

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE NIGERIAN PUBLIC SECTOR: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

¹Awe Obafemi Kayode, ²Tugbobo Adebola Nojimu &

³Ajulor Olusegun Nathaniel

¹*Industrial Relation and Personnel Management Unit,
IRPM Unit Lagos State University, Ojo*

²*Department of Sociology, Faculty of Libera Arts,
Houdegbe North America University, Benin Republic*

Abstract

The study examined performance management problems and prospects and their relationship with effective and competitive service delivery in the Public sector in Nigeria. The study adopted a theoretical and descriptive analysis of available literature and an empirical study of public policy management of cosmopolitan Local Government in Lagos State using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings showed that there is a significance relationship between a well-established performance mechanism individual and organizational productivity and efficient and effective service delivery. The findings also showed that sustained performance management system monitoring and feedback, when applied in the developmental context, facilitate employee professional growth, synergy with developmental goals, retention and development of organizational and productivity culture. It was found that the reason for poor performance of the Nigerian Public Sector is embedded in the Workers' attitude to work as they perceive government work as no man's work. They display tendencies to loot and high level of lackadaisical behaviours there greatly reducing service efficiencies productivity and competitiveness. Therefore, the study recommended that public sector employees groups and teams be reoriented and continuously developed on the essence of job commitment and engagement with resultant high level of proficiency, competency and service delivery for creative work and sustainable national development.

Keywords: *Performance Management, Public Sector, Service Delivery, Development Administration.*

Background to the Study

Poverty means the absence of basic necessities of life. Poverty is a situation where an individual is unable to take adequate care of his /her basic needs such as shelter, food and clothing. It also mean inability to meet social and economic obligation, lack of sound education, lack of self-concept, lack of gainful employment and exposure to poor social and economic infrastructures such as, good health care centre, clear water supply, electricity , sanitation and ultimately lack chance of advancing his/her welfare to the limits of his/her capacities.

Poverty connotes deplorable living standard of people and communities in a state. In our contemporary world, it simply mean people who are below a certain minimum income level and have no access to basic necessities of life needed for the acceptable living condition. Poverty is the worst disease that afflicts people all over the world. It is undeniable mark of underdevelopment. Poverty is a terrible and undesirable chain which keeps the poor in a pitiable state of destitution. As a matter of fact, poverty is a plague that demands urgent attention in order for the people to live a fulfilled and enviable life. Therefore, is not a thing of surprise that every government both past and present made poverty alleviation one of their cardinal focuses? In view of this concept, this research work tries to identify and determine the various impact of local government administration on poverty alleviation in Nigeria, using Ikeja local government Area of Lagos state of Nigeria as a case study. The reason to employ local government administration in this research work emanate from the fact that local government are closer to the people at the grass-roots' and ordinarily grass-roots are meant to offer development such as, health care centre, education, water supply, roads. Neglect of any of these in a part of the country will be reflected nationally in disease, ignorance and poor communication nature. Thus, the significance of local government "has to rest on something more substantial than its efficacy for the disposal of sewage or refuse". The functional terms, local government provides organizational unity for the performance of various services to match the socio-economic entities which local government communities are.

Furthermore; the constitutional duties of local governments are among other things to enhance the well-being of the people, thereby having alleviation of poverty in the lives of the people as one of its constitutional duties. However, various research works neglected this essential aspect of local government administration but focused on the evolution, development, finances etcetera, of local government. Ikeja local government of Lagos state, which is being used as a case study in this research work, has its headquarters at its present location along new garage Ikeja. Like any other local government within the federation, courtesy to 1976 local government reforms, it started functioning with a chairman at the helms of affairs, deputy chairman, a secretary and other officials to see to the administration of local government which was at that time under a non-representative administration. However, Ikeja local government is today routed in the laws that empowers it to function as a legitimate and democratic local government will all obligations and responsibilities as bequeathed to it through the 1976 local government reforms, which makes it worthwhile as a case study in this sensitive research work. Proof of poverty facilities in Nigeria, inadequate water supply, lack of roads, lack of health care, lack of educational system, lack of gainful employment, lack of financial resources, lack of skill, lack of social amenities such as electricity, limited access to socio- economic infrastructures.

The aforementioned historical background of poverty and of the local government being used as a case study places us on a better setting as we progress on the study. In the case of the local government, it provides us the chance of determining the basis for evaluating how its constitutional duties impacted positively on the lives of the people to alleviate poverty. On the other hand, poverty itself, create opportunity to examine how afflictions and endemic it is to the lives of the community and while it should be urgently addressed and ultimately reduced to the barest minimum if not completely wipe out.

Objectives of Study

The cardinal objective of this study is to strictly examine the impact of local government administration on poverty alleviation, using ikeja local government in Lagos state as a case study.

1. To know and evaluate the various constitutional duties of local governments in Nigeria as it relates to poverty alleviation in the life of the people.
2. The study will further identify and discuss factors contributing to poverty or inimical poverty alleviation programmes in local government administration in Nigeria
3. The study will look critically into the contributions of local governments in poverty alleviation or eradication
4. Identify those things that can be indicated as improvement in the life of the people of ikeja local government area as a result of effective administration of the local government
5. The study addresses particular weakness of local government in poverty alleviation programmes: the appropriation of fund in the political system by political officials, lack of transparency about money flows in politics, interference from higher power, poor personnel, how high level corruption limit poverty alleviation in Ikeja local government area of Lagos state.

Statement of Problems

This refers to any situation which creates difficulty in understanding. This is what the researcher intend to find solutions to by carefully looking into the following statement:

1. Political considerations have overshadowed the premium hitherto placed on economic viability in the creation of local government.
2. Most local government has come to rely heavily on subvention from the federal government thereby viable economic resources base are left untapped.
3. Legal-rational authority is not institutionalized. Since those in authority lack legitimacy, illegality quickly assumes acceptance from the people.
4. The encroachment of higher levels of government on local government's power is a negation of its declared objective.
5. The constitutional duties of local government include inter-alia the alleviation of poverty in the lives of the local citizens.

Significance of Study

This research work is expected to assist and expose individuals who may in the future find us in an elected or appointed position in government.

1. This study will not only be helpful to the staff of local government but also be of great importance to others researchers who might want to explore the same area of study.
2. This study is not an exhaustive discourse on the topic but a quick overview to sensitize us to those aspects of the local governments that has proven crucial to local government poverty alleviation.
3. The research will help us to understand the problem realistically and identify concrete initiatives that are likely to have impact.
4. The study will show practical and policy- oriented suggestions for poverty eradication.
5. The research provides useful overview of different modalities used in different countries, and thus offers a menu of options and solutions for other countries in the region and beyond, based on a thorough understanding of the local government situation.

