

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIP AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT: EVIDENCE FROM RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the impact of intergovernmental relationship and local government development in Rivers State. The objective was to examine the effect of administrative relationship, constitutional relationship, financial relationship and state-local government relationship on the development of local government in Rivers State. Questionnaire was administered to 400 respondents selected from the three senatorial districts. Simple mean and standard deviation coefficient were used as data analyses methods. The study found that administrative relationship, constitutional relationship and state –local government relationship have significant effect on local government development while financial relationship does not affect the development of local government in Rivers State. The study recommends that strategies such as constitutional reforms, revenue sharing formula and restructuring of the federal system of government should be carried out to management the challenges in intergovernmental relationship in Nigeria. Enhancement of intergovernmental relationship should be encouraged at the local government level to make the system truly emanate from the people and that direct allocation of finances to local government is important for their development. The issue of state/local government joint account is a strangulation of the system, as often state government makes substantial deduction from the local government funds and uses other financial instruments to control local government chief executives for their selfish interest.

Keywords: Intergovernmental Relationship, Local Government Development, Constitutional Relationship, Financial Relationship

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria operates a federal system of government with three tiers of government. The three tiers of government are the federal government, the state government and the local government. The 1979 constitutions empowered local government with primarily focuses on the provision of primary health care, compulsory education, and provision of housing, electricity and water, economic planning, the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 schedule four provides that a major function of the local government is the consideration and the making of recommendations to a state commission on economic planning or any similar body on economic development of the state and federal government (Chukwuemeka, 2016). Fiscal federalism is the application of constitutional rules in the process of allocation, distribution control, management and sharing of state resources. It is all about fiscal equity, and financial independence among the federating units (Tukur, 2007).

In Nigeria, intergovernmental relations refer to interactions between federal, state and local governments' federal and state governments, federal and local governments, state and state interactions, state and local governments or local government and local government interactions (Obasi, 2006). Just like in any field of study there are many lenses or approaches to the study of intergovernmental relations. Hattingh (2018) identified four distinct approaches to the study of intergovernmental relations. These are the constitutional/legal approach, the democratic approach, the financial approach and the normative approach. Intergovernmental relations are intended to promote and facilitate cooperative government and decision-making by ensuring that policies and activities across all spheres encourage service delivery to meet the needs of citizens in an effective way (Edwards, 2008). They are concerned with political, financial and institutional arrangements for interactions among the three spheres of government and organs of state within each sphere (Edwards, 2008).

Conceptually, inter-governmental relations refer to the structure, process of transactions, interconnections and cooperation among the tiers or arms of government and their organs or agencies as they exercise their powers and carry out their functions in a political system (Okoro (2016). There have been issues at stake between it and other levels of governments whether it should be given free hand to carry-out its duties and responsibilities without interference or should it be controlled by the other levels of government. Local government is the government which is created at the grass root level. It is a form of community government so its primary responsibility is community development. Local Government can be described as government at the local level. The 1976 local government reform defines it as government at local level exercised through representative council established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas (Adamolekun, 2014). These powers should give the Council substantial control over local affairs as well as the staff and institutional and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of services and to determine and implement projects so as to complement the activities of the State and Federal governments.

Local Government is not mutually exclusive of other levels of government. For example, the functions set aside for local government in the fourth schedule have to be conferred upon by a law of the State House of Assembly and does not derive from a direct constitutional grant Section 7(6) (Kaplan, 1964). Therefore, there is bound to be an interaction between the Local Government and other levels of government. Unfortunately, this relationship has not been cordial. In Federal-State-Local Government relations, there has been what amounts to cold war.

Intergovernmental relations among the levels of government in the Fourth Republic have been in disarray due to the unhealthy rivalry that takes place. The problem is not unconnected with the dissatisfaction in the distribution of functions among the levels of government and lack of adequate tax powers allocated to the states and local governments in relation to their functions, undue removal of Local Government Chairmen by the state governors through their audit powers, joint state- local government account, shortening of the tenure of local Government Chairmen. Intergovernmental relations in Nigeria have been characterized by reluctant cooperation and competition among the levels and arms of government. Areas that have generated intense competition between the federal and state governments are revenue allocation and the allocation of jurisdictional powers between federal and state governments (Eliagwu, 2011).

