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## Local Government administration and its challenges of rural development in Nigeria

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### Abstract

*Since the creation of local governments as a tier in Nigeria, it has been facing series of critical challenges in the provision of social services and how to sustain them. As a result, the rural communities have continued to remain under-developed allegedly due to poor governance. The objective of this study is to highlight and discuss the roles and functions of local government administration in rural development and its challenges affecting them. In conducting this study, the author primarily relied on primary and secondary sources of information. Lastly, it was suggested that for local government administration to achieve its purpose and objectives, rural infrastructural development such as roads, electricity, water, hospital must be adequately provided to all the rural communities to enable them feel the presence of the government.*

**Keywords:** Local government, Rural Development, Local government administration in Nigeria.

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### Introduction

Local Administration refers to the administration of a community by a body called local government which is responsible to the local people. Local government is as old as mankind, because it is the only form of human's administration that has existed from the history of man. It was in this regard that the theory of human society shows that community development came through properly and recognized local administrative structure before it metaphases into local government. Local government in Nigeria were established to provide efficient and effective basic amenities and social infrastructures in the rural areas such as access road, portable water, electricity, health delivery services for the people. furthermore, local government were also established as a political authority by a nation or state as a third tier of government for the purpose of dispersing political power at the local level as contained in the 1976 local government

reform introduced to stimulate a democratic participation through the institution of popularly elected representatives of the local government councils.

However, over the years local government have been facing with series of challenges resulting into underperformance in the areas of provision of social facilities to guarantee the social well-being of the people around the community. Among some of the major challenges includes the issue of leadership, good governance, political and financial autonomy, human resources development, funding etc. Consequent from the above, the expected efficient and effective service delivery in line with roles and objectives of local government towards the provisions of basic social infrastructures is lacking.

Furthermore, another challenge facing the local government administration and rural development as contained in the constitutional framework is the issue of "Joint Local Government Account". Since

from its inception, it “(Joint Local Government Account” have never been fully taken off in the governance structure of the local government. Similarly, local government being a political authority which was purposely created by law or constitution for local communities to manage their local public affairs within the limits of the constitution such as to make the local council purposive, independent third tier government, accountable, just and transparent to benefit the local community, have continued to remained backward in terms of infrastructural development. The study focuses on “local government administration and its challenges in rural development in Nigeria”, and it further attempt to identify, discuss and proffer possible solutions towards enhancing effective service delivery that can be beneficiary to the generality of rural populace.

#### **Functions of Local Government**

The local governments in Nigeria were set up to promote the idea of democracy at the grassroots as the third tier of government. According to Emezi, (1984), local government is seen as “system of local administration under local communities that are organized to maintain law and order, provide some limited range of social amenities, and encourage cooperation and participation of inhabitants towards the improvement of their conditions of living. He further buttressed that it provides the community with formal organizational framework which enables them to conduct their affairs effectively for the general good of the communities. The role and functions of local Government can be classified into political and socio-economic aimed to provide socio-economic services to the people. However, the best strategy for service delivery was among others to:

(a) Maintenance of law & order

- (b) Provision of motor parks & markets
- (c) Collection of rates, fees & rents
- (d) Construction of feeder roads & drainage
- (e) Provision of recreational facilities ie health facilities
- (g) Registration of birth, deaths & marriages
- (h) Enlightenment campaigns

#### **Objectives of the study**

The general objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the local government administration and rural development in Nigeria. While the specific objectives are to:

- i. Highlight the evolution and development of local government system in Nigeria.
- ii. Examine and discuss the roles and functions of local government administration in rural development
- iv. Examine the contributions of local government administration in terms of infrastructural development.
- v. Identify and discuss the factors militating against effective service delivery in the local community as third tier of government
- vi. Recommends measures that can assist in improving the services of the local government administration

#### **Literature Review**

The concept of Local Government has attracted several definitions across the globe because of its geographical, ideological, historical, political socio-economic, philosophical and other influences on scholars, leaders and as well as governments administrators. Mawhood, (1993), argued that without the local government, there cannot be considered any political system to be comprehensive and complete. This is in line with what Orewa, (1992) stated that Local government is the lowest unit of administration to whose laws and regulations, the communities who live in a defined geographical area and the common social and political tiers are subjects.