Research Questions

This study will provide answers to the following research question:

1. What are the visible elements impending poverty alleviation policies in local government administration in Nigeria?
2. What can one conveniently link as improvement in the lives of the people under local government in Nigeria?
3. What are the statutory functions of local government on poverty alleviation?
4. What will be the accumulative effect if local governments refuse to put in place program / policies on poverty alleviation?
5. What are the areas local governments can contribute towards poverty alleviation in the lives of the local people?

Research Hypothesis

We have null hypotheses (H₀) that is the hypotheses of interest; the one of the researcher is interested in testing. We also have alternative hypotheses (H₁) which is usually accepted whenever the null hypotheses is rejected. Similarly, a hypothesis is either true or false. Thus there are two errors which are likely to be committed.

Type I error: Is rejecting a true hypotheses

Type II error: Is accepting false hypotheses

This study will be guided by the following research hypotheses:

- H₀ (Null hypothesis): Poverty alleviation polices of local government in Nigeria has no significant influence on poverty alleviation.
- H₁ (Alternative hypothesis): Poverty alleviation polices of local government in Nigeria has significant influence on poverty alleviation.
- H₀ (Null hypothesis): There is no relationship between the impacts of local government administration and the level of poverty in its local citizens.

- H1 (Null hypothesis): There is relationship between the impacts of local government administration and the level of poverty in its local citizens.
- Ho (Null hypothesis): There is no going to be a relationship between statutory functions of local government and poverty alleviation.
- H1 (Null hypothesis): There is going to be a relationship between statutory functions of local government and poverty alleviation.
- H0 (Null hypothesis): The implementation of poverty alleviation policies has significant influence on the life of its citizens.
- H1 (Null hypothesis): The implementation of poverty alleviation policies has no significant influence on the life of its citizens.
- H0 (Null hypothesis): The contribution of local government on poverty alleviation policies has significant influence on poverty alleviation.
- H1 (Null hypothesis): The contribution of local government on poverty alleviation policies has no significant influence on poverty alleviation.

Limitation of Study

The financial refinement of the research work couple with the limited time will serve as a limiting factor, also the assumption that personnel to be interviewed may not be easily accessible to give sensitive information regarding the local government. In addition, the research will be limited by inadequate study material such as journals, text and classified government reports.

Scope of Study

This research work is intended to look into the various impact of local government administration on poverty alleviation in Ikeja local government area. The research work is on the Ikeja local government out of the 774 local governments in Nigeria and will not extend beyond it.

Definition of Terms

Government: The system by which a state or community is governed. Government is the machinery by which the will of the state is articulated, implemented and achieved.

Administration: Administration is the organization and running of a system. Government in power. Administration is the use of both human and material resources to achieve declared goals.

Local government: Government at the grassroots. Constitutionally, local government is third tier of government after the federal and the state government.

Poverty: The state of being very poor. Poverty connotes lack of basic necessities of life such as shelter, clothing and food.

Alleviation: To make problem less severe. To reduce or lessening negative effect to a bearable minimum.

Constitutional role: notable roles as entrenched in the constitution of a given political community.

Policy: Policy is a set of decision made and actions taken from various options by the actors in response to certain problem.

Grass-root: The most basic level of an organization, community or country.

Reforms: To makes changes in something so as to improve it. Make someone, organization or institution improves their behavior.

Obligation: A responsibility which one must carry out.

Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, our focus would be a review of major works literatures on poverty, poverty indicator, causes of poverty, approaches to poverty alleviation and incidence of poverty in Nigeria together with literatures of local government's justification, feature, and operations relating to poverty eradication will be reviewed.

Poverty

Poverty is a situation where the resources of individuals or families are inadequate to provide a social acceptable standard of living according to Harry Johnson (1974). In other words the individuals live below the conventional poverty line demarcating the poor from the non-poor.

Sam Aluko (1975) defined poverty as “lack of command over consumption need such as food, clothing, and shelter.” Such lack of resources to meet the basic needs incapacitates the individual in protecting himself against social, economic and political deprivations. Also Deng (1886), A.S.F Atoloye (1997), and A Englama and A.Bamidele (1997), defined poverty as “lack of basic necessities of life”. Based on these concepts, Anyanwu J.C (1997) categorized the following as poor, especially within the Nigerian content:

1. Ethnic minorities, who are marginalized, deprived and persecuted economically, socially, culturally and politically.
2. People in isolated rural areas who lack essential infrastructures.
3. Persons who have lost their job and those who are unable to find employment as a result of economic reforms.
4. Households or individuals below the poverty line and whose incomes are insufficient to provide for their basic needs.
5. Household lacking access to basic services, political contracts and other forms of support.
6. Female-headed households whose nutritional needs are not being met adequately.

Poverty is a word which vividly describes the deplorable living conditions of individuals and communities in a state of economic and social deprivation according to Paul A. Ognuma (1999). In other words, poverty manifests itself not only in economic deprivation but also, in terms of individual's level of economic and non economic factors such as political power, access to basic infrastructures and utilities like electricity, transportation, water supply, access to social services as education, health care and environmental protection.

The German government in 1992, described poor people as “those who are unable to live a decent life” while defining poverty as “not having enough to eat, a high rate of infant mortality, a low life expectancy, low educational opportunities, poor water, inadequate health care, unfit housing and lack of active participation in decision making process” (federal ministry of economic co-operation and development

(1992)). Sometimes, attention is drawn to the relative nature of poverty and clear distinction is drawn between the poor and non poor. According to World Bank Development report 1990, poverty is defined as “inability of uncertain person to attain a minimum standard of living”.

To demonstrate the practical aspect of this concept, three sets of ratios based on the level of consumption were constructed by the World Bank in 1976. These are the so-called P-alpha ratios showing:

1. The severity of poverty, obtained by squaring the gap between the incomes of the poor and the poverty line, also taking into account income distribution.
2. The depth of poverty which is obtained by multiplying head count ratio by the proportion of population deemed to be poor, and
3. The head-count ratio which is the proportion of the population for whom consumption falls below the poverty line.

Given its multi-dimensional nature poverty has been perceived using different criteria. Poverty may be seen as a reflection of glaring defects in the economy as evidenced in mass penury, pauperization of the working and professional class including artisans, mass unemployment and poor welfare services. It denotes absence or lack of basic necessities of life including material wealth, regular flow of wages and income and inability to sustain oneself based on existing resource available. In such a state the means of achieving minimum subsistence, health, education, and comfort are absent. That is why Green Wald and associates, defined poverty as a “condition in which income is insufficient to meet subsistence needs”.