In Nigeria, fiscal relationship has been generating tension among the three tiers of government (Angahar, 2013). In fact, this disturbing aspect of Nigerian fiscal federalism, among other factors has lately led to demand for resource control by nearly half of the states in Nigeria (Olanipekun, 2015). Resource sharing and distributing among the different levels of government in Nigeria federation remained controversial due to lack of an acceptable formula. Unfortunately, the local government in Nigeria has not been able to live up to its responsibilities of stimulating and promoting socio-economic development at the grassroots. The issue of inter-governmental relationship has well been examined, but there is lack of studies on the effect of inter-governmental relationship and local government development in Nigeria. From the above problems and knowledge gap, this study examined the relationship between inter-governmental relationship and development of local government area of Rivers State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Intergovernmental Relations

The concept of intergovernmental relations has been in use by public officials and scholars for a very long time but its definition continues to be highly contested (Madue and Kalema, 2011). The term appeared for the first time in print in the 1930s in an article by Snider (1995) cited in (Kahn, 2011) on country and township government. Both Snider and Anderson used the term intergovernmental relations but neither of them claimed credit for its creation or its origins. The concept of intergovernmental relations became part of public administration terminology in the United States of America in the 1930s. At the time, intergovernmental relations were a policy instrument, that is, its orientation was towards the choice of different paths of action.

The concept of intergovernmental relations is understood to refer to the way in which the different spheres of government relate to one another (Kahn, et al., 2011). The vitality of the concept of intergovernmental relations was brought to the fore by Botha (Kahn, et al., 2011) when he observed that the concept assumes importance where there is a division of powers at both administrative and legislative levels among different spheres of government. In other words, intergovernmental relations are creative mechanisms which are used to maintain cooperative relationships and coordination among and between vertical and horizontal parties. From the above discussion, two things can be deduced.

Firstly, intergovernmental relations imply forms of interaction between various levels of government and between equal governmental jurisdictions (horizontal interactions) within a given state. Secondly, coordination and cooperation are the main objectives of intergovernmental relations. One must, however, note that coordination and cooperation are

not the only aims of intergovernmental relations. Maud and Wood (Kahn, et al., 2011) stated that the concept of intergovernmental relations has a broader perspective which includes interventions, directions and control by higher levels of government, and consultation among all levels of government both horizontally and vertically. These elements do not always improve or advance cooperation and coordination; instead, they are often exploited to either reinforce subjugation of one level of government to another or promote dependence of lower levels of government on a higher one (Kahn, et al., 2011).

Types of Intergovernmental Relations in Nigeria

Administrative Relationship

The ministries and agencies of the central government usually have the power to regulate, supervise and mentor local councils in their respective fields of concern. For example, both the federal and state Ministries of Health in Nigeria work closely with the local councils to ensure that they provide primary health services in accordance with the national standards and policies (Enemu, 1999). Other administrative relations occur among officials at all levels of government during meetings and conferences. Such conferences as noted by Adamoleku in Awofeso (2004) included the Biannual Conference of Commissioners of Local Government, Meetings of Secretaries of Government of the Federation, the National Conference of Minister and Commissioners for Works etc. At the local government level, Awofeso (2004:20) concludes: apart from the three major areas of transactional interactions among levels of government there also exist intergovernmental social service delivery which may cut across issues such as the protection of life and property to be provided by the police, community and rural development efforts and health services delivery all of which have greater implication of federal-state-local government collaboration. There is also the need for development project which in our past experience has made federal agencies such as the DFRRI, Better Life for Rural Dwellers most relevant in Federal-State-Local collaboration.

Federal-Local Government Relations: The local government is constitutionally recognized as the third tier of government in Nigeria and enjoys some level of freedom and autonomy in the conduct of its activities. However, the autonomy is not absolute as it maintains some fiscal, functional and administrative relations with the Federal and State governments and other relationships do affect their autonomy.

- (i) **Fiscal Relationship:** By virtue of section 162(3) of the 1999 constitution, it is the National Assembly (an arm of the federal government) that determines the amount of money from the federation account that goes to the Local Government in the country. Also by virtue of S.162(5) of the constitution, it is the same National Assembly that prescribes the amount that goes to the States for the benefit of their local governments from the amount standing to the credit of the local governments in Nigeria from the Federation Account. Thus the fiscal relationship between the federal and the local governments is that it is the federal government that determines the amount that goes to the local governments from the federation account.
- (ii) **Functional Relationship:** The functional relationship between the federal, states and local governments is captured by section 2 of the fourth schedule to the 1999 constitution which provides for the functions which the Local Government can perform concurrently with other-tiers of government include provision and maintenance of primary education, adult and vocational education, provision and maintenance of health care services and such other functions as may be conferred on the Local Governments by the State House of Assembly.

- (iii) **Administrative Relationship:** There are a host of relationships between the federal and local governments which are administrative in nature. They include the following: - Law enforcement, peace and security; for an effective administrative platform to exist in a Local Government there must be law and order, peace and security. It is the police, at times, the armed forces that assist the local governments in this wise. Even in the enforcement of bye-laws, protection of their treasuries and other properties, collection of their legitimate revenue, the local governments need the services of the federal security agencies. - Access to Donor Agencies; the donor agencies that operate in the country can hardly go to the rural areas and begin to relate with the local governments without clearance from the federal governments. It is the federal government that gives access to these donor agencies to the local governments. - Poverty Alleviation Programmes; Majority of the poor in Nigeria are resident in the rural areas where the local governments operate. The poverty alleviation programmes therefore provide veritable platforms for the federal and local governments to relate administratively. 24 - Capacity building and training: Capacity building programmes which facilitated by the federal government through the office of the secretary to the government of the federation provide opportunities for interactions between the federal and local governments.

