



Research Article

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND STATE CONTROL IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATION ON DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The issue of Local Government and State Government control has been on the regular public discuss each time the need for rural development comes into heart of every Nigerians. This is due to near non-existence of this system or the fact that it only exist by location and building structures. The study tried to look back to what the local government was as a third-tier level of government in the provision of governance for the rural people and the picture it has from 1999 with crop of leaders who through the democratic experiment which lasted till 2003 saw to it that local government became a historic level of government known to have performed in the past through state houses of assemblies and the legality of SJLGA and the JAAC. Conscious of what local government under a federal system of government should represent for service provision and rural administration, some factors responsible for failures of local government in contributing its quota to national development which includes; unconstituted councils, lack of patriotism and commitment among elected and appointed officials, use of unqualified officials in the administration of the local government for political and selfish interest, corruption among tenured and career officials, local government as ground of political settlement for boys who facilitates winning elections and low capacity utilization of abundant skilled and other material resources. The relationship between the local Government and other state ministries/commissions and that of federal government was also given a touch in this study. Emphasis was placed on the principles of good governance as the basis for realizing the constitutional objectives of all levels of government with particular reference to local Government.

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INTRODUCTION

The military government headed by Obasanjo in the year 1976 ensured a reform in the local Government in Nigeria. This was to guarantee the autonomy for Local Government Councils and for them to stay out of the constant interference by other levels of Government. It had to function as a third-tier level of government in the provision of governance and basic amenities to the rural people. This rural administration was aimed at bringing government closer to the people.

A number of people making up the population of Nigeria were left behind as they lived in the rural areas with unimproved means of livelihood. They had no roads, portable water, electricity, market etc. They were socio-politically backward and government was far from them in that solitary state. This noticeable backwardness negatively affected the socio-political development of these areas, there was also no nationality with regard to national planning because the needed bureaucratic

structure to keep the flow of continues implementation of government policies and programmes lacked in these areas.

At the federal and state government levels, there had existed formal administrative structure for the implementation of government policies but at the rural areas such never existed. This informed the establishment of local government system in Nigeria. It took after other local authorities comparatively across the world in ensuring that markets were established and maintained, rural roads were constructed and maintained, health posts and health centers etc. The local government, was constitutionally living up to its expectations.

In 1999, the Nigerian constitution altered the autonomy of local government and provided for a state control of local government as the State-Local Government Joint Account SLJAC became a conduit pipe channeled to the private business of state governors while the local government chairmen only do the work of confirming the numerical values from federal government monthly allocation and sign it over. This attitude had brought about a situation where even people's salary when not paid becomes internally generated revenue to the state Government. This scenario had traditionally left the Local Government system of Nigeria in a

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state of misery. The State Houses of Assembly in line with the provisions of Section 7 (1)a {f} and (2) made it that Local Government Councils must jointly work out ways of developing the state through its laws.

Local Government before the 1999 Constitution

The 1976 Local Government Reform made the third tier a constitutionally recognized level of Government of the Federation. Its functions, responsibilities and commitment were geared towards ensuring the extension of development as conceived by the national Government. The uniform nature also guaranteed similar functions and same sources of funds. Under the reform the local Government had to make considerations and recommendations to a state commission on economic planning or any similar body on the following areas; (a) the economic planning/development of a state...(b) proposals made by the said Commission or body etc (Ofoeze, 2002:67)

Although the local Government was not to operate without the state government, much of her functions were not interfered with by the state government. The acceptability among the people was very high as it provided governance for the rural people. It also proved to be close to the rural people by its response to the development needs of the local dwellers, as such the Local Government had constitutionally recognized distinct functions. The local Government through its leadership had demonstrated high level commitment in rural road construction and maintenance, environmental sanitation and other core health services. It also provided governance which gave direction in rural areas as a third-tier government; its service provision was not too distinct in feature from that performed by the state and federal governments, although the scope had seemingly been different.

The autonomy enjoyed by the local government system in Nigeria gave it the powers to allocate resources without undue interference by any other body or agency of either the federal or state governments. Its political and bureaucratic structure constitutionally recognized to move development in the local areas had all it takes to ensure rural administration that is developmental and people oriented. Moreover, the existed reasonable number of projects carried out by local Governments was far greater than what is seen now under the era of state control.

