

## Political and Administrative Structures of Governance in Local Government System in Africa: Nigeria and Republic of Guinea

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### Abstract

Across the Globe, both administrative and political structures played some important roles in the administration of local government through their responsiveness in the development of local areas in order to empowering the populace with the view to make citizenry feel the significant of good governance at the grassroots level, democratization, the enlistment of non-governmental organizations and related agencies not only increases grassroots participation with government but guarantees improved standard of living. However, it appears that both administrative and political structures are the basic obstacles confronting local government in providing social services to the citizenry within their jurisdiction. This study therefore compared administrative and political structures of local governance in the delivery of developmental social service in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea. Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Data gathered were analyzed using descriptive and content analysis. The study revealed that administrative structure of governance exists in terms of personnel administration of the study areas. Local Governments in Nigeria has 64.7% while Republic of Guinea has 62.7%. And, the difference in democratic selection of local governance in the two countries is captured mean values ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.61 and 2.16 for Republic of Guinea and Nigeria respectively. The study concluded that administrative and political structures of local government has significant impact on transparency and accountability of local governance in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea.

**Key words:** Administrative; Administration; Political; Local Governance; Local Government; Local Government System

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### INTRODUCTION

Local self-government is, of course, the most familiar and universal form of democratic decentralization. In common parlance, local authorities are often dignified by the title of 'local legislatures'. How far this had any real meaning obviously depends on the extent to which they are required, *de jure or de facto*, to act under the instructions of the central administration and to submit their decisions to central approval. In most countries there is a strong tendency for local authorities to become a more decentralized administrative agencies of the central government, especially in respect of important services (such as public health, public housing, water supplies, sewerage, public utilities and, in some countries, police and fire) they are called upon to provide. This is equally due to their need of central subventions in funding these 'mandatory' services, as well as to keep in check all forms of public expenditure, as a means of regulating the economy and enforcing certain priorities.

It is noteworthy that this tendency seems independent of the constitutional status. In Britain, they are seen as legitimate authorities in their own right', unlike in other countries, where they are subject to administrative units. These factors differentiate local government in Turkey from what they are in France such that France people's desire to locally administer their own affairs is strong, in Turkey it is comparatively weak.

Advocates of political decentralization are of the opinion that the more people participate in decisions concerning them, the better they are informed and diversify relevant interests in the society as different

from decisions made by center authorities. Fiscal decentralization addresses financial management in terms of transparency in resource allocation, mobilization and fiscal capacity to encourage and promote autonomy in decision making on resource utilization.

Fiscal decentralisation can take different forms such as: “self-financing, co-financing, expansion of local revenues through property or sales taxes, inter-governmental transfers that shift revenues from taxes collected by the Central or Federal government to Local Governments for specific uses and authorisation to borrow and mobilise for resources through loan” (UNDP, 1997).

Administrative decentralization deals with redistribution of responsibility, authority, and financial resources in providing public services across different levels of government emphasizing administrative capacity, accountability, and transparency. Holtmann (2000) opines that decentralization is based on the principle of subsidiarity and identifying three forms of administrative decentralization which are deconcentration, delegation, and devolution.

Meanwhile, there are two forms of market decentralization as propounded by scholars, such as deregulation and privatization (Rondinelli, 1980; & Meenakshisundaram, 1996). Furthermore, Smith (2001) expands this into five basic forms: devolution, deconcentration, delegation, privatization and partnership (Smith, 2001; Utomo, 2009). Other scholars like Falleti (2004), Collins and Greens (1994) believe that no State actors should be included in the transfer of authority and responsibility. They argued that decentralization involves transferring of authority and responsibility from center to periphery while privatization involves transferring authority and responsibility from the public sector to the private sector (Mahamadachchi, 2011).

Since the concept of decentralization refers to the transfer of power to both units and agents of government in a given country, this concept is significant for Local Government because of its types. There are two types of decentralization: deconcentration and devolution. Alderfer (1964) asserts that deconcentration “is the transfer of powers to subordinate authorities, whether offices, individuals or field units”. Delegation is the transfer of responsibility for decision-making and administration of public functions to semi-autonomous organizations not controlled by the central government, but ultimately accountable to it (Conyers, 2006; FAO, 2002).

Devolution is the transfer of power and responsibilities for delivery of services to Local Government leadership and representative councils that raise revenues, and have independent authority to make investment decisions (Hongbin & Treisman, 2005; Ozmen, 2014; Manor, 1999). When power is devolved, Local Governments have a legal backing to exercise certain authority in performing public function within a geographical area.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Local Government

Local government as a concept were discussed from different scholarly point of view which diverse range of thinkers, and provide access to competing explanations of what is really Local Government.

Governance structures at the local government is not limited to state governors but the legislative arm of government at the state level, as serving the interest of both the executive and state assembly. Therefore, it appears that local government as the bedrock of democratic government has been rendered useless due to the constitutional lacuna in delineating jurisdictional powers of local government in Nigeria. Hence, local government issues continue to generate national debate because of its proximity to the people at grassroots levels.

According to the United Nations office for public administration, local governance is a political division of a nation or (in government framework), state, which is constituted by law, and has control of local issues, including the capacity to compel charges or right work for embraced reason. According to Ola (1984), some elements precipitating to the establishment of local government as the lowest tier of government include:

- a) citizen’s participation in the management of local affairs;
- b) efficient and equitable provision of essential services; and
- c) resource mobilization for developmental purpose.

He further adds that nearby government is a coordinated body which can sue and can be sued. Hence, it has free legitimate presence. Nearby governments are recognized from other social foundation because of legal or administrative forces to make bye-laws and directions for the local dwellers. Ogunna (1976), sees the nearby government as a political expert intentionally designed by law for neighborhood networks through which they relate with neighborhood open.

