

## ASSESSING THE NEED FOR MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** Ekwusigo local government council is a bureaucratic organization that ought to implement essential public policies while maintaining professionalism and other attributes of bureaucracy. However, poor staff training and development culture affected this function. The specific objective of this research was to identify the necessary strategies for effective manpower training in Ekwusigo local government council of Anambra State, Nigeria. The research adopted survey research design. The research submitted that the purpose of manpower training in Ekwusigo local government area should center on improving quality of workforce, improving employee growth, preventing obsolescence, assisting new comer, bridging the gap between planning and implementation, enhancement of health and safety measures, and increasing workers morale cum enthusiasm. Regarding the specific objective, result shows that the appropriate strategies towards manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council are significant. In conclusion, the findings predicate that the optimal performance of Ekwusigo local government is dependent upon the adoption of these identified strategies for training and re-training of the council's employees. It recommended that manpower development should be encouraged by the council leadership for the members of staff of Ekwusigo local government council.

**Keywords:** Manpower Development; Human Resource Planning, Local Government; Quality Education; Qualitative Data Analysis;

### Introduction

No organization will perform optimally when there are no efficient human resources (Chioke & Mbamalu, 2020), because human beings are the epicenter of an organization (Ebeofor and Nnaji, 2022), the active agents in charge of accumulating capital, exploiting the natural resources, building socioeconomic and political organizations (Adeyeye, 2015) and human capital constitutes the most crucial of all resources. Since, human resource (HR) are the most important resources, it becomes imperative to agree that there is a “significant correlation exists between human capital development cum employee performance

(Chioke, Abasili, Okeke, Mbamalu, Ibe & Odidika, 2023).” What this means is that the development of HR will positively influence employee performance in an organization. It is however unfortunate that this essential organizational factor is lacking in quality at the grassroots of component units in Nigeria. Empirical literature pictured that Nigeria is endowed with enormous natural and human resources (Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu, 2019), but where there is no well-trained manpower to tap and put them into effective use these resources will be unexploited (Nwokwu, Aloysius & Nwoba, 2018) especially at the local government level. It is on record that no organization can perform effectively without efficient human resources (Chioke & Mbamalu, 2020). Similarly, organizations find it difficult to deliver when a worker did not receive regular training (Ohaeri & Chukwu, 2016). In other words, staff training is crucial to the effectiveness of an organization (Ibid). In Nigeria, public enterprises, companies cum government agencies do not have manpower with needed technical knowhow (Chioke & Mbamalu, 2020). These issues appear to be worse in Ekwusigo local government area (LGA) where there is no adequate well trained manpower to pilot the routine activities of the grassroots government.

For the fact that local government serves as a training field (Agbodike, Igbokwe-Ibeto, and Nkah, 2014), the issue of manpower development should not be neglected. Ekwusigo local government council is a bureaucratic organization that ought to implement essential public policies while maintaining professionalism and other attributes of bureaucracy. However, the reverse has for long been the case as a result of the poor staff training and development culture of the council. To this end, the specific objective of this paper is to identify the necessary strategies for effective manpower training and adoption in Ekwusigo local government council. On bureaucracy, Idike, Ukeje, Iwuala, Onele, Ekwunife, Nwachukwu and Udu (2019) pointed out that, “Bureaucracy is a body of non-elective government officials or an administrative policy-making group. It is associated with professionalism, merit-based orientation and rule system. Provision of essential public services via implementation of government programs and policies is the essence of public bureaucracies.” Then, why do organizations like Ekwusigo local government need manpower? Basically, Chioke and Mbamalu (2020, p.387) may have provided an insight on this when they opined that, “The principal purpose of acquiring human resources in any organization is to aid the actualization of organizational objectives.” However, to provide adequate answers to this research problem, the specific purpose of this paper includes interrogating the strategies for manpower development at the grassroots level of Anambra State with specific reference to Ekwusigo local government council. On this note, the research question is: What the appropriate strategies towards manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council? The following null hypothesis was tested: The appropriate strategies towards manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council are not significant.