In this light, Okoli(2004:103) note that;

This scenario seems reasonable to the extent that there is a cordial relationship between the federal governments, on the one hand, and between the state government and councils, on the other”.....” In this way, mutual antagonism of the local Government council and DFRRRI in the rural area leads to greater rural development activities.

It can be clearly seen from the point that both state and federal government recognized the need for the rural population to enjoy an enhanced condition of living standard.

Historically however, public policy in Nigeria had been implemented with wrong motives. Within the 1987 much of the transformations the federal government intended to bring to the people to an extent, did not achieve its purpose. The reason being that policy implementation cannot adequately be understood without the environment or context in which it occurs. The relationship that existed between DFRRRI and Local Government seeks to provide an exclusively integrated

development to the rural population. Going by the tenets of system theory which, demands that policy actions stem from problems and conflicts in the environment and are transmitted to the political system by groups, officials etc (Anderson 1984: 51) These good policies did not completely attain its objective following some influential groups in the society to protect their personal vested interests (Ozor 2004: 237).

No matter these experiences the Local Government performed better in attending to the needs and aspirations of the rural population. In Nigeria the history of Local Government cannot be completed without including the military as a major actor into the political scene. However this group of people left a foot print in Nigeria development administration. According to Ofoeze in Okereke (ed) (2003: 115);

This was especially so, following from Gowon’s introduction of a new political arrangement leading to the “immediate” abolition of then regional system and its replacement with a new twelve state structure in which the former regions were split into states. It was from this period that the” state penetrated to the grass roots level through its own decentralized agency to govern at the grass roots level using its own civil servants to achieve the development purpose of the state government at the level”. It is this system of administration that became variously known as “Development Administration”. In South Eastern, and Midwestern states, and Divisional Administration” in East central states”... one central feature of this system was the existence of a senior civil servant variously known as “Development officers”, Divisional officers” and “Resident”, respectively in the South-Eastern, East-central and Midwestern states.

Form the fore going, it can be understood that the Local Government system was development oriented and it performed better than this situation the system is into now. It is obvious that the State Assembly which had been rendered ineffectual, pliable, and sometimes, a lame duck that is over willing to do the master’s biddings have also yielded to state governors selfish desires on the third- tier level (Yemi, 2017). Analyzing this issue shows that a gradual eroding of it is certain until it goes into extinction for today it is known as a good child of the state without hope of its continuous existence going by the demands of the state on resources made available to the councils, its staffing, operations etc.

It was for political reasons not by consciously concerned development administrative reasons in rural areas. Otherwise the trained expert personnels should have been given the opportunity to perform using the managerial model to embrace strategic management (Owen,2003: 147) An extensive scope politically controlled by the states results in under-minding the human resources base and redundancy on the side of the system and this leads to self- interest actualization by the political leaders.

Local Government in Nigeria had been sold to the state who determines its relevance. The provisions of the 1999 constitution had been violated by the activities of corrupt state Governors who saw the road to democracy which began at that year as an opportunity to serve their interest not in the interest of democracy and development. The local Government system is deteriorating slowly as the main objective for establishing the councils are not foreseen.

The Local Government system had performed in terms of socio-political development in the grass root before the 1999 constitution and the democratic rule of same period which gradually gave the opportunity for the implementation of some constitutional provisions which could not be domesticated during past years of political leadership. It is understandable that it was in 1981 that an Act of federal republic of Nigeria passed the State-Local Government Joint Account (SLGJA). Due to military rule experience and the consciousness for allowing for grass root development and government much closer to the people, this provision was not given full constitutional backings for its implementation in all states of the federation. But between the years 2000 to 2002, most of the states in Nigeria had gotten constitutional provision through their different state houses of assembly by passing the law on SLGJA. This law gave the states the legal empowerment to act beyond these provisions thereby making the Local Government councils an appendage to state governments. Between 1976 – 1999 the local government was assigned specific development roles by the constitution. The states were also mandated to allocate 10% of their internally generated revenue to local governments within their jurisdiction in addition to the LGAs internally generated revenue, statutory allocation from federal governments, grants, loans and funds for some specific projects (Akpan & Ekpo 1998 1-10).

