EMPLOYEE'S EFFECTIVENESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

No organisation globally can achieve its aims and objectives without its personnel efforts; this reveals that the importance of the human factor in any organisation cannot be underestimated. All other elements of production are worthless unless there is the labour to utilise them; indeed, an organisation can only be effective and efficient as its human resources. The local government in Nigeria requires its employees' effectiveness to deliver governments policies and programmes to the rural dwellers; however, do the council's employees have a conducive environment and motivating factors to discharge their responsibilities. The study examined employees' effectiveness in developing sustainable local government administration in Ekiti State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to gather adequate information from the respondents. The study utilised a structured questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. The study population of (3,351) consisted of (1302) local government staff of Ado Ekiti, (1,437) Ekiti South West and (612) Amure Ekiti local government staff. The local governments were randomly selected from the state's urban, semi-urban and rural local governments. In addition, the Taro Yamane formula was used to calculate the sample size of (858) for questionnaire administration. The study concluded that motivated employees would carry out their duties and responsibilities in the right way and manner.

KEYWORDS: *Employees, Development and Local Government Administration*

INTRODUCTION

The Indigenous Authority Ordinance of 1916, passed apparently to harness the existing traditional administration institutions in the various regions of what is now Nigeria, is linked to the formation of Nigeria's local government system. The ordinance was the first legislative framework to implement a system of indirect rules (Ikeanyibe, 2009). However, due to anti-democratic tendencies and because the system did not blend well with those regions' existing traditional administrative institutions, the effort to incorporate the local government system was met with strong opposition in the Western and Eastern parts of Nigeria. Notwithstanding this, until 1946, when the Richard constitution formed a new regional parliament, the directive remained. The Eastern house of assembly had offered a venue for debate by 1949, culminating in the Local Government Ordinance of 1950, which introduced a democratic local government system (Ogunna, 1996).

By 1954, democratic principles had penetrated each of Nigeria's three regions' grassroots administration, with each area having complete control over the form, structure, and purposes of local government (Bellow-Imam, 2007). Though the 1950 law began to infuse democratic ideas into local government administration, it also signalled the commencement of central/regional domination over grassroots administration, which was evident during British colonial administration and has continued in Nigeria. Given its colonial past, Nigeria's current grassroots administration began in 1976 with local government transformation. The goal of this restructuring was to reform and revolutionise grassroots administration to make it one of Africa's best. The 1976 reform had laudable goals, such as extending the federation ideal by bringing government to the people's level and achieving consistency in the third tier of government across the country (Chima & Abdulhamid, 2015). The reform was significant because it was the first time in Nigeria that a uniform system of grassroots administration was established.

The funding arrangement was reorganised, with mandatory revenue allocations from the Federation Account and defined amounts of central and state income going to the third tiers of government. The views of (Ekpo and Ndebbio, 1998) claim that revenue was also protected to shield grassroots administration income from state intrusion as part of the reform. Specific areas were noted for internal revenue sources for local governments, such as property, education, and street lighting; levies, such as community, flat rate, and poll tax; and fines and fees, such as court fines and fees, motor park fees, forest fees, public advertisement fees, market fees, and birth registrations, and so on. Grassroots administrative personnel and grassroots politicians were given the freedom to carry out their duties deprived of interference in their

everyday matters to ensure the success of the re-organisation. State grassroots administration ministries were only responsible for advising, assisting, and guiding local governments under their jurisdiction, not for controlling them. The 1976 reforms also shielded traditional monarchs from party politics (Chima & Abdulhamid, 2015).

When the federal military administration implemented civil service reforms in 1988, local government administration was again reformed. These tried to professionalise local government service by establishing required departments (human resources, finance, and supply, for example) and officers (councillors, secretaries, financial officers, auditor-general). The Grassroots Administration Service Commission, which sets criteria for staffing and intensive care grassroots administration, was also defined in the 1988 reform. These guidelines aimed to establish an accountable grassroots administration in the country.