State and Local Government Relationships:

There are many ways through which the state and local governments can relate. They include:

- (iv) Financially, the 1979 constitution provided for state-local financial relationship under section 149 sub-sections 7 and this is now section 162 sub-sections 8 in the 1999 constitution. This section states that the amount standing to the credit of the local government councils of a state shall be distributed among the Local councils of that state on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of a state.
- ii) Administratively, the State-Local Government Training Funds, institutional machinery established in Nigeria for the training of Local Government Staff. A board set up to see to the welfare of Local Government Pensioners and Primary School Teachers Retirees which is constituted by Chairman, Local Govt. Service Commission, the Head of Service, the Permanent Secretary Establishment, the Commissioner for Finance, the Permanent Secretary Min. of Finance, the Commissioner Ministry of Local Govt. & Chieftaincy Affairs, the State NULGE President, the Chairman of the three political Zones in the State and the Secretary Local Govt. Pensions Board as Secretary as in Imo State.
- (v) **Social Service Delivery;** Adewale (1995) outlined another important area where the three levels of government in Nigeria come into close contact or relationships as the area of social service delivery. Public order and security maintenance is a social service that calls for the various civic organizations. In the recent times, the Nigeria police have been reorganized in such a way that there is a unit covering each Local Government area. In short, every local government is a division with a Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge and supporting Officer such as Divisional Crime Officer (DCO), Divisional Traffic Officer (DTO) heading the various sections. Education, Health and Rural Infrastructural Services etc are among the areas of inter-governmental social service delivery in Nigeria.

(v) Legislative Jurisdictional Relations: The bye-laws made by Local Governments is an area of inter-governmental relations between state and local governments. Local Governments use state courts to prosecute defaulters of their bye-laws. Ogunna (1996) observed that when a Local Government fails to perform its duty, a citizen can drag it to court where it could be compelled to perform its duty through the writ of mandamus. The state or federal court is also vested with the power to stop an intended or ongoing of a local government through the writ of prohibition. The Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal; which are federal government agencies, are established to serve as watchdog of the public officers in the federation which include states and local government officers even the EFCC (Economic Finance Crime Commission) which punish offenders who mismanage government fund at all levels.

Financial Relationship

The fiscal and monetary powers of each tier of government have been delineated by Decree No. 21 of 1998, which has become the Act of National Assembly. The constitution expects local government councils to generate their revenues (Eliagwu, 2011). Section 162(1) provides that all revenues from the federation shall go into the federation account and that Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) shall present a revenue formula to the President to be placed before the National Assembly for the purpose of distribution. The distribution is both vertical (in terms of federal-state-local) and horizontal (in terms of allocation among states). Also, the maintenance of special account called Joint-State-Local Government Account by the state, through which local government funds are paid, allows for interaction between the two levels of government.

Constitutional Relationship

There is no local government that is totally autonomous. Each is part of the interdependent and inter-related political and administrative structures of a country (Enemuo, 1999). In spite of the autonomous powers granted to the local government, section 7(1) provides that the state government shall ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils. Section 4(5) of the constitution also provides that if any law enacted by the House of Assembly of the state is inconsistent with any law validly made by the National Assembly, the law made by the National Assembly shall prevail, and that other law shall, to the extent of inconsistency, be void.

The constitutional/legal approach emphasizes the centrality of constitutional and legislative provisions in the study of IGR. According to Roux (1997) in the 18th and 19th centuries, the federalist movement in the United States advocated the constitutional approach and accepted the existing hierarchy of governments as a constitutional fact. The Constitution was considered to be a vehicle for achieving harmony and was the basis for determining intergovernmental relations. The constitutional/legal approach entails a structural and hierarchic analysis of the Constitution and legislation pertaining to central, provincial and local governments which have a bearing on relations between government bodies. The result of such analysis would be a long list of governmental bodies and structures with a comprehensive description of the duties and powers of every political office-bearer within each institution (Kahn et al., 2011).

Development

Development means the gradual and qualitative improvement of the work of men's work (Chukwuemeka, 2013). Development is necessary not only to provide citizens with a better standard of living and material progress, but also to achieve socio-economic and political

transformation and to achieve technological achievements in the environment (Igbokwe-Ibeto, 2013). Local government development is considered multidimensional, referring to positive changes that affect most and which are found in social, economic, political and cultural societies.

