

Local Government Autonomy and National Development in Enugu State: 1999-2016.

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ABSTRACT

The consistent interference by the state and federal governments in the affairs of local governments in Nigeria necessitated this research work. The study focused on local government autonomy and national development in Enugu State 1999 — 2016. The research questions are: Does the autonomy of local government affect national development in Enugu State?, What are the major factors affecting local government autonomy and national development in Enugu State?, What are the measures that will make local government autonomous to enhance development in Enugu State? The objective of the study was to: examine the effects of autonomy of local government on national development in Enugu State, to examine the major factors impinging on local government autonomy and national development in Enugu State. While the hypothesis are; the autonomy of local government is one of the factors affecting national development in Enugu State, the financial autonomy of local government is one of the factors affecting national development in Enugu State; the amendment of 1999 Constitution will guaranty the autonomy of local government and enhance national development in Enugu State. The method of data collection 'was secondary method of data collection, while content analysis was used to arrive at conclusion. The theoretical framework used was "structural functionalism" which specified the functions of local government on national development". The study identified that local governments perform better with elected chairmen and any period funds were made available to them. The study recommended the amendment of 1999 Constitution for effective development of grassroots; that fund should be provided for local government from federation account, that is, direct to local governments.

Keywords Society, traditional, modern, government, local levels and traditional institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Every society, both traditional and modern, has practiced one form of government or the other. However, before the influx of Whiteman, the people of Nigeria had an existing government at the local levels [1,2,3]. There were some traditional institutions which were being administered based on the culture of the people. According to [4], quoting Caseley Hayford, the famous Ghanaian legal luminary rightly argued sometime ago that before even the British came in contact with our people, we had our own governments suffix, our own systems of administration in Nigeria [5]. The Igbos had non centralized government with exception of few places like Onitsha. The Igbos were republican in nature and were ruled by the elders (gerontocracy). The

umunna formulated policies and the age grades enforced the rule [6]. The Yorubas had centralized government with Oba at the helm of affairs. The Hausa/Fulani had a centralized government attached to Islamic religion [7,8,9,10]. The people had what appeared to be stronger government than now. In Nigeria, the formal introduction of local government administration started with the enactment of the Native Authority Ordinance of 1910 [11,12,13]. Moreover, the local government in Nigeria has been going through various reforms aimed at strengthening developmental roles in national development process [14,15,16]. However, the current platform for local government administration started with the 1976 guidelines for local government

reforms [17,18]. The guideline gave the present local government system its basic structure and functions as a third tier of government within the Nigeria federal arrangement [19,20]. In the same way [21] noted that the structure of local government system in Nigeria varied over the years subject to determination by the various regimes in power. The 1976 reforms gave local government autonomy and made-tire level a third tier of government in Nigeria; hence we have three tiers of government in Nigeria political system, viz: federal, state and local government. Unlike the previous local government reforms, the 1976 reform conceptualized local government as operating within a common institutional framework with defined functions and responsibilities in line with national development objectives [22] quoted in [23]. Conversely, before the reform, local governments were merely local administrations without formal recognition as tier of government and had no constitutional obligation towards national development. Globally, local government has been recognized as a veritable tool or framework for administrating local and grassroot and for enhancing overall, national development [24]. It is pertinent to underscore the fact that the 1976 reform initiated, particularly, the financial and political autonomy of the local government that

was further strengthened by the civil service reform of 1988. As well, the provision of the 1999 constitution as contained in section 7 (1) and section 162 (paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) are intended to also guarantee the local government autonomy [25]. The provisions for the autonomy as they were essentially and ostensibly aimed at protecting the local government from unnecessary interference from other tiers of government and to enable it play significant roles in the national developmental process. However, the results of some scholars' research work show that local government autonomy is becoming ever difficult as a result of many factors while political commentators/analysts point to the fact that autonomy of the local government can only exist in theory not In practical [26,27,28]. To that extent, the interference by the federal and state governments in the affairs of the local government in terms of administrative and financial autonomy necessitated this study. This work has set out to examine the autonomy of local government and national development in Enugu State, some of the major factors affecting local government in the process of national development, and measures to ensure autonomy of local government to enhance national development in Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

