STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA

AFEGBUA, Salami Issa (PhD)¹, OSAKEDE, Kehinde Ohiole(PhD)², NKOMAH, Barry Barisu³
 Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, Lagos State University, Ojo Lagos, Nigeria.¹

Orthodox University, CWD, United Kingdom²
 Lagos State University Ojo, Lagos State, Nigeria³.

DOI: 10.36108/ljerhrm/8102.01.0140

Abstract

This paper examined the structural challenges and local government development in Nigeria. Local governments system in Nigeria, has taken different forms from one period to the other. There were series of reforms in the Nigerian local government system aimed at addressing the structural deficiency inherent in the third tier of government in Nigerian federation. Suffice it to say that, the development of local government in Nigeria is almost becoming an illusion as local governments faced with multifarious structural challenges which serve as impediments to its development. The study that relied on secondary data sources through a comprehensive review of relevant literature on the subject of discussion. The paper identified constitutional crises, undue political interference amongst others as major constraints to local government development in Nigeria. The paper submits that there is need to restructure the present local government system in Nigeria by going back to multi-tier local government in the 1950's. Areas of contribution to its development were also identified and conclude that the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria should be amended to enable State Governments and the various State Houses of Assembly loosen their firm grip on the local governments in order to allow the local government authorities take initiative that will enhance its growth and development.

Keywords: Decentralization, development, devolution, local government and structure

1. Introduction

Local government system exists in every country with variations in its structures and functions. It operates under different arrangements based on the system of government in different nations. Some countries operate single-tier system, where one local government exercises all the powers and performs all the functions, others multi-tier structural framework, where two or more local governments share responsibilities for providing a range of services to the citizens in a defined area (George, 2010; Bamidele, 2013). Thus, whatever is the mode of government, local government has been essentially regarded as path to, and generator of national integration, administration and development (Arowolo, 2008). And the reasons for its creation anywhere in the world stems from the need to facilitate developments at the grassroots (Agba, Akwara, & Idu, 2013). Local government is not autonomous and this has affected and still affecting its effectiveness in service delivery in the country. The restructuring and provision of some level of roles, democratic existence and funding of local government administration began in 1976. The 1976 local government reform introduced a uniform system of local government administration throughout the country, recognized local government as third tier of government and granted financial and functional autonomy to local government administration in Nigeria (Agba, Akwara, & Idu, 2013; Ibok, 2014). The reform was a major departure from the previous practice of local government administration in Nigeria (Oviasuyi, Idada & Isiraojie, 2010). However, all the provisions of the 1976 reforms were incorporated into the 1979 and 1999 Constitution as amended which has structurally hindered the development of local government in Nigeria. The progress made in local government reforms in 1976 was virtually eclipsed in the early 1980s, when the authority vested by the 1979 constitution in the states to create local government led to proliferation of local governments. This had the perverse effects of both stressing the limited capacity for governance at the local government level and of intensifying the problem of sharing the limited resources among a vastly increased number of local governments. Moreover, the reform failed to address the issue of power separation between the arms of government as is typically the case in a Presidential system of government. It is against this background that this paper seen to critically examine the structural challenges and local government development in Nigeria. Obasi (2000) holds that the value of any research is determined by its contributions to the existing body of knowledge in the field of the study. This study will make contributions to the issues of structural challenges confronting local government development in Nigeria and how the Nigerian local government administration can be restructured to improved its performance and development.

The paper is organised into eight sections: introduction, literature review; discussions on theoretical orientation, the presentation of the nature and development of local government administration in Nigeria, x-ray of the reasons for the establishment of local governments in the country; section six discusses the various structures of local government in the country; seven explores the structural challenges of local government and the

development of local government system in Nigeria: a nexus ; section eight concludes and offer recommendations.

2. Literature Review

There is a consensus of opinion that the LG is an important and inevitable unit seen as the grass root level of government whether in a federal or unitary arrangement. In Nigeria, local government operates a single tier, while in Britain, USA, France and India are multi tiers. The United Nations Office for Public Administration quoted in Ola and Tonwe (2009), Ubani (2010), Achimugu, Stephen and Agboni (2013) defines local government as thus:

A political subdivision of a nation or (in a federal system) state, which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such as entity is elected or otherwise locally selected.