Within this period, the LGAs performed its role of local mobilization and carrying out developmental projects which includes; rural road maintenance, provision of potable water, healthcare, primary education, etc. There existed absence of state local Govt. Joint projects and interference on internal sources of revenue by any state of the federation. There were also an internal harmonious relationship with local Government workers and the management which led to the payment of their claims and other entitlements eg; leave allowances. Out-of-pocket expenses, travelling allowance, outstation - allowance, to even non – management/principal staff of the council. This was traced to the freedom which was there before the era of State-Local Government Joint Account

The operational arrangement in LG was such that served the local populace as third-tier level of governance. All political office holders and bureaucratic officials cooperated in ensuring that LGs function in line with the complementary objective to state and the federal government such that the developmental engagement of center government is appreciated by typical reflection of same at the grassroots local administration as government closer to the people. The reverse was the case in the era of SLGJA when as noted by Sanusi *et al* (2013:160);

“The states joint local government account has made the Nigerian local government financially handicap as some local government cannot afford to settle their running costs, pay 18,000 minimum wage, finance developmental projects. All these and many more have subjected the people in the rural areas to abject poverty because the resources do not reach those expected poor people.

Therefore within this era, good governance eluded us which is supposed to be the longing of African leaders and their subjects. The essence of decentralization is for efficient public policy implementation respecting the rule of law but the state left the right path and took that of longing for exterminating the third-tier levels of government through open and secret

agitations for the scraping of the LGs in Nigeria so that its statutory allocation will include the supposed share that goes to LGAs under them (states).

Local government maintained good governance to an extent between 1976-1999. By all standards which we are of the opinion that it will be regained with the establishment of anti-graft agencies charged with the responsibility of stamping out corruption in our political lives.

Leftwich 1994 in Adnan ul Haque (2012:16-7);

Governance is a fresh notion on the exploring programme and is frequently analysed as a required result of self-governing decentralization. A publication of World Bank on Africa launched the idea in 1989 by declaring that a “crisis of governance” was basically Africa’s advancement obstacle. The viewpoint trapped by and governance into an exhortation. Several journals stress the significance of democratic system and individual constitutional rights, but on the whole of them requisite a slightly technocratic analysis – at least in anticipation of the mid 1990s – centering on running (management) and supervising (administration) as the prime ideas of good governance...

State control of local government resources was a way going back to the crisis of governance in Africa. Leftwich also attributed it to “the certainty of useless and frequently fraudulent government in numerous developing countries”.

One can ask what local government has done new reflecting development in its various departments set-up to productively assist the LGAs in accomplishing its third-tier roles. Each of the departments; Administration, Finance and Supply, Planning Research and Statistics, Health, Education and Social Welfare and Agriculture and Natural Resources have a structural capacity in providing services to the people and generating revenue to the government at that level. In that line of thought, Njoku was right to state; “Indeed political autonomy can be best achieved in a climate of financial autonomy mentioning three basic areas where this will be of help;

1. Assistance in mobilizing internal sources of income.
2. Increase of grants from state and federal government. Not the state ensuring the LGAs funds used up in projects that not by jurisdiction that of LGAs.
3. Relaxation of loan requirement. The strict requirement for loans should be made softer with low interests. This will benefit the rural people as responses are made in areas that demands government actions for greater political participations”.

With the current state of local government councils in Nigeria, we have deviated from the operational provisions of 1976 local government reforms and its benefits. And gone beyond the due process and constitutionalism that would have been involved if the right attitude as displayed in the constitutional provision of 1981, later given a legal backing by state houses of assembly in the later years. However, the tenets of federalism according to OforEze (2000:7) noted:

In all therefore, the issue of formal division of legislative and their other corresponding governmental powers by a constitution among the different level of government in a country is so important and central to the concept of federalism

that without it the country in question is not and cannot be regarded as a federation at all.