The grassroots administration's role and functions have changed in current ages and will endure evolving in the future. The action plan for local government reform, Putting People First, lays out several essential goals for local government (Fatile & Adejuwon, 2017). Re-organisation of political and executive structures; integration of community and enterprise roles into the grassroots administration; enhanced impact and involvement in local overall social and economic advancement; improved system effectiveness; and changed resource allocations are among the goals. It has been well recognised in the human resource management (HRM) literature that workers' proficiencies, roughly defined as job-related services, talents, and boldness, are critical to acknowledging people's duty productivity. As a result, it has been suggested that firms should use HRM tools to boost competencies in order to improve effectiveness (Boyle & O'Riordan, 2013). According to the research, government organisations deploy a variety of HRM techniques aimed at managing employee skills, such as recruiting and selection procedures (Boselie, Dietz & Boon, 2005). Career-development trajectories and, more generally, competency management systems (Borst, Lako & de Vries,2013).

Though recommendations for civil servant capabilities are many, the issue has attracted very little comprehensive empirical study attention as a whole. The literature on civil servant capabilities is normative in nature and primarily concerned with the (managerial) competencies of senior civil servants and government officials. Hood & Lodge (2005). Given the widespread belief that a new breed of public servants is required to accurately resolve the challenges of administration (Needham & Mangan, 2014). we use the findings of a sizeable exploratory survey of Dutch public servants to explore and understand which acquire skills public servants themselves consider necessary.

It was advocated that governments adhere to a variety of governance ideologies (PMRA, 2018). It was widely assumed until the early 1980s that government institutions should be overseen by traditional public administration (PA); however, from the 1980s onwards, it was urged that government institutions should follow the ideas of New Public Management (NPM); and, more recently, some researchers claim that administration would be more effective if it followed the principles of New Public Administration.

Different governance philosophies necessitate diverse types of skills; the topic is whether civil servants include 'modern' NPG-related skills or a mix of abilities from other viewpoints primarily, implying a layering of perspectives Osborne (2010).

Understanding civil servant skills and their relations to governance ideas is beneficial not just for debates regarding governance viewpoints and their practical significance but also for scholars and practitioners of public (human resource) management (PMRA, 2018). For academics, adopting governance viewpoints as a basis for structuring general personnel abilities can highlight flaws in the HRM literature, contributing to a more contextualised view of HRM in government enterprises. This study should encourage experts, public personnel, civic directors, and HRM directors to make a point about civil employees' proficiencies in order to better cope with contemporary issues (Lee & Meng, 2021).

Any public-sector organisation's capacity, on the other hand, is measured by its ability to complete tasks, respond to problems, keep promises, and eventually accomplish desired outcomes. Citizens' outcomes[36]. Murray[37] unproductive management is the best anticipation one might have without the skill to make solid plans and execute them well; the worst prediction is a rogue state,' writes the author. Though Murray acknowledges the necessity of dimensions, he swiftly adds that its development is "infinitely complex," much also because the explanation of the question "capacity for what?" will change over time. Even so, Murray concludes that every public manager must be disturbed and should commit effort, as a priority, to understanding, growing, and deploying capacity to perform effectively, and that capacity stewardship must be a key responsibility of management at all levels (Ibietan & Ndukwe, 2014).

As a result, management should guarantee that the organisation's employees have the necessary skills to perform their duties efficiently. According to Schmelzer (2016), he stated that just like with any organisation, productivity is dependent on its people: their capabilities, talents, leadership and capability to encourage employees to achieve organisational goals. 'Grassroots administration in Ekiti State and other Nigerian states is essential because the responsibilities it performs are essential to both citizens and the state. Therefore, it is against this background that this study examines employees' effectiveness in the development of sustainable local government administration in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA

The Mohammed/Obasanjo regime was transparently committed to effective and efficient third tiers of government in the nation. Indeed, it made the issue of the reform and re-organisation of local government one of the items on its programme for disengagement from politics. In its blueprint for third tiers of government reform, the government noted the precarious state of grassroots government in the country and its desire to accord the local government system the desired position in the country's governmental activity in the nation. In order to achieve the desired result, it created a uniform multi-purpose, one-tier grassroots administration structure for

the nation. The 1976 third tiers of government reform were significant in the following ways:

(a)   It created a uniform grassroots administration for the country for the first time.

