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E-Government and Staff Performance in Local Government System: A Study of Selected Local Government Areas in Imo State, Nigeria

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Abstract
The study has investigated e-government and staff performance in local government system: a study of selected local government areas in Imo State, Nigeria**.** The objective being to identify the extent of e-government implementation in the local government system in Imo State. The study employed survey research design using questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The data collected were presented in tables and analyzed using simple percentage. More so, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient – PPMCC - (at 0.05% level of significance) through SPSS version 21.0 was employed as the statistical technique to test the four formulated hypotheses. It was discovered that there is significant relationship between lack of ICT policy and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State; and there is significant relationship between staff ICT compliance and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the government should make favorable ICT policies, fix the Nigeria power sector, enhance ICT facilities availability, and promote regular in-service training for local government employees on ICT so as to enhance their compliance and utilization of e-government in the local government.

Keywords: E-Government, Staff Performance, ICT compliance, ICT policy

Introduction

The desire for creating local government anywhere in the world stems from the need to facilitate development at the grassroots level. This is because the achievement of development at the grass root level depends on the effectiveness of local government to perform its development functions (Mbakuzie, 2018). Such functions can be performed very well through staff commitment. For that, the local government staff can add positive values to the society when the staff perform their functions positively, hence the issue of staff performance. The goal of every organization is to achieve improved performance of the staff. This is because when the organizational staff are performing very productively, it will lead to the achievement of organizational goals. Staff performance here entails the extent to which organizational employees (especially those in the local government) achieve the assigned duties and enhance growth in the organization. Staff performance is aimed at enhancing employee input so as to achieve the needed output (Naniki, 2021). Local government therefore cannot achieve/realize her expectation without improved performance of staff.

Thus, if staff performance must be achieved in the local government system, there are many strategies which could be introduced to achieve positive results. One of such areas which can boost the performance of staff includes the introduction and effective implementation of e-government. E-government will enable the staff of local government to discharge their functions very well through effective information dissemination between the local government and community members, between the local government political executive and career bureaucrats, between the local government and private sector organizations among others. For this reason, Ibe (2019) is of the view that the effectiveness of 21st century organization in achieving improved performance depends on the extent to which e-platform (e-governance) is introduced in running the system. The emergence of the modern form of information communication technology has brought opportunities for borderlessness, and effective inter-connectedness. In view of Anadine (2020) well implemented e-government can help in providing a powerful instrument in publicizing information, consultation, improvement of the general public participation, sending response to the people, observing and assessing government projects and making government accountable and transparent in its total political engagements.

E-government increases resident's ability to have access to basic programmes of government and it also brings about openness in performing public functions. The scope of e-government in the local government system turns around the system of e-registration, e-participation, e-taxation, brings in the tools of e-mobilization, e-education, e-service delivery, e-feedback, e-policing, and e-

planning (Ade, 2020). The Covid-19 challenge in the world has made it possible that any organization, like the local government, that wants to achieve sustainable development must be ruined on e-platform; hence the benefits of e-government cannot be neglected. This is because, e-government creates awareness for the general local population in relation to activities such as immunization, vaccination, the process of civic education, a period/strategies of gathering of waste, identification of community development association in every neighbourhood, and making suggestions for the betterment of local government programmes and activities in the local government system.

Statement of the Problem

The contribution of e-government to staff performance in organizations all over the globe cannot be overemphasized. That is why scholars like Adah (2020) and Anadine (2020) recommend for digital system in organizations as a strategy to improve performance. However, the extent to which e-government have been implemented in Nigeria system, especially at the local government level is worrisome. This is as a result of the fact that many staff of organizations (local governments) are not ICT compliant and cannot effectively implement e-government even when it is introduced in their system. More so, the issue of low level of technology in the Nigerian system has negatively affected e-government implementation at the local government level. Here, there exists unsteady power supply, lack of indigenous technology, high level of network fluctuation, lack of network access in some rural areas and many others. Moreover, one of the challenges affecting effective e-government implementation in Nigerian local government is corruption.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study focused on e-government and staff performance in local government system: a study of selected local government areas in Imo State, Nigeria**.** The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the relationship between lack of implementation of ICT policy and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State.
2. To examine the extent to which staff ICT compliance affects staff performance in the local governments in Imo State.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were constructed for the study.

