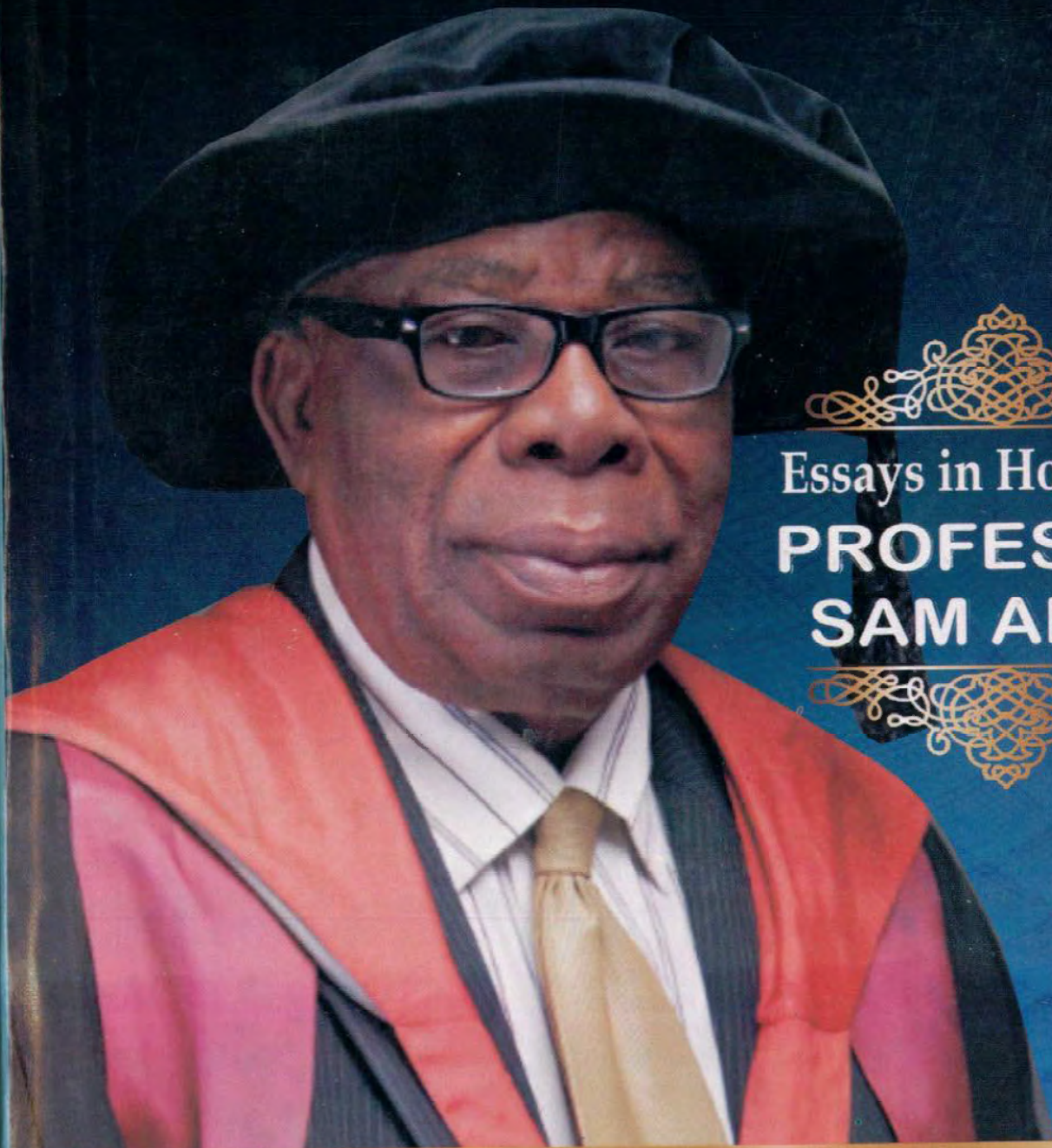


PUBLIC POLICY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA



Essays in Honour of
**PROFESSOR
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Public Policy and National Development in Nigeria

Essay in Honour of

Professor Sam Amdii, FCIPAN, FCIM, JP

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THE STRUCTURE OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY AND THE ATTAINMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL GOALS IN BAYELSA, EDO AND RIVERS STATES OF NIGERIA

BRAIMAH, FREDERICK IMUEBE

Introduction

There is a nexus between bureaucracy and development, especially in a developing country like Nigeria. According to Gbenga and Ariyo (2006), increasing the tempo of development in any polity must consider the various players in the system. The bureaucracy, being the engine house for the actualization of policies, privately or publicly, remains a major instrumentality that can drive development. Unfortunately, they noted, development has been undermined and retarded by the menace of corrupt practices. They elucidated that it will amount to affirming the obvious by saying that corruption has permeated every facet of the Nigerian society. According to them, several reforms aimed at making the civil and local government bureaucracy more proficient and result-oriented, have been carried out since independence. They, however, lamented that not much have been achieved from such reforms, attributing corruption as one of the factors that have affected the success of such reforms (Gbenga & Ariyo, 2006).

Eme and Emeh (2012) stated that government bureaucracy is a very important factor required for the process of rural development. That is why, in their opinion, the strength of any bureaucracy defines its output. The greater the strength of the efficiency of the bureaucracy to tackle intricate and societal development plans, the greater the development potentials of that society. However, Okafor (2009) opined that this assertion does not, in any way, suggest that government bureaucracy remains the only force that drives development, though, it remains a necessary machinery.

Local government management in Nigeria, according to Agba, Stephen and Nnamani (2014), has been bedeviled by open market mentality, pitiable accounting processes, absence of reliable data needed for planning, excess politicization, insufficient funding and reduced revenue, greed, higher government interference, lack of direction and corruption. The bureaucracy at the level of the local government accounts for, and in some other cases, is implicated in some of the aforementioned pathologies. There is the need, therefore, to cast an indulgent eye on the bureaucracy, especially its structure at this local level with the singular objective of restructuring it to deliver development at this level of governance.

Historically, local government in Nigeria, since independence, has gone through a chequered progression. It remains the closest governmental apparatus to the citizens that is supposed to relate more swiftly to the needs of the people. It is charged with bringing the profound benefits of governmental administration to the citizens. These benefits, among others, include making democratic practices more proximate and also delivering efficient services to the masses. However, some of these benefits, so far, have remained largely elusive at the level of local government in Nigeria.

Reforms by past governments, which include the 1976 Local Government Reform, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979, the Dasuki 1984 Report of the Nigerian Local Government, the Handbook of Local Government Administration, 1992 and the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which were supposedly aimed at properly positioning governments at the local level for delivering the profound benefits of development, so far, have not yielded the desired results. The governments at the local level in Nigeria still grapple, seemingly, with the challenge of efficiently delivering services and also bringing development proximate to the people. Previous reforms of the local government system that were supposedly aimed at strengthening the political arm and bureaucratic arm of government at the local level, towards efficient performance have, thus far, failed to meet their objectives especially that of development. Governments at the local level in Nigeria in the past years have received several trillion naira in taxes as internal revenue and also from external sources. However, there seems to be a lacuna between the huge income received by governments at the local level in Nigeria and the fulfillment of their responsibilities as stipulated by the constitution.