### **Local Government and Manpower Development: A Literature Review**

Defining local government has not been easy. Fatile & Adejuwon (2017) argued that local government has been conceived and constituted in different ways, depending on the orientation of the scholar. Olisa, Okoli and Nwabufu (1990, p.93) defined local government as the level of government below the central, regional or state government... According to Awofeso (2006), local government represents the governing body or administrative units empowered to govern the affairs of people in a definite locality. Recently, Chioke (2022)

observed that local government is any organized leadership/governance championed by adopting local personnel for harnessing material resources as well as human capital development at the grassroots level. Commenting further, Awofeso (2006) stated that the governing body can either be elected or appointed. Local government is a system of local administration instituted to maintain law and order, provide a limited range of social amenities and encourage co-operation and participation of inhabitants towards the improvement of their conditions of living (Emezi, 1984).

In Nigeria, the government had contextualized local government. Accordingly, 1976 Local Government Reform conceived local government as the government at the local level exercised via representative councils established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas. As opined by Wraith (1964) local government means decentralizing power. Local government as defined by Lawal (2000) is the tier of government that is saddled with powers to control the affairs of people in its domain. The onus lies on local government to provide such services as portable water, rural electricity, health centers, roads networks, schools and their maintenance, etc (Amoke, 2020). Local government entails the breaking of a country into small units for convenient administration wherein the people of that area play part in the election or appointment of the representatives that will exercise power on their behalf in relation to the powers the central government conferred on them (Nnamani, Okeke, Nduba & Oforma, 2019). Local government can also be viewed as a legal personality with sufficient but limited powers of control over its staff, finances, and funds (Michael, 2013). Importantly, “the major focus of local government is the transformation of material resources of local people and the development of human capital for participation in politics and contribution towards organizational goals as well as the overall sustainable national development (Chioke, 2022, p.47).” It is at this point that we take a break to bring to the fore perspectives on the conceptual framework of manpower development.

Manpower development and human resource development are usually used interchangeably. Onyekwelu and Nwoke (2021) submitted that staff training or manpower development is as old as man civilization. Manpower development as conceived by Diejomaoh (1978) is the totality of the skill, energies, knowledge as well as the experience available in a country. Manpower development includes the managerial, engineering, scientific, craftsmen technical and other skills that are used in designing, creating, developing organizations, managing cum operating productive cum service establishments and economic institutions (Yesufu, 1962). Addressing the conceptualization of manpower development, Obi, Nwobi and Chukwurah (2021) opined that employee training, performance management and development, employee career development, mentoring, coaching, succession planning, tuition aid, key employee identification, and organizational growth are examples of manpower development.

Manpower development has been identified as encompassing both State as well as organizational efforts (Omodia, 2009). This implies that manpower development programs and efforts are not the exclusive domain of any particular entity. In other words, government and organizations are involved in the business of manpower development. However, to a great extent, political corruption hinders effective training programs for employees of the local government. For example, it has been found that most funds meant for the training of employees of Enugu State Local Government Service Commission were embezzled by political office holders cum other senior officers (Ohaeri & Chukwu, 2016).

This suggests that the funds of local government areas of different states instead of being used for the purpose it was meant for (Ohaeri and Chukwu, 2016) are diverted for other unjust course.

### **Empirical Review of Related Studies**

Madubueze, Ananti, Onyekwelu and Okpalibekwe (2015) examined whether or not the selection of staff for training are based on merit and the effectiveness of the trained manpower towards enhancing the organizational performance of Local Government System in Nigeria regarding Ayamelum Local Government. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. Findings showed that: selection of staff for training are not the true reflection of actual manpower training needs of the council; the selection of staff for training are not based on merit; and the trained manpower are not properly placed in areas that will enhance their acquired skill.