1. What is the relationship between lack of ICT policy and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State?
2. What is the relationship between poor staff ICT compliance and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State?

Hypotheses

The following Hypotheses were adopted to guide the study:

H_{o1}: There is no significant relationship between lack of ICT policy and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State.

H_{o2}: There is no significant relationship between poor staff ICT compliance and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State.

Review of Related Literature

(a) E-Government

The concept of e-government has been variously defined. According to Shilubane (2011) e-government is the adoption of information communication technologies (ICTs) to convey public services, that is to say, the application of the internet to guarantee that services are carried out in a far more suitable, client oriented and cost efficient style. E-government embraces the process of adopting and exploring information technology to the process of running government activities in order to accomplish a Modest, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent (MMART) governance. Similarly, Ojo (2019), also perceives e-government as "the application of Information Communication Technology (ICT) by the government to increase accountability, establish consciousness and guarantees transparency in running and dealings of governmental organizations." He further stated that e- government can be seen as a political approach of government from which their undertakings can be showed to the public. E-government as asserted by Aneke et al (2019) is "the adoption of ICTs, and particularly the internet, to embrace a new notion and approach of governing and handling programmes where participation and usefulness are essential of all the partners connected in a network" (Misuraca, 2017).

The idea of "e-government" is well valued by putting side by side with the perception of e-governance goals in providing effective and efficient policy making and implementation process of the government. The application of e-government greatly assists the public institutions to use wired resources to embark on government businesses and the process of passing information with participants of the public. Furthermore, e-government provides all the processes of the government (vision, tactics, forecasting, headship and means) for safeguarding e-government in a state. Branen (2018) posits that e-government mainly centres on ensuring that the peoples partake in an ease means of accessing government services. Hence, the clumsy method of following administrative processes is avoided at all means. This means e-government is a vision that includes the distribution of information and communication technology by a number of government agencies and civil society in supporting the frequent involvement of the people in the governing and managerial process of political establishments (Naniki, 2021).

E-governance is the use of ICT to exercise political, economic and administrative authority towards managing the affairs of the state, which involves citizens' rights and

interest and participation. electronic governance is the application of information and communication technology (ICT) for delivering government services, exchange of information, communication on transaction, integration of various stand alone systems and services between government-to-customer (G2C), government-to-business (G2B), government-to-government (G2G) as well as back office processes and interaction within the entire government framework.

(b) Local Government

Njoku (2009) observed that local government is the third tier of government established to enhance development at the rural community level. According to Jide (2019) local government in the communal sense means people's political instrument to pri1cipate in resource allocation, distribution and power acquisition. Akpan in Effiom (2017, p. 87) describes local government "as the breaking down of the country into smaller units or localities for the purpose of administration in which the inhabitants of the different units or localities concerned play a direct and full part through their elected representatives who exercise powers and undertake functions under the general authority of the state or National Government". Looking at local government from its objectives, Odenigwe (2018) defined it as a system of Local Administration under which local communities and towns are organized to maintain law and order, and provide limited range of social services and public amenities and encourage co-operation and participation of the inhabitants in joint endeavours towards the improvement of their condition of living. Odenigwe's view revealed a partial support for local government service delivery.