Statement of the Problem

The seemingly poor output of the local government system across Nigeria is a pointer to the dysfunction of its bureaucracy among other factors. This mostly manifests in seemingly poor delivery of amenities and poor execution of policies. Attempts at reforming local governments in the country, so far, have not impacted enough on the service delivery aspects and development. Scholars, like Akpan and Ekanem (2013), and other contemporary commentators on the local government system in Nigeria have posited that the problems bedeviling local governments bother on lack of autonomy occasioned by interference from federal and state governments, especially as it relates to the administration and collection of internally generated revenue. While this may be true, the question now is, how efficient and prudent has present income receipts reaching the local government been managed? The local government in Nigeria, no doubt, will experience an increase in its revenue, if granted full autonomy. The question here, therefore, is: won't this improved revenue go the way present revenue went if the present structure and organization of the bureaucracy is maintained? Studies have revealed that the present debates on reforms of the local government have focused more on the political aspects with little attention on the bureaucracy (**Abdulhamid & Chima, 2015**). The part the bureaucracy plays in actualizing development at the community level is critical and therefore requires further and close study.

The nature and character of the bureaucracy at the local level in Nigeria with its present structures, organization, legal and formal (institutional) framework appear to lack adequate checks and balances between the political arm and bureaucratic arm, even at this, the bureaucracy at the local level appears to be the underdog. The civil servants, because of their seemingly disadvantaged position in the local government system, as a norm, obey, in most cases (hook, line and sinker) the instructions of the political actors. Since the civil servants are usually the custodians of funds, the possibility of a conspiratorial union between them and their political masters to divert local government resources becomes real. The local bureaucracy as it is presently constituted will definitely need some measures of reform with the possibility of the local people monitoring capital expenditures to act as a counter-check. What structural change will the bureaucracy at the local government level require to position it away from its present seemingly poor service status to optimal service delivery status? Could the seeming failure of local level in delivering development at their sphere of influence be contingent on its present structure, legal and institutional framework?

Objectives/ Hypotheses of the Study

The major objective of this study is to ascertain

- i. The effect of the structure/ arrangement of the bureaucracy at the local level on the attainment of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria.

The other objectives are to ascertain:

- ii. If deconcentration of the bureaucracy at the local level along ward level will improve its effectiveness in delivering developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States.
- iii. The indigenous staffing of some bureaucratic positions at the local government councils will impact on the achievement of developmental goals at the local level of government in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States.

Consequently, the hypotheses for the study are hereby stated as follows:

- H₀1: There is no significant relationship between the structure/ arrangement of the local bureaucracy and the achievement of developmental goals at the local government levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria.
- H₀2: There is no significant relationship between the deconcentration of the bureaucracy at the local level along the wards and the achievement of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States.
- H₀3: There is no significant relationship between indigenous staffing of some bureaucratic positions at the local councils and the achievement of developmental goals at the local government levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States.

Scope of the Study

This work was limited mainly to the structure of the bureaucracy at the local government level in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States, as it concerns effective delivery of services and

the drive for development at the local level. Edo and Rivers States were chosen for this study because of the heterogeneous and cosmopolitan nature of both states. They are ethnically diverse and are also not contiguous. These local government areas are in oil producing states, therefore revenues from oil are supposed to impact on their various local governments. Bayelsa State, on the other hand, is generally homogenous with Ijaw being the main language. Bayelsa is one of the newest states in the Nigerian federation and it shares boundary with Rivers State. The state, which is also an oil-producing state, has one of the largest crude oil and natural gas deposits in Nigeria. Apart from Yenagoa, most of the communities in Bayelsa are rural. The state is generally riverine with most communities surrounded by water, as opposed to what generally obtains in Edo and Rivers States. The period 2003 – 2015 was adopted for this study because it represented a twelve-year stretch of the operation of the bureaucracy at the local level in civilian or 'democratic' setting. The period, 1999 to 2003 can be regarded as the period of divesting military appendages from governance.

Operational Definition of Terms

Local government: A tier of government for the performance of certain basic services, which can best be decided upon and administered locally, taking the needs and conditions of area concerns. It unites the people in specific area to work for the interest and satisfaction of their common community needs.

Local governance: The collective actions, at the local level, of informal groups, community organisations, traditional institutions, labour associations, in their quest for collective actions.

Bureaucracy: A means of carrying out community action into rationally ordered social action. It is an expression of cultural values and a way of governing with intrinsic value. An administrative group located at particular local settings that drive development at the community level.

Deconcentration: A legal or administrative decentralization of functions from the local government bureaucracy to the ward bureaucracies.

Development: The ability to make and implement policies and laws for improved living standard and condition of the residents in the areas of improvement of infrastructures of roads, water, market, health, community development, rural electrification, education and sanitation.

Local bureaucracy: That arm of the local government that executes those responsibilities of the local government that are enshrined in the constitution. The local bureaucracy is the local government civil service.

Literature Review

Overview of the Bureaucracy

Max Weber defined bureaucracy as a formal organisation with a hierarchy of paid full-time officials who form a chain of commands (Atemie&Okaba, 1997). Weber (1947) posited that bureaucratic offices involve a long life tenure and permanence of official position. It is a legal system that emphasizes legal rational authority as distinct or different from traditional and charismatic authorities.

Akpomuvie (2005) posited that bureaucracy is a rational response to administrative strategy, which is required for the demands of complex organization and also for the promotion of systemic efficiency. According to him, the concept of the bureaucracy was highly amplified in the work of Max Weber, a German sociologist. Akpomuvie elaborated Weber's view of bureaucracy as a counterforce against patrimony and patriarchal leadership, which characterized human organization in Weber's time. Weber identified three types of organisation – the leader-oriented organisation, in which activities revolve round the leader; secondly, the patriarchal or patrimony-oriented organisation, in which activities revolve around the owner of the organisation, and lastly, the bureaucracy, which Weber viewed as the most efficient type of organisation because of its provision for rationality in the organisation (Akpomuvie, 2005).

Akpomuvie (2005) further enumerated a number of professional qualities, which typify the bureaucracy, to include free selection of staff based on ability and qualification, skills are acquired by specialized training and experience, the bureaucratic office holder must remain impersonal and formal in the execution of his official duties and the bureaucratic office holder is subject to authority and control in the areas of his official duties; he must live and act within the regulation of the organisation; he must not do damage the organisation or the government in his interaction with the public. His remuneration is fixed and the salary is defined by the demands of the job and not the worker's ability.

Ofotokun (2005) sees bureaucracy both as a problem and a process that is mostly central to administration. Quoting Stillman (1989), Ofotokun opined that bureaucracy not only denotes characteristics that are more than bothersome to modern organisation; but rather, it also connotes the formal structure of the human organisation, particularly, the collective personnel and structures of a government organisation. He posited that Weber (1946) view of bureaucracy should be located within his general theory of social action. This, according to him, is because all human action is directed by meanings. Therefore, in order to understand and rationalize actions, the motives and meanings underlining such actions must be appreciated. These actions, according to Weber, include affective or emotional actions, traditional actions and rational actions (Haralambos & Holborn, 2000).