Similarly, Ola and Tonwe, (2009) in their definition of local government termed it as a political sub-division of a nation or a federal system state, which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs. He further posits that this includes the powers to impose taxes or to exert labour for prescribed purpose and that the governing body of such an entity is elected, appointed or otherwise locally selected. In Nigeria however, the definition of local government is also affected by the factors of space and time.

Alao, Osakede, & Owolabi, (2015) in their analysis, buttressed that local government administration is the third tier of government created to take care of the rural dwellers with specific functions set apart from the administration. The above assertion is in line with Abdulhamid, Chima, (2015) defined Local government as a public organization authorized to decide and administer a limited range of public policies within a relatively small territory which is a subdivision of regional, national government. The issue of local government administration has been the subject of debate across many scholars and researchers.

According to Odoh, (2007) cited in Saulawa, et-al (2017) argued that Local Governments have not been autonomous in Nigeria except for the 1991/1992 experience. They further argued that what has been happening in Nigeria's Local Government system was a semblance of autonomy by tinkering with their democratic and financial basis. Thus, what the various administrations have been largely interested in was the selection of a group of loyalist as executives who would help to provide law and order and to explain the good efforts of the military in the transition process, not the genuine attempt of providing the people with basic services at the local level as contained in the (Committee Report on the Review of Local Government 1997)

In the same vein, Felix, & Okonette, (2013) in their contributions opined that for local government to effectively functions must have a statutory:

*“legal positions such as raising some revenue to perform assigned tasks in line with practice of fiscal federalism in Nigeria which over the years local government have been heavily dependent on federal financial handouts, thus relegating and or out rightly abandoning legal and credible sources of revenue necessary for effective service delivery to the people at the grassroots”.*

To Akpan, (2014) in Effiom, (2001) describes local government:

*“as the breaking down of the country into smaller units or localities for the purpose of administration in which the inhabitants of the different units or localities concerned play a direct and full part through their elected representatives.*

This means, local government as a third tier of government was established to facilitate and implement government programs and actions to meet the needs of the local communities.

This is in line with the position held by Adeyemi, (2013) that local government as the various aspects of administration of service on a local basis to local bodies for the settlement of the local people. Similarly, Abdulhamid, Chima, (ibid), in their contributions to the above subject matter, opined that local government is the third tier and the smallest government bodily created to take care of all local matters and interest that requires government attention. Adeyemi, (2019) while tracing the formation of local government system in Nigeria argued that:

*“Local government as part of system of government is constituted by a dominant ethnic and cultural groups particularly so among the majority Hausas in the North, Yoruba in the West and the Igbo in the East. Each of these ethnic groups operates in line with their traditions and cultural values”.*

Nwatu, (1995) stated that it was in view of the above that the country was bereft with the problem of heterogeneity in terms of peoples, race, religion, linguistic differentials and even culture. The scenario points to the fact that each and every facet of the nation's political life cannot be completely divorced from the cradle of ethnic identifications which encouraged the demand for local government as equally explained by (Erunke, 2009). The situation was based on the pre-colonial epoch to the present post-colonial Nigeria in which every community is calling to rise up to the challenges of development in order to provide better life to the people. This was attributed by colonial rule in Nigeria and their administrative ideologies that led to the unmistakably belief that Local government means is a communal sense. Accordingly, Adeyeye, (2016) argued that local government could be regarded as the;

*“People's political instrument to participate in resource allocation, power distribution and acquisition, political participation, efficient service delivery and resource mobilization. This political participation it concerns with the desire to involve local citizens in the management of local affairs such as efficient service delivery to ensure that the basic needs of local citizens are met as quickly as possible.”*

However, in spite of the importance and strategic positions the local governments occupy in the scheme of affairs, the majority

of Nigerians living in the rural areas have not witness government presence at any level. Even farming which remained the main occupations of the people especially in the northern part of the country is not only fast declining but have neglected while the standard of primary education, health care delivery have completely fallen”.