Chukwuemeka et al.(2014) as well as Whalen (1970) note that LG has the following characteristics including a given territory and population, an institutional structure. It is a separate legal identity, it has a range of powers and functions authorized by delegation from the appropriate central or intermediate legislature. Lastly, within the ambit of such delegation, autonomy is accorded within its sphere of jurisdiction and competence.

In addition, local government is seen as a system of government whereby the state allows the establishment of local units of government with powers and authority to make local decisions on matters that affect the local communities and to mobilize local resources for implementation or execution of the decisions made (Eboh and Diejomaoh, 2010).

Section 7(1) of the 1999 constitution observed that:

The system of local government by democratically elected local government council is under this constitution guaranteed and accordingly the Government of every state shall subject to Section 8 of this constitution ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finances and functions of such councils.

The concept of LG particularly in a federal arrangement like the USA and Nigeria is routed in decentralized authority and power from the central/regional government to the lower or grass root level (Youm & Feiock 2015). This in effect is to facilitate efficiency and administrative conveniences. According to Osaghae (1990), it means a system of dispersal of power from a central government to other units or agencies of government.

Local government is the system of political decentralization in which the power base of decision making is, to a great extent, not national but local. Within this system, functions are locally and directly executed by elected officials who have direct control over local affairs. It constitutes the most critical level of government at which the momentum to sustain national development can be created. To some countries in the third world, it is the only semblance of authority known beyond the traditional institution (Bello-Imam, 1996).

A local government is an institution whose operations address the needs and aspirations of the citizenry and also extends the administrative and political control to the community (Khalil, 2013). According to Lawal (2011), local government is that tier of government closest to the people and which is vested with certain powers to exercise control over the affairs of people in its domain. A local government council is expected to play the role of promoting the democratic ideals of a society and coordinating development programmes at the local level. It is also expected to serve as the basis of socioeconomic development in the locality. According to Appadorai (1975), local government is defined as government by popularly elected bodies charged with administration and executive duties in matters concerning the inhabitants of a particular district or place.

Orewa (1992) sees local government as the lowest unit of administration to whose laws and regulation the communities in a defined geographical area and with common social and political ties are subject. The implication of this is that, the territorial jurisdiction of the local government has to be clearly determined and defined to enable the residents of the local government aware of their civic and financial claim for the provision of service and for protection against health & hazard. According to him, local government is the product of decentralized administration. Decentralization per se refers to the arrangement by which the management of the public affairs of a country is shared by the central/State provincial and the local government in such a manner that the local

government is given reasonable scope to raise funds and to use its resource to provide a range of socio-economic services and establish programmes to enhance the welfare of those resident in its area of authority (Ola, 1984).

Theoretical Orientation

The paper adopts Structural- Functional theory to underpin the structural challenges and local government development in Nigeria. Structural-Functional theory is an important tool of investigation with predominantly sociological concept, applied by political scientists, particularly in the study of the nature/structure of government (Das & Choudhury, 2002). The theory revolves around the concepts of 'structure' and 'functions'. The former, according to Almond and Powell (1966) means 'the observable activities which make up a system'. The latter, is the 'contribution of some elements in a system to the maintenance of the system in a given state'. While functions deal with the consequences involving objectives as well as processes of the patterns of action, structures refer to those arrangements within the system which perform the functions (Das & Choudhury 2002).

In applying structural-functional analysis, Almond in Das & Choudhury (2002) holds that political system can be compared and ranked in terms of the manner in which the functions are performed. In fact, Varma (1996) maintains that Gabriel Almond would always like to approach an understanding of the structures within the political system through their functions. Each political system, according to Almond, has to perform certain functions, and it is on the basis of the efficiency with which a political system performs the function assigned to it that its stature in the scale of political development is determined.

The Structural Functional approach adopted in this study explains the Relationships among the various tiers of government in a federal system and how structurally the local Government had been hindered in term of its development. It assisted us studying local Government development, largely in terms of its structural deficiency and its interdependency on higher tiers of government. The local governments in Nigeria has not been performing its statutory functions due to structural challenges, these structural deficiency that had hindered or impeded its growth have not been addressed for meaning development to be noticed.