Since Nigeria in the mist of advancing democracies had transited till now, it becomes very pertinent to embrace real federalism by removing any form of clause restrictions via constitutional provisions. The local governments before 1999 was better in terms of grass-root oriented administration and governance than now, therefore, it needs financial and administrative autonomy as a third-tier level of local administration in Nigeria.

Other Factors Responsible For Failure of the Local Government in Contributing To National Development

The third-tier level of government was established to ensure a balance in the development of the country without a lopsided effect owing to lack of attention to any level of the society. It would be very difficult for the federal government at the centre to spread its administrative authorities down to the rural areas without constitutionally established authorities for reaching the rural population with governance that should be close to them. This was to provide for government presence at all levels of governance; namely: central, state and local government.

However, state control on local government had had a devastating effects on supposed developmental progress and people oriented governance thereby impeding national development.

The following factors are responsible for failures of local governments in providing the needed democratic dividend in complementing the national development programme of the federal republic of Nigeria.

Unconstituted Councils: The federal government had continued to guarantee the statutory nature of local government as it is contained in 1979 constitution. In section 7(1) of the constitution, it was stated, "that system of democratically elected local government councils is under this constitution guaranteed." Despite all amendments, this provision had continued to maintain its effect until now. Under the Buhari's administration, local government in many states of the federation had continued to run under an unconstituted status where caretaker/transitional committees or sole administrators undemocratically elected political office holders were used to manage the affairs of the LG until 2017 when the national assembly frowned at this development issuing a clearly backed constitutional warning that all states of the federation should ensure that LG councils are democratically constituted for further receipt of their statutory allocations. Otherwise the law of the land will take its course which means stoppage of the federal allocations to such councils. This was followed by a legislative process to grant the LG financial autonomy it deserves as a third-tier level of government. Nigerians are in expectation of the passage of the bill into law, a step in the right direction, which will automatically distinguish Buhari's administration from other Nigerian democratically elected presidents. But the State Houses of Assembly most also play their constitutional role for their financial autonomy and that LGAs. (National accord 2017)

The state governors had preferred using the unelected officials to ensure that revenues accruing to local governments are diverted. Such unconstitutional actions do not allow the LGs to perform. Resulting in situations where the chairmen of councils live near the governors at the state headquarters

attending to the desires of the chief executive neglecting the need of the rural people and their aspirations (Nnadozie 2016:53).The council headquarters is visited rarely leading to abandonment of the constitutional responsibilities for local government.

Patriotic Spirit and Commitment Lacks Among the Officials

Much of the failures the local government recorded is blamed on the manner through which its elected officials come into power. In the spirit of God-fatherism, boys to strong politicians are made to win elections against popular candidates in the society. Those elected will represent the interest of those that gave them such positions while public interest is relegated to the background or neglected. This has resulted to denial of the rural people basic needs and good governance.

In this era of state control on local government, the issue became more pronounced as only men and women who will help in carry down the decision of the governors through God-father/ stakeholders are appointed or elected as council political office holders. Lack of personal and well thought initiative on the part of this council officials leads to low performance in the face of guided policy framework orchestrated to divert the resources of LG, becomes the case. The extension of even development to rural areas as a complimentary role to federal and state government is defeated.

Use of Unqualified Officials in the Administration of the Local Government

State government control of local government has had multi-faceted effects on the local government in carrying-out its constitutionally recognized mandate to the rural people. One of such is the use of appointed personnel to positions on the basis of political patronage and quota system. In most cases those who are appointed to key bureaucratic positions does not meet with the criteria of seniority, efficiency and best practice in order to promote people oriented leadership and due process.

As state controls the activities of local governments, it also led to a situation where key public servants are appointed to please big time politicians who take advantage of local government service commission chairmen and other commissioners or members who were appointed by party in power. Amongst the highly qualified workers in the system, most of them are dropped during appointments as principal staff but relations to who is who and those who have influence are appointed to the detriment of those who are qualified. The impact of this on service provision by the local government is low performance and inefficiency in service delivery. Emphasis is placed on the role of a particular level of government in fulfilling the main objective for which it exist otherwise the structure diminishes the expectations and lack basic relevance. So establishing a high performance culture through bringing individuals/teams into organizational focus for an improved business process accompanied by well-developed skills guided for an encouraging out-put made possible by a committed and efficient leadership (Onah, 2014). This also guarantees continues training and re-orientation. Onah (2014:345) also pointed out that;