This has been acknowledged by Mensah, & Ojowu, (1989). According to them, rural areas in Nigeria have continued to remain backward and static at a time when the global economy is experiencing tremendous forward movement as contained in the World Bank report (2019) and WHO (2018) report respectively. According to the report, the poverty and health level of the rural areas has earned Nigeria a place among the world's poorest nations in spite of abundant human and materials resources since independence from Britain in 1960.

### **Conceptual Clarification of Local Government**

A local government is a form of public administration which, in a majority of contexts, exists as the lowest tier of administration within a given state. Thus, local governments generally act within powers delegated to them by legislation or directives of the higher level of government as contained in the (1979 constitution Federal Republic of Nigeria) which it stated that;

*“Local government is the third-tier of government is vested with the responsibility of transforming various communities into effective socio-economic and political advanced structures for national development that is the improvement of the quality of life of the communities”.*

This means it is a system of administration of the rural communities by people who knows the need of the community. This is informed

by the idea that since the people know the needs of their community, they would do everything possible within the available resources to develop the area. It was in view of the above; Ezeani, (2006) posits that local government as a veritable agent of development and grassroots participation in the democratic process". Ezeani, (ibid) further explained that it is highly arguable if local governments in Nigeria have been able to effectively meet these and other lofty goals of their goals and objectives of their establishment.

In the opinion of Adamolekun, (2002), & Ezeani, (2004) that local Government should be seen as a veritable instrument for rural devolution and development. Means, it (local government) should be recognized as a third tier of government independent with little or no control from the state and federal government as equally argued by Ogan, (1980) that:

*Local governments are not creatures of state governments but one of the tiers of government of this country. Every effort should be made to allow local government councils to operate with prestige and not as beggars of a state ministry of finance begging for money*

This shows that local government should have a clear and legally recognized geographical boundaries and which must be constituted by law, substantially control by local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or to exert labour for prescribed purpose. Thus, it (Local governments) must also possess corporate status including the power to raise sufficient revenue to perform assigned prescribed duties and responsibilities. However, the suffocation and subversion of local government autonomy is more pronounced at the financial and leadership recruitment levels

than in any other areas of intergovernmental relations at state and federal levels.

These definitions above was in line with the guidelines of the 1976 Local Government Reform which contained that local government as Government at the grassroots level and closer to the people but exercised their independent duties through representative councils established by law to exercise specific powers within a particular period of time. And such powers should give the councils substantial control over and above local affairs and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of services and to determine and implement projects so as to complement the activities of the state and federal governments in their areas as argued by Ola, (1984). Similarly, the United Nations office for public administration states that local governments must be constituted by law and the conceptual clarification can be summarized as follows:

Local government must have independency. This means it must have to enjoy independence in administrative autonomy in spite of the fact that they are still at the mercy of state or federal government control in certain areas

Local government must exists within a territory geographically defined in terms of culture, tradition and ethnic

Local government exercises its authority over a given population. In other words, as a corporate entity, local government is created to serve citizens resident in a known location. It must have specific functions, powers and performs as spelt out in the constitution or statutes (as in Nigeria).

The council of the local government is composed by elected representatives of local people.

Local government is usually divided into departments, divisions or a unit who facilitates the accomplishment of its goals, objectives and functions.



It must function as the lowest tier of government to complement the efforts of state and federal government but not as subservient.

It can sue or be sued and has a perpetual succession as enshrined in the constitution as in Nigeria. This implies that the life of a local government does not expire with the end of each administration but rather as continues process.