One of the greatest problems facing the development of post-colonial societies mainly in Africa (Nigeria) is the task of formulating and utilizing the right modalities for social and political organization of society at primary level of governance [9]. The 1999 constitution was meant to guarantee the autonomy of the local governments on two basic aspects as follows: provision for the political/administrative autonomy of the local governments. In order to enhance the political/administrative autonomy of local governments, the constitution provided for a democratically elected government council. Specifically, section 7 (1) of the 1999 constitution guarantees

this as it provides thus; the system of local government by democratically elected local government councils is under this constitution, ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils (1999 Constitution). In order to effect the constitution, section 177 (1) (b) further provides for the establishment of State Independence Electoral Commission (SIEC) that conducts election for chairmanship and councillorship in the state (Ugwuanyi, 2004). The constitution further states clearly the financial autonomy of the local government. In view of all these stands of

the constitution, the interference in the local government finance by the state government, through the instrument of joint account, has made the financial autonomy of the local government a laughing stock, [6] observed too that the state governments have turned the state joint account with local government into an instrument to manipulate and control the local government. [10] observes that local government between 1999 -2007 witnessed a lot of financial misappropriation and fraud being perpetrated by various state governments that actually eroded the autonomy of local government. Obasanjo in June, 2016 observed that the situation in the country's local governments is such that they have been bastardized, battered and encroached upon badly, contrary to the

vision and mission of creating the third tier of government in 1976. He further disclosed the treatment being meted out to local government in Nigeria by state governors as barbaric. He however, queried the rationale behind state government's dominance on local government, especially on financial matters, noting that the third tier of government has been encroached upon by state governors [13]. Apparently, the constitutional responsibility of local government towards national development seems to be hampered by the interference of state governments and federal government. It is against this background that this study sort to examine the autonomy of local government and national development in Enugu State.

Research Questions

1. Does the autonomy of local government affect national development in Enugu State?

2. What are the major factors impinging on local government autonomy and national development in Enugu State?

3. What are the measures that will make local government autonomous to enhance development in Enugu State.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the autonomy of local government and national development in Enugu state. Specifically, the study seeks;

1. To examine the autonomy of local government on national development in Enugu state;

2. To examine the major factors impinging on local government autonomy and national development in Enugu state.

3. To recommend measures that will make local government autonomous and enhance national development in Enugu State

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be of immense benefit to the following both in theory and empirical: the nation at large; the ALGON; NULGE; and scholars of political science. The nation will benefit from the autonomy of local government. This is because all of us come from one local government or the other. As well, the autonomy of local government will enhance national development in that the full financial autonomy of local government will bring about development in our respective villages and communities. The Amalgamated Local Government of Nigeria (ALGON) will benefit from this study. The body has

been fighting for the autonomy of local government. To that extent, the findings of this study will serve as a means of getting the goal actualized. Moreso, Nigerian Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) will benefit from this work by utilizing some of the findings in an effort to actualize the autonomy of local government. Empirically, the scholars of the political science and researchers from other fields will benefit from this study. This can be achieved through utilization of the study as a reference point. Secondly, the students of political science can as well further this study in order to add more knowledge in

the field. The study will as well add to already existing knowledge in the

partment of political science and social sciences at large.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study Local Government Autonomy and National Development in Enugu State: 1999 2016, focused on local government autonomy in Enugu State between 1999 and 2016 and national development. The study seeks to examine the autonomy of local government; some of the major factors that impinge on autonomy of local government and measures to make local government. The state, Enugu is made up of 17 local government areas. The

limitations of the study are the inability of the researcher to research in all the 17 local government areas. Secondly, the research used secondary data instruments like textbooks, journals, seminar paper and online materials which may reflect bias or intentions of the writers. Finally, some of the records requested from the workers in the council were not provided, more especially on finance.

Method of Data Collection

In the course of this study, the researcher relied on secondary data; most of the works were journals, textbooks, paper works. The online materials were made

possible through goggle. Thus, secondary data were the only source of data collection.

Method of Data Analysis

In the analysis, the method of analysis employed was content analysis. Content analysis is a method of studying and analyzing communication or issue in a systematic objective and qualitative manner to measure variable. However, in

this study the researcher employed descriptive methods as design in the analysis of local government autonomy as analyzed in relevant textbooks, journal, paper and other discussions

THE MAJOR CONTENDING ISSUES IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTONOMY

The area of study is Enugu State. Enugu State is the capital of former Eastern Region. The State had a population of 3, 267, 837 people at the census held in 2006 (estimated at over 3.8 million in 2012). It is home of the Igbo of southeastern and few Idoma/Igala people in Ette (Igbo-Eze North) of Enugu State, Nigeria. Enugu State was created in 1991 from part of the old Anambra State. Enugu is capital and largest city in Enugu State from which the state derive its name. Enugu State is made up of 17 local government areas. The local governments are: Aninri, Awgu, Oji-River, Udi, Ezeagu, Enugu North, Enugu South, Nkanu-East, Nkanu-West, Enugu-East, Isi-Uzo, Nsukka, Udenu, Igboeze South, Igbo-Etiti and Uzo-Uwani. The state has boundary with Anambra, Ebonyi, Kogi, Benue, and Abia States. However, Enugu State is one of the 36 states of Nigeria. The state, having been the former capital of Eastern Region was expected to have developed beyond its present status. To that extent, people were of the view that the return of

democracy in 1999 will speed up development in all parts of the State. This assumption was negatively undermined by so many factors of which some political analyst and sympathizers of local government attributed it to local government autonomy. In view of this, the researcher in an effort to examine the autonomy of local government and national development, selected three local governments from the state. Each of the local governments represents each of the three senatorial zones in the state. They are; Uzo-Uwani which represents Enugu North Senatorial Zone; Ezeagu which represents Enugu West Senatorial Zone and Enugu-South which represents Enugu East Senatorial Zone. Furthermore, this study is not to prove the absence of national development but to greater extent, to identify the correlation between national development and local government autonomy. This is important as we all know that national development has gone beyond using economic Gross National Product (GNP) as a yard stick to

determine its growth. National development has been expended to include the basic needs of man (food, shelter, cloth, esteem/love), health, education, infrastructural development. It also includes other social amenities like good road, electricity, pipe borne water,

CONTENDING ISSUES ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTONOMY THE CONSTITUTION

The 1976 reform initiated, particularly, the financial and political autonomy of the local government that was further strengthened by the civil service reform of 1988. As well, the provisions of the 1999 constitution as contained in section 7 (1) and section 162 (paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) are intended to also guarantee the local government autonomy [7]. Evidence shows that starting from 1976 reforms to 1999, all efforts both in framing and repositioning of local government was done by the military administrations, which may account for its short comings. The 1979 constitution which recognized local government in Nigeria as third tier of government failed to guarantee autonomy of local government. However, the subsequent military decree did not also guarantee full autonomy of local government. In view of this, efforts will be made to x-ray those shortcomings in regard to autonomy of local government. The 1976 Local Government Reform, despite its shortcomings in the dimension of autonomy for local councils, at least actively revolutionized the system of local government administration [8]. The above assertion is an indication that local government was created as third tier of government but was not fully allowed to determine its destiny. This was made manifest since that constitution did not allow for democratically elected person or persons to manage the affairs of the local councils in full capacity. The constitution undermined the financial autonomy of local government by not making money available to the local government through its own account, rather they got their money through the state and local government joint account. The idea of State Ministry of Local Government

sanitary, etc. Moreso, evidence shows that Enugu State has been under the administrations of three governors in time under study thus:

Chimaroke Nnamani	1999 - 2007
Sullivan Chime	2007 - 2015
Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi	2015 - Date

compounded the autonomy. The State Ministries of Local Government dictate the activities of local governments in those days. The release of the National Scheme of Service for local government employees in 1988 afforded the local government the chance to promote its workers to level (15). The period of 1988 afforded local government near autonomy hence the removal of state ministry of local government and power given to the elected chairman to appoint his secretary and supervisors. The 1999 constitutional provisions meant to guarantee autonomy of the local government in Nigeria. The 1999 Constitution retained democratically elected executive chairmen and legislative arms, the councilors (Section 7 (1) of the 1999 Constitution). The same constitution in section 8 ensure the existence of local government. Conversely, the 1999 constitution in section 177 (1) provides for the establishment of state independent electoral commission (SIEC) to be conducting elections for the local government in their respective states. Arguably, this is another form of mortgaging local government into state power. Secondly, the appointment of caretaker committees is another setback, the constitution empowered State Assembly to create laws that guide the tenure of the local councils and at same time empower governors to appoint people to handle the administrative affairs of the councils. Finally, the local government commission constitutes an instrument of state control over local governments. This manifests itself when state appoints commissioner for the commission who determine when to recruit, promote and retire the local government staff.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCES

Section 162 of the 1999 Constitution provides for the financial autonomy of the local governments as it stipulated, specifically, in paragraph 3 thus: "any amount standing to be credited to the Federal, States and Local Governments as tiers of government. Ironically, that same 1999 Constitution, in paragraph 5 stipulated thus, the amount standing to the credit of local government councils in the Federation account shall also be allocated to the state for the benefit of their local government councils". This is where the major problem is lying because money is the life-wire of any institution. The joint account (state and local government joint account) has been and will continue to be the area where local governments were helpless because of the way most governors in the different states control the affairs of local government council funds. [6], writing on local government financial autonomy observed that local government in Nigeria is a product of decentralization and was established by law. As a Federal State, Nigeria has three tiers of government (Federal, State and Local Government) whose intergovernmental relations which include: political, financial, judicial and administrative are mainly established by constitution. The tiers are requested to operate within their area of jurisdiction and any action to the contrary is inconsistent with law. This meant to guaranty the constitution of each tier. Under the constitution of Nigeria, the state joint local government account (SJLGA) is a special account maintained by state government into which shall be paid allocations of local government in the state. Section 162 of constitution provides for how public revenue should be collected and distributed among three tiers of government. To Okafor, autonomy can be defined as the freedom of local government to recruit its own staff, raise and manage its own finance, make by-laws and policies, and discharge its own functions as provided by law without any interference from the higher government

[8]. Financial autonomy of local government is the freedom to impose local taxation, generate revenue within its assigned sources, allocate its finance and material resources, determine and authorize its annual budget without external interference. It must be noted that local government autonomy is not absolute as third tier of government that retain functional and financial relation with the high tiers of government [10,13]. Thus, the Borno State government effectively deducted and diverted fund meant for development of local areas contributing significantly abysmal performance of local governments in providing good governance for the communities. According to [15,16] between March 2002 - 2003, a total of 13.3 billion was available for council in Borno state, out of these, the amount the state government deducted is almost half. Aggrieved by incessant interference in the local government financial autonomy, the 26 local government councils, with exception of Maiduguri metropolitan council, sued the Borno State Government for passage of the state joint local government account law 2002, challenging the right of the state government to deduct local government fund at source. The high court held that the state had power to pass the law under section 162 (8) of the Constitution but declared unconstitutional the specific provision that empower committee to deduct at source. The judgment was delivered in June 2002. However, the deduction continued, the Borno example is a reflection of the situation affecting other local governments across Nigeria. Between 1999 to 2007, the administration of Chimaroke Nnamani of Enugu State turned state joint local government account into personal account. He gave money to local government chairmen in the state as it pleased him. The effect of this was the poor performance of local government council chairmen in the state within the period [8]. In 2010, 31 out of 36 State governors tampered with local

government funds through the instrumentality of joint account. These states are: Anambra, Abia, Enugu, Ebonyi, Imo, Akwa-Ibom, Rivers, Delta, Bayelsa, Ondo, Ogun, Ekiti, Oyo, Sokoto, Kastina, Kaduna, Kwara, Osun, Borno, Jigawa, Niger, Kaduna, Adamawa, Taraba, Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau, Gombe, Bauchi and Kano. This was made possible by the 1999 Constitution. In section 162, paragraph 6, the provision of state and local

government joint account means that state controls the joint account and does not allow local governments access to federation accounts. Such chain called joint account has deprived local government its responsibilities since most of them can hardly pay workers' salary let alone embark on any project with the little money the states usually give to them.

STATE INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Many perceived the use of state independent electoral commission as a means of interfering in the autonomy of local government. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is an umpire that shoulders the responsibility of conducting election in Nigeria. It must be recognized that the 4th republic elections were conducted by the INEC in the three tiers of government. The transition programme that brought in this new democratic rule outlined tenure of local government executives to be three years while the Federal and state governments got four years. The introduction of the state independent electoral commission remained blurring to many. The question is, if the local government is a tier of government, why is it that their elections are being conducted by SIEC against the use of INEC in other sister tiers? [7], asserted that another area of confusion is in terms of election in the federal, state and local government council. While the constitution provides four years for federal and state, the same constitution was silent on tenure of the local government political office holders. The constitution in the concurrent legislative list gives the National Assembly the power to make laws with respect to the registration of voters and the procedures regulating election to local government council. The same constitution gave the power to the State house of Assembly too to make laws in respect of election into local government council. For instance, in preparation for the fourth republic in 1999, local government elections were held on 5th December, 1998. The electoral