Poverty manifests itself in different forms depending on the nature and extent of human deprivation. When the minimum level of consumption to sustain human existence become important in distinguishing the poor from the non poor, the unemployed and low income earners come readily as the stratum of poor households. It is more likely that this group may not have the capacity to provide the basic needs like food, clothing, housing and transportation for themselves and dependants. Most of them live in shanty usually overcrowded and poorly ventilated homes.

This class of poor people spread across geographical divisions urban-rural and occupational categories. Aboyade (1987), held the view that there seems to be a general agreement that poverty is difficult concept to handle, and easily recognized than defined. Thus, even though it is difficult to be specified about the minimum level of well-being for the state of poverty, the poor in any given society usually stands out sufficiently in terms of severe material deprivations for wretched conditions to be immediately recognized.

Poverty has income and non income dimension while it refers to lack of physical necessities, it also represents a general condition of deprivation manifesting in social inferiority, powerlessness, isolation and degradation. According to Abdullahi (1993), poverty may be structural or chronic (i.e long term and persistent) if it is cause by more permanent or chronic factors such as limited access to production resources, joblessness or endemic socio-political problem.

Poverty may also be transitory or temporal and therefore reversible, if it is caused by natural or man-made disaster such as flood, drought, war, environmental degradation or even failure of public policy. The perception of poverty has therefore broadened the focus beyond the ability of households to provide food for its member to include its ability to access other basic social amenities which impact positively on family welfare.

Features of Poverty

A characteristic of poverty in general, focuses on measure of economic performance as well as the standard of living of the production. They thus, combine measure of income or purchasing power or consumption with those social indicators which highlight availability and access to health care delivery, education basic infrastructure and other welfare-enhancing facilities in order to define the incidence of poverty (how many are poor), the intensity or severity of poverty (how poor are they) and the distribution of poverty within a population.

The social indicators of poverty measure the availability and access to health, education and welfare facilities as well as basic infrastructure which are connected with the services provided by local government. The health indicators include those of life expectancy at birth, mortality rates across the age-segment of the population, prevalence of malnutrition, percentage of population with access beds and physicians per unit of population, availability of reproductive health facilities and access to immunization. For education, the ratios computed are literacy rates, and gross and net enrolment ratios at the primary, secondary and tertiary educational levels disaggregated by gender and expressed as a percentage of the relevant age group within the population. Measures of basic infrastructure include supply of electric power, telephones, paved roads, railways, air traffic, etc / per unit of population.

A recent development in computing indicators of poverty is the initiative of UNDP to provide composite quantitative measures of both the economic and the social indicators of human development called the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI combines a measure of purchasing power with measures of physical health and educational attainment to indicate progress or retrogression in human life. The building blocks of HDI are data on longevity, knowledge and income. Longevity is measured by the adult literacy at birth, while knowledge is measured by the adult literacy rate and many years of schooling weighted at 2:1 respectively. For income, purchasing power parity (PPP) (based on real GDP per capital adjusted for the local cost of living) is used.

These three measures are combined in a 3-step process to arrive at average index. The HDI set a minimum and a maximum rate for each measure, and then shows where each country stands in relationship to this range, expressed as a value between 0 and 1.

The Causative Factors of Poverty

The causes of poverty can be grouped into two according to Johnson (1974). In a brief definition, he came up with two conceptual sources of poverty namely:

1. The factors which make the number of individuals in the consuming unit (individual or family/ household) large relative to the amount of productive services the unit is able to supply; and
2. Those which make value of the productive services the household can supply low relative to the household's need.

Under the first category of factors, excessive family size in relation to income as an example; while the second category he listed factors including chronic obsolescence of acquired human skill, mental or physical incapacity and discrimination in terms of age, color, race or sex.

Galbraith (1971), made a cursory observation on the causes of poverty in the three regions of the developing world: the sub-Saharan African, Latin American and Asia. For sub-Saharan Africa, he describes poverty to the "absence of opportunity rather than absence of aptitude" as the countries of this region "have had only a few years" of independence to face the task of economic development.

He observed that in this region. "People with requisite education, training, and honesty for public task are unavailable". Consequently, "taxes are collected in haphazardly or arbitrary fashion and public funds are spent inefficiently" he sees this situation as a potential source of instability, as "those who do not have access to public income will have a strong incentive to seek out those who do".

Furthermore, he noted that law enforcement in sub-Saharan Africa was unreliable and essential public services which exist could make primitive local trade flourish with attendant handicaps. But modern large, technically advanced corporate enterprises which require more demanding environment for the protection of their personnel and property cannot operate, because "their business cannot be transacted in the absence of (efficient) postal services, telephones, security and common carrier transportation".

The World Bank has been particularly active in this regard. Some of the studies include; "Taking Action for Poverty Reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1996 and the Social Impact Adjustment Operations" 1995. The latter identified the causes of poverty as including: inadequate access to employment opportunities, inadequate physical assets; inadequate access to the means of supporting rural development in poor regions; endowments; inadequate access to assistance for those living at margin and those victimized by transitory poverty because of drought, floods, pests and war, inadequate participation of poor in the design of development programs and poor maintenance culture of the failure to retain and maintain existing structures, leading to deterioration in rural, urban and highway road and township slums and squalor. From the foregoing the causative factors of poverty may be summarized as follows:

1. The stage of Economic and Social Development: Managers with the capacity, capability and the integrity to utilize such funds for development projects may not be easily available. The old cliché in Nigeria was “money is not our problem, but how to speed it”. In a situation like this, poverty will tend to persist.
2. Low productivity: low productivity may be the obsolescence of human skill or low acquired skill resulting from low education, poor health and physical incapacity. It could also, be as a result of inadequate access to productive assets and consequently unemployment or underdevelopment.
3. Market imperfection: The existence of an income distribution structure which is skewed in favor of some classes in the society as a form of market imperfection that renders the less favored class poor.
4. Physical or Environmental degradation: Misuse or over-use of land which results in deforestation, desert encroachment the blight in an excessive shifting cultivation system of agriculture are destructive of endowed land resources, swelling the population of the poor as well as deepening the incidence of poverty.
5. Structural shift in the Economy: The structural shift occurred when undue concentration was given to crude oil to the neglect of agriculture which provide job for rural poor.
6. Inadequate Commitment to program Implementation: The usual pattern of lack of commitment to policy by each successive government however beneficial the policies of the preceding government may be. All this results in economic instability and are unhelpful to poverty alleviation.
7. Political Instability: The failure to successfully actualize the political program has brought untold hardship to the economy. There has not been much real economic growth in Nigeria since military, thus seriously enlarging the number of the poor.
8. Corruption: The total losses due to corruption can be more than a country's foreign debt. Corruption can cost government as much as 50 percent of their tax revenues. Bodies like the EFCC, ICPC and other checkmate corruption in the country which its effect has brought poverty to reside with the people.