### **Rural development**

Rural can simple be defined as that which is not urban, is a contested space from a definitional standpoint. Rural can be taken to mean from or of open areas—those outside cities. Rural has a common strand of meaning with country or countryside but is more frequently encountered with such nomenclature in public policy. Rural development therefore involves efforts that are Educational, health, and employment services are essential in rural areas, as they are in urban areas, but the particular needs may be different. According to Woods, (2011), educational attainment in rural areas may be relatively less than in urban areas; this may drive unemployment, which in turn prevents attention to resolving needs in the educational sector economic and social in nature intended to encourage concepts of retention, growth, and expansion in areas outside cities, including improving quality of life for rural residents through such as improving the living standards of the subsistence population through mobilization and allocation of resources to achieve desirable balance over time between the welfare and productive services available to the rural subsistence populations.

Rural development is not entirely dissimilar from its urban counterpart. It deliberates on many of the same general issues that would affect development decisions in urban settings but employs a perspective that

considers and values the unique context of the rural environment. Resources, organization of community and policy/program structures, and delivery of services to communities are all concerns. While the types of issues themselves might be largely the same, infrastructure is a point of serious concern for rural areas, especially those with an eye toward growth. This means rural development means:

- (a) Mass participation aimed at achieving both allocative rationality plus equity with distributive efficiency
- (b) Making the process self-sustaining and this requires appropriate skills acquisition and development.
- (c) Capacity building; and availability/presence of functional institutions at local, state and federal
- (d) To facilitate optimal use of available resources and the development of the rural areas.

It was in line with the above that Maboguje (1980) argued that:

Rural development is concerned with the improvement of the living rural standards of the low-income people living in the rural area on a self-sustaining basis through transforming the socio-spatial structures of their productive activities. It implies a broad based reorganization and mobilization of the rural masses and resources, so as to enhance the capacity of the rural populace to cope effectively with the daily tasks of their lives and with the changes consequent upon this.

### **Evolution and Administration of Local Government System in Nigeria**

The term local government has been defined differently by many scholars but according to scholar like Wraith, 1964 cited Nwatu, (1995), he sees local government as s locally elected councils whose main purposes and objectives are to provide or administer services with as great degree of independence

as modern circumstances. **Hampton** (1991) in his view also opined that local government system of governance in Nigeria started long even before the coming of colonial administration and subsequently through the attainment of independence from Britain in 1960. Prior then, it have always been an integral part of various societies and human communities that. However, before to the amalgamation in 1914, Adeyemi, (2018) stated that:

*Nigeria were made up of empires, a caliphate, kingdoms, chiefdoms, city states and villages with ruler that exercise absolute authority over them as in the case of empire or kingdom in the northern region until local government system has taken different forms from one period to another in Nigeria.*

It was later during the pre-colonial experience, which culminated into a different traditional political systems, viz Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo systems. For example, the colonial indirect rule system whereby such governments were being run through the traditional rulers, the chiefs or warrant chiefs. The colonial administration was established based on indirect rule and was carried out through the traditional rulers and institutions. The main function of the native authorities at that time was only to maintain law and order. Subsequently, there were series of reforms were carried out for the local government systems to functions effectively. For instance in the Eastern region, the local government reform of 1955, 1958, and 1960.

However, there was a serious drastic decline in the prestige and responsibilities of local authorities especially in the defunct Western region from 1960-1966 as rightly put forward by Orewa, (1991). Which later saw the abolishing of the local government law of 1960. Similarly, in the East, prior to the civil war in 1967, the situation was almost like the

West. However, in Northern part of Nigeria, there was a gradual change in the structure of the councils leading to the increased in the numbers of elected members of local authorities. According to the 1976 guidelines local government reform, the Federal Military Government was moved by the necessity to stabilize and rationalize Government at the local level. This brought up the decentralization of state governments authorities to local government to enhanced rapid development.