The Nature and Development of Local Government in Nigeria

Local government system has undergone three phases in Nigeria. These are: pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial phases. In the pre-colonial phase, different traditional systems of government existed which were to satisfy the political needs of the different ethnic groups at that time (Okoli, 2000). These traditional political systems were considered as a form of local government created by ethnic groups – Hausa/Fulani, Ibo, Yoruba, etc for the provision of social services to meet the needs of the people within their domains ((Agba, Akwara, & Idu, 2013).The structure of local government during the traditional periods were not uniform. Different regions had different structures of local government. The second phase was the establishment of Native Authority by the colonial government. It was meant to adapt to the structures of local government already in place by the various ethnic groups. According to Ukiwo (2006), the Native Authority was charged with the collection of taxes, maintenance of law and order, road construction and maintenance, and sanitary inspection, especially in township areas.

The third phase took effect from Nigeria's independence of 1960. This phase was characterized by a multi-tiered local government structure in the Eastern and Western regions where both elected and traditional elements were accommodated (Agagu, 2004). At this period different states operated different systems of local governance known as local administration that existed before Nigeria's independence in 1960. However, local government administration took a new dimension in 1976 local government reforms initiated by the Obasanjo led military government. The 1976 local government reforms introduced a uniform system of local government administration throughout the country. The reforms also introduced population criterion under which a local government could be created. Consequently, a population of within 150,000 to 800,000 was considered feasible for a local government. This was done to avoid the creation of non-viable local council and for easy accessibility. There was provision for elective positions having the chairmen as executive head of local government with supervisory councilors constituting the cabinet (Eboh & Diejomaoh, 2010).

The reform was a major departure from the previous practice of local government administration in Nigeria (Oviasuyi, 2010). It formed the foundation of the present-day local government system in Nigeria in terms of structure, composition, functions, finance and democratic existence. Thus the reform equipped local governments with political, administrative and fiscal capabilities for service delivery to rural communities (Idada & Isiraojie, 2010). Subsequently, the main tenets of the 1976 reform were incorporated in the 1979 Constitution and 301 local government areas were listed in the Constitution (Agba, Akwara, & Idu, 2013). The Babangida military government increased the number of local governments from 301 in 1976 to 453 in 1989, and 589 in 1991. The

Abacha regime also increased the number to 774 local government areas in 1996 (Ajayi, 2000) quoted in (Agba, Akwara, & Idu, 2013).

Defects of the 1976 Local Government Reform

The 1976 Local Government Reform had some anomalies which made the reform not to survive for a long time before amendments were made. Some of these defects are as follows:

1. Uniformity and standardization: The population of the local government should range between 150, 000 to 8,000. This did not make for efficiency and effectiveness of the councils.
2. The objective of bringing government closer to the people was largely defeated by the large size of some LGAs e.g Epe Local Government Area covered about half of the size of the whole of Lagos State, yet it was then one local government.
3. Because the Federal Government set the limit to the number of council wards and councilors that could be elected within an LGA, some of the wards in the LGAs were excessively large and therefore out of touch with the electorates.
4. Some of the States Local Government Edicts grouped together communities with little or nothing in common both in out-look, culture and other requirements with the result that such areas witnessed incessant disagreements and instability
5. Grouping of un-identical villages or communities with a view to getting the required minimum population of 150,000 per LGA. Similarly, some towns and villages which were geographically contiguous and therefore, similar in their outlook and ways of life were split between two LGAs because of their large size and population stipulation of 800,000 (Aransi, Borisade & Olaopa, 2006)

The 1976 local government reform was also modified and enshrined in the 1999 constitution of Nigeria. The 1999 constitution ensures that the local government consolidates the tripartite system of government (made up of executive, legislature and judiciary) at grassroots level (Eboh & Diejomaoh, 2010). Executive powers are vested in the chairman, vice chairman, supervisor or supervisory councilors, as well as the structure of local government bureaucracy. The legislative functions are meant to be performed by the councilors, who represent the wards which make up the Local Government Area. The judiciary on the other hand, is streamlined with the federal and state and the local government can avail itself of the judicial process available to it (Eboh & Diejomaoh, 2010).