Incidence of Poverty in Nigeria

The various cause of poverty highlighted above are prevalent in Nigeria and hence, the problem of poverty is very serious, in spite of the country's vast resources. The causes are complex and the consequences often reinforce the causes, leading to further impoverishment. In the recent survey(1996) carried out by the federal Office of Statistics (FOS) and published by the World Bank under the auspices of the national Planning Commission, title, Poverty and Welfare in Nigeria 1997. Nigeria's festering poverty profile was described as “widespread and service”. In a comparative analysis of welfare of the report ranked Nigeria below Kenya, Ghana and Zambia and expressed concern over the dwindling purchasing power of the people and the increasing income inequality in Nigeria which have made life unbearable for the citizenry. Whether measured in absolute or relative terms, poverty is generally more prevalent in the rural communities of Nigeria.

Approaches to Poverty Alleviation

A number of studies have been undertaken by scholars and institutions on mechanisms at the disposal of the Nigeria government to overcome or alleviate poverty, some of which have been referred to earlier. In the World Bank Development Report, 1990 (WDR) the world bank identified four measures to increase the income of the poor, namely:

1. Increasing the demand, and therefore, the price for those factors of production that the poor own (e.g their own labour).
2. Transferring physical assets such as land to the poor;
3. Providing social service such as education to the poor; and
4. Transferring current income to the poor through cash of food subsidies

The above are aimed at utilizing the poor factor endowments for improved income earnings and in living standards. It is study on "Taking Action for Poverty in sub-Saharan Africa" the World Bank emphasized the redistribution of wealth such that distrust, inequity, unrest, eventual civil war and the current pressure for political change may not be perpetuated and thereby save the society from social and political unrest that only retard development and result in retrogression. Measures recommended in that study for poverty alleviation included:

1. Growth Development must move in pair: The pattern of economic growth and widespread grassroots development of basic necessities and amenities that result in improved welfare must be evident.
2. Distribution of the benefit of Growth: Relatively high levels of inequity persist in Nigeria, even where solid growth and re-introduction in average incidence of poverty have occurred.
3. Changing the pattern of Growth: Although evidence shows that economic growth is powerful means of reducing poverty, not all pattern of growth have the same impact.
4. Rural Improvement: For rural to lead productive and enjoyable lives, and therefore, to participate actively in various socio-economic activities, they will also need better access to education, health and water supply services.
5. Pursuit of accelerated and Equitable Distribution of growth: The attention given to the issue of poverty worldwide with devastating effect on the developing nation-state, Nigeria inclusive, it is important therefore, to know if the impact local government administration in Nigeria has made towards alleviating it or eradicating it from the lives of the people.

Local Government

There is a preponderance of notions of local authority, which are often confused with local government. Within the context of a federal system of government local government is that government closest to the people with constitutional derived power and specified territory boundary. According to Awolowo, local government is the sub-structural base upon which the super-structure of state and federal governments are erected.

Government of local level exercised through representative councils established by law to exercise special powers within defined areas. These powers should give the council substantial control over local affairs as well as the staff, an institutional financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of services and to determine and implement project so as to complement the activities of the state and federal

governments in their areas, and to ensure through active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, that local initiatives and response to local needs and conditions are maximized (Awotokun 1996:11).

Local government is a political division of a nation or (in a federal system state, which is constituted by law and has sustained control of local affairs, including powers to impose taxes or to extract labor for prescribed purposes according to the United Nations office for Public administration 1996). The governing body of such entity is elected or otherwise locally selected. Local government is seen as subordinate level of government in terms of the scope of its constitutional powers and areas of jurisdiction according to Hugh Whallen. Local government involves transferring of powers, which will help strengthen local government, politically, economically, institutionally, and fiscally. It is believed that this will help tackle the problem of human development particularly as it relates to people of the grassroots (D.Olowu 1995:3).

Local government is self-government involving the administration of public affairs in each locality by a body of representative of the community according to Byrne (1995). Local government is that system under which local government are organized to maintain law and order, provide some limited range of social services and public amenities and encourage the cooperation and participation of the inhabitants towards the improvement of their conditions of living according to Eme Awa. From the above, it deduced that it is a system which gives the local communities the right to manage their affairs without outside interference. The system provided by law. Although subject to the central government in many ways, it poses a considerable amount of responsibility and discretionary power. Local government is then one of a number of forms of decentralization, hence it is confused with so many other administrative structures as the ministries, Boards Corporations, Parastatals, Authorities, Department and so on according to Adamolekun(1983). Local government under the 1979 constitution as amended by the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is recognized as a third tier of the government.

Brief Historical Background of Local Government Administration in Nigeria

Local government in Nigeria has come a long way, from its centralized non-democratic system in the colonial era to the present elected-democratic local government system. The path to these changes or reforms has not been easy. While in terms of structure much has taken place, politically not much can be said to have changed from the past. This is because "habit dies hard." What is intended on paper is hardly translated into concrete realities.

Prior to 1976 local government reform that brought about elected democratic government into this level, different regions or states in the country had their own local government administrative arrangements, some elected while others had appointed officers. However, one common denominator among them was that they were subjected to control from the state government. This made them hardly efficient and effective. It was against this back-drop that the murtala-Obasanjo Military administration decided to take the "bull by the horns" and introduced far-reaching innovations to uplift local administration to local government with distinct powers and sources of fund.

However, modern local government in Nigeria has its roots in the British system of local government following their conquest proclamation and occupation of Northern Nigeria in 1990. This was followed by institution of framework for grassroots governance directed in the main towards the consolidation and preservation of new imperial acquisition. In recent times however, Nigeria has experimented with some American and French valuations of local government necessitating system undergoing many change before the 1976 reforms which in all ramification seems unique in that for the first time in history of Nigeria, there is a form of local government that uniforms. Although, it is essential to understand that the modern system of local government administration is traced to British rule, however there has existed even before the British, a system of local administration that was in conjunction with the norms and practices of the people in the locality and the British merely built on the system found and modified it in some areas to suit their own design.