According to Weber (1946) affective actions emanate from individual emotional states at a given time. Traditional action usually follows established customs and values while rational actions involve clear-cut awareness of objectives and goals, logical assessment

of the various ways and means of meeting an objective or a goal and the decision to select the most appropriate means.

The local government bureaucracy in Nigeria, from contemporary structure, organization and operation, exhibits most of the characteristics of the Weberian bureaucratic features. The operations of the local government structure are presently centralized at the local government headquarters. For example, the local government bureaucracy in Nigeria is made up of a hierarchy of officials with specialization at different departments. Secondly, there is a clear-cut chain of commands from the Heads of Local Government Administration [HOLGA] to departmental heads, down to lower level staff.

The personnel of the local government bureaucracy, to a very large extent, enjoy permanence of tenure. Presently, local government personnel enjoy a 35-year service or 60-year age tenure. Across the country, discipline, promotion and other conditions of service are regulated by the Local Government Service Commission, thereby eroding the autonomy of the local government system. Personnel of the local government bureaucracy are largely anonymous and neutral. The anonymity and neutrality of the local government personnel are accentuated by non-indigenes occupying the various positions of the bureaucracy. In line with another tenet of the Weberian bureaucracy, the salaries, allowances and remuneration of the local government personnel are fixed on particular grade levels except and unless one is promoted to another level based on merit, efficiency and good recommendation. To a very large extent, the features of the Weberian bureaucracy are domesticated in the local government bureaucracy across Nigeria.

However, Fatile and Ejalonibu (2015) argued that decentralizing the local government structure has the capacity to reduce poverty, facilitate a gradual increase in development efforts and also promote collaboration between the government and civil societies. The World Bank Group (2011), in its report, posited that decentralization makes for better political representation among various political, cultural, ethnic and religious groups in decision-making and removes the burden of routine task from top managers at the centre, leaving them to concentrate on policy. They agreed that decentralization will lead to creativity, innovativeness and responsiveness by allowing local experimentation. Deconcentration, which is a form of decentralization, is best suited for this role.

The Concept of Local Government

In any given nation, the incidence of development usually falls on the areas within the control and sphere of the local government. Every inch of the area where people reside is usually a local government area. Local government is seen as equivalent with local development. Presently, current discussion has shifted to how best development can be attained or delivered at the local level. Scholars, therefore, have developed the concept of Local Government around the prism of development and democratization.

Fatile and Ejalonibu (2015) posited that local government is situated within the idea that it is the governmental level that is better situated to effectively drive developmental policies that can also address myriad problems of service-delivery at the local level. Orewa and Adewumi (1992) aptly described local government as:

A necessary instrument of state or national government put in place to perform some basic services, which can be mostly decided upon and administered locally in the intimate awareness and understanding of the needs, conditions and peculiarities of area concerns. It unites inhabitants in a particular area under a government whose rules and functions complement those of others levels of government, which to a large extent, is in the interest of the local inhabitants with a view to satisfying their collective needs. The effectiveness of the government at this level is appraised by the level of development, social amenities it can provide, and also the level of satisfaction it brings to bear on the inhabitants of the area of control.

Gboyega (1987) viewed local government as a concept from two basic classifications – firstly he attempted to justify the need for local government as being essential for a democratic process or for administrative purposes like responsiveness, accountability and control. Conversely, the second class of concepts opined that the local government system contradicts the democratic process. He tried to justify this position on the ground that local government institutions are neither democratic in their internal operation or admits a responsiveness, accountability and control. Adeyemo (2005) opined that the aforementioned position may also be divided into different schools of thought with emphasis on the functions and responsibilities of local government. Tonwe (2005) further identified these schools of thought to be the Democratic Participatory School, the Efficient-Service School and the Developmental School.

Adeyemo (2005) explained that the democratic school of thought holds that the local governments in their functions are democratic and also afford the people political participation in addition to educating and socializing them. The efficiency school, according to him, is what is more central and important to local government. He is of the opinion that it is not the bringing about of democracy but that local government should be accessed by its success in the provision of efficient services. The developmental school emphasized mainly on how local government in the developing world can effectively drive the process for a better life, and also bring about improvement in the standard of living, socially and economically and how it can attract to it, a better share in the national wealth. Adeyemo categorized these approaches into two – the general and the developmental categories. The major functional items in the general category which sums up the idea of the democratic participatory and efficiency schools are democratic ideals, political participation, security and infrastructural services. Under the developmental category are national integration, social and economic development, and manpower resource development.

Tonwe (2004) posited that, like national government, local authorities have shifted their concern from law and order to the promotion of the overall welfare of the public and thereby have become partners in national/ social and economic development. In effect, Tonwe argued, local governments perform four-fold development functions in addition to the traditional regulatory functions. He listed this four-fold development functions to include promotion of popular participation, spurring economic development, social transformation and equitable distribution of the fruits of development

Adeyemo (2005) posited that, as a result of the foregoing, the government itself states the primary objectives of local government as follows, to bring about the activities of development and also services in line with the aspirations and wishes of the people; to expedite the application of democratic self-government closer to the local people, and also to encourage initiatives and leadership potential; to marshal human, material and other resources by involving the people to drive their own development; and to ease communication between the local people and the government. (Local Government Reform, 1976)

The developmental concept of Local Government, which has transcended law and order, local participation to direct participation in development ideals, is germane to this study because the occurrence of development falls on people at the local level. This is because every space in the polity is a localized space. Therefore, to achieve development, the local government must be strengthened for efficient delivery of development as this is the focus of every local government.

Wraith (1984) conceptualized local government as the act of decentralizing power which may take the format of de-concentration or devolution. He also sees local government as a means to stimulate cooperation and participation of the people towards improving their condition of living. It offers the community with some official arrangement which enables them to effectively manage their affairs effectively for their general good.

The Concept of Development

Development as a concept has attracted a plethora of discourse, especially in social sciences. Consequently, there is no accepted single definition of the concept (Eme&Emeh, 2012). However, Ohale and Kalu (2005) described development as a multi-dimensional concept with several interlocking aspects that include social, political, cultural and economic aspects. The social aspects include high level of literacy and healthcare, while economic development connotes industrialization, growth in output and per capita income. Political development connotes high degree of autonomy and self-rule, political stability and national cohesion. They argued that development is a holistic process whose elements are inter-dependent and vary simultaneously. They agreed that the common denominator to all the aspects of development is the human being. Consequently, Ohale and Kalu defined development as a sustainable multi-pronged process of good governance and socio-economic progress that has the integrity, wellbeing and security of the individual and the society at large (Ohale& Kalu, 2005).

Okoli and Onah (2002) asserted that development connotes movement forward, advancement and progress. It is the enhancement on the physical, which is material as well as the non-material facets of life. It involves actions, motions and reactions. A developing community is a society on motion, a people yearning for self-improvement and a group committed with and to its advancement through its own efforts.