Ebeofor and Nnaji (2022) examined human capital development and employee service delivery in ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Matters Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted in carrying out this study. Their study revealed that the study identified that in-service training, staff workshops and conferences and supervisor orientations have significant effect on employee service delivery in the ministry of local government and chieftaincy matters Awka, Anambra state. It concluded that human capital development is an indispensable tool for the survival of organizations in modern times.

Wilson & Asiegbu (2020) research on human capital development and local government administration: A case of Emouha local government council of rivers state, Nigeria. Specifically, Wilson and Asiegbu investigated the level at which human capitals directly impact on local government administration. In investigating this, they employed survey design and purposive sampling technique. Primary and secondary sources were used to generate data for the study. They raised ten (10) questionnaire items and administered 160 questionnaires to workers of the local government. The findings posit that effective human capital development improves the administrative system of Emouha Local Government Council; and human capital development has significant impact on the administration of Emouha Local Government.

Chioke, Umeokafor and Mbamalu (2020) carried out a research on, local government autonomy and rural development: imperative issues and challenges bedeviling local governments in southeast geopolitical zone, Nigeria. These researchers having adopted survey research design for their study specifically set out to investigate if local government areas in South-East geopolitical contributed to the rural development of the areas that make up those local governments and why Local Government has not lived up to expectations despite its relative autonomy. A total of hundred and twenty seven (127) respondents from this zone formed the sample for this study. The study reveals that local government areas in South-East geopolitical zone have no autonomy in practical terms and consequently did not contribute to the rural development of the areas that make up local government areas of South-East geopolitical zone.

### ***Gap in Literature***

A lot of studies on local government have been carried out from different angles. In their study, Madubueze et al (2015) broadly examined manpower development from utilization perspective in Ayamelum Local Government Area, Anambra State. Ebeofor and Nnaji

(2022) did scratch the issue of human capital development as they narrowed their study to Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Matters Awka. The study done by Wilson & Asiegbu (2020) analyzed human capital development as it concerns the level at which human capitals affects local government administration. Chioke, Umeokafor and Mbamalu (2020) approached the issue of local government from autonomy perspective leaving a serious gap in the area of manpower development. However these studies paid no attention to the cardinal issue of strategies for achieving manpower development in Ekwusigo LGA. To the best of our knowledge there is no available previous research that was conducted in the scope of the current study with a view to examining the above fulcrum that drove this research.

### **Objectives of Manpower Development: What Ekwusigo Local Government Council Should Focus On**

Objectives according to Ohaeri and Chukwu (2016) refer to the benefits of a training program. The main concern of this section is to analytically portray what should be the purpose of human resource training in Ekwusigo local government area as a bureaucratic organization. Objectives of training/manpower development are the basic reasons why human resources of the organization are trained from time to time. Critical review of extant literature on this shows that there is no universally acclaimed objective of manpower development. Hence, scholars such as Amewudah (2012), Chioke & Mbamalu (2020), Herman and Kurt (2009), Kayode (2011), Pitfield (2013), and so on had in their studies provided useful insights on this. In the view of Amewudah (2012), objectives of manpower development are what employees would gain after successfully undergoing the training program. According to Pitfield (2013) the objectives of training include: the provision of the skills, knowledge and aptitudes required to undertake assigned job, increase efficiency and reduce physical risks. Herman and Kurt (2009) believe that these benefits include improved organizational performance (e.g., profitability, effectiveness, productivity, operating revenue per employee) as well as other outcomes that relate directly (e.g., reduced costs, improved quality and quantity) or indirectly (e.g. employee turnover, organization's reputation, social capital) to performance. However, for the sake of this paper's focus, we adopt the views of Kayode (2011) who categorically stated the objectives of manpower training. Based on this, the objectives of training as opined by Kayode (2011) in Ohaeri & Chukwu (2016, p.119) form the bases of our discussion vis-à-vis the need for manpower training in Ekwusigo local government area as follows:

*Improving the quality of workforce:* Quality of workforce is very important for organizational performance and employee service delivery. There is dire need for immediate improvement of the quality of the work force in Ekwusigo local government council. Ohaeri and Chukwu (2016) stated that the quality of work produced by the workforce of an organization can be improved through training programs. Hence, it must not be neglected in organizations like Ekwusigo local government council. In many organizations, especially Ekwusigo local government council, training is required for an employee to perform optimally. In respect of this, Ohaeri and Chukwu (2016) submitted that training is given in specific areas such as: marketing or HR, finance and this helps in enhancing the quality of work done in that particular area. Human resource technical knowhow is a vital ingredient that ensures organizational performance (Chioke & Mbamalu, 2020) as well as employee service delivery.

*Enhancing employee growth:* By attending training programs, employees are able to master the work of their jobs and grow professionally (Ohaeri & Chukwu, 2016). In this regard, employee growth is different from physical growth which entails increase in height. However, the problem with most organization is that they do not form specific objectives before sending their staff for training programs. Buttressing this, Truss (2004) argued that some organizations send their staff for training without identifying or knowing what their trainees would achieve at the end of the training program.

*Preventing obsolescence:* Although, Ekwusigo local government council is situated in a strategic location, the situation with respect to mode of operation and workers attitude to work is unprofessional and need for urgent attention is glaring. To salvage the situation, we agree with Ohaeri and Chukwu (2016) who contended that, training programs help employees to keep themselves up to date with the new trends in latest technology, which reduces the chances of termination of the job.

*Assisting new comer:* Employees of the local government must get acquainted with the nitty-gritty of their assignments before they can effectively fill the void in the local council. On this note, manpower training programs help new employees to adjust themselves in their new working environment, culture cum technology (Ohaeri & Chukwu, 2016). Regarding this, human resource development is the framework for helping employees develop their personal and organizational skills, abilities and knowledge (Heathfield, 2016). Considering this, newly employed staff of Ekwusigo local government council should be trained from time to time for complete mastery of the technological implements used for their routine functions. Manpower development/training provides avenue for the socialization of newly employed. Aside this, human capital is considered the major resource or capital of an organization and consequently, its training will improve its ability to coordinate and equally improve the other sources of capital in an organization (Ebefor & Nnaji, 2022).

*Bridging the gap between planning and implementation:* Planning means formulating policies and the means of executing them (Chioke, 2012), while implementation is about putting those plans into work. Ohaeri and Chukwu (2016) argues that training helps organizations to easily achieve their targets and goals. Employees know their job better and these employees deliver quality performance according to needs of top management and this accounts for the reason why organizations can easily execute their plans (Ohaeri & Chukwu, 2016). There is no way organizational goals and targets – what organizations actually planned for can be achieved with the development of proper curriculum for manpower training.

*Enhancement of health cum safety measures:* Training and development program clearly identifies and teaches employees about the different risk involved in their job, the different problems that can arise and how to prevent such problems (Ohaeri & Chukwu, 2016); especially at the grassroots of Ekwusigo local government area as the epicenter of this paper. This helps to improve the health and safety measures in the company (Ohaeri & Chukwu, 2016).

*Increasing workers morale cum enthusiasm:* Training programs often time, boost workers confidence and also gives the employees of the organization the needed high spirit to perform optimally (Ohaeri & Chukwu, 2016). In fact, we are of the view that the first thing that organization should do in order to increase the workers morale and enthusiasm is to send them on paid training programs.

### **Strategies for Actualizing Manpower Development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council**

There are two drivers of manpower planning: supply shortage as well as the need to improve labour utilization (Reilly, 1996). In this regard, manpower planning promotes smooth supply of employees without interruption (Benjamin & Anthony, 2014). There is shortage of well-trained manpower for the day-to-day public administration needs of Nigerian local government councils. To this end, this study projects the following strategies for effective manpower training and adoption in Ekwusigo local government council.