(b)   The government enshrined local government as the third level of government in the constitution.

The constitution of 1976 section 7(1) and others that followed provided the system of Local governance is protected under the constitution (Fatile & Adejuwon, 2017). As a result, every state's government must secure their survival by legislation that specifies its establishment, organisation, composition, finances, and functions.

(c)   For the first time, the functions to be performed by municipal governments were enshrined in the constitution.

(d)   In order to discharge its functions most efficiently, the constitution provided two primary sources of revenue in the form of grant-in-aid. The first is the Federal Grant-in-aid, and the second is the statutory provision from the Federation Account. Section 149 of the 1979 constitution, for the first time, included local governments as beneficiaries from the Federation Account and spelt out the procedures and institutional framework for the disbursement of such monies through the National/State Assemblies and State Local Government Joint Account. Also, the Revenue Act[11]of 1981 later fixed the exact proportion to be paid to local governments as 10% (now 20%) of the Federation Account, and 10% of the total budget of a state later changed to 10% of the total internal revenue of the state government. Each of these stipulations represented major leaps for local governments in Nigeria and was designed to ensure the effective institutionalisation of local governments and their participation in the task of national political and socio-economic development.

With all the arrangements to recognise grassroots administration as the third level of government under the state government with viable sources of revenue to make it survive, the good intentions of the Federal Military government to provide a framework within which local resources, both human and material resources are effectively mobilised up till today, could not materialise. This was a result of the advent of the civilian administration in 1979 and the attendant politicisation of local government forcing them to compromise the constitutionally guaranteed autonomy, which only was materialised during the Babangida administration.

The 1979 constitution and the subsequent constitutions have been building on the solid foundation laid for local government by the 1976 Local Government Reforms, which among other things, introduced a uniform system of terms, functions, structure, funding and management; the positions were clearly articulated and defined. The local government were made single-tier; instead of the multi-tier system, Federal and State Governments were mandated to release allocation and grants to local governments (Ten per cent of State Internally Generated Revenue to local governments on a monthly basis) with a political structure of Chairman, Supervisory Councillors and Councillors. In the arrangement, the traditional rulers were divorced from active partisan politics with the introduction of a separate Council of Chiefs. The management structure was introduced, making provision for the posts of Secretary to Local Government and Treasurers, amongst others. In essence, local government, since its evolution, has continued to grow to meet the purpose of its establishment, as revealed in the various reforms.

According to Ola and Tonwe (2005), government policies carried by the central and the states government might not reflect local needs. This was supported by the explanation that localities are not simply areas or sites but communities of people living together as neighbours who believe they differ from the government's abstract average of society and claim the right to apply the government's uniform rules in a way that better suits their real needs and ideas of themselves. The reason and claim for grassroots administration emerge at this moment based on the assumption that it will check the dangers of absolutism. The amount and variety of work that needs to be done by the government across the country make it hard for a single authority to do so directly, especially when the government lacks the necessary knowledge of all the divined problems that are local. Hence, Laski (1964) rightly observed that; We won't be able to reap the full benefits of democratic government unless we admit that all problems, in their various manifestations, necessitate decision-making at the location and by the most affected people.

According to the above, the author's concept of democracy takes root when there is a local government that ensures local people's participation in activities to suit grassroots requirements. While there are many interpretations from various sources, the widely accepted one to be reasonably encompassing has been the one that was considered and adopted during the Conference on Local Government in Africa and the United Nations Conference on Administrative Aspects of Decentralization in The Hague in 1961 by both Cambridge in the United Kingdom and the United Nations. The United Nations Office for Public Administration defines local government as a legal subdivision of a nation or (in a federal system) state that has substantial control over local affairs, including the power to impose taxes or exact labour for specified purposes, and whose governing body is elected or otherwise locally selected. Kick Green clarified that each unit of local government in any system must have the following characteristics: a defined territory and population, institutional structure for legislative, executive, and administrative purposes, a distinct legal identity, a range of powers and functions authorised by delegation from the appropriate central or intermediate legislature.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

Guarantee that grassroots strategies and actions are followed fair and consistent, motivating and inspiring the employees to reach their complete possible.