William and Robson (2006) stated that neighborhood government include the origination of regional, non-sovereign network with legitimate right and the fundamental association to manage its undertakings. This summarizes the presence of a neighborhood expert with capacity to act freely the organization of its own undertakings. In 1976, neighborhood government, nearby government was characterized as government at adjacent level honed through delegate chambers developed by law to rehearse specific power within affected zones.

These powers should give the social occasion liberal control over adjacent issues to the staff and institution, cash related impact to, direct the organization’s plan, keeping in mind the end goal to supplement the activities of the state and government in their regions. To ensure through devolution of ability to advisory group through the dynamic collaboration of the all inclusive community

and their standard establishments of exercises and response to close-by necessities and conditions that are extended. Price (1975) sees local government as:

An attempt to make use of its citizens' local loyalties by delegating local function to local administrative bodies, which may be various type, such as locally elected representative body, a recognized traditional authority or local representative, with clearly defined power of the central government.

Drain (2000) in his book "Local Government Administration", perceives local government as the lower level of government responsible for domestic enhancement. To him, development must start from the grassroots with an organized system and public enlightenment as well as development should be every one's business because local government is the closest to the people, hence all enhancement and agent of rural development are engineered within local councils.

### **Decentralisation**

Historically, the concept of decentralization is not a new thing in most countries across the globe. The term gained prominence in the continent of Africa in 1950s and 1960s when European colonial administrations tried to devolve responsibilities to local authorities as part of preparation for independence of their various colonies (Ndunguru, 2008; Nelson, 2000). Decentralisation is linked with the Local Government system and has been practiced in varying degrees since colonial times (URT, 2006).

Osaghae (1990) defines decentralization as a system of dispersal of power from a central government to other units or agencies of government. This explains that power and authority of government are not concentrated on one tier but rather shared between existing levels of government. It lessens the responsibilities on higher levels of government and at the same time calls for responsibilities at lower levels of government.

Decentralisation encompasses variety of concepts which must be for carefully analyzed in any system of government before determining if projects or programs should support re-organization of financial, administrative, or service delivery systems (The World Bank, 2002). Decentralisation also connotes "a process of transferring authority and responsibility for public functions from the government at the center to intermediate and Local Governments or quasi-independent government organizations or the private sector, in a complex multifaceted concept" (Togba, 2014). Fleuke, (1997) is of the opinion that the impacts of decentralization on any nation are different depending on the objectives and conditions it is structured to achieve. Different types of decentralization are distinguishable given their different characteristics, policy implications, and conditions for success. Some scholars identified the different types of decentralization to include political, administrative, fiscal, and market decentralization (Rondinelli, 1980; Fleuke, 1997; Work, 2002; Ekpo, 2008; Utomo, 2009).

Political, administrative, fiscal and market decentralization could also appear in different forms across countries, and even within sectors. Political decentralization emphasizes political accountability, transparency, and representation. It is associated with pluralistic politics and democratization that gives the populace or their representative the chance to participate in the formulation and implementation of government policies.

In Nigeria Local Government setting, devolution as a concept is gradually going into extinction because most States of the Federation are not devolving power to Local Government through the electorate process but instead by appointing caretaker committee which tends towards deconcentration.

### **Local Government Funding and Capacity to Provide Services**

The local council in the Republic of Guinea is similar to what obtain in other nations because local councils in the country have significant control of local laws and resources. It is less demanding because of local government revenue is dictated by the Ministry of Interior especially during revenue allocation and distribution. Every decentralized unit need present their financial plans to District Assembly for endorsement (Gellar, Groelsema, Kante, & Reintsma, 1994). The financial plan must initially be endorsed by the council representative at the Ministry of Interior before being sent to *Conakry* for the endorsement of the Minister of Interior's endorsement (Sano, 2016; Sadjo, 2017).

Thereafter, any spending by local council becomes official after endorsement and classified as utilizing an *Arrete Ministeriel*. Council governments have restricted ability to administer services due to low income and streamlined spending plans. The 2015 financial year plans figures from the *Direction Nationale de la Decentralization* stood at 5,131,412,249GNF for aggregate capital and recurrent spending plan for the council in the city of Conakry, the remaining four areas as well as various urban cooperatives and the CRDs (Gellar, Groelsema, Kante, & Reintsma, 1994).

### **Enhancing Efficient and Effective Service Delivery at the Local Government**

Agugu (2004) opined that, the need for improvement and sustained cooperation, in improving local government administrative responses necessitate the creation of local councils. As the nearest unit of government to the grassroots, local governments have been empowered to effectively administer social services to the populace. Thus, the following measures would enhance effective service delivery at the local councils:

**A. Constitutional Reforms to Ensure Total Autonomy of Local Government:** Reforms are expected to expand the financial and expenditure self-rule of local governments as well as limit interference and control

of state governments (Eboh & Diejomaoh, 2010). The role of state governors in deciding the modus operandi within local government administration create new pathways chance to configure proper strategies, projects and ventures to specific territories; protect social legacy and networks; and harness to grassroots, benefits self-sufficiency in this regard would in turn foster local levels. Also, representatives or neighborhood government officials must be selected by the populace and not superimposed by either the ruling party or political godfathers. Stipulated time lines for election and tenure of offices would be well specified (Ibok, 2014).