This can be buttressed by Campbell (1965), when he wrote "it cannot be denied the fact that the North presents the British administration with workable system of local government with few changes to the Emirate system they found in force at the time of their occupation". Ikimi (1972) aptly noted also, that Northern Nigeria is often regarded as the cradle of the system of local government known as indirect Rule during the colonial regime". It was on this British built their own system of local government which is transformed into the modern local government administration in Nigeria today. In the southern parts of the country through existed some form of "Native System" of administration, yet there cannot be much claim to a well established system of local administration before the emergence of the British. The Western part though operating similar centralized system as the North, differ because it hinges on checks and balances. The Eastern part, as against the others exhibited a seminary traditional local government system without much authority residing on an individual or in the council of chiefs. With the centralized; well structured local administration of the north, the British then built their rule on the ruler or divine kingship. In the east where there was no such traditional rulers with divine kingship, the British created "Warrant Chiefs" to rule on their behalf, which was a problem to system of local government administration in the east. As noted by Ikimi (1972). "The indirect rule much publicized British System of local government in African dependencies disappointment its proponents in Eastern Region".

In final analysis, it undeniable that with different traditional local government background, Nigeria would have different forms of local government administration, which it actually had until the unified 1975 local government reforms.

Justification for Local Government

Local government is justified on the following grounds:

1. It provides an institutional arrangement for the authoritative allocation of values at the grass root level. As David Easton has rightly reminded that politics is about authoritative allocation of power, resources and other central elements of politics. At the local level, local government provides that institutional structure for facilitating this duty.
2. Government at the state or federal level may not adequately understand the needs and fears of the people in the various communities across the country. Local government provides the avenue through which the peoples' views are

- articulated and aggregated for onward transmission to the relevant government decision making machinery.
3. Local government is justified on the ground that it serves as political laboratory for testing and training people for higher political duties and callings. Those who wish to hold political position at higher levels of government can begin their political carrier at the local levels where they can easily make their mark and be recognized for future appointment.
 4. In a developing, society like Nigeria, where government at the center is so salient, local government helps reduce pressure on the central government by bringing policies and programmes of government closer to the people. In the areas of providing training grounds for would-be politicians, and reduction of pressure on the central government, it has been argued that local government provides: The seed of democracy in that it holds out against the depreciation of majoritarian tyranny and provides a chance for local political pressure upon the central government to be reduced (quoted in Awotokun, 1996:12)
 5. Moreover, local government creates the feelings of belongingness, political attachment and social involvement in policy initiation, decision making and implementation at the local level. In a polyarchical system, the people are expected to participant actively in government in order to reduce elite dominance of politics and the political processes (R.Dahl 1971).
 6. Due to the down-turn in global economy and the introduction of SAP in many countries, most states are faced with dwindling resources to discharge their responsibilities to the people. In Nigeria the State is rolling back and much of the social services it provides are in disarray. But most local governments have taken off from where the State stops by rising up to the challenges by providing social amenities such as water, cottage industries, hospitals, motor parks, drainages etc at affordable rates to their people.
 7. Furthermore, local government has become necessary because it promotes national and community development. Central to development is the concept of clientele participation. For example, self-help project for community development requires the support and participation of the people through their working in concert , providing value judgment on such projects and in the process determine the course of action “ within a social situation and structure” (Briggs, 1977 :286). The major thrust of this thesis argues that :
The fundamental premise of clientele involvement is that in interest and commitment to programmes, Success is likely to be high when people regard such programmes as their (Briggs, Ibid).
 8. Political communication and mobilization. The institutional structure local government provides is pivotal to the success of any programme of the government aimed at uplifting the human conditions. Local government therefore becomes an effective and efficient instrument for political education and socialization of the people of the grass root. There is no doubt that local government in contemporary times hold the key to mass political education for a new democratic era and development.
 9. Does local government promote democracy? In what follows, we examine this interesting debate in the literature on this subject matter :

Distinguishing Feature of Local Government

Byrme (1995), contended that there are a number of characteristics which mark out local government as a distinctive form of public administration compared to others like parastatals, board etc.

1. Local government is elected: most local authorities consist of representatives chosen by the members of the community at properly constituted elections these elected members form the local council which then recruit the full time paid staff of the authority made up of different professionals.
2. Local government is multipurpose: every local authority has many jobs to do and a variety of services to provide. A local authority could be responsible for the provision of schools, destitute homes and training centers for the handicaps, fire services, road building and land development. By contrast however, public corporations tend to be concerned with just one particular service or field of activity. This could be well understood under situation where we have PHCN (electricity), Water Board (water), and health management Authority (health) etcetera.
3. Local scale of its operation: Each local authority has responsibility in its own area only to affect the needs of the people of the area. Thus, the activity of a local government of a riverine area is going to differ in form and content from that in the hinterland.
4. Local government has a quite clear define structure: For instance, the Nigeria System is known as the third tier of the government, while the British System consists of either two tier made up of fifty-nine large country or regional councils and 455 smaller district council or 68 single tier London boroughs and metropolitan district/borough council (in the conurbation of England).

The Role of Local Government in Nation Building

Local government has come to play a crucial role in both community and national development. The areas through which local governments have contributed to the development according to Goke Olawuyi (1999), includes:

1. Local government s no doubt serves as a training ground for the future leaders. It helps in the training of the local communities about participatory democracy. Thus a local government councilor can move up to the State house of assembly or governorship position and from there even become the president.
2. Local government helps in redressing the imbalance in the distribution of social amenities and infrastructural facilities among several disperse communities , like the construction of roads, building of schools, hospitals and the provision of pipe borne water etcetera
3. Misconstruing government policies. In Nigeria, the contribution of local government towards nation building can better be appreciated in the colonial era, where the colonist has to use the Native Authorities as avenue through which they sustained themselves in governance.
4. Fostering the growth of grass-root democracy and functional efficiency of government by bringing government near to the people.
5. It is a center of dissemination of information from the central and state governments to the local people. Thus some of the policies of the central or state government that are not well understood by local people are made

- easier to be thereby subduing tensions.
6. It helps in accelerating the rate of social and economic development of geographically disadvantage local communities through the provision of social amenities like school, hospital, recreational centers etcetera.

It brings about political awareness and consciousness among the larger illiterate masses, majority of who reside in the rural areas. This helps in socializing the people and makes them feel part of the governance, like the common saying among the people that “we are the government. However, up till this day local government is still playing a major role in nation building.