Okoli and Onah (2002) also observed that economic and other social pointers are not the only attributes of development; it involves an advancement and positive change in their behaviour. According to Eme and Emeh (2012), development includes increase in citizens access to food, water and shelter, information and means of communication, health care delivery, good motorable roads, good education and justice. According to them, individuals' dignity, happiness, values, patriotism and quality of life increase when the aforementioned attributes are obtainable. This resonates with Todaro (1982) definition of development as a multi-dimensional process, which also involves the entire system, economic and social, changes in attitudes, customs and the people's beliefs.

According to Ujo, as cited in Eme and Emeh (2012), the main contention is that development is both a physical process and a state of mind; the institutional conversion on one hand and also the alteration of the mindset of the people on the other hand. Okoli (2002) contended that development encompasses positive (functional) and negative (dysfunctional) aspects and consequences simultaneously. Accordingly as a concept, development is the accomplishment of an ever shifting but always higher level of equilibrium between the positive (functional) and the negative (dysfunctional) element between the society and the individual. As a practice, it entails the simultaneous disruption and reordering of society to achieve material and non-material abundance and eroding the socio-psychological balance of the individual. However, he continued, development as a strategy should aim at simultaneously disrupting and reordering the society to achieve material and non-material abundance and reinforcing and restructuring society to equilibrate the socio-psychological balance of the individual.

Tonwe (2004: 20) stated that development involves satisfaction of basic human needs like food and shelter, education and health and also his deeper psychic needs like feeling significant, to contribute in shaping one's life and communities' future.

According to Alapiki (2003), development pertains to the ability of man to take control of his environments, to manipulate and manage progressively everything in that environment to increase his production and productivity to achieve a qualitatively better life.

Nabhon and Perepreghabofa (2008: 1158) posited that available evidence as revealed in the literature of development portends the concept to be nebulous hence it has different meaning in different contexts. According to them, the meaning of development began and became more focused from the 1950s when the east-west politics with the resulting competition for the allegiance of states that had just gained independence was at its peak.

In strict economic terms, development has traditionally meant economic growth measured with yearly increases in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or Gross National Product (GNP), etc. the challenge of poverty, unemployment and income distribution were of secondary importance then. He posited that even when some developing nations, especially in the third world did achieve the UN growth target, the standard of living in most parts of Africa remained unchanged indicating that something was basically wrong with this narrow definition of development. Consequently, there became a general call for the disbandment of GNP and strident attack on widespread absolute poverty, increasingly inequitable income distribution, rising unemployment, etc. (Nabhon & Perepreghabofa, 2008).

This shift on the understanding of the concept of development was firmed up on 8th September, 2000 by the United Nations when 189 Heads of States and government proclaimed the indices for the measurement of development under the rubric of Millennium Development Goals. Contemporary focus has shifted from the rubrics of Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable development is defined generally, as the development that meets the needs of the present population without conceding the capacity of future generations to meet their developmental needs (Ezeah, Iyanda & Nwangwu, 2013).

According to Ezeah, Iyanda and Nwangwu (2013), sustainable development embraces environmental, economic and social sustainability, which generally can be attained by proper management of physical, natural and human capital. Introducing the book, 'People: From impoverishment to empowerment', Speth (2013) sees sustainable development as that which not only promotes economic growth but distributes its benefits equally. He further sees development as that which regenerates the environment, empowers the people, enlarges the opportunities and choices of the poor and provides for their participation in decisions affecting them. The UN Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Agenda (2012) concluded that:

The new framework must be based on an understanding of the importance of and a commitment to further promote resilient, legitimate and inclusive national and local institutions, as well as inclusive participation in public processes.

Bureaucracy and Development

Eme and Emeh (2012) stated that the nexus between the bureaucracy, that is, public administration and national development is no longer relevant as it were because of the various criticisms against the place of the public bureaucracy in fostering development at the rural level in spite of enormous developmental policies and programs that are deliberately rural-based in Nigeria. According to them, living in rural communities still remains unattractive.

Abdulsalami (2010) posited that the role the bureaucracy plays in socio-economic development, especially in Nigeria includes, but is not limited to, security of life and

property, infrastructural facilities administration in the areas such as transportation, communication, water resources management, energy, ensuring freedom of movement and above all the preservation of the law and the maintenance of order. He further stated that the effectiveness, efficiency and usefulness of these public services depend, to a great extent, on the nature and character of its bureaucracy. He concluded that the bureaucracy therefore, plays a pivotal role in assisting the political class in the formulation, execution and management of public plans, procedures and guidelines designed to foster the socio-economic development of the nation and also to promote nation-building. Abdulsalami concluded that the Nigerian political class is dominated by amateur politicians and therefore such political immaturity puts a heavy task on the bureaucracy in ensuring the proper functioning of government. He further stated that the Nigerian political culture is characterized by:

1. Little awareness by the citizens about the work processes of government.
2. The immaturity of the political class which prevents the politicians from knowing the dynamics of holding political office. Because of this, political office holders hardly articulate socio-economic problems of the society for agenda-setting in government.
3. Apathetic and alienated masses who always don't expect anything from the government because of loss of confidence and betrayal of trust by the political class overtime.

Gimba (2016) stated that public policies at the local government levels are characterized by poor performance, dismal failures and failed expectations which are noticeable in the community by persistent agricultural stagnation, hunger, poverty, diseases, unemployment, underemployment, poor housing, low life expectancy, high birth and death rate, low life expectancy, malnutrition ignorance among others. Tonwe (2008) posited that even though local governments have shifted their concern from law and order to the promotion of the general welfare of the community and thereby have become partners with the national and state governments in national/social development their performances cannot be said to be optimal.

Eme and Ugwu (2011), citing Nnoli (1980), Adebayo (2001) and Yusufu (1992), stated that the structural problem affecting the Nigerian bureaucracy, especially at the local level, can be categorized into four basic areas: personnel regulations, personnel qualification, organizational structure and work environment. They argued that each of these results is weakening the capacity of the public bureaucracy.

Decentralization and Development

Haque (2013) posited that decentralization of policies relating to development to sub-national or sub-state institutions have been emphasized in some developing countries due to the numerous roles carried out by central and state governments. He further argued that socio-economic development must require the active involvement of the people. According to him, "resource mobilization necessitates local initiative and devolution of power is a pre-condition for democratic mode of governance". Manor

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The other two characteristics of the Marxian bureaucracy are alienation and incompetence. The Marxian theory of the bureaucracy emphasizes the lack of imagination and initiatives by the bureaucrats who are habitually scared of taking responsibility. In addition to this, the process of self-glorification is accompanied by what Marx termed as “sordid materialism” of bureaucrats; in other words, the continuous and internal struggle for promotion, careerism and infantile attachment to trivial status symbol and prestige among bureaucrats (Eme&Ugwu, 2011:43).

In the view of Uzoma (2005), the Marxists' view of the bureaucracy is that it is a complete misrepresentation of itself. He elaborated that Marxists associate bureaucracy with over three forms of alienation, viz: relations between bureaucrats and outsiders, alienation within the bureaucracy itself and the autonomous and oppressive force of the bureaucracy, which to a large extent is felt by a majority of the people. Uzoma further posited that Marxists see bureaucracy as a form of imperialism in which the bureaucrats aspire to extend the frontiers of the function and prerogative in order to make themselves more relevant to the society.