Leadership: Encourage personnel's personal development and create opportunities for professional and leadership development. Create a culture of trust and inclusion where people are aware of the broader picture and how their jobs fit into it. Predicting employee needs and putting strategic planning in place.

Management: Integrate the human capital of the local government with the governing body's strategic goals. Ensure that the policies and processes of the local government are up to date and applied consistently. Provide opportunities for ongoing learning and improvement, such as coaching, mentorship, and professional and leadership development.

Methodology

The study collected data through both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was gathered through the use of questionnaires. Secondary data was compiled from a variety of sources, including textbooks, journal articles, conference proceedings, institutional records, and the internet. The study population of (3,351) consisted of (1302) local government staff of Ado Ekiti, (1,437) Ekiti South West and (612) Amure Ekiti local government staff. The study adopted a multi-stage sampling procedure. In the first stage, the local governments in Ekiti State were stratified into urban, semi-urban and rural. In the second stage, random sampling techniques were utilised to select one urban, semi-urban and rural local government. In the third stage, employees of the selected local governments' councils were chosen for questionnaire administration. The selection was based on the fact that the councils' employees are in a vantage position to give helpful information on community participation in the development of the council. In addition, the Taro Yamane formula was used to calculate the sample size of (858) for questionnaire administration. Data generated were analysed using SPSS.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This part examined respondents' perceptions of employees' competence in the development of Ekiti State's sustainable local government administration. Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on each of the statements, as well as the value/responses that were elicited from the respondents using the Likert scale measurement.

The first assertion in Table 1, the participants react to motivating the employees to perform at the highest level. The result revealed that 356 (49.9%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 71(10.0%) of the participants noted moderately involved; 214(30.0%) of the participants stated lowlily involved, while 72 (10.1%) of the participants indicated they were not involved in it.

With respect to the second assertion, presenting a clear direction to the staff, as well as reconciling the big picture with day–to–day activities. The results revealed that 213 (29.9%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 285(40.1%) of the participants noted moderately involved; 72(10.1%) of the participants stated lowlily involved, while 143 (20.1%) of the participants indicated they were not involved in it.

The third assertion in table 1 prioritises teamwork and initiatives that result in a collective sense of accomplishment. The result revealed that 215 (30.2%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 214(30.0%) of the participants noted moderately involved; 213(29.9%) of the participants

reported lowly involved; while 71 (10.0%) of the participants indicated they were not involved in it.

With respect to the fourth assertion, being a role model and displaying the behaviour that is required from others. The result revealed that 143 (20.1%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 285(40.0%) of the participants noted moderately involved; 214(30.0%) of the participants reported lowly involved, while 71 (10.0%) of the participants indicated they were not involved in it.

The fifth assertion is building solid relationships with employees at all levels of the organisation. The result revealed that 285(40.0%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 142(19.9%) of the participants noted moderately involved; 214(30.0%) of the participants stated lowlily involved, while 72 (10.1%) of the participants indicated they were not involved in it.

The sixth assertion facilitates teamwork. The result revealed that 349 (48.9%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 180(25.2%) of the participants noted moderately involved; 142(19.9%) of the participants stated lowlily involved, while 42 (5.9%) of the participants indicated that they were not involved in it.

The seventh assertion sets clear expectations for the organisation and workgroups. The result revealed that 285 (40.0%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 143(20.1%) of the participants noted moderately involved; 214(30.0%) of the participants stated lowlily involved, while 71 (10.0%) of the participants indicated that they were not involved in it.

The eighth assertion is developing an enabling atmosphere that encourages accountability and decision-making at all levels of the organisation. The result revealed that 265 (37.2%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 193(27.1%) of the participants noted moderately involved; 156(21.9%) of the participants stated lowlily involved, while 99 (13.9%) of the participants indicated they were not involved in it.

The nine assertions, delegating: entrusting tasks to others and depending on employees. The result in table 1 revealed that 213 (29.9%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 142(19.9%) of the participants noted moderately involved; 286(40.1%) of the participants stated lowlily involved, while 72 (10.1%) of the participants indicated they were not involved in it.