Functions of Local Government

In some States, the central or State governments provide broad guidelines on how local government should operate. Other details are allowed to be filled in by the special circumstances under which these local councils find themselves or work under. But in Nigeria, an innovation which all constitutions since 1979 has brought to bear is that of making local government not only a tier of government comparable to the state and federal government, it goes ahead to enumerate in its fourth schedule (1999 constitution) details of its main functions, these are :

1. To make recommendation to a State commission on economic planning so as to further the economic development of the state and local councils within it.
2. Collection of taxes, radio and television licenses; licensing of bicycles, trucks, canoes, etc.
3. Creation and management of cemeteries, burial grounds and reformatory centers.
4. Provision maintenance of markets, motor parks and harbourteurs;
5. Provision and maintenance of public facilities such as roads, street-lightening, parks gardens etc.
6. Numbering of houses, naming roads and streets;
7. Registrations of births, deaths and marriages;
8. Assessment and collection of tenement rates on houses;
9. Control and management of out-door advertising and hoardings, shops and kiosk, restaurants, bakeries laundries, sale of liquor, etc.
10. Work in tandem with the government of the state in providing and maintaining primary, adult and vocational education;
 - i. Developing agriculture and natural resources
 - ii. Providing healthcare services; and
 - iii. Other functions that may be given to local government councils by the State

House Assembly where they are located (The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, fourth schedule, section 7 P.150-151).

The functions of local government as enunciated by the constitution of Nigeria above is the fact they title towards the alleviation of poverty in the lives of the people, and they therefore stand as approaches to poverty alleviation by this tier of government. According to Wegelin and Borgman (1995), the importance of these municipal approaches to poverty alleviation must be understood against the background of two conventional policy directions of poverty alleviation programs which are: policies that centered upon specific community-level programmes that are targeted

at the poor. Although, it must be acknowledge that the planning of coherent local economic development strategies is not generally well advanced across the developing world according to (Rogerson, 1995) but there have been a number of significant municipal or local level government initiatives on poverty alleviation (stream and Gombay, 1994 Vanderschueren, 1996).

In several policy documents, the national government of South Africa, constitution 1997; department of housing 1997: Department of Constitutional Development, 1997. In particular, the white paper on local government emphasizes the vital need to foster a culture of developmental local government in South Africa including the promotion of local economic development (ministry for provincial affairs and constitutional development, 1998). This is to enable the country deal with the issue of poverty from the perspective of local government administration.

Problems Facing Nigerian Local Government

We cannot meaningfully discuss problems of local government without taking into consideration their historical antecedence and the socio-economic and political environment in which they operate.

According to Guyer (1992) the problems involves the following:

1. British colonial enterprise in Nigeria laid the foundation of centralization and showed disregard for the culture diversities of the people. If today local government cannot meet the expectations of the people, it is supposed to serve; the reason for this cannot be far-fetched. Again, Guyer's view is apt: colonialism implicitly and successfully implements anti-community philosophy, such that "the present structure (local government fails to relate effectively to the indigenious or subjective local community in virtually all parts of the country). The effect of this is that it has fostered a system that fails to recognized and use the distinctive peculiarity of the people.
2. Evidently, the parlous economic state of most local governments is due to the fact that political considerations have overshadowed the premium hitherto placed on economic viability in the creation of local government.
3. Most local governments have come to rely on subvention from the federal government to discharge their councils, anticipate easy money from the central government, viable economic resource base are left untapped. This has also made the people of local communities complacent and unwilling to initiate programmes and projects as in the days prior to colonialism.
4. Derivable from this scenario, is attitudinal problems among local government personnel's. As was the case under colonialism, most civil servants still see government work as service to no one in particular. They go to work late and close early, engage in all sorts of underground practices, pillage government coffers and vandalize their properties. In all this, the teeth of the law remain blunt as the big corrupt goes unpunished.
5. The people on their part hardly raise an eye-brow because legal-rational authority is not institutionalized. Since those in authority lack legitimacy, illegality quickly assumes the tag of legality or acceptance from the people.
6. It is interesting to note that while the federal government has done much to institutionalize local government as a third tier of government, its activities have done much to initiate its operation. The encroachment of higher levels of government on local government council's power is a negation of its

declared objectives. For financial, economic, political and electoral reasons the state and federal governments are not willing to give local government the chance to perform its duties. It is not uncommon to hear federal government propaganda about making local government autonomous according to T. Travers, 1979:13). The over-bearing influence of state and Federal government on local government affairs has been a constant source of discomfort and grumbling among local government administrators. There is need for a change of political values by the dominant political elite, to accord local councils the much needed autonomy to carry out their responsibilities.

7. Another major problem confronting local government is personnel shortage. Due to the crisis in local government system most qualified and skilled manpower are reluctant to take up jobs or appointments at the local government level. The Public Service Review Commission of 1974 observed in the case of Nigeria that: The greatest single factor that persistently inhibits the effectiveness of local government authorities is their inability to attract and retain adequate members of competent technical, professional or administrative staff (in Oyediran and Gboyega 1979: 188).
8. In a plural society, issues like tribalism, nepotism and other sectional tendencies are prevalent in the administration of local government. These have further worsened the woes of local government as they serve as obstacles to attempts to revitalize local councils. In the process, merit is sacrificed on the altar of mediocrity making development a more distant possibility at this level of government.

From the above, it could be concluded that local governments have been confronted with various problems among which are the above mentioned. And they have done a lot of damage to the smooth and successful running of local government administration in Nigeria.

The Role of Local government in Socio-Economic Development (Poverty Alleviation)

The existence of local government has no doubt contributed immensely to economic development in Nigeria, that is, contribution towards poverty eradication from the lives of the local citizens cannot be over-emphasized. A brief look at the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria will suffice for our illustration of this point.

The Pre-Colonial Era

The peoples of the present day Nigeria migrated to their present abode from various societies, empires and kingdoms. Before and in the course of migrating they had developed their own distinctive political systems which were considered adequate for their societies. A look at their political system will show that according to the political bureau (1987:25) there was an intricate mix between service and accountability, consultation and consensus the pursuit of government was clearly defined as that of promoting the welfare of the people, smooth succession to political offices is based on traditional rule. Relative stability was assured because "all incumbents and claimants (to political offices) were expected to be people of transparent, honesty, integrity, uprightness, and with the ability to service the basic needs of their communities.

In the north, before the coming of the British an elaborate and functional system of government and politics has evolved. Their pre-colonial local government system could be classified into centralized and non-centralized system. In the Fulani caliphate, the system was centralized under native authority administration. The Sultan is the political and religious head and he is assisted by Emirs in the emirate. The system was backed up with a functional treasury and revenue generating system. It was this developed taxation system that increased and sustained the gap between the ruling and ruled classes (E.Osaghae, 1989:60)

In the East there was a non-centralized system in the sense that there was no Oba, King or supreme leader of the people. Governance was carried out through elders, family and clan heads with the use of age-grade groups to discharge the duties of local government administration. There existed several centers of power at different levels such as the various oracles and other secret societies/cult, each of which exercised certain power and authority in the proper running of the community. In this system there was no compulsory system of taxation that serves as financial base of the system. A point to note in this pre-Colonial local government administration system was that there were checks and balances, which did not allow for the miscarriage of Justice. In the Western part, the head of the local administrative system was the Oba. There were checks and balances provided by the Oyomesi (council of chiefs) and the ogboni society and other cults. Tributes are collected from farm produce.