This is because he wanted to see a community where people subject themselves to law and order that is peculiar to their environment, provide limited social services and public amenities through self help which of course would be realized through co-operation and participation of the inhabitants. Akpan (2017) in his definition sees local government as the breaking down a country into small units or localities for the administration in which the inhabitants of the various units or localities concerned play a direct and frill part or role through their elected representatives under the general authority of the National Government." It is glaring that Akpan's definition focused largely on the political value of local government and much less on the social and economic issues as it could be seen that he mentioned one unique element. On the aspect of development, Oladosun (2011) asserted that "local governments are potentially better placed than the state or federal government to provide to a large extent, the necessary social services such as basic education, roads, water supply, public utilities and other facilities on which the wellbeing of the whole nation depends, provided they receive the adequate genuine and whole hesitated support from the higher local government.

This is because of their familiarity with the local needs and intimate knowledge of the problems and aspiration of the local communities than any other levels of government.

(c) Staff Performance

There is no generally accepted conceptualization about staff performance. Staff performance is defined as how an employee fulfills their job duties and executes their required tasks (Ibe, 2019). It refers to the effectiveness, quality, and efficiency of employee output which results to organizational growth. Performance also contributes to our assessment of how valuable an employee is to the organization. According to Ade (2020) staff performance assesses whether a person performs a job well. Staff Performance is an important criterion for organizational outcomes and success. Staff performance is a key factor that contributes directly to the performance of the organization. Private and public organizations today with increased competition in their service and product offer are keen to boost employee performance in order to enhance their productivity and growth.

Major Benefits of E-Government on Staff Performance in Local Governments

E-government is one of the basic strategies of enhancing staff effectiveness, commitment, productivity and achievement of development objectives of the local governments (Effiom, 2017). For that, the impact of e-government of staff performance cannot be neglected. The adoption of e- government is expected to lead to effective government services becoming more available to citizens in a convenient, efficient and transparent manner. The three main target groups that can be distinguished in e-government concepts are local Government (public/ civil servants), citizens and businesses/interest groups. The impact of ICT in the world today cannot be over-emphasized because it enhances productivity, growth and business performance and it is clear that no country today can hope to be globally competitive without leveraging the power of ICT. In view of Igwe (2019) the Federal Government currently spends close to $1bn on ICT infrastructure and services per annum. However, this spend is in functional or Ministerial silos and largely skewed towards hardware purchases and ICT infrastructure. The realization that savings could be made if such infrastructure is shared by various MDAs led to the creation of Galaxy Backbone Ltd.

It is creditable to note that e-government "is not simply the only automation of a government system of running its businesses, but also a conviction in the capability of modern technology to accomplish great stages of improvement in several areas of the government activities and programmes, hence converting the nature of politics and the dealings between governments and the people" (Dada, 2016). The present situation of the world as a global system enlightens that administration changes its method of dealings and delivery of public services to the people. Diverse opinions abound as to why there should be a shift from longstanding public administration style of management. Some of the scholars for instance Pearce (2004), made the view that e-government and governance does not appear to improve other medium apart from the previous and traditional method

of collaboration and communication among the governments as their elements, relatively "it is a means and chance to engage modern means of technologies in providing a smooth process of revolution of government to an ideal and more suitable to the 21st era".

Alhabshi (2011) contended on her perspective on the benefits that e- government is an indispensable aspect of contemporary public administrative system. That the contemporary management of public administration is explicitly an approach of restructuring the effective procedures and efficient service delivery tools of government into a model of the style of private sector system of management which is extremely focused, inventive and cost operational as in contrast to the traditional and from the past public administrative style of management which is very much bureaucratic and incompetent in procedures and the modern pattern of service delivery within the public domain. In the view of Basu (2012) the development of the current technology, the growing application of the internet and the powers of globalization have released the frontlines of chances and problems of what has currently been recognized as the knowledge era. Local Government will not disregard the essential modifications that are affecting the lives of the people they worked for.

Certainly, these deviations are bound to have an effect upon the rules, arrangements, machineries and methods of governments as well. Moreover, e-government is a way for the governments to apply fresh modern technologies to offer the people with more suitable means of accessing information and services; to advance the quality of services and to afford better chances for the public involvement in ensuring responsible and accountable government. Government expands the value and the people's involvement and through electoral government and as well as the following ways.