At present, Nigeria is a federation comprising three tiers of government -the federal government, 36 state governments, federal capital territory (FCT) and 774 local governments (Eboh & Diejomaoh, 2010). As such, the local government system in Nigeria operates within the “presidential model”. The Chairman of the local government area is directly elected by electorates in the local government area, and governs in collaboration with the legislative arm of the local government. Local council members are also elected from single member wards (i.e. districts). The term of both the chairman and council of the local government areas is currently three years, but varies from state to state, depending on what has been legislated by the State House of Assembly (Eboh & Diejomaoh, 2010).

Reasons for the Establishment of Local Government

According to Aigbakoba and Ogbonna (2004), a lot of reasons have been given for the creation of local governments in Nigeria which range from political, social and economic reasons. The following are seen as the purpose for the creation of local governments in Nigeria.

- (1) For Administrative Convenience: Local government serves as a channel through which policies and programmes from the state and federal government are communicated and implemented. This is because there are many functions that will be cumbersome for the state and federal governments to perform because of the distance separating them and the people, e.g: (a) Collection of rates, radio and television licenses; (b) Registration of births, deaths and marriages registry etc. The local government was also created to serve as the representative of both the federal and state governments amongst the local people. It is a channel through which policies are communicated and implemented (Aigbakoba & Ogbonna, 2004).
- (2) To Bring Governance Closer to the People: Local government functions to bring democracy to the local citizens as well as to educate and socialize them politically; participation of the citizens in governance is one of the underlying precepts of democracy. Due to the vast nature of the country (Nigeria), the presence of governments whether at the federal or state levels was not well felt by the people, and this led to neglect and distrust of government by the people. In a bid to bring the activities of government closer to the people, local

governments were created to serve as conduits through which government's policies are communicated to the people (Aigbakoba & Ogbonna, 2004).

- (3) **To Ensure That Resources are Effectively Mobilized:** This is to arouse in the citizens the zeal or willingness to contribute financially, materially and morally to the management of local affairs. Local governments are created to bring about meaningful development in the rural areas through the effective mobilization of resources. Local government use the funds made available to it by both federal and state governments and their internally generated revenue to improve on the lives of the people within their areas of operations (Aghayere, 1997).
- (4) **To Preserve Heritage and Common Interest of the People:** In Nigeria today, there are over 364 ethnic groups with diverse cultures and tongues. These ethnic groups are further divided into communities. These communities form the constituents/areas of local governments in Nigeria. By carving out local governments from amongst people of the same community, government is preserving such long traditional associations and using same to foster the interest of the people concerned. The creation of local government is intended to bring people of common heritage or ancestry together as a political unit to further their interests and increase their participation in government business. It should be noted that, the broad objective of establishing local government is placed on the service delivery function. When roads are bad, when there are no markets stalls, no health centers, when there is no water, no drugs in the local dispensaries and when refuse is littered all around the place etc, the ordinary citizen blames it on the local government. It follows, therefore, that local government administration is established to affect citizens through the service delivery function (Aghayere, 1997).

Structures of Local Government

Every organization or institution has a structure. By structure we mean the components of an organization that perform certain functions geared towards the achievements of organizational goals. In administration, these component or structures are hierarchically organized. This therefore entail that the structures offer positions that are stratified i.e. a superior subordinate relationship. In local government just like in other governments, there is the administrative structure and political structures. The challenge of administration at the local government level is how to forge more of cordial relationship between the political and administrative group as they perform their roles and for providing development for the council.

In the local government there are also Committee structures set up to look at issues and take decisions on behalf of the government – a lot of such decisions are subject to ratification by the council or the superior body as the case may be. The structure of local government can also refer to the status of local government i.e. Whether it is multi-purpose or single tier local government or a multi-tier local government with layers of local authorities below the local government structure.

Political Structure

All elected officials fall into this structure and it is principally made up of the legislature and the executive. It represents the democratic concern of local government. This is also a fall out of the system of leadership in local governments. The political structure is responsible for policy making, law making and even policy implementation at the local level. The major organs of the political structure are the Executive, the Legislature and Committee. These Committees can be standing Committees (statutory) or House or Executive Committees asset up to study issues and report to the parent body. The legislature is made up of councilors and in some cases Alderman. The Executive could be made up of councilors or supervisory superiors together with the Chairman. The political structure varies from country to country depending sometimes on the system of leadership. Some systems advocate a strong chairman while others a weak one. Some may have a large number of councilors, other small. The executive may also follow the same pattern. In the US, the political structure addressed four types of leadership, namely strong mayor, the council or city manager system and the commission system. In Nigeria the 1976 Reform spells out a population of 150,000 - 800,000 for the creation of local governments. In multi-tier system, the population of the smaller units is bound to be much less (FGN,1976).