**B. Curtailing Corrupt Practice in Local Government Administration:** To stem corruption and embezzlement, all financial transaction of the council must be audited and publicized annually. There should be monitoring and regular evaluation by designed units to ensure efficiency in local government administration (Ibok, 2014). Civil society organizations should monitor the performance of local government officials and report erring officials to anti-graft agencies. Anti-graft agencies like the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFFCC) must intensify efforts at tackling corruption in the local government system. Again, both the federal and state governments should assist through the introduction of fraud detecting mechanisms as well as ensuring a free and fair electoral process that elects the people's choice (Chukwuemeka, *et. al.*, 2014).

**C. Effective Statutory Allocation to the Local Governments:** Local government must have constitutional backing in generating its revenue and expenditure roles. The revenue/expenditure relationship between the Federal and other levels of government must be revised to reflect equality, fairness and justice (Ekpo, 2008). Moreso, local governments should have direct and unrestrained access to statutory allocations from the Federation Account as well as their share of the internally generated revenue. In addition, state government should be advised to release their (10%) internally generated revenue to the local council to avoid overdependence on statutory allocation and onward review of statutory allocation from its present 30 percent benchmark from the federation account is highly recommended (Abutudu, 2011; Chukwuemeka, *et. al.*, 2014; Ibok, 2014). Conversely, internal revenue generation sources should be expanded through investment in profitable ventures without local councils. Rural dwellers should be properly educated on their civic responsibilities to support local governments financially (Adeyemi, 2013; Thobias & Eleuter, 2015).

**D. Capacity Building–Institutional and Human Resources:** Regular training and capacity building for local councils should be encouraged to inculcate modern trends in governance. This must include both the political and administrative cadre of council officials (Abutudu, 2011). Institutional and system that produce

the required human capacity should be reviewed in lines with the principles of good governance - transparency, accountability, honesty, equity, justice, strong leadership, prudent management of public funds, to benefit the masses (Agba, Akwara, & Idu, 2013). The first is institutional reformations in different organs, divisions, units and operational issues. It equally includes preparation and introduction in arrangement improvement, observing and assessment, open investment, open administration conveyance, social preparation and government joint effort with the private area. The second is HRM – including recruitment, training, workshops etc. to improve their insight, aptitudes and abilities in workplace ought to be moved up to draw in higher quality very much roused staff.

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## THEORETICAL REVIEW

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This section provides a scheme for adopting and applying assumptions, postulations and principles of a theory in the description analysis of important concepts in this study to understand, explain, analyse and predict the phenomena within the preview of subject matter.

### Development Administration Theory (DAT)

This theory was popularized, in the early years of Comparative Public Administration (CPA). It is traced to the works of Riggs (1970), Montgomery (1966), and Esman (1970). It then entered the field of administration as several scholars sought to develop a theory that guides administrative development within the context of comparative public administration. The central thrust of this theory is the evaluation of administrative systems at different stages of development in the society. According to Marini (1971), it is action-driven and goal-oriented. The theory is built on two premises. One, the method of administrating developmental policies, plans, large – scale programmes by government in order to meet the developmental objective of a state and this presumption is known in literature as “the Administration of Development”. Two, the development of administrative capacities and capabilities of state institutions or organs of governments, generally acclaimed to be “the Development of Administration”.

Weidner (1970) captures development administration theory as constellation of processes that promote political, economic, and social agenda of a state in progressive manner within the ambit of authoritatively designed jurisdictions. Development Administration Theory is anchored on the thrust that an “action-driven, goal-oriented administrative system is central to effective functioning of all levels of government. Therefore, the theory is supported by three blocks: Change-Oriented, Goal-Oriented and Progressivism. The theory believes that administrative structure is expected to be dynamic not static consequently, change is said to mean adjustment or movement of structures or systems from a position to

another. This movement is expected to reflect the coping capacity of an administrative system in relation to its strengths and weaknesses. This bloc is more strengthened in a globalized era where administrative cum governance systems are built for potential transformation.

The goal-orientation bloc according to Weidner (1970) is the dominant value expected of any efficient administrative system. It is characteristically fashioned chronologically and systematically in order to achieve the desired objectives. Put differently, DAT as an element of public administration is goal-oriented. It supports the notion that development at all level of government (federal, state or local) should ensure advancement in economic, political and socio-cultural agenda of the state.

The third bloc, progressivism is central to the overall tenets of DAT. It emphasizes the significance of grassroots participation in public affairs. According to this bloc, the general consensus is that multiple chances and platforms should be created for massive involvement of the people in areas of political mobilization, interest articulation, free and fair voting and more specifically, policy making process. Progressivism is used in DAT to mean a platform where deeper participation of the people (grassroots) is exploited in the developmental process.

In addition, this theory extends towards equality in the distribution of income and wealth among the citizens – ensuring economic justice in the society. The theory adds more credence to progressivism, by identifying the socio-cultural phenomena in the administration of the society. It lays emphasis on the provision of social service delivery like education, health utilities, social and safety programs etc. simply put, the theory is people – oriented. A possible implication is that administrative system in a given state or society can be adjusted to reflect the coping strategies of local government in terms of material and human resources in a way that accommodates the will of the people with a view to administering concrete developmental projects. The above analogy suggests a strong footing for theoretical backing for local government reforms in ways that promote efficient service delivery to the grassroots. It provided reasonable arguments upon which more responsibilities and finance were allocated to local government for grassroots development.

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## METHODOLOGY

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The study adopted descriptive research design. Primary and secondary sources of data were utilized for the study. Primary data were collected through administration of questionnaire and conduct of interviews. A sample frame of 2034 (1663 in Nigeria and 371 in Republic of Guinea) consisting of senior officers (GL 7-17 in Nigeria) of the selected Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea (RG) were used for the study. The selected departments were Administration, Education, Health and Water, Safety and Environmental Sanitation

of the nine and eight selected LGAs in Nigeria and RG respectively. In all, 812 (441 in Nigeria and 371 in RG) copies of questionnaire, covering 40% of the sample frame were administered. In addition, interviews were conducted on 17 Chairmen/representatives (nine in Nigeria and eight in RG) of the selected LGs in the two countries. Data collected were analysed using frequency distribution, percentages and mean value as well as content analysis methods.