*Quality Education:* Quality education is also the process that ensures that an individual is transformed into a stakeholder/participant in the socioeconomic development of the society (Daura & Audu, 2015). Consequently, quality educational system from 21st century realities considers the dynamics of the labor market and its teeming population by equipping human resources with occupational skills that enable them become self-reliant for a better society (Chioke, Ukeje, Mbamalu & Oranekwu, 2023). The primary schools in Ekwusigo local government areas should be a nursery for breeding the crop of leaders that will take over the leadership of the council in future. However there is a serious impediment to this. In Nigeria, studies have equally confirmed that lack of Information Communications Technologies (ICTs) literacy among educators seriously affects the use of ICTs in schools (Aworanti, 2016) including those schools within Ekwusigo and its environs. Corroborating the short in the above regard, Shabiralyani, Hasan, Hamad and Iqbal (2015) stated that there are few educators that are trained in the use of ICTs across the globe. This entails that, “government at all levels should improve on the quality of education in order to produce skilled manpower (Nwokwu, et al, 2018, p.44)” that will effectively manage various activities in Ekwusigo local government area.

*Review of Curricula:* Training of manpower in various institutions of learning should be matched with labor market needs through careful review of our educational curricula to ensure relevance and currency (Nwokwu, et al, 2018, p.44). The review of educational curricula in Nigeria will affect human resource development across all sectors of the country and government at all levels. The curriculum review that will meet present needs is one that integrates technology into curriculum. The use of Information Communication Technologies for meeting the needs of the present age is noticeable in governance (Ekwunife, Ononiwu, Akpan & Sunday, 2021; Nnaji & Nri, 2022), Integrating technology into curriculum enhances higher-order thinking abilities or skills of the students (Koç, 2005).

*Human Resource Planning:* Indeed, the success of an organization depends on the competency of its leaders (Soebbing, Wicker & Weimar 2015) and as such, manpower planning remains paramount. This is because it specifies how much manpower are needed by organizations to reach their strategic goals (Armstrong, 2012). Part of the strategies for effective manpower development in the study area and beyond is human resource planning (HRP). In their study, Chioke and Mbamalu (2020) argued that, manpower planning is mostly the first step in the human resource management processes cum strategic business in an ideal establishment. The focus of human resource planning according to Vineeth (2019) is ensuring that the organization gets adequate human resources with the right skills, at the right time cum in the right places. It follows then that an effective manpower planning should be undertaken without politicization (Nwokwu, et al, 2018, p.44). Why do we need

human resource planning without politicization? This according to Nwokwu, et al (2018) will promote sound human resource development.

Merit System: Favoritism should not be mentioned in local government system especially when focusing on manpower training. Selection of human resources for development programs should be strictly on merit (Nwokwu, et al, 2018, p.44). Today local governments and other levels of government have been bedeviled by corruption and nepotism in the selection of staff for training. In this regard, Nwokwu, et al, (2018) advocated for the objective evaluation of eligible applicants so as to choose the ones that have training needs. However, the matter remains that even public services of local government, state as well as federal levels are bedeviled by corruption (Dauda, 2003) and this creates severe constraints that reduce labour morale and erode staff productivity (Uchendu, 1982).

#### Methodology

The paper adopted survey approach. Survey design is a system that uses instruments mostly questionnaire instrument to ascertain data concerning either animate or inanimate objects in a specified study area (Chioke, 2018). This method is preferred because it is quick, cost effective and information can be obtained directly from targeted individuals (Campanelli, 2008). However, data were collected through primary and secondary sources of data. In order to analyze the data collected, qualitative data analysis was used. The paper adequately reviewed literature on the subject matter so as to pinpoint the gap in literature. The research instrument was structured on a 5point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D) and Neutral (N) with the following points respectively: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. In order to establish internal consistency, the researchers administered the questionnaire on 15 respondents and their responses passed through Cronbach Alpha test. The reliability index  $\alpha$  result was = 0.75 indicating that instrument is reliable. Significantly, a total of 154 questionnaires was shared to the staff of the local government. However, 140 was returned, but 41 questionnaires were not correctly filled. Hence, the research was based 99 returned and correctly filled questionnaires.