Intensive training, enlightenment and general re-orientation should be instituted for employees to obliterate the idea that the public service is still the white man's job which should be

attended to with half-hearted devotion. In the past employees realized that public enterprises brought benefits to them and that they, directly or indirectly, reaped what they sowed. Employees should be made to see these enterprises as their own and made to contribute their best to their success. On the other hand, organization should in turn give employees a real sense of belonging, not just by lip services but by substantially giving them opportunities to effectively participate in decision-making and profit sharing as well as good and competitive condition of service. ...As long as employees do not see a positive correlation between the success of the organization and their personal success, their sense of alienation from the organization will persist.

The overpoliticization of all hitherto activities of the third-tier level of government had undermined professionalism, performance, commitment, due-process, efficiency etc. in job-delivery, respect to democracy and rule of law. As national digest of 14th October, 2017 noted that; "States in Nigeria are run like fiefdoms by the governors who do all within their means to pocket all segments of the society in their states and the legislature usually is the first victim of the fief lords". It now represents a personal business interest of the state governors and may also fill the desires of some other politicians that also wield power to a reasonable extent. The place of the third-tier is not in a near future realizable sight except the federal government actually wants to restore its lost place in societal development and growth. This can only be achieved by the current action of the senate on Bills that will ensure both administrative and financial autonomy to LGs, in that case, Section 126 which provided for State Joint Local Government Account is altered (News Express and National Accord 2017).

Corruption

Officials of the system both political office holders and bureaucratic officials are highly corrupt that has also affected the positive impact that the local government should provide for the people.

In the first place, the elected and tenured officials strive to please the man that appointed or elected them through a mere process of selection. For that they pay attention only to the wishes of the man at the top-Governor.

Secondly, bureaucratic officials had tried to maintain the transaction entered into which saw them to the position there are holding. This is done through kick-backs which must be fulfilled monthly. Their position and postings was bought, the beneficiary must try to be up to date in order to keep the position and the posting to a viable local government and development centers as the case may be.

What has occupied the minds of every official in local government is what to earn or gain not actually the carrying out of one's responsibilities for which they were hired justifying whatever one earns. The reason is that the state had concentrated on using-up resources made for local governments, on the other hand, its employees and political office holders cannot do anything than manage the little resources to merely keep offices open while the major grass-root developmental role of the councils suffers greatly. It should be recalled that local government was not established only to pay salaries and build few office accommodations but to a large extent were expected to ensure that each of the

departments masterminded a share of developmental needs of the rural people.

For example, works department, were to take up rural roads maintenance and even construction, building registration and planning sewage and erosion control, other constructions etc. Agric. department was to ensure that new innovation in Agriculture is brought near to the rural people. All improvements recorded in crops, animal (veterinary) pest-control etc. are extended to the rural people through extension offices. The reason is that it is in the rural areas that 90% of Agro Business is carried-out. So issues in food production, preservation, storage, etc. was to be taken care of by the department representing the federal and state government before the rural people as the third-tier level of government. The social welfare and education department have to take care of social welfare involving families, adult education, run and manage destitute homes, old people's homes etc. as it may be needful in urban-local governments. Works department has to ensure planning of physical structures, registration of buildings etc. The health department run health related issues in clinics and hospitals etc. via a drug revolving fund. The planning department have a lot of planning projections while the administrative department have the over-all staffing responsibilities and supervisory roles and still got involved in revenue generation in addition to that of service delivery such as issuance of letter of identification (as it may apply to local governments) in addition to many other statutory responsibilities.

In all these, there is a high level of low performance due to the attitude of the officials and on the other hand due to the state government's overemphasis on joint projects with local governments. So the aggrieved officials contribute to the worsened nature of service delivery in the councils.

Ground of Political Settlement

The oppression of state government on the local government had given rise to the use of all bureaucratic and political positions for the settlement of men and women who worked during elections. This is to compensate them for staking their lives normally during general and council elections. Thus the appointed ordinarily think of those that appointed them and themselves, then the main reason for the existence of the councils are far from being recognized.