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## ANALYSIS

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One of the aims of the field study was to compare structures place in Nigerian and Republic of Guinea for promoting local governance. This study identified political and administrative structures in the instruments administered to the respondents. Responses were grouped using scale measurement: strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1) and Undecided (0). Simple percentages and mean were used to analyse the effectiveness of the structures in local governance. A mean that is equal or greater than 2.5 indicates the item tested in the assertion is obtainable in the study area(s) while the mean value that is less than 2.5 shows that the item raised in the ascertain is not obtainable in the study area(s). At the end, grand mean and t-test independent were computed to establish the significance of difference in the mean responses of the respondents on structures of local governance in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea.

Administrative structures at the grassroots in the study areas were compared using seven items in Table 4.2a. The first item tested competitiveness of the recruitment process in the two countries. The outcome from Nigeria shows that 52.1% of the respondent supported the claim while 41.5% did not support the claim. 6.5% of the respondents were undecided, and the mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) is 2.36, which indicates that recruitment at the local government level in Nigeria is not competitive. The survey result from Republic of Guinea on the similar item produced a lesser mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.01. This was confirmed in the responses gathered. Out of 233 responses, 68.2% discarded competitiveness in recruitment process in Republic of Guinea; while 24.1% of the respondents agreed to this claim. The outcome is that recruitment process in Republic of Guinea is not competitive. This means the two countries suffered similar fate in their recruitment processes.

The outcome of the survey on effective communication in the administrative structure of the local government or council in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea reflected that the countries are doing well in the communication system put in place to foster good governance at the grassroots. In Nigeria, 65.4% of the respondents agreed that effective two-way communication exists at the local level as against 32.3% of the respondents who did not agree to the claim. This outcome was verified by a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.76. whereas, in the Republic of Guinea, the distribution of

responses shows that 68.5% of the respondents affirmed the utilization of effective two-way communication at the grassroots while 17.9% of the respondent did not follow this trend. A mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.50 confirmed this outcome.

On documentation and filing system, the result of the analysis indicated that Republic of Guinea had established proper documentation and filing system in order to promote effective grassroots governance; a feat that is lacking in administrative structure of grassroots governance in Nigeria. This comparative outcome is supported by 70.8% of Republic of Guinea's respondents as against 23.2%. A mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.97 corroborated this outcome. In Nigeria, survey statistics contradicted that of Republic of Guinea as 65.8% of the respondents rejected that proper documentation and filing system exist at grassroots administrative structure, 34.2% of the Nigerian's respondent agreed with the claim, with a lower mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.05. it is thus evident that administrative structure of local government in Nigeria suffers proper documentation and filing system.

Inter-departmental meeting was tested as an effective governance structure that exists at the grassroots administration in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea. The field outcome shows a sharp divergence between the two countries. On the one hand, the responses in Nigeria show that 84.4% of respondents rated inter-department meeting as obtainable structure of local governance in Nigeria and just 8.7% expressed reservation about this variable. This outcome is valued by a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.95. On the other hand, respondents from Republic of Guinea expressed dismay about the use of inter departmental meeting as an administrative structure. Over 90% of the respondents rejected the claim that inter-departmental meeting was adopted as a structure of grassroots governance. This direction is upheld by a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 1.56. This result reflects possibility of autocratic leadership at the grassroots governance in Guinea.

Effective personnel administration was tested as an invaluable administrative structure of local governance. From the field survey, personnel administration in local governance context in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea are effective. Responses from the two countries polled mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) values of 2.62 and 2.65 for Nigerian and Republic of Guinea respectively. In term of percentage

distribution, 64.7% of local administrators in Nigeria agreed to the assertion that there is an effective personnel administration in Nigeria; 23.9% of them disagreed; and 11.4% of the respondents were indifference on this variable. Similarly, 62.7% of the respondents in Republic of Guinea shared the view that personnel administration at the grassroots level is effective. Although, 32.2% of the respondents rejected this position. This means personnel administration structure of local government is well organised in the two countries. This will serve as buffers to minimise the adverse effect of non-competitiveness of recruitment process as revealed by earlier findings.

The utilisation of committee system as part of administration structure in Nigeria and Guinea was the sixth assertion. Results of the survey indicate that 68% of the Nigeria's respondents scored committee system low in local administrative system. Another 27.4% believed that committee system constituted a reasonable component of local administrative structure. In Republic of Guinea, 70% of the respondents scored committee system low in administration of local governance. 29.2% of them believed committee system is one of the prominent administrative structures at the grassroots. The variable, committee system, polled low mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) values of 2.08 and 2.10 in relation to responses gathered from Nigeria and Guinea respectively. This casts out doubt on the local administrative leadership style being employed in the two countries.

Another variable of administrative structure of local governance in Nigeria and Guinea is strict compliance with administrative hierarchy at the local government. In Nigeria, 89.4% of the sampled administrative personnel confirmed that there is strict compliance with administrative hierarchy. This outcome recorded mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) value of 3.13. Whereas in Guinea, 76.4% of the respondents supported the view that administrative hierarchy in local administration are followed religiously. These results came with mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) value of 2.7. This indicates that one of the noticeable features of administrative structure in both Guinea and Nigeria is respect for hierarchical order which supports effective delivery of administrative structure in both Guinea and Nigeria is respect for hierarchical order which support effective delivery of administrative tasks.