The tenth assertion, mentoring and coaching, entails giving others guidance, support, and feedback in order to help them reach their most significant potential. The result in table 1 revealed that 143 (20.1%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 214(30.0%) of the participants noted moderately involved; 285(40.0%) of the participants stated lowlily involved, while 71 (10.1%) of the participants indicated they were not involved in it.

The eleventh assertion is undertaking successful performance reviews, analysing accomplishments and chances for achieving goals and work objectives, providing constructive comments, and discovering others' developmental needs and possible solutions. The result revealed that 285 (40.0%) of the participants indicated highly involved; 213(29.9%) of the participants noted moderately; 144(20.2%)

of the participants stated lowlily involved, while 71 (10.0 %) of the participants indicated they were not involved in it.

With respect to the twelve assertions, ensuring a healthy environment where relationships are based on professionalism and care. The result revealed that 213 (29.9%)

of the participants indicated being highly involved; 357(50.1%) of the participants noted moderately involved, while 143(20.1%) of the participants said they were lowly engaged in it.

Table 1: Examination of Employee's Effectiveness in the Development of Sustainable Local Government Administration in Ekiti State, Nigeria

Variables	High Extent (f) %	ModerateExtent (f) %	Low Extent (f) %	No Extent (f) %
1. Motivating the employees to perform at the highest level.	356 (49.9%)	71 (10.0%)	214 (30.0%)	72 (10.1%)
2. Presenting a clear direction to the staff, as well as reconciling the big picture with day–to–day activities.	213 (29.9%)	285 (40.0%)	72 (10.1%)	143 (20.1%)
3. Prioritises teamwork and initiatives that result in a collective sense of accomplishment.	215 (30.2%)	214 (30.0%)	213 (29.9%)	71 (10.0%)
4. Being a role model and displaying the behaviour that is required from others.	143 (20.1%)	285 (40.0%)	214(30.0%)	72 (10.0%)
5. Building strong relationships with employees at all levels of the organisation.	285 (40.0%)	142 (19.9%)	214 (30.0%)	71 (10.0%)
6. Facilitating teamwork.	349 (48.9%)	180(25.2%)	142 (19.9%)	42 (5.9%)
7. Setting clear expectations for the organisation and workgroups.	285 (40.0%)	143 (20.1%)	214 (30.0%)	71 (10.0%)
8. Developing an enabling atmosphere that encourages accountability and decision-making at all levels of the organisation.	265 (37.2%)	193 (27.1%)	156 (21.9%)	99 (13.9%)
9. Delegating: entrusting tasks to others and depending on employees	213 (29.9%)	142 (19.9%)	286 (40.1%)	72 (10.1%)
10. Mentoring and coaching entails giving others guidance, support, and feedback in order to help them reach their most significant potential	143 (20.1%)	214 (30.0%)	285 (40.0%)	71 (10.0%)
11. undertaking successful performance reviews, analysing accomplishments and chances for achieving goals and work objectives, providing constructive comments, and discovering others' developmental needs and possible solutions.	285 (40.0%)	213 (29.9%)	144 (20.2%)	71 (10.0%)
12. creating a healthy environment where relationships are based on professionalism and respect.	213 (29.9%)	357 (50.1%)	143 (20.1%)	--------------

Source: Field Survey, 2022

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that employees of local government councils in Nigeria would deliver their best given the suitable and conducive environment to carry out their duties without interference. The role of the employees in implementing government policies and programmes cannot be overemphasised.
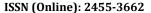
Recommendations

There is a need to create a conducive atmosphere and working environment for the employees of the local council;

this will enable them to put in their best in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities to the local populace.

For an employee to be effective and efficient at duty, they must enjoy good working conditions such as a good salary package, timely promotion and other fringe benefits.

The local council management should be concerned about employees' self-development; as the council improve on service delivery, the career of its employees must also advance.

Concerted efforts should be placed on prioritising collaboration between the management and the employee to create a shared sense of success and facilitate teamwork

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