Probendalism had also been the case in Nigeria's political process but its negative impact is mostly felt in the local government system for the state government had resolved to reduce it to nothing but a revenue pool attached to the state government whose interest is protected but the developmental quest of rural population and constitutional resolve of the federal government dismissed. This is done for the state to operate from a position of strength not that of weakness (Aja 1997:38).

Thus the excessive demand on the management by various capacity of political appointees also lead to overlooking several functions and responsibilities of the grass root government, in that case, the local government only function for the selfish personal interest of the state government other than the political mobilization, education, self-reliant and development consciousness of the teaming local people who desires the benevolent presence of government of the 21st century where good governance must embrace

constitutionalism, rule of law and due process to ensure political socialization for effective democratization.

Low Capacity Utilization

Since the councils does not function for the purpose for which they were established, the trainings and retraining including professional and non-professional skills acquired by most bureaucratic officials are not in anywhere properly utilized for the development of rural people. This is because these human resources are not properly deployed to maximize benefit owing to political reasons. The rate of acquired competencies by employees of local government does not reflect on the progress made in terms of out-put in local government. So well trained personnel does not productively give out commensurate services due to inability of the management to adequately utilize these human capacity for both service provision and revenue generation. And this is caused by the state interference which does not allow local governments operate maximally. It also had led to a condition of near redundancy and labour turn-over-which in most cases; the general public views it to mean that the local government workers are not ready to do the work for which they were employed.

If this condition should be allowed, extreme point of it will result in what Amujiri (2010:99) takes to be;

The position of authority transforms into one that must be retained and renewed at all cost. To achieve these selfish objectives, a band of spies, pliable aids, sycophants and mediocrities must surround the “throne” of authority and office to ensure incumbency at all times. This further generates an atmosphere of suspicion, personality clashes and absence of team spirit. It also manifests in the tendency for officers to become sadistic frustrators of one another. Under this unwholesome environment, suspicion follows one another.

If an idle man is a devil’s workshop then the condition being examined has negatively affected both the career of the labour force and supposed out-put performance.

Inter-governmental relations in local government

The essence of government at all levels is to ensure orderliness through rules and regulations. The federal, state and local government has to ensure some levels of interactions in order to ensure that laws which are development oriented are strictly carried down to states and local governments for a uniform effect on the national population.

Ofoeze (1999:165) out lined the nature of Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) in a federal state which includes;

1. National – state relations
2. Nation-state-local relations
3. National-local relations
4. State-state relations
5. State – local relations
6. Local-local relations

It is obvious that the structure of three levels of government under federalism prescribes uniformity in the organization, for that a federal ministry or agency must have a corresponding commission/ministry in the state and as departments in the local government.

Despite financial relationship which exists between local governments and the other levels of government, there are

other duties and responsibilities that must be fully carried by the involvement of federal ministry or agencies in relation with state commission/ministry and local Government via its Departments. For instance, if federal ministry of women affairs engages in adult literacy through the state, it will be carried down to the local government through the education and social welfare department for effectiveness to the grass-root. On financial responsibilities which involves a straight-forward financial transfers-grants or statutory allocations from federal and state to local governments. In some cases there are specific grants designed to solve specific problems like flood, erosion, outbreak of disease etc. At times conflict due arise when the federal government allocates a grant to a local government through the state government because the local government may not receive the appropriate amount (Akpan *et al* 1998:20).

When it is not clear which level of government have a particular responsibility to perform, state and local government liaise to solve the problem since the local government was established to enhance growth and development mostly within their areas of jurisdiction.

A clear example of area of conflict for both state/federal and local government revolving on rural development includes; road construction and rural electrification which the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI) also had a clear mandate. In this remarkable area of overlap although for efficiency in reaching the rural people, there still exist an inter-relationship. More so, local governments are interested in health, education, provision of pure water, poverty alleviation programmes etc this is also an area where the better life programme and other NGOs, are interested in so that welfare of the people can be improved upon, (Okoli 2004:, Akpan *et al* 1998: 21). All tiers of government had been assigned functions and responsibilities which much complement different policies implemented at the central level of government. Thus each level must relate with others for efficient and effective services delivery to the citizens. The place of local government in promoting the well-being of the rural people cannot be overemphasized, for that there must exist a well-planned inter-governmental relation to ensure monitoring in National planning. The federal government cannot carry out all its functions and responsibilities without looking back to know the extent at which state and local government have delivered theirs, since this efficiently can be done in reflecting the basic principles of good-governance. (Okoli and Ugwu in Onah & Oguonu (ed) (2010:107).