In conclusion, it could be said that local administration contributed to socio-economic development and thereby alleviated poverty in the lives of the local citizens in Nigeria before the advent of the British government in the following ways:

1. The efficient handling of civil and criminal cases and the preservation of law and order thus discouraging criminal activities and dubious acts.
2. The preservation of customs and tradition of the people, an age long affair which had great impact on the lives of the people.
3. Provision of good roads, which facilitated trade and agricultural activities.
4. Provision of soldiers and policing of the local areas with night guards, thus helping to preserve the security of the communities.

Colonial Era

The British met functional structures, and decided to adopt the indirect rule system, that is executing their imposed government at the centre through all indigenous governmental organs in the Native Authority. They initiated it first in the North and eventually took it to entire country since they got comprehensive result in the Northern part. This was noted by Campbell (1965) when he said "the early administrators of Northern Nigeria were impressed with the ability with which the emirs rule their people on the existing foundation. It was a model for the whole of Africa".

Revenue ordinances of 1927-28 and its advantage to the entire provinces were:

1. Training of the people in the art of governance
2. Preservation of law and order
3. Provision of essential public service such as education, health services, construction and maintenance of roads, water supply, communication etc.

From all the above, it is clear on how the local administration alleviated poverty from the lives of the people, and thereby contributed to economic development in Nigeria during this era.

Post Colonial Era Till 1975

As has earlier mentioned, the British met governmental structures, and decided to build on it so as to maintain and sustain themselves in administration of the country, in like manner, the post colonial administration inherited functional structures and service of colonialist to maintain itself in governance.

The local government ordinance of 1950 enable about 80 percent of the councilors to be elected directly, As Holland (1963) observed, the key note of that ordinance was change of management, being the elimination of control by the native Authority System and the vesting of power in virtually autonomous councils. Thus elected local authorities were introduced in various parts of eastern Nigeria, the western and Lagos the National capital between 1950 and 1954. This autonomy was however to be abused. As Olori E.A (2004) puts it that the abuse took the form of mismanagement and embezzlement of funds that were meant for the development of the localities, leading to other reformative measures. Lagos where full representative local government was introduced through the local government ordinance of 1950, the finding of Bernard story commission of enquiry of 1952 into its activities showed that the Lagos Town Council (as elected in 1950) did not discharge its function efficiently and with absolute honesty. This led to the Lagos local government law 1953 which introduced traditional membership into the council consisting of the Oba of Lagos state and some white cap and war chiefs to ensure stability and honesty in the administration of local government.

In the North, the process of democratizing the Native Authorities was gradual. This policy was however consistently pursued and by 1962, 438 of the 465 District council in the North elected some members directly and of the 45 Town councils, 41 had direct elected members although most still had many nominated members, and by 1963 all the Native Authorities has some elected members, although most still had many nominated members and chiefs. Thus, because of democratization process of the Native Authorities and its follow ups thing could not more smoothly compared to what it was before this period. Although this period was that of checkered history of local government administration but local authorities however assume greater financial and executive responsibilities for the performance of new socio-economic services.

In the Western Region Local Government law 1952, revised by the local government law 1957, elected local authorities were introduced (including the Midwest) with the provision that not more than quarter of the state on each council should be made up of traditional members who did not have to stand popular elections. Through most of the elected council between 1953 and 1955 started off well, but

soon caught up in the web of corruption and misadministration and it was therefore not surprise that of the 32 Divisional and District councils in the Midwest area, only 3 were by 1963 functioning as elected councils, the others having been dissolved mainly for the mismanagement of their affairs.

In the Eastern Region, the noted anomalies in the activities of the elected local government led to Eastern Region Local Government law of 1955 which transferred most of the powers of the councils to the minister responsible for local government and to the Administrative Officer in the field, vested with more supervisory powers over the councils. It is not worthy that before 1950 many local authorities were short of staff to execute their social service projects. But with the availability of more trained personnel in the civil service from 1950, to offer technical advice to local authorities, the problem of shortage of personnel was partially ameliorated and it became a boost at independence as this carried over to the post colonial administration. Councils began to try to satisfy the electorate by the provision of essential services thereby alleviating poverty in the lives of the people.

Sources of Data

There are two major sources of data used in this research, primary and secondary data:

Primary data include all the first hand sources of data used. The two major sources used are questionnaire and oral interviews. Questionnaires are used to collect data from people who make things happen in their place of work and whose contribution will be of great use in this study.

Secondary sources used here are mainly different text book, related literatures and journals. Data gathered from these journals are arranged into more meaningful whole. Also, the research was able to gather these data from public and research libraries in the state

Sample Technique

On the technique employed in this work, the researcher ensured strict application of the scientific method. In this model or research, clear defined steps were followed starting from delimitation of the heterogeneous target population into representative sample, through several activities to the specification of method of data analysis to be used on the data.

Method of Data Collection

The questionnaires were self-administered because the population was within the reach of the researcher. The self-administered questionnaires were also used to eliminate the problems of non-receipt and how return of questionnaires if they were mailed or given through some other persons. Some of the respondents of the population were also interviewed by the researcher to know their view and reaction toward local government poverty alleviation and the suggestions and recommendations they might have for improvement. In administering the questionnaires, the random sampling procedure was adopted to avoid biases. There was also no discrimination on the basis of sex or marital status. The questionnaires are administered to all willing workers within and outside local government premises.

Description of Research Instrument

In order to reduce the problem associated with data collection and to ensure that result from the study were as reliable as expected; the questionnaire method was used for sampling the view or opinion of staff's in and out local government council. The questionnaire was drawn to obtain information on the following hypothesis:

1. There is no relationship between the impacts of administration of a given local government and the level poverty in the lives of it local citizens.
2. There is a relationship between the impact of administration of a given local government and the level of poverty in the lives of its local citizen.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts, section I and II. Section I was designed to collect demographic data on the respondents while section II tested the working hypothesis. Respondent were standardized into Yes and No. Each respondent was expected to tick the appropriate answer considered right on the question asked.