- E-government supports people to have a stress-free say in local government business of the state.
- Through e-governance the people get enhanced services from the local government institutions.
- E-governance help people to have additional joined services ever since different government institutions are able to interconnect more effectively with each other.
- People will be better informed because they can get current and provide complete information about local government regulations, policies and efficient services

More also, e-government aids the government through lesser cost and enhanced effectiveness and value services, more active connections between the people and government, better productivity of government employees, expedite smooth system of transparency and accountability within the state workforce. Oye (2013) supported the issue and pattern of the benefits and justification of e-government and noted that:

> E-*government using ICT has had remarkable influence on our lives. We can do virtually nothing on or without ICT in our present day. The*

> *ICT business over the past years had led to the dramatic changes and growth in economic and social improvement around the world and has exposed better prospects for even faster development and changes than have already occurred. It has greatly helped to improve effectiveness in many segment and enlarged the capacity and quantity of outputs in virtually all parts of the various organizations ranging from industrialization to manufacturing, construction to modern activities of banking, the effective aspect of finance, modern health system, and current style of education, modern level of development assistance and the all-round level of government services (p.8).*

He also identified that:

> *E-government through ICT can be through electoral governance system back up the battle against corrupt practices by rising responsible and accountable life style through digital tracks, increase transparency by a means of disseminating guideline and charges, and helps to decrease face-to-face communication where utmost demand for inducements take place. ICT such as modern system of mobile phone, efficiently empower the people by tolerating people to collaboratively collect and share confirmation of corrupt practices (Oye, 2013).*

Akunyili (2010) in support of the gains from of e- government stressed that the use of information and communication technology to improve access to, and sending of modern government services for the advantage of all has improved government businesses. E-government to a large extend is the computerization or automation of current paper-based processes to increase access to, and the transfer of government services to the people. More essentially, its purpose is to help support governments determination towards competence and reboots governance and improved transparency for enhanced management of resources, for progress and improvement. E-government also targets at incorporating the various government ministries, departments, and agencies in a method that supports their on-line interface. E-government system provides the possibility of closer interactions, government to government, government to public services, government to citizens, and public services to citizens. Electronic governance as the utilization of information and communication technologies helps in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of government programmes, projects, and activities (Crowley, 2018).

E-government helps to deliver cost-effective and easy-to-access citizen services. It is the delivery of government services and information to the public using electronic channels

(Baidyabati Municipality, 2012). E-government is beneficial because it helps in using information and communication technologies (ICTs) at various levels of the government and the public sector and beyond, for the purpose of enhancing governance to the citizens (Bedi, 2021; Holmes, 2001; Palvia & Sharma, 2017). E-government is a set of "technology-mediated processes" that are changing both the delivery of public services and the broader interactions between the citizens and government. E-government is generally considered as a wider concept than e-government, since it can bring about a change in the way how citizens relate to governments and to each other (Maswood, 2000). In the view of Akbar (2004), e- government helps in the computerization and automation of common government processes with the goal of lowering costs, improving efficiency and generally providing better services to citizens which helps to implement the policies of government (Ojo cited in Ikebu, 2018, p.78). The benefit derived in implementing e-governance is to increase good governance.

Backus (2011) buttressed the importance that e-governance helps in the arrangement of procedures and structures. It includes the application of various kinds of ICTs covering from the modern internet to the World Wide Web to mobile internet system., It is intended at making government to function and run more resourcefully, effectually, transparently and accountable, It is employed in the connection among government establishments and the people, or business companies, or other government and levels of government. More also, e-governance guarantees that the people and customers of government obtain supreme in their dealing with government, It is an innovative tool in governance that promises timeliness and durable and enduring accountable government, It spread over hardware, software system ,modern system of internet and other ICTs to provide effective and efficient governance, e-governance is a political approach engaged through the use of the modern ICTs to showcase the activities of modern system of government. Agrawal (2014) advanced that the use of e-government helps to form the hope of the people towards enhancing the people's involvement in the governmental sectors. The sharing of information by the people always remains secured and the utmost privacy of the people are also protected through its implementation strategies.