officers however did not assume office until six months later in March 1999. The electoral law under which the local government officials were elected (Basic Constitution and transition provisions Decree No. 36 of 1998) provides for tenure of three years. The local government officers later went to the Supreme Court to ask for the increase of tenure to four years in collaboration with National Assembly. The Supreme Court however ruled that the National Assembly did not have the power to increase or alter the tenure of elected officers of local government from the three years stipulated in the constitution and transition provisions decree No. 36 of 1998. At the expiration of the three years tenure in May, 2002, the state governments appointed caretaker committees for all the local government councils in their respective states to serve until another date of election was agreed upon. Subsequently, the election did not take place as and when due as it was postponed twice due to the tussle between State Independent Electoral Commission and the Independent National Electoral Commission. Although State Independent Electoral Commission was empowered by the constitution to conduct local government election, the INEC has the responsibility of updating the voters registration and making same available to SIEC. But when SIEC fixed May 18, 2002 for election into local government council, INEC failed to produce and make voters register available to them. Thus election had to be postponed. Another date was fixed for December, 2002, but due to registration

of new parties, the election was postponed to 21 June, 2003. A few days to the date of election on 17 June, 2003, the forum of local government met and pushed for constitution amendment to empower state governors to appoint council chairmen and councilors. A day after, the Governors met with President at the council of States meeting where a decision was reached to set up a technical committee on the review of the structure

of the local government council in Nigeria. The committee was headed by the late Atsu Nupe, Alhaji Umaru Sanda Ndayako. The report was submitted in 2006. However, election into the local government council took place in 2007. It could be adduced that the controversy over election into local government was created by the 1999 Constitution between National Assembly and State Assembly.

CARE-TAKER COMMITTEE

On caretaker committee, Lekke Baiyewu of Punch Newspaper, writing from Lagos, observed that the Lagos State Governor, Ambode installed new sole administrators to oversee the affairs of the 20 local government areas and 37 local government development areas in the state. The statement issued by the secretary to- the state government Mr. Tunje Belle, earlier on Saturday had said the 57 sole administrators, after being sworn in would take charge of their various councils pending the conduct of elections at their domain. In what indicated that council polls would be held in Lagos soon, the first version of the statement issued by the state government on Saturday was that the sole administrators would take charge of their various councils pending the conduct of election at the councils later in the year. But in corrected" version which was later sent later in the year, Ambode had penultimate Thursday approved the dissolution of caretaker committees with immediate effect, following the resolution of the Lagos State House of Assembly, which relieved the executive secretaries of the 57 local government areas and local council development areas who had held sway in the councils of their responsibilities.

Apparently, appointments of sole administrators would further make having substantive council chairmen in Lagos state unlikely. The state chapter of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) has last week asked Ambode not to copy his counterpart in Osun State Rauf Aregbesola who has not conducted council polls in the state in the last six years [9]. The

opposition party noted that the appointment of sole administrators to manage the local councils in the state was unconstitutional, adding that the government was not serious about its promise to conduct polls in the state. The PDP said Ambode should have allowed the Lagos State Independent Electoral Commission to announce the date for the council pool rather than use delay tactics. It added that using sole administrators to head the council was contrary to section 7 of the 1999 Constitution which made the provision for only democratically chairmen elected to manage the councils. On the other hand, the Governor of Enugu State, Hon. Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, early this year, instituted caretaker committees in the state to manage the affairs of the local governments, saying that the current economic recession had made it impossible for the state to go into election. The opposition party in the state had raised its flag in protest against using caretaker committee to manage local government councils, saying that it is unconstitutional. The All Progressive Congress (APC) took the matter to court. This has been the case in Ebonyi, Imo, Anambra during Peter Obi and many states of the federation [9]. The observers of the trend have also noted that it did not start under the current administration, it has been on since democracy began, only that the situation is becoming worse under successive administrations. Nigeria operates a three tier Federal system of government, made up of Federal, State and Local Governments. Currently, the state governors are lamenting the over bearing

influence the federal government has on their finances and operations as "Too much" power has been given to the highest tier. Ironically, the governors too are widely perceived as threatening the existence of the lowest tier, the local government in their respective states. Incidentally, the local governments, currently 774 of them, are the closest to the people and are in the best position to have direct impact at the grassroots level. The bone of contention had always been how the local government should be run. This is apparently why several moves have hit the brick wall-while a section of the divide believes that local governments should be created and run by states, the other section insists that autonomy of local governments should be recognized

in practice, as the third tier of government with funds allocated to it directly from the Federal account. The amendment of section 124 of the 1999 Constitution by the National Assembly under President Goodluck Jonathan led administration was widely seen as the closest the local government had gone towards becoming autonomous. In the amendment, the federal legislature granted full financial and administrative autonomy to the 744 local governments in the country. Of importance is the fact that the use of caretaker committee will undermine or rather abuse the autonomy of local government in the country as third tier of government in the Federal arrangement and this will undermine national development.

CREATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The confusion created by 1999 Constitution which affected local government autonomy was the provision that empowers the state to determine and take major decision on local government area. Section 8 (3) provides the modalities for the creation of new local government area and indeed vests the power to do so on various State Houses of Assembly. The provision also brought about the tussle for the control of local government administration between state and federal government [9]. Many states created local government like Lagos, Enugu, Kogi Niger, Oyo and so on. The federal government refused to recognize the newly created local government. A state like Lagos decided to recognize and fund the new local government areas it created. This degenerated into a rift between Lagos

State and Federal government in which federal government stopped financial allocation to Lagos State. The Lagos State went to Supreme Court and the apex court ruled that states have the power to create local government if they follow the modalities for creating local government areas. [7], quoting [12] had observed that the Constitutional power to establish local government, define structure, composition and functions belong to the state government. As such, the issue of autonomy of local government becomes a myth and not a reality. In reality, the 1999 Constitution recognized local government as third tier of government but handed it over to state for its management such will undermine the efforts towards national development.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

H₁: The Autonomy of Local Government Affects National Development in Enugu State.

The 1999 constitution seemingly promotes autonomy of local government in Enugu State. The 1999 Constitution in section 3 (6) enshrined that there shall be seven hundred and seventy four (774) local governments in Nigeria. This is evidence that local government was created by the constitution as a tier of government. In addition, section 7 (1) of

the 1999 constitution stated that the system of local government by democratically elected local government is under this Constitution guaranteed, and accordingly, the government of every state shall ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils (1999 Constitution). Section 7 (6) subject to the provisions of this constitution, (a) the National Assembly shall make provisions

for statutory allocation of public revenue to local government councils in the federation, and in section 313, pending any act of the National Assembly for provisions of a system of revenue allocation between the federal and the state, among the state, between the state and local government councils and among local government councils. The fourth schedule, section 7 (1) the 1999 Constitution outlined the functions of local government which includes: collection of rate, establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, maintenance of homes for aged and destitute, regulation of slaughter houses, market maintenance, road maintenance, street light, drainage system, public high ways, hospitals, primary schools, adult and vocational education, restraining of animals, development of agriculture, sanitary, security, provision of electricity, etc. All these functions were aimed at promoting national development. However, the 1976 local government reforms unified local government system in Nigeria and made local government third tier of government in Nigeria. The reform was institutionalized by 1979 Constitution, hence the federal, state and local governments in Nigeria. Similarly, since 1976 till 2016, there have been reforms which were aimed at repositioning local governments and promoting autonomy of local government in order to ensure that local government contributes its quota towards national development. Between the years under investigation (1999 - 2016), the local governments in Enugu State witnessed over-deduction of funds meant for local governments in the state from 1999 - 2007. In Ezeagu local government, during the period of 1999 to 2003, the then local government chairman Joe Mmamel could not fulfill his electoral promises due to lack of fund. More so, during the period of 1999 to 2003 in Uzo-Uwani local government, the local government Chairman Daniel Okweli could not attend to all his campaign promises due to unavailability of local government fund from the State government. Similarly, in

Enugu South, the late Sunday Anyanwu who was the local government Chairman could not create or achieve any landmark due to unavailability of funds. In view of this, [8] opined that the period of 1999 to 2003, the government of Enugu State under Chimaroke Nnamani turned state and local government joint account to personal account and gives out money to local governments as it pleases him. Furthermore, the Enugu State government created 45 local governments out of 17 local governments recognized by the constitution. In counter reaction, the federal government under leadership of Olusegun Obasanjo refused to recognize those newly created local governments. In response to that, Chimaroke Nnamani turned those local governments into development centers. Nevertheless, between 2003 to 2007, the government of Enugu State refused to organize election for the local governments. Instead, the state government constituted caretaker committees to oversee the affairs of local governments in the state and this act affected development in the state. During the period of 2007 - 2016, the Enugu State government was able to conduct election into local governments. In Ezeagu local government, the local government Chairmen - Julius Ogbuke and Emeka Ozoagu were able to perform credibly in the area of security, road construction, education, agriculture, electricity, street light, health centers. In Uzo-Uwani local government, during the period of 2007 to 2015, the local government chairmen in the area James Ademu and Cornel Onwubunya were able to fix roads, reconstruct the headquarters, did well in health, education, street light and agriculture. Also, in Enugu South, the period of 2007 to 2015 witnessed massive road construction, schools, health centres, agriculture, street lights, market maintenance, parks, slaughter houses, electricity, security, etc. These were achieved by the Chairmen of the local government who are, Nwabueze Okafor, Oguejiofor Agbo and Sam Ngene all duly elected. To that extent, there exist correlation between elected chairmen