**Table 1**  
**Administrative Structure of Local Governance in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea**

Items	Responses	Country						Total	
		Nigeria			Republic of Guinea			f	%
		f	%	$\bar{x}$	f	%	$\bar{x}$		
The recruitment into the local government in your country is competitive.	Undecided	17	6.5		18	7.7		35	7.1
	Strongly Disagree	62	23.6		58	24.9		120	24.2
	Disagree	47	17.9	2.36	101	43.3	2.01	148	29.8
	Agree	83	31.6		16	6.9		99	20.0
	Strongly Agree	54	20.5		40	17.2		94	18.9
	Total	263	100.0		233	100.0		496	100.0

To be continued

Items	Responses	Country						Total	
		Nigeria		Republic of Guinea		f	%		
		f	%	f	%				
There is effective two-way communication system operated at the level of local government in your country.	Undecided	6	2.3	13	5.6	19	3.8		
	Strongly Disagree	38	14.4	41	17.6	79	15.9		
	Disagree	47	17.9	24	10.3	71	14.3		
	Agree	93	35.4	127	54.5	220	44.4		
	Strongly Agree	79	30.0	28	12.0	107	21.6		
There is proper documentation and filing system at the local government level.	Total	263	100.0	233	100.0	496	100.0		
	Undecided	0	0.0	14	6.0	14	2.8		
	Strongly Disagree	116	44.1	28	12.0	144	29.0		
	Disagree	57	21.7	26	11.2	83	16.7		
	Agree	51	19.4	47	20.2	98	19.8		
Inter-departmental meeting is one of the effective governance structures adopted by local council in your country.	Strongly Agree	39	14.8	118	50.6	157	31.7		
	Total	263	100.0	233	100.0	496	100.0		
	Undecided	18	6.8	8	3.4	26	5.2		
	Strongly Disagree	20	7.6	109	46.8	129	26.0		
	Disagree	3	1.1	102	43.8	105	21.2		
Effective personnel administration as an administrative structure exists in your local government.	Agree	138	52.5	5	2.1	143	28.8		
	Strongly Agree	84	31.9	9	3.9	93	18.8		
	Total	263	100.0	233	100.0	496	100.0		
	Undecided	30	11.4	12	5.2	42	8.5		
	Strongly Disagree	20	7.6	37	15.9	57	11.5		
Committee system is an effective part of administrative structures put in place at local government level.	Disagree	43	16.3	38	16.3	81	16.3		
	Agree	97	36.9	79	33.9	176	35.5		
	Strongly Agree	73	27.8	67	28.8	140	28.2		
	Total	263	100.0	233	100.0	496	100.0		
	Undecided	12	4.6	2	.9	14	2.8		
Strict compliance to administrative hierarchy is embedded in the governance structure of the local government system in your country.	Strongly Disagree	53	20.2	82	35.2	135	27.2		
	Disagree	126	47.9	81	34.8	207	41.7		
	Agree	42	16.0	32	13.7	74	14.9		
	Strongly Agree	30	11.4	36	15.5	66	13.3		
	Total	263	100.0	233	100.0	496	100.0		
	Undecided	10	3.8	8	3.4	18	3.6		
	Strongly Disagree	6	2.3	24	10.3	30	6.0		
	Disagree	12	4.6	23	9.9	35	7.1		
	Agree	147	55.9	136	58.4	283	57.1		
	Strongly Agree	88	33.5	42	18.0	130	26.2		
Total	263	100.0	233	100.0	496	100.0			

$\bar{x}$  = mean, f = frequency, % = percentages

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Political structure, another layer of local governance was subjected to field survey among local administrators in Nigeria and Guinea as shown in Table 4.2b. A four items section was generated for this purpose in the research instrument. The first outcome shows that independent of electoral body is not protected in the countries. Local administrators in Nigeria disagreed to tune of 64.6% of the total responses gathered while 33.1% expressed their acceptance of the claim that electoral body conducting local council election is independent of the state government. Only 6% of them were indifferent. This outcome is statically confirmed by mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.01. In Guinea, similar results were recorded in the survey. A total of 71.6% of the respondents refuted the research statement that electoral body at the grassroots is independent, another 27.5% of the respondents gave a

nod to this claim; while only 0.9% of the respondent were neutral on the issue. The mean statistics of 1.79 supported this outcome. This result is an indication that higher level of governments determine what happens at local level, one of which is local council election. This control might undermine effective service delivery at the grassroots in Nigeria and Guinea.

On the political composition of local administration, result of the survey indicated that executive council at the local government level are elected in Republic of Guinea compared to what is obtainable in Nigeria. Distribution statistics shows that 68.3% of the respondents conformed that political leaders at the local level are democratically elected in Republic of Guinea, although 19.2% of the Guinea's respondents expressed reservation about the research claim. In Nigeria, statistical submission were in

the negative as 57.8% of the respondents declined that executive council at the local level are democratically elected. Another sizeable percentage of the respondents in Nigeria, precisely 38%, maintained that political leadership at the grassroots came to power through election. The difference in democratic selection of handlers of local governance in the two countries is captured by different mean values ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.16 and 2.61 for Nigeria and Republic of Guinea respectively. This outcome shows that the grassroots have little or no influence in the way and manner their leaders are selected in Nigeria as against what obtains in Guinea. This is a position that contradicts tenet of democratic governance.