#### Data Analysis Research Question 1: What are the appropriate strategies towards manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council?

Variables		Options							
S/N	Variables (Items)	SA	A	SD	D	U	$\Sigma fx$	X	Decision
1	Human resource planning would improve manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council.	40	2	15	23	19	318	3.21	Disagreed
2	Emphasis on practical knowledge is appropriate for enhancing manpower development in Ekwusigo local government council.	28	21	26	21	3	347	3.50	Agreed
3	Selection of employees for training based on merit would improve manpower development in Ekwusigo local government council.	6	67	20	5	1	369	3.72	Agreed
4	Investment in education is part of the appropriate strategies towards manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council.	62	8	7	20	2	405	4.09	Agreed



5	Periodic review of curriculum will positively affect manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council.	22	46	18	13	-	374	3.78	Agreed
6	Provision of quality education ensure that the local council will have skilful and well developed manpower.	34	29	17	7	12	363	3.67	Agreed
	Grand Total of Mean Score (X)							3.66	

Source: Field Data, 2023

Data from table above show that five out of the six listed items showed a mean score of 3.50 and above. Hence the respondents agreed that emphasis on practical knowledge is appropriate for enhancing manpower development in Ekwusigo local government council (3.50); selection of employees for training based on merit would improve manpower development in Ekwusigo local government council (3.72); investment in education is part of the appropriate strategies towards manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council (4.09); periodic review of curriculum will positively affect manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council (3.78); and that provision of quality education ensure that the local council will have skilful and well developed manpower (3.67). However, the respondents disagreed that Human resource planning would improve manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council (3.21).

### Test of Research Hypothesis

H01: The appropriate strategies towards manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council are not significant.

**Table 2: Chi-Square Test of appropriate strategies towards manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council**

	Df	$\chi^2$	$\chi^2_{\alpha}$	Sig.	Alpha Level	Decision
Pearson Chi-square	12	21.026	243.09	.000	.05	S, R
Number of Valid Cases		99				

Source: Field Survey

Keys: Df = degree of freedom (12);  $\chi^2$  = critical value (21.026);  $\chi^2_{\alpha}$  = chi-square calculated (243.09); Sig. = P-value (0.000);  $P < .05$ ; S = Significant, R= rejected

Table 2 shows a chi-square calculated value of 243.09 which is greater than the critical value of 21.03 at .05 level of significance and with 12 degree of freedom (i.e  $\chi^2_{\alpha} = 243.09 > 21.026$ ). The H0 is rejected. The study therefore accepted that the appropriate strategies towards manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council are significant.

### Discussion of Findings

Contrary to the finding that human resource planning without politicization will promote sound human resource development (Nwokwu, et al, 2018); the respondents with mean (3.21) disagreed with human resources planning as a strategy for improving manpower development in the study area. Thus, the implication of this finding is that the respondents did not perceive human resource planning as strategy for improving human resource development. The respondents merely perceived HR planning as specifying how the amount of personnel needed by organizations to reach their strategic goals (Armstrong, 2012). Since organizations in Nigeria suffer shortage of manpower (Chioke and Mbamalu,