Validation of Research Instrument

The data used for this study were collected through the administration of structured questionnaires to a sample of public servants in Lagos metropolis. Lagos was chosen for the purpose of this study because studies have shown that Lagos state has the most essential local government administration in Nigeria, with her population. It therefore, implies that Lagos could serve as a good representative of the local government administration features of Nigeria. Seventh five copies of the questionnaire were administered randomly to staff's of local government stratified as follows:

	No served	Served No Returned
Ikeja local government	40	30
Yaba local government	15	5
Agege Local government	10	10
Oshodi local government	10	5
Total	75	50

This shows, that fifty copies of the questionnaire were duly completed and returned, which formed the basis of the analysis. The experimental variables examines in this study are the effectiveness that result from local government administration in the current dispensation in Nigerian.

Methods of Data Presentation and Analysis

The analysis of data involves the processing or manipulation of data into a form which is meaningful to the end-user. The analysis of data involves the application of statistical techniques, which are descriptive and inferential statistical techniques on the other hand shall be used to draw conclusion or make deductions based on analyzed data.

As far as the study is concerned, the analysis will be content-based including the usage of chi-square (χ^2) statistical techniques to aid hypothesis testing. The formula for calculating the statistic is:

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum (O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where:

O = observed frequency

E = the expected frequency.

Note: chi-square (X^2) test is applied when two variables are drawn from independent samples and each of these samples is categorized accordingly. Data are non-metric and are accordingly expressed in frequencies.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data collected, analyzed evaluated and discussed in the research were derived from two sections (A and B) of the questionnaire. While section A is the Bio-Statistical data which deals with personality profile, section B is concerned with other variables which deal with technical matters in the investigation.

In this chapter, qualitative data collected are codified and recorded whereas the quantitative data are classified, code and weighted both for the purpose of analysis and interpretation. In line with the investigational ethics, the result obtained from the analysis was used in the summary and in arriving at the conclusion and recommendations.

Presentation of Data

A table; is a two dimensional representation of statistical information on the attributes under study in such a way that relationship between all the information on the attributes can be seen at a glance. In this research work table are drawn to assemble data required to test hypothesis hence, the information contained in the tables are arranged in vertical columns and horizontal rows to aid this purpose.

The tables below represent each of the questions with their appropriate hypothesis and analysis using either or both parametric and non-parametric statistical analysis for their evaluation and inferences:

Table 1 Title: Have your Local Government met the needs of the people in the area of Poverty Alleviation?

S/NO	Options		Responses	
		NO	%	VR
a.	YES	10	20	0.8
b.	NO	40	80	0.2
	Total	50	100	1

Source: Field work 2012

The option with "NO" has the highest value with the least variation ratio. It adequately represents the opinion of the population.

Table 2 Title: local Government has not met the needs of the Local Citizen in the area of Housing?

S/NO	Options		Responses	
		NO	%	VR
a.	YES	35	70	0.3
b.	N O	15	30	0.7
	Total	50	100	1

Source: Field work 2012

This shows that local government has not influences the live of local people in this area since the least variation ratio supports this.

Table 3 Title: Have your local Government met the needs of the Local Citizen in the area of Food?

S/NO	Options		Responses	
		NO	%	VR
a.	YES	10	20	0.8
b.	N O	40	80	0.2
	Total	50	100	1

Source: Field work 2012

The most popular opinion amongst the respondents is option 'b'. It is the modal, mean and median class with variation ratio of 0.2, which represent 80% of the entire respondents. It can therefore be concluded that Local Government is unable to justify the purpose for which it was created.

Table 4 Title: Have your Local Government met the needs of the local Citizen in the area of Health care Delivery?

S/NO	Options		Responses	
		NO	%	VR
a.	YES	15	30	0.3
b.	N O	35	70	0.7
	Total	50	100	1

Source: Field work 2012

Option 'b' represents the opinion of the majority. It has a least variation ratio of 0.7 which represents 70% of the respondent distribution. It is therefore observed that Local Government has no significant effect on health care service.

Table 5 Title: Have your Local Government met the needs of the local Citizen in the area of Education?

S/NO	Options		Responses	
a.		NO	%	VR
b.	YES	15	30	0.7
	NO	35	. 70	0.3
	Total	50	100	1

Source: Field work 2012

Option 'YES' represent the majority opinion with the least variation ratio. Therefore it can be deduced that Education has not been neglected by the present administration.

Table 6

Title: Local Government has not met the needs of the local Citizen in the area of Infrastructural Development?

S/NO	Options		Responses	
		NO	%	VR
a.	YES	40	80	0.2
b.	N O	10	20	0.8
	TOTAL	50	100	1

Source: Field work 2012

The most popular opinion is 'a' with the least variation ratio of 0.2, it adequately represents the view of distribution. It can be interpreted therefore, that the local government should improve their infrastructural development.

Table 7 Title: In overall, would you say that the Administration by Local Government has been Effective and Efficient?

S/NO	Options		Responses	
		NO	%	VR
a.	YES	20	40	0.6
b.	N O	30	60	0.4
	Total	50	100	1

Source: Field work 2012

$X^2 C > X^2 t$, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative

$$X^2_c = 4.8751$$

$$X^2_t = 5.5991$$

$$X^2_c > X^2_t,$$

We therefore accept the null hypothesis

Local government administration draws from the Federal Treasury for this point to be settled. Local government consumes billions of national resources annually, by way of grant, subsidy, import duty waiver, tax relieve etc. Local government has actually been performing below expectations and Ikeja local government with this study examined is not an exception. The obvious factors militating against the effective performance of the local government could be viewed as inadequate finance, mismanagement of fund, weak resources base and inadequate skilled manpower needed for the execution of policies and programmes.

These problems have actually inhibited the impact of Ikeja local government towards alleviating poverty in the lives of the people in Ikeja area. Now considering the fact that local government administration is a governmental administration at the grass-root, which in all ramification is close to the people where poverty is more pronounced then something must be urgently done to make the people feel the impact of its administration especially in the area of poverty alleviation in Ikeja local government of Lagos State of Nigeria in particular.

Recommendations

The performance / impact of local government administration on poverty alleviation can be improved through extensive governance and management reforms that would give it a clearer and more focused development oriented, strengthen the governance body, ensure the recruitment and retention of professional , competent, and well trained senior managers and of highly skilled employee. In other cases, performance improvement require not only internal governance and management reforms but also need to be corporatized and given a legal business status to operation according to market criteria.

Local government has come to play a crucial role in both community and national development. For the people at the grass-root to enjoy the benefit of government, they have to be empowered politically and socio-economically. This local government can do if it is insulated from central and state governments control and if the political will to make it functional by major stakeholders in the system, is embraced In final analysis, state and local government joint account should be abolished. Probity and accountability should be promoted in local government system across the country by activating sanctions on corruption practices and other unethical practices in local government system.

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