Another political structure of governance at the grassroots is the assembly (council) meeting. The adoption of this governance layer seems to be favoured in Republic of Guinea; not in Nigeria. This discrepancy is statistically upheld by mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) values of 2.87 and 2.24 of the survey data generated in republic of Guinea and Nigeria respectively. The percentage distribution shows 61.2% rejection rate for Nigeria and 73.8% acceptance rate for Republic of Guinea. This result portrays that the structure

of local governance in Republic of Guinea promotes initiatives and collaborative spirit among local governance administrators; a feat that is missing in Nigeria's local governance structure.

Politics of interference in the budget formulation process was tested among the administrators in the two countries under study. From the percentage output, 84.6% of respondents in Republic of Guinea agreed to the research position that interference from higher level of government is curtailed, owing to the political structure. This positive outcome is supported by mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 3.08. This finding is a sharp departure from what obtains in Nigeria. The distribution percentage reported 79.5% rejection rate among local administrators in Nigeria and a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 1.70. These figures reflect that higher levels of government in Nigeria dictate and exert overbearing influence on approval of local council estimate, and the implication is that programmes at the local level might not truly represent collective demand of the grassroots. This culture of influence in the political structure of local governance in Nigeria is apparently a clog in the process of service delivery at the grassroots.

**Table 2**  
**Political Structure of Local Governance in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea**

Items	Responses	Country						Total	
		Nigeria		$\bar{x}$	Republic of Guinea		f	%	
		f	%		f	%			
The body that conducts election into local council is independent of National/ State government.	Undecided	6	2.3	2.01	2	0.9	1.79	8	1.6
	Strongly Disagree	111	42.2		114	48.9		225	45.4
	Disagree	59	22.4		53	22.7		112	22.6
	Agree	48	18.3		60	25.8		108	21.8
	Strongly Agree	39	14.8		4	1.7		43	8.7
Local government executive is composed by elected members and political appointees.	Total	263	100.0		233	100.0		496	100.0
	Undecided	11	4.2	2.16	6	2.6	2.61	17	3.47
	Strongly Disagree	71	27.0		33	14.2		104	21.0
	Disagree	81	30.8		35	15.0		116	23.4
	Agree	64	24.3		132	56.7		196	39.5
Strongly Agree	36	13.7	27		11.6	63		12.7	
The council/assembly meeting is an important layer of governance structure of local administration in your country.	Total	263	100.0		233	100.0		496	100.0
	Undecided	7	2.7	2.24	12	5.2	2.87	19	3.8
	Strongly Disagree	54	20.5		24	10.3		78	15.7
	Disagree	107	40.7		25	10.7		132	26.6
	Agree	59	22.4		93	39.9		152	30.6
Strongly Agree	36	13.7	79		33.9	115		23.2	
Council assembly approves local budget without interference from state or federal (or Central) government.	Total	263	100.0		233	100.0		496	100.0
	Undecided	6	2.3	1.70	2	.9	3.08	8	1.6
	Strongly Disagree	136	51.7		12	5.2		148	29.8
	Disagree	73	27.8		22	9.4		95	19.2
	Agree	27	10.3		126	54.1		153	30.4
Strongly Agree	21	8.0	71		30.5	92		18.5	
Total	263	100.0		233	100.0		496	100.0	

$\bar{x}$  = mean, f = frequency, % = percentages  
 Source: Field Survey, 2019.

The comparison between structures of local government in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea were further made on sectorial and overall bases in Table 4.3. The grand mean which is the mean generated from

the computation of the means of all items under each structure (i.e. Administration, and Political), was used to draw the final inferences wherein t-test independent was at 0.05 level of significant to establish whether the



overall difference is significant. It is shown in Table 4.2a that on sectorial basis, the administrative structure at the local government level in Nigeria is more productive because Nigeria polled a grand mean of 2.57 compared to Republic of Guinea that pulled a lower grand mean of 2.36. On the contrary, Republic of Guinea's political structure of local governance as identified in this study appears more productive considering the grand mean of 2.59, as against a lower grand mean of 2.03 for Nigeria.

On overall basis, the inferential statistics, t-test independent, was used to infer overall difference in the local governance structure in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea. The result indicates that there is no significant difference in the existing local governance structure in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea [ $t(30) = -1.778, p = 0.86$ ]. This inference is a reflection that governance structure in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea are affected by proximate peculiarities.

**Table 3**  
**Analysis of Structure of Local Governance in Nigeria and Guinea (Summary)**

Structure	Country	
	Nigeria	Republic of Guinea
Administration Structure		
First item	2.36	2.01
Second item	2.76	2.50
Third item	2.05	2.97
Forth item	2.95	1.56
Fifth item	2.62	2.65
Sixth item	2.10	2.08
Seven item	3.13	2.77
Grand Mean	2.57	2.36
Political Structure		
First item	2.01	1.79
Second item	2.16	2.61
Third item	2.24	2.87
Forth item	1.70	3.08
Grand Mean	2.03	2.59

$t(30) = -1.778, p = 0.86 @ 5\%$  Level of Significance

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

However, interviews conducted provide further information on the structures and patterns of local government with different views and opinions. In Nigeria, almost all the interviewees strongly agreed that there are structures put in place for the smooth running of the local councils, in which these structures have helped the local government to discharge his statutory duties and responsibilities to the citizenry. These structures play an important role in the administration of local authorities within their jurisdiction. Another interviewee believed that structures (i.e. political and administrative) of governance, if not misused, can help the local government administration improve considerably in term of execution of many projects to their people, which will result in socio-economic development in the local area. It was also

agreed by another interviewee that there should be full autonomy for Nigerian Local Governments because some State Governments are using the operation of the state joint local governments accounts to delay and deduct local government funds and thus same governors manipulates the provision as the superior partner to subject their chairmen. He added that "It will also ensure the local government to facilitate and execution of projects, enhance effective service delivery, efficiency, and quick response to the needs of the citizenry".