Table I: Performance of Local Governments in Enugu State within the period of 1999 - 2016

S/N	ITEM	PERCENTAGE
1.	Education	50%
2.	Primary Health	60%
3.	Market Maintenance	30%
4.	Rural Road	65%
5.	Restraining Animal	10%
6.	Home for Age/Homeless	0.5%
7.	Burial Ground	0.5%
8.	Agriculture	50%
9.	Sanitary	45%
10.	Park (Motor)	55%
11.	Street Light	30%
12.	Electricity	60%
13.	Public Convenience	0.5%

From the finds, the joint account by the state and local government affects local government performance. It was discovered that elected chairmen perform better than caretaker committee, while creation of local government affects the activities of local government in Enugu State.

H₀₂: Financial Autonomy of Local Government is One of the Factors Impinging on National Development in Enugu State.

The federal and state government interference impinges on the efforts of local government in an effort to attend to its constitutional mandate of promoting national development in the rural areas. There exist federal allocation formular in Nigeria and is as follows:

Table 2: Federal Allocation Formular

Federal Government	53%
State Government	27%

The federal allocation formular was aimed at providing funds for each tier of governments to discharge its constitutional duties. The 1999 Constitution stated that the federal government will have its own separate account while the states will also have their own separate accounts. Then the funds due to the local governments should be paid to its states. It was on the basis of the constitutional stand that the states deduct local government fund at will. Between the year 1999 to 2017, Enugu State under the administration of Chimaroke Nnamani controlled the funds of local governments in Enugu State. The administration in 2003 decided to run the local governments with caretaker committee. Such trend continued up to the year 2007. To that extent, the three local governments studied in the state, the findings shows that there was no meaningful development by the local government within the period. Most of the Chairmen were unable to pay the staff of their local governments. Although during the period, the local governments provided foods for the primary schools. However, during the period of 2007 to 2015, Enugu State government under the administration of Sullivan Chime decided to allow to greater extent, financial autonomy of local government. In effect to that, the local governments in the state demonstrated to greater extent, high level of involvement in national development. More so, Enugu South under the

H₃: Constitutional Amendment will Guaranty the Autonomy of Local Government and National Development

The efforts of the government at the central seem unable to redeem local government from the grips of state government. Since 1976, local government reforms which for the first time recognized the local government as third tier of government, all other efforts could not guarantee autonomy of the local government. Many scholars and political analysts have been advocating for the autonomy of local government yet, debate and struggle for the autonomy

chairmanship of Nwabueze Okafor constructed 80 percent of rural roads in Enugu South. He also reconstructed Gariki market, rehabilitation of some buildings in the headquarters, provision of transformer, rehabilitation of some primary schools, construction of new kenyetta market, and many other developmental programmes. In Ezeagu local government within the period of 2007 to 2015, the administration of Julius Ogbuka and Ozoagu Emeka was able to fix some rural roads, construct (bridges, health centres, primary schools, local government headquarters), provide transformers, etc. While in Uzo-Uwani local government, the administration of James Ademu and Cornel Onwubunya were able to provide some assistance to farmers, construct roads, rehabilitate schools, construct bridges and supported vigilante groups in the area of security. In view of all these, it is evident that the local government in Enugu State perform well at any point the state government makes their fund available to them. Likewise, it was discovered that the caretaker committee does not ask questions about monthly allocation. That was the case in Udi during the Chimaroke and Oscar Egwuonwu in 2003. On a final note, financial autonomy of local government affects national development in Enugu State. This is because the local government performs well at any point the state gives them their monthly allocation.