Administrative Structure

The administrative structure represents the instrument for effective services. The administrative structure of local government is hierarchical as in any other government. At the head is a Secretary to the Government (what in France is referred to as the Prefect). In some local government system, (e.g. Nigeria) the

Secretary is the Chief Executive but through reforms he had come to be answerable to the Chairman. He is the head of Administration. Under the Secretary are Departments which are headed by Heads of Departments. The Departments in local governments are created in such a way that they perform a group of functions. Normally such dependents are those of Finance, Personnel (Administration), Agriculture, Education, Health, Works, Social Welfare and Community Development, etc. The number of departments a local government should have would depend on the complexity of the local government (e.g. Urban-rural). Sometimes, these departments are classified as service and operational departments. The service departments are normally those that deal with staff and finance both of which support service delivery (Ekpo, 2008). The operational departments deliver the services on the field. Each department is organized in such a way that there are sections and units or divisions and branches which deal with particular services that add up to the entire services of the department. The operational departments also have their structure right into the community where they deliver these services. These are called field or extension workers and they could be of a technical, professional and administrative nature. The sections and units are answerable to the heads of department while the local government secretary coordinated the activities of the heads of departments. The Secretary in turn is largely responsible to the chairman in some system; the state expects the Secretary to be the watching dog for effective administrative practice at the local government level (Ezeani, 2004).

Types of Structures of Local Governments by the Statutes

There are two types of structure related to the statutes of local governments. First is a single-tier (multi-purpose) structure in which only one authority is recognized by law at the local level. Any other arrangement under local government is a matter of administrative convenience. A good example of this is the Nigeria local government system which is described as single tier. Only this level of authority is recognised by the 1979 and 1999 constitution. Districts, villages, wards and even area development authorities are just for administrative purpose and thus vary from state to state. The multi-tier system is one where the authorities under the local government like districts, counties, borough, special districts, home rule, etc are recognized by the Law and related with appropriately by the central/state governments. However, in some countries like Britain, the lower authorities are not responsible as such to the higher authorities i.e. within its own sphere (Denga, 2003).

It enjoys a functional independence, meaning that it is responsible for the administration of a group of services or parts of services. What this means is that government, having given its local authorities certain powers and functions by statutes, thereafter allows these authorities to discharge their functions without interference as long as they do so effectively and justifiable. In America, Local governments are governed by laws of the states and not those of the national government; therefore no national pattern of local government exists. The law and practice of local government varies from state to state. State governments have direct legal control over the counties which operate as agencies of the state to enforce state law. Nevertheless, these local units are powerful because they enjoy enormous power by way of legal competence, financial resources (especially in cities) and their democratic base (Imuetinyan, 2002).

The implication of this is that each of the layers in other systems discussed was designed to be able to effectively provide services that are comparatively local in nature and based on their financial and human resources capabilities. Such is not the case in Nigeria as it operates a unified system irrespective of the size, scope and capability. The manageable population in a multilayer system also allows for grass root democratic development in that reputable and known individual that are with high integrity are elected to run the various tier of LG. Furthermore, when a democratic governmental system contends with low population, inherent advantage such as neighborhood watch enhances human and national security, ensure smooth provision of service peculiar to the environment and enhances the capacity to collate records and statistics required for effective planning while at the same time facilitates the growth of democratic norms through participation in governance (Denga, 2003).

Structural Challenges and Local Government Development In Nigeria: A Nexus

The challenges of Local Government system in Nigeria include the management of its structure to enhance efficiency. Structure in this sense refers to its single-tier unified system that is officially recognized in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Also, the population of the Local Government according to Local Government Reform of 1976 is between 150,000 -800,000. The implication is that when a single layer arrangement might work for Local Government with low population like Tai LGs in Rivers State with population below 40,000 such might be difficult in Ajegunle Local Governments in Lagos state with population about 700,000. The ability of the operators of the system to respond to development challenges cannot but be weak and slow even if there was the genuine intention to perform (Fajobi, 2010). In addition, a unified administrative

system might not be able to accommodate effectively the peculiarity of each of the localities. This may lead to replication of offices to meet up with the approved structure without due consideration for their needs. Also, unlike in developed system with multi-layer system of LG like in France, USA and Britain specifically designed to cater for specific local needs, a single layer in Nigeria has been found to be inadequate to cope with developmental challenges (Dalhatu, 2006).