Good Governance at all Levels of Government in the 21st Century

The world, good governance is not only fitting when it explains the pattern of good democratic rule at the federal (centre) state and local government. It also should be used to qualify the people oriented governance at the third-tier level of government. Thus, the main principles of good governance should apply at the three levels of government for a responsive democratic leadership.

However, the administration felt at the local government under the state control does not in any way reflect good governance this is because among other things, the rule of law is not observed, so that local people divided into federal wards at the local government levels, who should have a stake and have a part to play in the way the resources due to them is

appropriated. Good governance also stresses on the need for societal development, progress and sustainable growth.

According to Onah and Oguonu (2010):

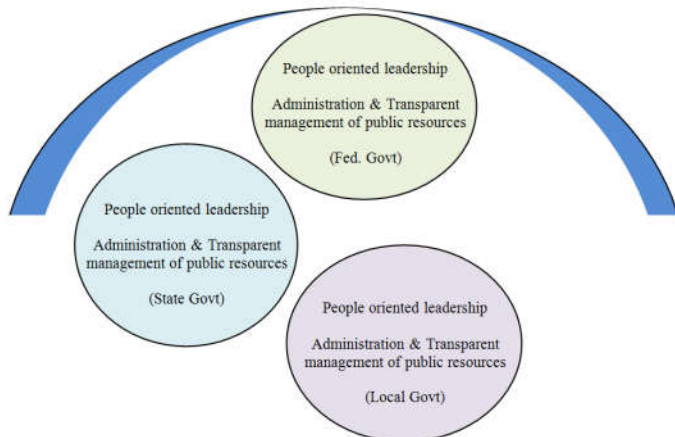
Good governance emerges as a product of emphasis on societal development, progress and sustainable growth. In terms of detailed analysis, good governance encompasses eight major characteristics. These include citizen's participation, consensus orientation, strict accountability in management of public affairs, administrative and political transparency, leadership and institutional responsiveness, institutional and processes effectiveness and efficiency, equity and inclusiveness and the regime of rule of law.

If there is any level of government that good governance should be mostly felt, it should be the local government which according to Izueke (2010:79):

Local government represents the dispersion of political power in our society. The idea of local government stems from the fact that it is the closest government to the people in a democratic setting and the best system of exercising good governance and engaging people in their own governance.

Although there are constitutional provisions which had defined the relationship between the state and the local government, with good-governance the third-tier government should not be excessively reduced to nothing by the instrumentality of the state houses of assemblies to the extent that local government just exist as a mere appendage to the state. In-short, good-governance has basic relationship involving the government and individuals which includes; people oriented leadership, administration and management of resources for the good of the society.

Good Governance Felt At All Levels of Government



Good governance must succeed on the basis of people oriented leadership which means that accountability be the seat of the administration. The management at all resources must be a consensus and democratically practiced for system survival and sustainability.

CONCLUSION

The local government system is a creation of the federal government through the constitution, for even development down the rural areas. Such that those that operate in an urban and semi-urban environment have the mandate to employ the peculiar resource giving in their areas for advancing development. It will not be within a reasonable thought to still tie the local government to any other tier at a time many anti-

corruption agencies have been set-up in readiness for any council boss who may want to divert public (local government) fund for personal uses as was the case leading to state government checks and eventual control.

At this point in the history of holistic development for the masses, the local government should be giving full autonomy in order to enable it take, its place in service delivery to the people. By that, the state governors who have been responsible for failure of these attempts through their lobbying at the national assembly and consequent misleading of members of state houses of assemblies. This is because the committed efforts of national assembly members at ensuring local government financial and administrative autonomy in 2017 should not be allowed to fail by any person or group of persons

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