Almost all the interviewees agreed that local government election in the country is taking new shape compare to what was obtained in the past, where the caretaker or executive secretary who were appointed for being loyal to either the party, governor or government of the day, to run the affairs of the local councils for many years, even more than the stipulated years for the constitutionally elected chairmen according to the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended. This had led to the refusal of some Governors to conduct local government election as at when due.

An interviewee said that the state government usually concentrates on the state projects located at the local governments, after which the glory will still go to the state government. An example is construction and rehabilitation of state roads in the local government areas.

Few interviewees commented on the subject matters and concluded that the essence of structural system of governance is to provide social infrastructural amenities to the populace and these should be the essence of any governments at all level – federal, state or local – in order to ensure good governance. However, interviewees said that the fundamental obligations of government (federal, state or local) would be achieved if each level of government operated without interference. They also recommended that there should be more structural system in Nigerian local governments system, such as parliamentary or operational structure as well as the use of traditional rulers or sole administrators.

In the Republic of Guinea, virtually all the interviewees established that various structures, arrangements or patterns of local governance in Republic of Guinea, have resulted in crisis over the years, dispute the good governance system at the upper levels of government (regional and central). They also stated that provision of the Constitution did not stipulate the specific structures for local governance, but the government of the day is using the central power to administer the activities of the local councils in the country through the use of elected chairmen who were then and converted them to sole administrator/operational structure. Constrained by the control from the upper government, (now) caretakers do not have a say in the running the affairs of their councils, which would have made them directly responsible to the citizenry; rather, they discharge their social responsibilities

in accordance with the stipulated functions from the upper level of government, most especially central government. The chairmen are doing well in providing services through thorough supervision of the central government. Thus, almost of the services provided by local councils are sponsored, financed, supervised and monitored by central government. This is because administrations of the entire country are centralised. These is one of the big challenges of over centralization of power, function, fiscal and even administration, facing good governance in the entire country.

Some of the interviewees concluded that local governments differ in features such as structure, organisation, historical experiences, constitutional status, delegation, developmental responsibilities, scope of their statutory functions and allocated financial powers. There is general consensus that local government is the government of the grassroots and it is the closest government to the people. Being the people's government, they are expected to represent and involve citizens in determining specific local public needs and how they (the needs) can be met, and also mobilise for mass participation in governance process.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This section provides supplementary discussion on both quantitative and qualitative analysis carried out in this study. It further synchronised the findings of the study with related existing studies on issues with governance and local service delivery in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea. In line with the four objectives set out, the study compared the structure of local governance in Nigeria and the Republic of Guinea, especially in administrative and political in Nigeria and the Republic of Guinea. Secondly, it evaluated the sources of funding social service delivery for local governance in Nigeria and the Republic of Guinea, especially statutory and non-statutory. For the third objective, it assessed the effect of local governance on social service delivery on the people and lastly, it analysed the challenges confronting local governance vis-à-vis social service delivery in Nigeria and the Republic of Guinea.

From the analysis of the data gathered, it was revealed that Nigeria has 52.1% and Guinea has 24.1% with regard to the level of competition in the recruitment process in the two countries. These established that the level of competition in the recruitment process is good in Nigeria and very weak in Guinea. These finding were in tandem with some earlier studies. In Nigeria, earlier studies have identified certain problems confronting the recruitment process and impeding the performance of staff as reviewed in chapter two of this study (Agba, 2006; Adeyemi, 2012: 2013; Agba, Ogwu, & Chukwurah, 2013) and in Republic of Guinea, the studies have showed that recruitment process is one of the key obstacles facing administrative structure in the country (Ba, Bintou & Benoit, 1989;

Prud'homme, 2006; Toonen, 2007; Thobias & Eleuter, 2015). Smooth running of the local councils as noted in the interview response, serves as the instrumentality structure of administrative system in local government. This enjoyed strong acknowledgement by discussants of the interview sessions. Smooth administrative system can only be achieved where there are adequate and effective personnel.

Gellar, Groelsema, Kante and Reintsma (2016), conducted a study on democratic governance in Conakry with reference to local authority in Republic of Guinea. They, however, revealed that one of the key structure of good governance is having skill personnel to manage the affairs of local government in order to ensure that administrative structure of the council perform their duties without partiality. Effective personnel administration was tested in the data gathered and it was revealed that personnel administration is an invaluable administrative structure of local governance. Personnel administration in local governance context in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea are effective as shown in term of percentage distribution, 64.7% in Nigeria and 62.7% in Republic of Guinea. Thus, local administrators in the study areas shared the same view that personnel administration at the grassroots level is effective. This means personnel administration structure of local government is well organised in the two countries. This will serve as buffers to minimise the adverse effect of non-competitiveness of recruitment process as revealed by earlier findings.

Extant studies have posited that hierarchy is part of governance structure in local government system in Nigerian and Republic of Guinea (Wunsch, 2001; World Bank, 2002; Adeyemo, 2004; Agagu, 2011; Agba, Akwara, & Idu, 2013; Adeyeye, 2016). This study affirmed that administrative hierarchy at the local government is strictly complied with. In Nigeria 89.4% of the sampled administrative confirmed that there exists strict compliance with administrative hierarchy. While 76.4% of the respondents in Guinea supported the view that administrative hierarchy in local administration are followed religiously. This indicates that one of the noticeable features of administrative structure in study areas is respect for hierarchical order, which supports effective delivery of administrative tasks in both Guinea and Nigeria. This was also revealed in the interviews sessions in the two countries; the interviewees argued that any organisation (public/private) without effective administrative structure in term of hierarchy, will not achieve anything. Thus, as stated in the Constitutions of the two countries, there must the hierarchically order of administrative system in local government for easy administration. It is however insightful as this study clarified the important of hierarchy in the local council affair, with its findings in line with Togba (2014) and Aransi (2017) who maintained that hierarchy in local government is significantly important for the smooth

running of administrative structure in local councils.