2020), planning would ensure smooth supply of human resources without interruption (Benjamin & Anthony, 2014). This is the missing link in the perspective of the respondents in Ekwusigo Local Government Area. In addition, previous findings indicate that there is a correlation between human resource planning and organizational performance (Chioke and Mbamalu, 2020) and as such, we argue that Ekwusigo local government should adopt human resource planning as a strategy for improving manpower development. Given the mean (3.50), the respondents unanimously agreed that emphasis on practical knowledge is appropriate for enhancing manpower development in Ekwusigo local government council. This finding shows that emphasis on practical knowledge instead of Nigeria's traditional emphasis on test scores will make manpower development programs not to be bookish and incapable of translating into the quality manpower in Ekwusigo local government council. The implication of this finding is that practice of emphasizing test scores while neglecting technical know-how should be jettisoned. This is in line with Chioke (2022b) finding that emphasized the need for the woeful troubling education (manpower training) to be addressed so that human resources will acquire the high standard education needed to suit the demands of the changing local and global labour market. In lieu of the mean (3.78), the study approves that selection of employees for training based on merit would improve manpower development in Ekwusigo local government council. Supportively, selection of human resources for development programmes should be based on merit (Nwokwu, et al, 2018). The implication of this is that unethical practices in the selection of employees for training should not find expression in the local council. If the council must achieve its strategic targets then meritocracy should be the guiding principle. With mean (4.09), the respondents agreed with the fourth statement. The challenge to this is that public services of local government are bedeviled by corruption (Dauda, 2003) and this reduces labor morale and erode staff productivity (Uchendu, 1982). Seeing that quality of work produced by employees can be improved through training programs (Ohaeri and Chukwu, 2016), it is therefore important to bear in mind that pathways of achieving this is via investment in education at various local councils in the state and the study area in particular. Periodic review of curriculum will positively affect manpower development in Ekwusigo Local Government Council was also accepted by the respondents. Corroborating this finding, Nwokwu, et al (2018) stated that training of manpower in various institutions of learning should be done through careful review of educational curricula. The respondents lastly supported the fact that quality education improves manpower development in the local council under investigation. This finding is in line with previous studies which posited that government should improve the quality of education as a way of producing skilled manpower (Nwokwu, et al, 2018, p.44); and educational system should equip human resources with occupational skills that enable them become self-reliant for a better society (Chioke, et al, 2023).

#### *Implication of the Finding*

The study has its implication for practice. This study shows that the respondents (employees of Ekwusigo local government area) have no adequate knowledge regarding the significance of human resource planning in relation to employee training. It suffices to say that the local government area has limited or no HR practitioners and therefore needs to have well trained HR practitioners at its disposal for effective human resource management and resultant public service delivery. Thus, there should be a policy change in the recruitment and selection of employees of the local government council.

Additionally, the paper implies that organizational effectiveness in Ekwusigo local government area can only be achieved through intensive manpower training and development programs given to the staff irrespective of social status.

### **Conclusion**

The research has succeeded in using secondary source of data to provide answers to what should be the purpose (objectives) of manpower training in the local government area of Ekwusigo. On the specific goal, the research through survey identified the necessary strategies for effective manpower training in Ekwusigo local government council of Anambra State, Nigeria. Pertinently, we agree that the administrative structure for decentralization, national integration, and efficiency in governance at the grassroots is local government (Awasthi and Sanjay, 2002) and this credence that local government exists in order to fill a gap which the federal government cannot fill (Okoli, 2000) in terms of manpower development. But how far has Nigeria gone in ensuring proper decentralization of powers, efficiency and national integration through local government? Can a government with good intention as regards the above achieve this without well-developed manpower at the grassroots? Well, there is no way this can happen anywhere without well-developed manpower. Therefore, there is need for policy change at the grassroots as regards the crop of employees that local councils parade in various portfolios.

The findings predicate that the optimal performance of Ekwusigo local government is dependent upon the adoption of these identified strategies for training and re-training of the council's employees. It recommended that manpower development should be encouraged by the council leadership for the members of staff of Ekwusigo local government council. Again, we recommend that Administrators of the local council employ experienced HR practitioners to join the team of employees of the local government and encourage them to train other staff of the local government. This will ensure optimal service delivery at the local council.

### *Limitation of the Study*

This study has its limitation. The study was conducted in one local government area of Anambra State, Nigeria. The views of the employees of other local councils in the state was not considered during the study and this might have affected the finding regarding the first item in the cluster.

### *Suggestion for Further Research*

Based on the limitation, we suggest that other researchers should consider:

Expanding the scope of the study in subsequent studies.

Examining the views of human resource practitioners on the effect or correlation that exist between human resource planning and manpower development in a public sector.

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