the Autonomy of Local Government and

seem not to be yielding results. The former president, Goodluck Jonathan perceived autonomy of local government as a deep disintegration in nation building. The present administration should as a matter of urgency rescue the local government from near death. This view was predicated on the fact that local government is government at grassroots with the responsibility of bringing development and encouraging greater participation of the people at the

hinterland. However, in an effort to ensure national development, the local governments are the closest government to the people. Therefore, this effort should stem from reframing the 1999 constitution which has military background and lacks all it takes to put up all inclusive government at the grassroots. The National Assembly should see the entrenchment of local government autonomy as panacea for national development. In other hand, Olusegun Obasanjo observed that the state joint account with the local government has failed to serve its intended purpose and should be discontinued. The constitution should be amended in such a way that all the 774 local governments should have its own separate accounts from that of the states. Furthermore, the election of chairmen and councilors in local governments should be conducted by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The idea of using State Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC) go a long way to hand over the autonomy of local governments to the state. The INEC which is the umpire that conduct other elections in Nigeria should conduct elections into the local governments. More so, the INEC should harmonize the tenures of the chairmen and councilors all over the federation and

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study show that the local government in Enugu State is being affected by the autonomy of local government in national development. The study shows that local governments perform better in national development whenever more funds were provided for them. The study finds out that caretaker committee does not perform compared to elected chairman. The study discovered that the 1999 constitution, State Local Government Joint Account (SLGJA),

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

This study titled "Local Government Autonomy and National Development in Enugu State 1999 - 2016" focused on autonomy of local government and its effects on national development in Enugu

conduct elections for them, the system of using caretaker committee in administration of local government is not only unconstitutional but a coup, an aberration. In that case, such trend should be discouraged. Also, the local government commission should be dissolved as it serves as channels for interference by the states. Another, measure to ensure autonomy of local government is the fact that the 1999 constitution empowered local government to collect rate and tax. This will serve as means of generating funds which will enhance national development. This will make them self sustaining, this is because a true autonomy required ability to provide for yourself. Other areas include non-permanent structure. This is because most of local governments in Nigeria were operating under trees while some use former SDP and NRC buildings. The 1999 constitution enshrined that local governments should have structure. And lastly, the creation of local government should be of the constitutional matter and not the State Assembly or Governors. Conclusively, if the constitution should be amended to contain all these, the autonomy of local government will be assured and that will enhance national development.

caretaker committee, local government commission and creation of local government constitute major factors that impinge on autonomy of local government. More so, the study discovered that constitutional amendment will guarantee the autonomy of local government. But, the autonomy can only be achieved by constitutional amendment.

State. The chapter one of the study created the background as well as gave direction to the study in the statement of the problem. This gave way to research questions and objective of the study.

Also, in chapter one, efforts were made to outline the significance of the study and scope/limitations of the study and finally, method of data collection and data analysis. In chapter two, most of the literature related to the study was reviewed. The theoretical framework that was used to extrapolate the study was structural functionalism. This was because it seems most suitable for analyzing local government which is a structure or a tier of government, and some key concepts were clearly explained for clarity purposes. This provides ground for introduction of area of the

study and methods of selecting the three local governments which provides ground for data collection. However, major contending issues were discussed and that of gap in literature. Chapter four of this study presented the analysis of the hypothesis and the findings of the study. The chapter five however, started with summary of the study. Recommendation was made, while the study concluded by saying that 1999 Constitution should be amended so that local government will become autonomous and play its role on national development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study will not be complete if the researcher fails to proffer solutions to myriads of problems facing local government as regards to autonomy and national development. As our foregoing exposition indicate that local government autonomy is largely being interfered in and this has militated significantly against the capacity of the local government to operate effectively and contribute to national development. To strengthen and guarantee the autonomy

of the local governments, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

1. That for local government to contribute effectively on national development, the constitution must guarantee its autonomy.
2. That the fund of local governments should be provided to them directly from the federation account.
3. That the 1999 Constitution should be amended to ensure autonomy of local government which will in turn reflect on national development.

CONCLUSION

Having analyzed the effects of local government autonomy on national development, evidence shows that the autonomy of local government affects national development in Enugu State. The 1999 Constitution places local government to some extent, in the hands of state governments. The state governors exploit such short-coming or loophole to

undermine the autonomy of local government which affects national development in Enugu State. In view of these trends, the study concluded by saying that the 1999 Constitution should be amended in such a way that the local government in Enugu State will gain its autonomy which will enhance its performance in national development.

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