Weber (1946) also defined the bureaucracy as 'the means of carrying community action over, into rationally ordered social action... an instrument for socializing relations of power, bureaucracy has been and is a power instrument of the first order'. Weber (1946) contended that the civilization of humans was purely an evolution from the primitive stage to the stage of rationalization and further to the complex stage with capacity for relationships. According to Weber (1946), the progression of societies is brought about by traditional, charismatic and legal-rational authority (Fry, 1989). According to Wasim (2013), the legal-rational type of authority is what constitutes the fulcrum of Weber's concept of bureaucracy and the foundation of modern civilization as it is premised on “a belief in the legitimacy of pattern of normative rules and the rights of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands” (Weber, 1946).

Wasim (2013) stated further that “since Weber contends that bureaucracy grows because of society's needs of provision of education, health and social service through collecting taxes and other forms of revenue, it is imperative, therefore to divide work according to specialization and capacity in order to achieve the goals desired and set by the society. Nigeria's local government bureaucracy, with all the reforms carried out so far, has scarcely met adequate provisions of the afore-mentioned services expounded by Weber (1946).

The Weberian and Marxian theories of bureaucracy are relevant to this work to the extent that the Weberian position explained the structure and organization of the local government bureaucracy, while the Marxian position explained, succinctly, the role of the political class in impoverishing the masses by conniving with the bureaucrats to corner their common wealth.

The Weberian theory of bureaucracy is also relevant to this work as it has revealed that the bureaucracy at the local government level in Nigeria did not meet the prescription

that bureaucracy grows because of society's needs of provision of education, health, social services, collecting taxes, etc. The theory also reveals how the bureaucracy at the local government level in Nigeria deviates radically from the ideal bureaucracy in terms of efficiency and service-delivery. It also shows how the short-comings of the bureaucracy cut across the entire spectrum of the local government bureaucracy.

While Ohwona (1995) had stated that the bureaucracy at the local government level in Nigeria is patterned along the line of management approach with complex bureaucratic set-up, Oslin (2011) posited that the bureaucracy should be an expression of the cultural norms of the environment. Simply put, the bureaucracy should be domesticated. Oslin (2011:8) further argued that an ideal bureaucratic structure is assumed to contribute to unity and harmonization, accuracy and speed, predictability, compliance and loyalty, impartiality, reduction of friction, in addition to material and personal cost, knowledge of files and an institutionalized link and ensuring continuity from one government to the other.

Methods and Materials

This paper adopted the mixed methods approach and is generally ex-post facto in design, because the information were sourced after established facts. The research is generally survey. The data of the study were both qualitatively and quantitatively sourced. The qualitative data entailed in-depth interviews from Heads of Local Government Administration (HOLGAs) in six, out of the nine local governments studied across Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States. The questions were weaved basically around the objective of the study, that is to ascertain the effect of the structure/ arrangement of the bureaucracy at the local level on the attainment of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria.

The primary source also entailed the use of questionnaires, while the secondary data consist of a 12-year budgetary record of the estimates and expenditure of the indices of the study in the nine local governments in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria. A combination of these methods provided stronger evidence in the study which led to a reliable conclusion through convergence and corroboration of findings.

The questionnaire, which was graded along the five likert scale to elicit responses to observable performances (attributes) of the local governments studied, was adopted to test the hypothesis of the study in order to establish the relationship between the two variables, that is, the independent and dependent variables. The study determined if the relationship between the structure (organisational & legal) and institutional framework of the local government was hampering their capacity for effective realisation of developmental goals. The first part of the questionnaire elicited the demographic details of respondents, while the second part elicited their responses concerning the effect of the structure and organization of the local bureaucracy. To elicit respondents' responses on the hypothesis, it was broken down into four observable attributes for which respondents, from their observation, are to either strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree. These observable measurement attributes are:

- (a) improvement in construction & maintenance of earth roads,
- (b) improvement in provision and maintenance of water supply,
- (c) improvement in provision and maintenance of health facilities, and
- (d) decrease in unemployment rate/ poverty reduction

The number of questionnaire copies distributed at each of the twelve wards was 44, except for South Uneme I (Ward 009) in Etsako Central Local Government of Edo State and Biseni I (Ward 012) in Yenagoa Local Government of Bayelsa State which got 45 each. The study also relied on secondary data from the various local governments under study. It examined budgetary allocations and actual expenditure for the improvement of infrastructure such as roads, market, water, health, education and sanitation, from 2003 and 2013. The data obtained from the primary and secondary sources were analysed using the NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software for the interviews, the Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient and the Z-score, which is a test for proportionality, in analysing the budgetary performance of the nine local governments studied.

The population of this study was drawn from local government areas in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States. The total population of the study comprised of the total population of the wards in which the researcher conducted the study. Total population from Bayelsa State was 54, 347, total population from Edo State was 58, 493, while that of Rivers State was 38, 183. This gives a grand total of 151,023.

The sample size for the study was determined by applying the Taro Yamani Formula as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

n = Sample Size

N = Total Population

e = Level of significance = 0.05

Consequently, the sample size for Bayelsa State is 397; that of Edo State is 397; while Rivers State is 396. This gives a total sample size of 1,190. Copies of the questionnaire were, therefore, divided among the nine wards in each of the three local governments sampled in the three states. Table 1 summarizes the actual number of questionnaire distribution across the various wards in the selected local governments in the three States.

The study adopted the Multi-stage Sampling Technique in determining the sample size for the study. Firstly, the number of local government areas in each of the senatorial districts in both states and their total voting population were identified using the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) voters' register of 2013. The INEC voters' register was used for the sampling because, according to Oyedele (2013), the national population commission has acceded to the fact that Nigerian population figures, so far, have been inaccurate. Elements from the population, who were 18 years and above, and are registered voters, were randomly sampled from a local government, each,

of the senatorial districts. The local government areas for the purpose of the research were further broken down into their various wards, where copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the individual elements according to the sample size that was calculated using the Taro Yamani Formula.

Also, secondary data, which were local government budgetary records concerning the various indices of development as identified for this study, were sourced. The indices of development for this study were roads, water, market, health, community development, rural electrification, education and sanitation. The budgetary records for the aforementioned indices from the nine local government areas over a twelve-year period (2003 – 2015), were obtained. The data were further summarized in percentages for analysis and analysed.