Furthermore, the reform of 1976 was also reaffirmed by the 1979 constitution primarily aimed to give powers to local government to participate in both economic planning and development in the council. Again, in 1988 there was another reform generally known as 1988 civil service reform. The aimed of the reform was to grant autonomy to local government. While the Ministry of Local Government was abolished and replaced with executive and legislative arms in local councils through direct allocation of funds to local government. Thus, as part of the local government reform, the 1999 Constitution also provided for a democratically elected local government council in section 7 of the constitution that gave the power to the National and State Assembly to make laws “with respect to the registration of voters and the procedure regulating elections to a local government council.

It is against this backdrop Abdulhamid and Chima (2015) concluded that the evolution and development of local government reforms can be summarized into four major categories.

- (i) Colonial rule, which was based on the traditional administrative system, and existed from 1903 until the 1950s when the native authority system became obsolete

- (ii) The more liberal and participatory approach to local governance introduced in the 1950s
- (iii) The advent of military rule, which replaced the model of grassroots participatory democracy with military centralization and a 'unity of command.
- (iv) The comprehensive reform of local government administration in 1976, which restored liberal participatory values.

Thus, Ikeanyibe, (2009) put it that all attempt to unify the system of local government met informed resistance because of its anti-democratic thrust and because the system did not fit well with the existing traditional administrative systems in those regions. The Federal government guidelines on local government reforms of 1976, local government reforms stated that: The reforms:

*"was essentially motivated by the necessity to stabilize and rationalize government at the local level. This must of necessity entail the decentralization of some significant functions of the state government to local in order to harness local resources for rapid development. The federal military government has therefore decided to recognize local governments as the third tier of governmental activity in the nation"*

The local government council did not have recognition until it was enshrined in the 1979 constitution, which provided the legal framework to implement the 1976 reforms as opined by (Diejomoah, & Ebo, (2010). It also aimed to determine and implement projects so as to complement the activities of the state and federal government in their areas, which this can be achieved through the active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, so that local initiative and response to local needs and conditions

are utilized maximally. They further illustrated that the primary goal was to ensure that every state government should, by law, provide for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of local councils. It was against this backdrop that the 1988 civil service reform emphasizes on the funding of local government through the Federation account.

Though, the United Nations office for public administration states that local governments should have control over local affairs which will include the powers to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes. This also goes along with what Gowon, (1990) observed. He said local government is any form of administration that is found at the grass roots level with the primary objective of integrating the rural populace into the decision making process of the state. This is also in line with Ola, (1984). He observed that the local government must also be constituted by law and that those who are to govern such entity should be elected or locally selected. It is against this backdrop that the 1979 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria clearly spelt out categorically that:

*"local government as the third-tier of government is vested with the responsibility of transforming various communities into effective socio-economic and political advanced structures for national development that is the improvement of the quality of life of communities"*

### **The Contribution of Local Government in the Development of the Rural Areas**

According to Adamolekun., (1988), Adeyeye., (2016), Akindele., & Olaopa, (1998), the contribution of local government administration in the development of the rural areas can be dated back to the period of community-based efforts of developing the



individual societies where local authorities are used to mobilize all resources for development. However, in the modern day local government administration as stipulated in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. They contributed in the following areas:

- i. Making of recommendations to a State Commission on Economic Planning, The economic development of the State.
- ii. Collection of rates, radio and television licenses;
- iii. Establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for the destitute or infirm;
- iv. Licensing of bicycles, trucks (other than mechanically-propelled trucks), canoes, wheel barrows and carts;
- v. Establishment, maintenance and regulation of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs, markets, motor parks and public conveniences;
- vi. Construction and maintenance of roads, streets, streets lightings, drains and other public highways, parks, gardens, open spaces, or such public facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the House of Assembly of a State;
- vii. Naming of roads and streets, and numbering of houses;
- viii. Provision and maintenance of public conveniences, sewage and refuse disposal
- ix. Registration of all birth, death and marriages

### **Challenges of Local Government Administration in Nigeria**

In spite of the importance of local governments in the scheme of affairs in Nigeria and the amount of efforts made to reform the local government system viable through increase in the participation of people at the grassroots level, it (local government) was faced with some numerous challenges of insufficient funding, autonomy, lack of adequate human, material and financial resources both in term of quantity

and quality to carry out its own activities, corruption and poverty mismanagement of funds and lack of autonomy Agagu, (2004).