This study revealed that local government executive is comprised of elected members and political appointees in the two countries. The survey indicated that executive council at the local government level are elected in Republic of Guinea with statistics showing that 68.3% of respondents affirmed it, while in Nigeria, statistics showed that 57.8% of respondents claimed that the executive of local governments are political appointees. This compared and confirmed that executive leaders the local level are democratically elected in Republic of Guinea but and they are mainly political appointees in Nigeria. This means that the grassroots has little or no influence in the way and manner their leaders are selected in Nigeria as against what obtains in Guinea. This discovery contradicts the tenet of democratic governance. However, Aransi (2004 & 2017), Bello-Imam (2010), Bolatito and Ibrahim (2014), Togba (2014) and Sano (2016) conducted an empirical study of local government in the study areas. The findings of their studies are in line with the findings of this study that the executive of Nigerian local governments are mostly political appointees of the government of the day while that of Guinea are elected executives. Furthermore, it is also confirmed through the interview sessions in the two countries that local government election in the country is taking new shape compared to what has been happening in the recent past where the caretakers or executive secretaries who are appointed as loyalists of Government of the day to run the affairs of the local councils for many years even more than the years to the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) stipulates for elected Chairmen. These lead to the refusal of some Governors to conduct local government election as and when due. While, in Republic of Guinea, the central government uses his ultimate power to covert the Chairmen to Sole Administrator of the local government whereby the elected chairmen are now caretakers.

Politics of interference in the budget formulation process was among variables tested in the political structure of local government in the study areas. It was revealed that 84.6% of respondents in the Republic of Guinea agreed that political interference from higher level of government is curtailed. While, 79.5% of respondents in Nigeria rejected the claim. This means that higher levels of government in Nigeria dictate and exert overbearing influence on approval of local council estimates, indicating that programmes at the local level might not truly represent collective demand of the grassroots, while in the Republic of Guinea, the political interference is partial despite the fact that the central council dictate and order the local authorities. Stoker (1990), Togba (2014), Shah (2014), Teriman, Yigitcanlar and Mayere (2011) also observed that political interference of higher level of government is characteristics of the nature of challenges affecting the local government performance, and

sometimes, renders local councils irresponsible to perform their statutory duties to the populace.

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## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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The findings on both Administrative and Political structures of local governance was on that translating the competitive of recruitment process in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea. The study revealed that in the two countries, recruitment process mechanism is more effective in the area of appointment, selection, and promotion into local government system in Nigeria (52.1%) than Republic of Guinea (24.1%).

Furthermore, the study found that effective personnel administration of the two countries actually exist in reality. However, administrative structure of governance exists in terms of personnel administration of the study areas. Local Governments in Nigeria has 64.7% while Republic of Guinea has 62.7%.

As far as compliance with laid down hierarchically structure of local government administrative system is concerned, the study found that Nigeria has a better record of compliance than Republic of Guinea, although, Republic of Guinea had established proper documentation system in order to promote effective grassroots governance, with a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) score of 2.97 than Nigeria at 2.05. The findings showed that in the area of documentation, Guinea fared much better than Nigeria in compiling documentation process of administrative structure of grassroots governance.

The comparative outcome of political structure of governance at local level revealed that local government executive exists in the study areas. Thus, the political leaders of Republic of Guinea at the local level are democratically elected, with 68.3% while Nigeria, (38%) showed that political leadership at the grassroots came to power through election. The difference in democratic selection of local governance in the two countries is captured mean values ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 2.61 and 2.16 for Republic of Guinea and Nigeria respectively.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

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In respect of the findings from the study, these policy recommendations are offered on a comparative outcome of both administrative and political structures of governance at local level for the effective and efficient social service delivery in Nigerian and Guinean local governments, as they will assist the local government in achieving more in other areas of their constitutional responsibilities; and in increasing its impact role of social service delivery. these includes:

a) Local government in Nigeria and Republic of Guinea should improve on the structures of governance for better quality enhancement of social service delivery at the local level.

b) Frequent inter-departmental meetings and meetings with community development associations as a medium of cooperation that will enable an active participation in the good governance through maintenance of public goods at the local level need be encouraged.

c) This needs to also take into consideration that the community development associations also have some constitutional responsibilities to be accountable to the citizens in some areas.

d) There is need to promulgate necessary anti-corruption laws and ensure their effective implementation. Beside to addressing the problem of corruption in the local governments around the world, there is need to look into the welfare of the civil servants.

e) There is urgent need to ensure independence of local government, via constitutional amendment. In addition, state governments in Nigeria should take hands off the constitutional internally revenue sources of LGs as practised in advanced or developed countries such as United State, Britain, France, etc.

f) The government also needs to adopt a structural arrangement/strategy where the populace would have a sense of ownership to service provided by the local government in the study areas.

g) Upper levels of government should further strengthen the capacity of legislative adjudicating agencies with necessary paraphernalia, so as to facilitate their efficient discharge of the administrative procedures and processes at the local council.

h) It is further suggested that commitment to local governance in terms of providing qualitative social service would strengthen the local government in tackling aforementioned challenges bedeviling the local governance on social service delivery processes across cultures in West African States and Africa as a whole.

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