The Test Re-Test Method was adopted to determine the validity and reliability of the primary data. As with the primary data, the questionnaire was used to source data for the validity and reliability test. A total of 270 copies of the questionnaire were re-administered to almost the same respondents in the same wards in the selected local government areas of Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States, after an interval of a month. Ten copies of the questionnaire were redistributed in each of the wards in the areas of survey. This questionnaire redistribution, enabled for the determination of the reliability and validity of the first test, which was calculated using the Reliability Statistics – Cronbach's Alpha. A total of 88 copies of the questionnaire from Bayelsa State, 90 from Edo State and 88 from Rivers State were returned, as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Frequency Distribution Table of Respondents for Validity & Reliability Test

Sex (Gender)	States			Total no. of respondents by gender
	Bayelsa (%)	Edo (%)	Rivers (%)	
Male	48 (54.7%)	42 (43.8%)	53 (60%)	143 (53.8%)
Female	40 (45.3%)	48 (56.2%)	35 (40%)	123 (46.2%)
Total no. of respondents by state	88 (33.1%)	90 (33.8%)	88 (33.1%)	266 (100%)

Source: Field Data, 2016

Table 2 – Case Processing Summary for Validity & Reliability Test

		N	%
Cases	Valid	90	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	90	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 3 – Reliability Statistics for Validity & Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.936	.936	20

The Cronbach's Alpha test of reliability was used to test internal consistency of the research instrument. The Cronbach's Alpha score, r , is .936, which indicates a high level of reliability. The data of this study from the reliability statistics is therefore valid and reliable.

DATA ANALYSIS

▪ **Interview Data**

The results of the NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis are hereby presented in line with the objectives of the study.

Responses on the in-depth interview

- i. Researcher: Can the present structure and organization of the local government bureaucracy still promote good service-delivery and drive development?

Opinions on the present structure are divided into two broad categories. There are responses on the perceived potency of bureaucracy while other responses show that the problems of bureaucracy lies in the wider societal factors that undermines bureaucracy

NAME	DESCRIPTION
affirmation of the potency of bureaucracy	Theme In response to the effectiveness of bureaucracy in improvement service delivery

Potency of bureaucracy

... Yes, the present structure of the local government bureaucracy can still ensure good service-delivery...

...The present structure of the local government bureaucracy, as it is today, can still support effective service-delivery and development at the local government level. For me, I don't see anything wrong with the structure. However, no system can be said to be perfect, therefore, the present structure and system can be improved

...The present structure and organization of the local government bureaucracy, in my opinion, can support service-delivery and development...

...The present structure and organization of the local government bureaucracy, in my opinion, can support service-delivery and development

One respondent held that the structure is the problem while other respondents pointed out the wider social factors implicated a number of factors as listed below

NAME	DESCRIPTION
structure as the problem	Theme indicating that the structure is the problem
the entrenched problem of cultural problems affecting service delivery	Theme indicating the problems of structure
the problem of competence	Theme indicating the issue of competence as the problem affecting structure
competence affecting bureaucracy	Theme depicting the problems of the bureaucratic structure
incompetence as a bane in the traditional institutions	Theme depicting the problem of the traditional institution
the problem of funding	Theme depicting deficiencies of funding as the bane of the bureaucracy
the problem of leadership	Theme depicting that leadership is the problem
the problem of non-cooperation	
autonomy as factor in bureaucracy	Theme in response to perceived deficiency of bureaucracy

Structure as the problem

...With the present structure and operations of the bureaucracy, it may not assist in service-delivery and development. In fact, it will slow down the speed of doing things. Administrative jobs are mostly done at the headquarters and if there are jobs at the ward level, engineers and others are assigned to supervise such jobs and report back to the headquarters.

Researcher: Will the deconcentration of the local government bureaucracy to the wards improve service delivery and development?

NAME	DESCRIPTION
Local government distance from the people	Themes showing perceived distance from communities
Deconcentration as a basis for grassroots participation	Theme depicting that deconcentration would encourage grass root participation

Most Responses indicated that deconcentration of the local government bureaucracy was beneficial as the Local government authority was far from the people and would encourage grassroots participation. A respondent had this to say

...It will go a long way to improve service delivery at the wards because it will, in a way, form a basis for grassroots participation. It will help the communities in ensuring that

projects are well done since we at the headquarters are not too close to some of the wards. It will also serve as a close contact to the people at the ward level. It will be a good development if it can be funded (key informant response).

Another participant had this to say

...It will go a long way to improve service delivery at the wards because it will, in a way, form a basis for grassroots participation. It will help the communities in ensuring that projects are well done since we at the headquarters are not too close to some of the wards. It will also serve as a close contact to the people at the ward level. It will be a good development if it can be funded.

The NVivo analysis on deconcentration indicates that the local governments are mostly distant from most of the communities, therefore, deconcentration of the bureaucracy to the communities will form a basis for grassroots participation.

iii. *Researcher: Will it be desirable if the staff at the ward bureaucracy is manned by qualified indigenes where feasible?*

Name	Description
A sense of entitlement	Theme In response to indigenisation as a strategy to improve service delivery
Qualification as competence	Theme showing attitudinal and cognitive acceptance of qualification as needed boost for service delivery

Most respondents indicated that indigenisation is a complex issue which has to be moderated by the factors of qualification and the right attitude. Below are some of the responses.

...it is not advisable, in my opinion, for indigenes to occupy those offices. This is because indigenes are likely not to obey the rule of the bureaucracy because of the closeness to their people. My experience, for example, is that participants from particular areas hardly participate in seminars organized for them, they usually take things for granted. This attitude may likely be transferred into the decentralized ward bureaucracies.

The NVivo analysis here indicates that local indigenes manning the deconcentrated bureaucracy will enable a sense of entitlement and may also be a strategy to improve service-delivery. However, this is dependent on qualification and positive attitude of the indigenes. If these two are taken into consideration, indigenizing the deconcentrated bureaucracy will be desirable.

▪ **Analysis of the Hypotheses**

Hypotheses Testing using the Spearman's Correlation Coefficient

Table 4 – Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
devpt_goal	1116	75.00	24.00	99.00	85.6810	12.78959	-1.302	.073
Restructuring	1116	16.00	4.00	20.00	17.7814	2.59400	-2.247	.073
Indigenisation	1116	16.00	4.00	20.00	16.0251	4.08072	-1.127	.073
Fusion	1116	16.00	4.00	20.00	17.1048	3.10659	-1.470	.073
Deconcentration	1116	16.00	4.00	20.00	17.4310	2.35840	-1.752	.073
Participation	1116	15.00	4.00	19.00	17.3387	2.44399	-1.976	.073
Valid N (listwise)	1116							

Table 4 indicates the general responses of respondents are unevenly skewed to the left, therefore, it is appropriate to analyse the responses using a non-parametric test. The spearman rho is, therefore, aptly deployed in this regard.

Hypothesis 1 (H₀₁): There is no significant relationship between the structure/ arrangement of the local bureaucracy and the achievement of developmental goals at the local government levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria.

Table 5 – Spearman's Rho *Correlations*

			Devpt. Goal	Restructuring
Spearman's rho	Devpt. Goal	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.935**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	1116	1116
	Restructuring	Correlation Coefficient	.935**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	1116	1116

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows a Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient of .935. The null hypothesis as stated that there is no significant relationship between the structure of organization of the local bureaucracy and the achievement of developmental goals at the local government levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers state is hereby rejected. In other words, there is a strong relationship between the structure of the organization of the local government bureaucracy and the achievement of developmental goals.

Hypothesis 2 (H_{o2}): There is no significant relationship between the deconcentration of the bureaucracy at the local level along the wards and the achievement of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States.