**Funding**, one thing that is clear was that the problem of local government finances in Nigeria is as old as the creation of modern local governments itself due to lack of proper or good funding. It was in realization to this that Gboyega (1992) acknowledge that there is still, great deal of dissatisfaction with the system of local government administration as the system was still not dynamic enough to mobilize resources and generate development. Supporting the non-performance of local government areas in Nigeria due to funding, the former President of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo in (2003) once quoted to have said:

*What we have witnessed is the abysmal failure of the Local Government system. It is on record that at no time in the history of the country has there been the current level of funding accruing to the Local Governments from the Federation Account. As a result, the hope for rapid and sustained rural development has been a mirage as successive Councils have grossly under-performed in almost all the areas of their mandate”*

This lack of performance by local council, Adeyomo, (1984) & Adedeji, (2000) stated was due to lack of substantial powers to control over the local affairs, the staff, institutional and financial powers, provision of services and autonomy. These undue interferences by both the state and federal government have rendered the development of rural areas ineffective and inefficient.

**Leadership**, in Local Government has been too fragile and perhaps not too enduring and consistent in policy making and implementations as a result of constant change in government which are the greatest

instabilities in the political system is at the Local Government level. Today, it may be an elected Council, tomorrow a Sole Administrator or a Management or Caretaker Committee, etc. Different nomenclatures or appellations are ascribed according to the whims and caprices of the government of the day at the State level. This is damaging to the system, as not enduring leadership system is perceptible.

**Socio-economic agenda**, most leaders if not all climbed over the council leadership without vision and socio-economic agenda for the people as majority of them are not educationally sound. They vie for public offices just for their personal aggrandizement. The emphasis is on private accumulation of wealth rather than service to the people.

**Autonomy**, since the demand for creation of local councils is to perpetuate the interest of the elites, the clamour for Local Government autonomy is not with sincerity of purpose. As most of the political leaders just want financial autonomy for them and not for the Local Government as a system but to accumulate resources for themselves. According to (1999 Constitution of Nigeria), section 162 (6), spelt out clearly that the Special Joint Local Government Account (SJLGA) is a special account maintained by each state government “into which shall be paid allocations to the local government Councils of the State from the Federation Account and from the Government of the State” the section further stated that the Federation shall maintain a special account to be called “the Federation Account” into which shall be paid all revenues collected by the Government of the Federation. (Ogunna, (1996) put it that:

*“this arrangement will denied the Local government the freedom to make and implement decisions such as recruitment, training and*

*manage its own staff, raise and manage its own finances, make by-laws and policies, and discharge its functions as provided by law without undue interference from the state or federal government”.*

**Revenue generation in the local government** has been forgotten and leaking. Local government revenue comes from property, sales, and other taxes; charges and fees; and transfers from federal and state governments. The revenue that can be generated from the above sales and services is too small to meet the budgetary requirement of the council. Leaders forget that internal revenue is the corner stone of Local Government autonomy. Again, many Local governments cannot generate up to 10% of their total internal revenue which makes the institution completely dependent on the Federal and State Governments. Furthermore, there are high wage bills and other competing political demands, the only complement will be internal revenue. Local Councils have treated this with levity over the years either for political reasons, or because they believe the statutory allocation is constant.