He further said the efficacy and benefit of the application of the e-governance platform includes an essential role in business transaction and actions, help to reduce government red-tapism, corrupt practices and provides direct services to the people, it help people to attain different policies of government that would help to achieve effective and well-organized service delivery within the frame of government policy making process and e-governance help to provide effective confidentiality, uprightness , accessibility and obedience to service.

Empirical review

Lawan and Muhammad (2018) focused on e-governance opportunity for Nigerian university's administration. Survey research design was adopted, and questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The data collected were analyzed using simple

percentage and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The findings revealed that e-government promotes accountability, simplicity, accuracy and reduces corruption. It recommends that, the university authorities and the government of Nigeria must address its infrastructural defects such as instability in the power sector and poor manpower expertise as well as embarking on efficient and effective training of staff and students concerned.

Adah (2020) focused on the status and nature of e-governance in Nigeria. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher employed survey research design. Questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and hypotheses tested using chi-square. It was discovered that the emerging growth of ICT in Nigeria has not effectively influenced the development of its e-governance status due to numerous challenges such as the unwillingness on the part of the government to ensure a two way communication pattern in the governing process. One of the suggestions proffered by the paper is that Nigeria and other Sub-Saharan countries should endeavour to keep abreast of new innovations which would aid in the speedy growth of e-governance in the region.

Aneke, Bakht and Desta (2019) studied challenges to e-government implementation in developing countries using the Nigeria case. The study employed structural functional theory to analyze the subject matter. Survey research design was used for the study, and Nigerians in Tai LGA of Rivers State made up the population from where 87 people were sampled. Questionnaire served as the instrument of data collection (73 of the questionnaires were properly filled and returned). The data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and chi-square. The result revealed that e-government promises lots of advantage in governance process but at the same time requires efforts for changing process, building infrastructures, capacity enhancement etc. Employing e-government to improve efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery in government structures is one facet of economic sustainability. However, the introduction of e-government is about a radical change and reengineering within government agencies and the relationship between government and its citizens.

Ade (2020) focused on e-governance and organizational effectiveness in selected public sector institutions in Edo State. The population covered 500 staff in the Ministry of Education, Works and Agriculture in the state from where 300 were sampled. The study used survey method through interview and data were analyzed using mean and t-test. It discovered that e-governance promote organizational productivity and performance. He recommends for improved implementation of e-governance.

Anadine (2020) focused on e-governance implementation and government policy effectiveness in Accra, Ghana 2010 – 2015. 15 heads of parastatals were used as both population and sample. The study used ex-post facto method and data were collected were analyzed using regression statistics and SPSS. It discovered that e-governance has

contributed in promoting effective policy implementation within the year under study. But, infrastructural deficiency still affects e-governance viability. He recommends for improved infrastructure.

Ibe (2019) wrote on strategies for improving staff performance in the local government system using Izii local government area of Ebonyi State. The population is made up of the entire 190 in the local government. The study used survey method and data were collected through questionnaire and analyzed using mean statistics. The study discovered that staff training and development, provision of needed working tools, and improved remuneration are the solution for staff performance. The study recommends for improved training, remuneration and working tools.

Mbakuzie (2018) wrote on local government administration and employee performance using Aniocha local government area in Delta State as the focal point. The study population covered the entire 271 staff in the local government. Survey, questionnaire and simple percentage were employed in the work. The study discovered that there is low level of employee performance in the local government. The work recommends for improved reorientation of staff to enhance performance.

Naniki (2021) analyzed staff development programmes and staff performance in rural government in Serrie Leon. The population of public officers in the community government which is 83 were used. The study used survey method and data were analyzed using percentage and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The instrumentation is based on telephone interview. The work discovered that staff development programmes like conferences and workshop are the panacea for improved performance in government institutions. The work recommends for regular training for staff.