Table 6 – Spearman's Rho *Correlations*

			Devpt. Goal	Deconcentration
Spearman's rho	Devpt. Goal	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.921**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	1116	1116
	Deconcentration	Correlation Coefficient	.921**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	1116	1116

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 revealed a strong significant relationship between deconcentration of the local government bureaucracy along ward level and the attainment of developmental goals. With the Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient as .921, the null hypothesis, stating that there is no significant relationship between deconcentration of the local government bureaucracy along ward level and the achievement of developmental goals at the local government levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers state is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 3 (H_{o3}): There is no significant relationship between indigenous staffing of the bureaucratic positions at the local councils and the achievement of developmental goals at the local government levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States.

Table 7 – Spearman's Rho *Correlations*

			Devpt. Goal	Indigenisation
Spearman's rho	Devpt. Goal	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.907**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	1116	1116
	Indigenisation	Correlation Coefficient	.907**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	1116	1116

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 shows that there is a strong significant relationship between indigenisation of staff of the bureaucratic positions at the local councils and achievement of

developmental goals at the local government levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States with the Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient of .907. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between indigenous staffing and the achievement of developmental goals at the local government levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers state is hereby rejected.

▪ **Analysis of Budgetary Records [secondary data]**

The secondary data for this study are analysed using the Z-score Statistical Method. The 12 year budgetary performances for the local governments were first converted into average scores and then into Z-scores for easy comparison of the local governments.

Table 8 – Average Percentage Budgetary Performances of the Local Governments from 2003 – 2015

Local Govt.	Percentage Budgetary Performances							
		Water	Market	Health	Community Development	Rural Electrification	Education	Sanitation
Ikpoba-Okha	15.28	8.61	20.00	6.78	2.15	8.01	8.12	15.05
Esan North-East	15.14	4.69	1.33	8.22	16.77	23.28	6.52	10.26
Etsako Central	22.06	12.97	12.84	15.74	4.89	26.33	5.18	15.49
Ahoada West	27.28	43.38	39.41	34.67	31.34	32.41	27.12	32.60
Oyigbo	44.97	57.89	72.68	80.70	40.73	31.59	37.84	60.88
Emohua	33.73	41.78	9.57	19.84	45.86	23.61	42.7	38.09
Brass	25.27	35.21	28.88	16.38	29.38	26.49	30.24	20.81
Yenagoa	21.44	22.21	25.21	25.28	26.39	25.23	19.54	18.20
Sagbama	33.73	41.78	9.57	19.84	16.15	17.80	19.46	12.88

Table 8 above presents the average budgetary performances of the local governments reviewed, on the indices under study. According to the table, Esan North-East Local Government with 15.14% had the least budgetary performance on roads infrastructure, while Oyigbo Local Government had the highest with 44.7%. Similarly, the aggregate budgetary performance on water, market, healthcare and sanitation were also highest in Oyigbo while Esan North-East also had the lowest aggregate performance on water, health and sanitation for the period.

Emohua Local Government had the highest average performance (45.86%) on community development and education while Ikpoba-Okha and Etsako Central, each, had the lowest on both indices. On rural electrification, Ahoada West had the utmost, while Ikpoba-Okha had the lowest performance. In general, most of the local governments performed greatly below average for the period under evaluation. However, to determine a near-exact intra and inter-state comparison of the Local

Governments' performances, the average scores were converted to Z-scores and further analysed as presented in Table 4.54 below.

Table 9 – Descriptive Statistics for Z-scores Analysis is

Performance	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Road	9	15.14	44.97	26.5432	9.66894
Water	9	4.69	57.89	29.8365	18.40578
Market	9	1.33	72.68	24.3856	21.51124
Health	9	6.78	80.70	25.2754	22.42187
Community Development	9	2.15	45.86	23.7383	15.00942
Rural Electrification	9	8.01	32.41	23.8609	7.38444
Education	9	5.18	42.70	21.8582	13.69750
Sanitation	9	10.26	60.88	24.9177	16.33119
Valid N (listwise)	9				

The table above shows the measurement statistics for the analysis of the secondary data (the local government budgetary records collated). These defined descriptive statistics are further used for the Z-scores analysis.

According to the Z-score formula, the average score, against which the performances of the local governments are measured, is zero (0). In other words, performances below the average score (0) indicates a general low budgetary performance on the indices being analysed. Table 7 below presents the results of the Z-scores analysis of the performances of the selected local governments in Edo State, Rivers State and Bayelsa State on the indices under focus.

Table 10 – Z-scores for Budgetary Performance by Local Government Area

	Road	Water	Market	Health	Community Development	Rural Electrification	Education	Sanitation
Ikpoba-Okha	-1.16512	-1.15347	-0.20372	-0.82467	-1.43854	-2.14699	-1.00298	-0.60403
Esan North-East	-1.17912	-1.36625	-1.07191	-0.76066	-0.46441	-0.07908	-1.11972	-0.89746
Etsako Central	-0.46343	-0.91628	-0.53686	-0.42506	-1.25584	0.33495	-1.21729	-0.57745
Ahoada West	0.07583	0.73571	0.69826	0.41908	0.50646	1.15774	0.38401	0.47018
Oyigbo	1.90576	1.52398	2.24493	2.47192	1.13176	1.04666	1.16681	2.20194
Emohua	0.74285	0.64911	-0.68883	-0.24221	1.47379	-0.03367	1.52163	0.80678
Brass	-0.13168	0.29218	0.20874	-0.39658	0.3759	0.35629	0.61219	-0.25156
Yenagoa	-0.52795	-0.41409	0.03822	0.00039	0.17667	0.18496	-0.1694	-0.41134
Sagbama	0.74285	0.64911	-0.68883	-0.24221	-0.5058	-0.82087	-0.17525	-0.73706

The result of the Z-scores analysis above, shows a general poor performance by the local governments under review. From the table, Oyigbo Local Government had best budgetary performance on all the indices except for community development and rural electrification for which Emohua and Ahoada West topped the list, respectively. Generally, Ikpoba-Okha Local Government performed least satisfactorily compared to other local governments with a completely below-average performance. Also, the local governments in Rivers State performed generally better than those in Edo and Bayelsa States.

A Review of Data Analyses Results

The results of the data analyses were reviewed to situate them within the objective of the study; that is, evaluating how the objective of the study was achieved. The present structure of the bureaucracy at the local level cannot support the adequate attainment of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States. The result of the Spearman's analysis of the hypothesis, which is derived from the objective, indicates a correlation coefficient of .935. This shows that there is a significant relationship between the structure of the bureaucracy and the attainment of developmental goals. However, this relationship is negative and does not translate to effective delivery of development. The NVivo analysis of the in-depth interviews and the results of the secondary data analysis also confirm this assertion.

The second objective, which was to determine if the deconcentration of the bureaucracy at the local level along ward level will improve its effectiveness in delivering developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States, was also achieved. The result of Spearman's Rho Correlation analysis of the hypothesis derived from it, .921, indicates that deconcentrating the bureaucracy to the ward level has the capacity to improve its effectiveness in delivering developmental goals. Similarly, the NVivo analysis of the in-depth interviews supports the findings of the questionnaire.