**Human resources** development, mobilization of human resources is another area of neglect by local government undermining the effective service delivery. Local governments are blessed with communities that have potential to be mobilized. Many communities organize themselves into different groups ranging from agricultural, co-operative or through clubs and unions, and even thrift and credit societies. As a result, local governments in Nigeria suffer from administrative inefficiency and ineffectiveness resulting from low educational qualifications of staff, poor motivation, autocratic leadership, poor work environment, etc. The management and

control of finances is a central factor in the management of local governments.

**Corruption**, one of the objectives for the creation of local government in Nigeria was to decentralize political administration for the purpose of rural development. However, according to Mrs Farida Waziri former chairman Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), the level of social infrastructural development in the rural areas does not match the huge amount of money available to local government administrators nationwide. She further put that between 1999-2007 alone, the 774 local governments councils in Nigeria received N3.3 trillion without any sign of infrastructural development to show.

Last, inefficient and ineffective service delivery system is one of the most serious problems in the administration of Local Government. Though, this is attributed to corruption in the system. For instance, contracts which are supposed to be used to achieve socio-economic goals and economic empowerment of the people of the locality have now become an instrument for the pilfering of the Local Government purse. Samuel., & Robert, (1992) argued with the position stated by Gboyega, (ibid) that the challenges of local government in Nigeria started when:

*The Ministry of local government was abolished in 1988, the transfer of Primary Health Care to local government 1990, the taking over of Primary Education by Local Government 1991, Reconsideration of Revenue Allocation among the three levels of government to the disadvantage of local government, the introduction of the presidential system of Government at the third tier, the scrapping and reinstatement of the Local Government service commission*

*and the politicization of the office of the secretary to the Local Government among others were some of the problems affecting local government administration.*

### **Conclusion**

The absence of good governance in our local areas in recent time was deliberate attempts by most local government chairmen to justify the fact that funds made available to them are inadequate. This process was orchestrated by state government undue intervention in local government affairs, and if the trends continue, the desired developments will continue to elude local people who are at the receiving end of the ills of corruption at the local government level. Therefore in order to ensure good governance at the grassroots level, all hands must be on deck. Local government as the tiers of government represents the principles of decentralization of government activities, since it is not possible for all the functions of government to be conducted centrally alone. As a result, over the years, reforms were made to make local government more responsive and vibrant towards developmental needs. It was in view of the above, that reforms especially 1976, 1979, 1988, 1999 etc. were clearly stipulated that every government at whatever level owes its citizens the duty to develop them through the provision of infrastructural development such as portable water, health care, education, roads, food, shelter, and any socio-economic variables. However, with the increase in demands for more local government in every part of the country is being motivated by the desire of the rural populace to contribute directly in the affairs of their communities. Consequently, rural areas in Nigeria have still continued to be undermined by some challenges making development remains a mirage. This can be understood from the content of development

that is lacking in almost every rural community.

**Recommendations**

(i). The problems of Local Government system in Nigeria can be solved only when the issue of political and financial autonomy is resolved to enable local governments have freedom in decision making and implementation.

(ii) Campaign should be intensifying on the danger of corruption with a view to stop it.

(iii) Government should review the constitution on the funding of local government upwards to enable the commission execute more developmental projects since they (LGAs) are more closer to the communities.

(iv) Infrastructural development such as roads, electricity, water, hospital should be adequately provided to every community with the view to have the impact or government presence

(v) Local governments should diversify to raise more revenue that would enable them deliver programs and services that has a direct bearing to the communities.

(vi). Local governments should be more people-centered in approach through collaboration/partnership to enable the communities feel the presence of government in their localities.

(vii). There is urgent need for further reforms to clear the political interference by the Federal and States government in the control of the affairs of local government and its service commission.

(viii). The commission should be directly involved in the recruitment, promotion and discipline of junior staff in the commission.

(ix). The commission should provide adequate training and retraining of staff to serve as incentives and employee motivation, rewards and recognition towards discharging their responsibilities

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