Furthermore, the LG in Nigeria has not been able to perform optimally because of the overbearing nature of the state government rendering the autonomy of the system relatively paralyzed. This manifested largely under democratic dispensations (1979- 1983) and (1999- 2015) (Gboyega, 2001). The Fourth schedule of the 1999 constitution as amended clearly stated the functions of LG and sources of revenue which are not effectively tapped to the advantage of the system. The resources accruing to the Local Government from the federated account were considered too juicy to be ignored by the state government. These implies that the state government have taken over most sources of internally generated revenue including large markets, naming of street, and tenement rate among others. Hence, hiding under Section 7 (1) & (6) of the 1999 Constitution to rob the LG of the benefit of appropriating its funds. In addition, the introduction of Joint Allocation Account by the state government and having the LG operatives to forcefully authored and signed letters in support of this arrangement remove the fear of litigation (Odo, 2012).

To reflect that LG operatives were participating in the process, they were requested to submit the list of projects intended for execution while the state government award the contracts. Added to this is the unrestrained demand for fund and over ambitious expectations the populace particularly the local political juggernauts by expecting the council official to meet their personal needs at the expense of developmental needs. Such situations constituted distractions for the LG administration in balancing the governor's demands and community's expectation. In effect, disproportionate fund were often released by the state government to meet the needs of LGs which often fell short to pay staff salaries and for efficient administrative management. Hence, the scenario of 1983/84 is repeating itself in 2016/2017 whereby salaries remained unpaid to LG staff in most states of the federation necessitating a bail out from Buhari administration (Ovaga, 2016).

Again, because the provisions of the 1976 reforms were incorporated into the 1979 and 1999 Constitution, this has worsened the developmental strive of local governments in Nigeria. For instance, the 1999 Constitution introduced ambiguity and contradictions in the control and running of the local councils. For example, Section 7 (I) States: "The system of Local Government by democratically elected local councils is under this constitution guaranteed; and accordingly, the government of every state shall subject to Section 8 of this constitution, ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils." Section 7(6a) provides that "the National Assembly shall make provisions for statutory allocation of public revenue to local councils in the federation (FRN, 1999)." And Section 7(6b) compounds the confusion by stating that "House of Assembly of a State shall make provisions for statutory allocation of public revenue to local councils, within the state." In addition, Section 8 (5 and 6) empowers the National Assembly to legislate on new councils before they can become legal. With the state government, state House of Assembly and the National Assembly all having roles to play in the affairs of the local council because of its structurally deficient, it is not a surprise that confusion, intrigues and non-performance has been the lot of governance at the grassroots levels and the development of the third tier government is undermined (Tumini, 2011).

The above situation is further exacerbated by the unnecessary interference in the local government affairs by the State Government through the constitution of the Caretaker committee. The current trend of incessant dissolution of Local Council by the State government and enthronement of Caretaker committees has not made the development of the councils healthy. The Caretaker committees are given different nomenclatures such as Acting Chairman (Ag.), Transition Head, Sole Administrator etc to justify their continued existence in office. This scenario has completely eroded the principles and practice of democracy and development of Local Government and firmly entrenched corruption in the system (Adeyemi, 2013).

Another challenges in the wheel of local government development in Nigeria is the over bloated personnel structure which has to a large extent expanded the financial burden of the Local Government owing to the current structure of local government, though it may be argued that creation of employment opportunities is an essential attribute of a good government. However, when such employees were not properly engaged, they turned out to be cogs in the wheel of progress. Though all states in Nigeria have Local Government Service Commission among other functions to streamline employment issues, most employments were politically motivated through donation of staff rather undergoing real engagement procedure. Recruitment, engagement and deployment of staff have largely become a political consideration rather than actual need for efficient service delivery in the LG system in

Nigeria. The quality of staff could not but be negatively affected if the right mix of staff could not be engaged and deployed (Kyenge 2013).