Gap in Literature

Some studies have been in related areas of the work as you can see in our empirical review. However, the past studies did not cover the exact topic of this work. The research could be established on subject scope (ie, e-government and staff performance), geographical location of the work, and indices in the objectives.

Theoretical Framework

Task-Technology Fit Theory

The task-technology fit theory was developed by Goodhue and Thompson in 1995 and further expanded by the research conducted by Zigurs and Buckland in 1998. The work of Goodhue and Thompson (1995) focused on individual use of Information System (IS) and presented a primarily positivistic research approach applicable to IS in general while that of Zigurs and Buckland (1998) focused on groups use of IS and formulated fit profile applicable specifically to Group Support System (GSS) (Gebauer, Show & Gribbins, 2006 as cited in Iheanacho, 2018). The Task-Technology Fit (TTF) theory holds that IT is more

likely to have a positive impact on individual performance and be used if the capabilities of the IT match the tasks that the user must perform. Task-technology-fit theory seeks to explain and predict the use of and outcomes associated with technologies designed to accomplish tasks. Task-technology-fit theory posits that a technology which is well-suited for a given task will be used more often and will yield better outcomes than a technology which is poorly-suited for the task.

The theory holds that the use of Information Technology (IT) is more likely to have a positive impact on individuals' performance and be used if the capabilities of the IT match the tasks that the user must perform (Iheanacho, 2018). Therefore, individuals or employees will realize high performance if the technology they adopt or use fit or relevant to the task they perform. Proper utilization of ICT or IT that fits to a particular tasks, will lead to better performance in an organization. Even though such technologies or IT is required or suited for such task, such technology must be utilized and fit the task in order to have a performance impact (Iheanacho, 2018). This theory argued that technology plays a key role in affecting individual impact and performance in the use of information system. An information system must be both utilized and fit the task it supported in order to have a positive impact on performance (Irick, 2008 as cited in Iheanacho, 2018).

Relevance/Application of the Theory

This theory is relevant to this study because it enable us to explain if the performance of local government staff in Imo State is determine by appropriate use of technology that is suitable for their task. If such available technology is not suitable and inadequately utilized, it will not improved on staff performance towards delivering services to the public. The local government staff in Imo State are assigned several tasks to performance which must be in line to the realization of constitutional role of the local government in Nigeria. So, there is need for adequate use of modern technologies in order to effectively perform each task which may be in area of collection of rates, licences, establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, proper regulation of slaughter houses, construction and maintenance of feeder roads, naming of roads and streets, registration of birth, death and marriages etc. If such technology utilized does not fit to the require task, the staff of local government will not perform their assigned responsibility effectively and efficiently.

Information technology has revolutionized how we interact with people of different categories. Thus, the relevance of this theory cannot be overemphasized. The theory focuses attention on specific issues which include task, fit and technology. This implies that the task which is the functions of employees or their specific duties determines the type of technology to be used in accomplishment of organizational goals. In this direction, the achievement of the objective of employees in the local government in Imo State determines the application of the required fitted technology which will enhance the performance of employees. In the work environment (like the local government under study in Imo State), the task include administrative, financial, educational, human

relations and community relation functions. If the above task must be well accomplished, the local government staff must be very effective in performing its functions. And such functions can be well performed if the required technology that fit the job are brought into use and such technologies are the e-government instrument. Such e-government instrument for such work may include the application of modern telecommunication, improved power supply provision of modern office ICT facilities which include computer system/laptop and many other ICT facilities.

The goal of the above instrument or facilities is to enhance e-government and to achieve improved staff performance. More so, the goal of the local government can be achieved when the local government staff are well trained and developed on the utilization of such fitted technologies. The need for the above is to achieve improve performance of staff and overall organizational improvement as it concerns productivity, industrial harmony, positive organizational relations/its environments and overall employee positive commitment to duty. Therefore, task fit technological theory is very relevant for this study. Theories of technology adoption propose that the better an information technology fits the task environment (TTF), the more motivated potential users will be to adopt it.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design that is employed in this study is the survey design. In view of Asika (2008) survey is a research method which focuses on the use of primary data.

