.
- **Analytical Perspective:**
- **Scope and Methodology:** The study uses a continent-wide perspective with case studies, providing both broad and specific insights.
- **Implications:** The dominance of political cadres undermines good governance, disrupts service delivery, and hampers economic development.
- **Proposed Solutions:** The study emphasizes the need for depoliticization, better institutional structures, and a shift toward meritocracy in recruitment.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The civil service across Africa has increasingly been undermined by the infiltration of political cadres, resulting in diminished professionalism, inefficiency, and weak governance structures. In regions such as Northern, Western, Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa, this crisis manifests in various ways, including nepotism, patronage-based appointments, and the erosion of meritocracy. The dominance of political loyalists in bureaucratic institutions has severely impacted service delivery, economic growth, and public trust in government institution [37]. Without substantial reforms, the civil service will continue to be an extension of political networks rather than an engine for effective governance and national development.

To address this issue, African governments should prioritize depoliticizing the civil service by implementing strict merit-based recruitment and promotion policies. This includes establishing independent public service commissions with transparent hiring processes and performance-based evaluations. Furthermore, legal

frameworks should be reinforced to limit political interference in administrative affairs and to ensure accountability for those who abuse their positions for political gains [35]. Strengthening anti-corruption agencies and enhancing civil society participation in governance processes can also serve as critical mechanisms for fostering a professional and competent civil service. Only through these measures can African nations restore integrity, efficiency, and public confidence in their administrative institutions [38].

Appendices
Appendix 1
74 Workers at Kabwe Council Suspended for Protesting their Delayed Salaries (April 2019)

Appendix 2

PF CADRES INVADED LAZ MARCH 2017

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