Again, with regard to the political and administrative structures of local government, these structures comprise the composition and roles and even relationships of actors within a local government. The political structure is supposed to use administrative structure for translating political promises into services. How well this takes place depends on the type of relationship between the political and career staff of local government. Sometimes this relationship is cordial, other times the relationship is strained and conflictual especially as a result of personality clash, and interpretation of guidelines, such crises slow down the operation of local government and this had become a big source of worry in local governments development in Nigeria (Adeyemi, 2012).

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

Going by the system of local government adopted by Nigeria in the Local Government Reform of 1976, this study concludes that what is established and operated is a system of local administration rather than local government. This is because the legal framework, administrative structure and fiscal design guiding Federal, state-local government relations are adverse to the fundamental features of local government. The Relationship between the State and Local government councils can best be described as that of hierarchical subordination and 'inclusive authority model'. The model is associated with erosion of local government powers, incidence of dependency syndrome and indeterminate devolution of powers. Accordingly, every conceivable legal, administrative and fiscal mechanism is devised to engender the domination of the state over local government councils. In other words, local governments are subject to the control and manipulation of the state government because the latter interfered with, altered and profoundly influenced the conditions of existence of the former.

The paper submits that there is need to restructure the present local government system in Nigeria through proper decentralization by adopting a multi-tier system of local government where there will be devolution more power to local government based on its peculiarities and the need of the people within a domain. The paper further recommends that:

1. The amendment of Section 7 is recommended by expunging Sub Section (6b), that is: The House of Assembly of a State shall make provisions for statutory allocation of public revenue to local Government within the state.
2. Other sub sections under which the state governor hide to divert the resources of the Local Government should be expunged while a provision with penalty be included in the constitution for diversion of LG fund and non-release of the 10 per cent of State's internally generate revenue.
3. Other state governments should emulate Kaduna State governor that scrapped Joint Allocation Account by allowing LG to have direct access to their statutory allocation.
4. In addition, the state governments should hand off from constitutional internally revenue sources of LGs as practiced in US, Britain and France.
5. The Local Government councils should have a well defined tenure of office for elected officials that will be taking care of by the constitution of the country. A law criminalizing non-remittance of 10 percent of State Internally Generated Revenue to local government councils should be enacted by the National Assembly.
6. Finally, through constitutional amendment process, multi-tier LG system should be adopted by accommodating district and CDA to make the idea of decentralization truly workable.

References

- Abasi, O. (2010). Corruption and Local Government Administration in Nigeria: A Discourse of Core Issues. *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 1 (2), 183-198.
- Achimugu, H., Stephen, M. R. & Agboni, U. J. (2013). Local Government Service Delivery in Nigeria: An Empirical Comparison of Government Efforts and the People's Expectations. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4 (6), 335-345.
- Adeyemi, O. (2012). Corruption and Local Government Administration in Nigeria: A Discourse of Core Issues. *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 1 (2), 183-198.
- Adeyemi, O. (2013). Local Government and the Challenges of Service Delivery: The Nigeria Experience. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 15 (7), 84-98.
- Agba, M. S., Akwara, A. F. & Idu, A. Y. (2013). Local Government and Social Service Delivery in Nigeria: A Content Analysis. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2 (2), 455-462.