Population of the Study

The study population covered the entire staff in the organization or area of study (Nnamocha, 2005). The population of this study is 3275. It covers the entire civil servants and political executive in Owerri Municipal, Owerri North, Orlu, Ideato Noth, Okigwe and Isiala-Mbano Local Government Areas of Imo State (i.e. two local governments each from the three Senatorial Zones in Imo State). The above Local governments were used because they are more developed and are in position to give information on e-governance. The local governments and their population distribution (for staff and political executive) are stated in the table below:

Table 1: Population of staff in selected local governments in Imo State.

S/N	Selected Local Governments in Imo State	Number of Political Executive	Number of Career Staff (Public Servants)	Total
1	Owerri Municipal	49	667	716
2	Owerri North	44	585	629
3	Orlu	41	499	540
4	Ideato North	33	409	442
5	Okigwe	31	379	410
6	Isiala-Mbano	43	495	538
	Total	**241**	**3034**	**3275**

Source: Local Government Service Commission, Imo State, 2021.

Sample Size

The sample size is 357. The researcher used the Taro Yamane method to practically determine the sample size. It is applied thus:

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

Where N = The total population / Population

n = The sample size required

e = Level of sig.

1 = Constant

$$\therefore \quad n = \frac{3275}{1 + 3275 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3275}{1 + 8.1875}$$

$$\cong 357$$

Sampling Technique

The sampling technique that was applied in selecting the sample is simple random sampling technique.

Research Instrument

Questionnaire was the major source. Anyanwu, (2000), points out that questionnaire is a printed list of questions to be answered by a number of people especially as part of a survey research. Questionnaire is the list of questions framed from the research questions, objectives and hypotheses and focused on addressing the problem of the research. The questionnaires have two sections,

Validation of the Instruments

The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation. In doing that, the initial draft of the instruments besides the supervisors, was given to some experts who after scrutiny, suggested corrections that were included on the final copy that were administered on the respondents.

Reliability of the Instruments

In order to determine the consistency of the instrument, test/retest exercise was carried out by the researcher. This is to ascertain the reliability of the research instrument. The instrument was first administered on 20 staff in Umuahia North and South local governments of Abia State. After a period of three weeks, it was re-administered.

Method of Data Analysis

Anyanwu (2000) defined data analysis as the conversion of raw data into usable information. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentage, and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient – PPMCC- (at 0.05% level of significance) through SPSS version 21.0. Here, simple percentage and Bar Chart were used to analyze the demographic variables (personal information of the respondents), and thematic issues of the study (based on the research questions and hypotheses). The hypotheses were tested using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient – PPMCC- (at 0.05% level of significance) through SPSS version 21.0.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Out of the 357 copies of questionnaire distributed to the sampled population, only 340 were properly filled, returned and used.

Testing of Hypotheses

Restatement of Hypothesis One

H_{o1}: There is no significant relationship between lack of ICT policy and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State.

H1	**There is significant relationship between lack of ICT policy and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State**	**Pearson Correlation = 0.84** **Sig = 0.05** **N = 340**	VALID

The table above shows that the Pearson product moment correlation is 0.84 which indicates that there is significant relationship between there is significant relationship between lack of ICT policy and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State.

Restatement of Hypothesis two

H_{o2}: There is no significant relationship between poor staff ICT compliance and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State.

H2	**There is significant relationship between staff ICT compliance and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State**	**Pearson Correlation = 0.84** **Sig = 0.05** **N = 340**	VALID

From the table above, the Pearson correlation is 0.84. It means there is significant relationship between staff ICT compliance and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State.