The third objective, which was to determine if the indigenous staffing of some bureaucratic positions at the local government councils will impact on the achievement of developmental goals at the local level of government in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States, was also achieved by measuring the hypothesis derived from it. The Spearman's Rho Correlation coefficient of .907 indicated a strong relationship between indigenisation of some of the bureaucratic positions, especially at the ward levels and the achievement of developmental goals. The result of the NVivo analysis of the in-depth interview further revealed that local indigenes manning the deconcentrated bureaucracy at the ward level will enable a sense of entitlement.

Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

Findings

This study examined the effect of the structure and organization of the local bureaucracy on the achievement of developmental goals at the local government levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria.

A cursory look at the 12-year budgetary records and actual expenditure of the local governments under study revealed a very low budgetary performance regarding those indices of development as identified in the study. These indices are roads, water, market, health, community development, rural electrification, education and sanitation. This shows therefore, that the bureaucracy, as presently constituted, lacks capacity for optimal performance. This resonates with Gimba (2016), who opined that public policies at the local government levels are characterized by poor performance, dismal failures and failed expectations. Tonwe (2008) had also posited that even though local government had shifted her concern from law and order to general welfare... to social development, their performance cannot be said to be optimal.

The study further revealed that the present structure and organization of local governments, especially the bureaucracy, does not support adequate development at that level. For example, the study confirmed that there is a significant relationship between the structure of organization of the local bureaucracy and the achievement of developmental goals. Eme and Ugwu (2011), citing Nnoli (1980), Adebayo (2001) and Yusufu (1992), had identified that the Nigerian bureaucracy is affected by structural problems. They argued that the entire structure – personnel, organizational structure and work environment – result in weakening the capacity of the Nigerian public bureaucracy of which the local government bureaucracy is a part. Oslin (2011) also stated that an ideal bureaucratic structure is assumed to contribute to unity and harmonization, accuracy and speed, predictability, compliance and loyalty, impartiality, etc. The local government bureaucracy, which ought to deliver on optimal performance, structurally operates within the milieu of the Weberian bureaucratic model. This study has revealed that this model, from its structural perspective, has to be remodelled. While the key informants from the interview do not see anything wrong with the present structure, they are not opposed to improvements to the present structure of the local government bureaucracy.

The study also confirmed that there is a significant relationship between indigenous staffing of the bureaucratic positions at the local councils and the achievement of developmental goals at that level. Orewa and Adewumi (1992), in their definition of local government, see it as a tool set-up to perform certain essential services, which can best be decided and administered upon, locally, in the intimate knowledge and understanding of the needs, conditions and peculiarity of the areas concerned. Indigenous staffing of the local government bureaucracy will best meet this intimate knowledge and understanding of their localities. Most of respondents from the interviews indicated that indigenizing the local government bureaucracy is a complex issue which has to be moderated by factors of qualification and right attitude. The agreement here is that the employment of qualified indigenes with the right attitude is desirable at the ward bureaucracies. However, indigenous staffing of the bureaucracy will translate to non-neutrality of the actors at the local bureaucracy, especially at the ward levels. Neutrality is a major tenet of the Weberian Ideal Bureaucracy. This finding therefore interrogates this tenet.

The study also established a significant relationship between the deconcentration of the local government bureaucracy along ward level and the attainment of developmental goals. This is in line with Hague (2013) who had posited that deconcentration and devolution are more relevant when it comes to accountability at the local level. Wraith (1984) sees the local government as offering the community with some official arrangement which enable them to effectively manage their affairs for their general good. While the prescription of Hague and Wraith are generic and blurred in nature, the findings of this study brought their prescription into very sharp focus. The study also confirmed the report of the World Bank Group (2011) that decentralization makes for better political representation among various political, cultural, ethnic and religious groups in decision-making and removes the burden of routine task from top managers at the center, leaving them to concentrate on policy. They also agreed that decentralization will lead to creativity, innovativeness and responsiveness by allowing local experimentation. This study also upholds the submission of another World Bank Group report by Ahmad, Devarajan, Khemani and Shah (2005). They posited that the motive of decentralization is the failure of basic services such as health, education, water, sanitation, etc. Therefore, improving service-delivery in these areas is what drives decentralization efforts because these services are locally consumed; besides these services were also historically locally provided. Responses from the interviews also indicated that deconcentration of the local government bureaucracies to the ward levels will be beneficial to the local government authority. This, according to them is because the local government headquarters, where the bureaucracy is presently located is far from the people. Besides, deconcentration will also encourage grassroots participation. Deconcentration of the bureaucracy to the ward level will bring about optimal service delivery and development.

Conclusion

This study was triggered by the observed dismal performances of local governments across the country. Existing studies regarding the dysfunction of local governments had pointed to the political direction as the major cause of their poor performances. Little empirical study was done on the role of the bureaucracy in actualizing development at this level, even though scholars had identified its overarching importance in large organizations and government.

The study established that the present structure of local governments across the country, which is patterned along the Weberian model, will need to be altered and improved upon for it to deliver on its core mandate. Bureaucratic neutrality and impersonality have also alienated the people from governmental activities because the bureaucracy, as the operation arm of government, is not driven by the indigenes. The bureaucrats who are mostly non-indigenes, in some cases, do not relate with the people. They are concerned mainly with implementing policies, which may not be people-oriented. The present structure of the local government bureaucracy, which has some of the characteristics of Weber's neutrality and impersonality principles have, so far, not yielded the desired result of efficient service-delivery. The indigenisation of the proposed ward

bureaucracies can be achieved if the present structure of the local governments is altered to drive development at that level. With adequate checks and balances from town hall meetings and interactions, the ward bureaucrats will be made to be on their toes to drive service-delivery. The case of indigenous teachers absconding from the field where they are posted to, for instance, was possible because of inadequate checks. The proposed new structure, therefore, will most likely check this anomaly.

Neutrality of personnel, which is also a major tenet of the Weberian Ideal Bureaucracy, can no longer be sustained as a factor for efficient delivery of services and meeting objectives, especially in the Nigerian local government setting. The bureaucracy, if deconcentrated to the ward levels, can no longer be said to be neutral with the participation of qualified local indigenes. The study found out, therefore, that continued neutrality of local government personnel on issues concerning their development can no longer drive efficient service-delivery. The indigenes must be actively involved for development to thrive.

Recommendations

Considering the pivotal role of the bureaucracy in the execution of values, it is hereby recommended that –

- i. Part X, Sections 68 – 75 of the Edo State of Nigeria 2000 Local Government Bye-Laws, as applicable in Bayelsa and Rivers States (and indeed all other states in Nigeria), which deals with the appointment of local government secretaries and local government directors, should be amended by their various Houses of Assembly to include positions that will be created in the ward bureaucracies. This is with a view to restructuring and repositioning the local government bureaucracies towards efficient performances in line with the findings of this study;
- ii. States Houses of Assembly in Bayelsa, Edo, Rivers and other states should also take steps to amend Part of their Local Government Bye-Laws, which gives effect to the creation of executive councils, to accommodate a four-man bureaucratic structure at the ward level. This should be termed 'Local Government Ward Executive'. This will give legal effect to the deconcentration of the bureaucratic structure up to the ward levels.

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