- Agbakoba R, & Ogbonna, M. (2004). *Local Government Administration and Development in Nigeria*. Lagos: The Human Rights Law Services.
- Aghayere, V. O. (1997). *Dominant Issues in the Nigerian Local Government System: A Contemporary focus*. Lagos: Imprint Services.
- Ajayi, K. (2000). *Justification and theories of Local Government*. in Kunle Ajayi (ed) Theory and Practice of Local Government, Ado-Ekiti, University of Ado-Ekiti.
- Appadorai A. (1975). *The Substance of Politics*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Arowolo, D. (2008). Local Government Administration and the Challenges of Rural Development in Nigeria. Available online: (<http://www.articlesbase.com/authors/dare-arowolo/49807>)
- Ayourn, Q. & Felock, O. (2015). Local Government and the Challenges of Service Delivery: The Nigeria Experience. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 15(7), 84-98.
- Bamidele, P. (2012). The Impact of Existing Inter-Governmental Financial Relations on Effective Service Delivery at the Grassroots in Nigeria. *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*, 3 (1), 112-118.
- Bello-Imam, I.B. (1996). Residents' Perception of Local Government Services in Bello-Imam, I.B.(ed). *Local Government Finance in Nigeria*, Ibadan: Centre for Local Government and Rural Development Studies.
- Dalhatu, S. (2006). *Essays on Local Government Administration: Fostering Better Service Delivery, Record Keeping, Accountability and Empowerment at the Local Government*. Kano: Benchmark Publishers
- Denga, D.I. (2003). *Local Government Administration in Nigeria*. Past, Present and Futuristic Projections, Ibadan: Rapid Educational Publisher Ltd
- Eboh, E. & Diejomaoh, I. (2010). Local Governments in Nigeria: Relevance and Effectiveness in Poverty Reduction and Economic Development. *Journal of Economic and Sustainable Development*, 1(1), 12-28.
- Ekpo, H. A. (2008). *Decentralization and Service Delivery: A Framework*. African Economic Research Consortium. Available at: <http://dspace.cigilibrary.org/jspui/bitstream>
- Ezeani, O. E. (2004). *Local Government Administration in Nigeria*. Enugu: Zik-Chuks Printing Press.
- Fajobi, O.F. (2010). *X-ray of Local Government Administration in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Crethill Publisher Ltd
- Federal Government of Nigeria (1976). *Guidelines for the Reform of Local Government in Nigeria*. Lagos, Federal Government Press.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*, 1999. Lagos: Federal Government Printer.
- Gboyega, A. (2001). *Local Autonomy in Federal politics: The Nigerian Local Government System in Nigeria*, Lagos: Malthouse press.
- George, C. (2010). Fiscal Policy and Local Government Administration in Nigeria. *An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, 8 (2), 118-137.
- Ibok, E. E. (2014). Local Governance and Service Delivery in Nigeria. *Caribbean Journal of Science and Technology*, 2 (1), 536-541
- Imuetinyan, F. O. (2002). *Issues in Nigerian Government and Administration*. Benin City: Denvic Publishing Company
- Khalil, E. (2013). Nigeria Local Government: A Discourse on the Theoretical Imperatives in a Governmental System. *An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, 8 (2), 305-324.
- Kyenge, J. (2013). The Challenges of Local Government Administration in Nigeria, *Journal of Management and Corporate Governance*, 5 (1), 70-76.
- Lawal, T. (2010). Local Government, Corruption and Democracy in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 12 (5), 227-235.
- Odo, U. (2012). Challenges of Local Government Administration in Nigeria; an Appraisal of Nigerian Experience. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 3 (7), 562-568.
- Ola, R.F. (1984). *Local Government in Nigeria*. London: Keagan Paul International
- Ola, R.O.F. & Tonwe, D. A. (2009). *Local Administration and Local Government in Nigeria*, Lagos: Amfitop Books.
- Orewa, N. (1992). *Local Government in the Third World Countries*, New York: Wiley and Sons.
- Osaghe, D. (1990). *Local Government and Rural Development: A Bottom- Up Perspective*. Lagos: Sylva Publications Limited.
- Oviasuyi, P. O., Idada, W. & Isiraojie, L. (2010). Constraints of Local Government Administration in Nigeria, *Journal of Social Science*, 24 (2), 81-86.

- Tumini, D. G. (2011). Local Government in Nigeria: An overview of Structures and Functions” in Onyishi Tony (ed) *Key Issues In Local Government and Development: A Nigerian Perspective*, Enugu: Praise House Publishers
- Ubani, A. (2010). *Achieving the Millennium Development Goal, the 7-Point Agenda and the PDP Irreducible Minimum Objectives: The Role of Local Government*. Abuja: Peoples Democratic Institute.
- Ukiwo, U. (2006). "*Creation of local government areas and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria: The case of Warri, Delta State*" a paper presented at the CRISE West Africa Workshop, March 2006, Accra, Ghana.
- Whalen, H. (1970). *Ideology, Democracy and function of Local Self Government* in Feldman I. and Wheare, K.C. (1963). *Federal Government*: London: Oxford University Press.
- Youm, J. & Feiock, R. (2015). *Local Governments in the United States* cited in <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199756223/obo-9780199756223-0070.xml> Retrieved 11/2/17.