Discussions of Findings

Test of hypothesis one revealed that there is significant relationship between lack of ICT policy and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State. This indicates the need for proper policy action for improved e-government and staff performance. In view of Amaechi (2016), a policy is a statement of intent and is implemented as a procedure in organization. Here, policy is seen as organizational affairs. Seeing policy as a practical and realistic plan of action, and guiding principle, Anderson (1979) cited in Okereke (2003) opines that "policy should designate what is actually done rather than what is proposed in the way of action on some matters". As it concerns organization, a policy is the principle by which organization is guided. Since this work is on e-government in local government, our concern about policy is focused on public policy. According to Okereke (2003) public policy refers to those definite acts or actions of government, geared toward the fulfillment of the obligations of government on the citizens, that is, the maintenance of law and order, and the provision of necessary social and economic facilities needed for an enhanced standard of living of the people. Public policy is usually organized around programs and the strategies to be adopted for its implementation towards the achievement of the stated objectives are also usually outlined. Therefore, lack of proper policy for the effectiveness of e-government hinders e-government implementation. In view of Abah & Nwokwu (2019), there exist no clear cut policy which promote effective provision and utilization of e-governance platforms, and that is the basic reason for its neglect.

Test of hypothesis two showed that there is significant relationship between staff ICT compliance and staff performance in the local governments in Imo State. Here, poor employee compliance is based on poor ICT knowledge and training. According to Ozioko (2015), the basic building block of Information Technology (IT) industries is the skilled and semi-skilled manpower with basic skills for operating computers, using elementary functions of standard software. It includes the ability to make use of computer networks, in particular the Internet; and access the resources available through them. This requirement is true for local government staff using these technological tools in their service delivery. In this case, there is need for training of employee to be ICT effective (Ibe, 2019). Staff training is a venture when embarked upon will bring about acquisition of better skills and competencies on the part of employees and will ultimately lead to the overall effective performance of the organization. However, there are a number of problems usually associated with staff ICT training: training is often haphazardly done and not well planned and coordinated, lacks employee needs analysis, lacks proper funding, poor sponsorship, selection for training is not always objective while training programmes may be inadequate and not sound enough (Ozioko, 2015). Any organization that toys with its staff training is perhaps, putting at risk the realization of its goals and objectives. Thus, it is necessary to evolve new and better strategies to improve staff needs and training and e-governance compliance. In view of Mbakuzie (2018), some of the

strategies that can be employed include: employment of more qualified staff, adequate support for training in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for both professional and para-professional staff, adequate professional training, adequate support for formal education training programmes leading to award of certificates, employment of ICT specialists, adequate training in cataloguing and classification, and adequate funding.

Conclusion

This study has examined e-government and staff performance in Imo State local government system using selected local governments in the state as the study unit. With growing computerization and increased internet connectivity, this process has now reached a stage where more and more users are motivated to change their ways of doing things in order to harness the advantages of e-technological innovation. In government organizations like local governments, the coming together of computerization and internet connectivity (e-government)in association with the process of reengineering, promises better processing of information leading to effective decision making and implementation in the various government sectors, wider coverage, accountability, better utilization of resources and overall good governance within the agencies of local government.

More so, if well implemented, e-government can increase resident's ability to have access to basic programmes of government and it also brings about openness in performing public functions. In this case, scope of e-government in the local government system turns around the system of e-registration, e-participation, e-taxation, brings in the tools of e-mobilization, e-education, e-service delivery, e-feedback, e-policing, and e-planning. More so, e-government creates awareness for the general local population in relation to activities such as immunization, vaccination, the process of civic education, a period/strategies of gathering of waste, identification of community development association in every neighbourhood, and making suggestions for the betterment of local government programmes and activities in the local government system. E-government in the local government as an innovation is the use of information and communication technologies to the practice of government functioning in order to accomplish modest responsible, built-up and transparent governance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made.

1. The government should make favorable ICT policies, which will add positive values to e-government and improve staff performance in the local government.
2. There is need for regular in-service training for local government employees on ICT so as to enhance their staff compliance and utilization of e-government in the local government.

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