Disagreements over the relationship between economic and political development raises concerns for how we envision the causes of volatility. The existing research suggests that both political and economic development have similar effects. Increases in either will dampen volatility, leading to more stable growth patterns. Yet, the literature on the relationship between economic and political development raises several issues. First, the high theoretical correlation between the processes creates problems when trying to model the relationship (Guiso, Sapienza, and Luigi 2019).

Infrastructural Development

Captain and Ogbonna(2019) opined that infrastructure development means to bring the change social organizational, personal or natural into modern facilities. Infrastructure development is mainly related of road, bridge, building, hydroelectric power generation, telecommunication network, transportation facilities and safe drinking water facilities. The term refers to a structure that supports the development of society, such as transport, homes, electricity, the micro-industry, projects and communication between drinking water suppliers. It also refers to the physical components of interconnected systems that provide access to products and services to enable, maintain, or achieve the living conditions of society. Infrastructure development perspectives is a new genuine and on appropriate approach to analyze the socio-economic status, geographical structure, people living standard and environmental condition of countryside, area and country. It focuses about the condition of infrastructure and their impact in the society, socio-economic structure and development activities. Infrastructure developments are at the very heart of the economic and social development. They provide the foundations for economic activities virtually in every aspects of modern day. Infrastructure development is mainly related of road, bridge, building, hydroelectric power generation, telecommunication network, transportation facilities and safe drinking water facilities.

Basic Amenities Provision

Captain and Offurum (2019) opined that basic amenities are necessity commodities which every human being needs to live in life. Access to basic amenities like drinking water, sanitation, electricity, housing, drainage and others are crucial for the overall well-being of a household. Nigeria like many other developing nations, has also suffered from wide-spread deprivation in access to basic amenities and services. Its importance for human development has been highlighted in the international arena ever since it was included in the Millennium Development Goals. The disparities in delivery of basic amenities leading to a stunted growth of the nation indicate a preponderance of inequitable policies and administrative efforts, supplemented by a cavalier attitude and tolerance for market-led provisions of basic amenities. They also indicate that the government and parastatal institutions have not exhibited sensitivity towards backward states, small and medium towns and the poor (Kundu et al, 1999). Privatization, partnership arrangements and promotion of community-based projects have emerged as the only options for undertaking investments in basic amenities due to resource crunch in the government. This changed perspective and a consequent decline in public investment, however, is likely to accentuate the disparity in the levels of amenities across the size class of urban settlements (Kumar, 2013). The nature of the links between basic amenities, achievement in other capabilities such as health and education, and the role of public policy, lack of basic amenities has important implications for the quality of life and

increasingly, it is being realized that key dependencies exist between water supply and sanitation and improvements in health, education, population stabilization and overall human development (Dreze and Murthi, 2001; Gupta and Mitra, 2002; Human Development Report, 2006).

Theoretical Framework

Collaboration Theory

In the public sector, inter-sectorial collaboration has long been viewed as a virtue in an attempt to solve societal problems. However, a collaboration of different sector departments has been very difficult to achieve. This was confirmed by the Audit Commission which stated that local partnerships are important in delivering services to local communities and improving their lives working across organizational boundaries is complex and ambiguous and often very confusing and weakens accountability (Audit Commission, 2005).

The literature on collaboration reflects that it can be overwhelmingly complex (Ansell & Gash, 2007). Wimpfheimer, Bloom and Kramer (1991) have gone as far as saying collaboration is a minefield filled with unexpected problems, unexpressed differences of opinion and unanticipated outcomes. As a result of the difficulty of collaborating Hudson, Hardy, Henwood and Wistow (1999) attempted to come up with a theory of collaboration to limit the complexity, confusion and ambiguity that comes with working across organizational boundaries. The collaboration theory seeks to formalize collaboration in order to ensure efficiency. Before the collaboration theory is discussed in depth it is important to note that collaboration as a concept remains elusive. Different theorists have different explanations of the concept of collaboration.

Governments around the world have realized that complex challenges such as inequality, service delivery, terrorism, climate change. cannot be resolved in isolation without collaboration (Bryson and Crosby, 2008). As a result, collaborations have dominated the policy agenda of many states. It is clear from the above discussion that collaboration has emerged in contexts where organizational individualism has failed to resolve challenges and where the scope of the challenges to be addressed is beyond that of any single organization.

Decentralization Theory

The basic foundation of decentralization theory was laid by Kenneth Arrow, Richard Musgrave, and Paul Sadweh Samuelson, the contribution of Samuelson (1954 & 1955), Arrows (1970) and Musgrave (1959) for decentralization theory (Ewetan, 2012). The theory as observed by Ikeanyibe (2014) focused on situations where different levels of government provide adequate levels of outputs of public goods for those goods whose special patterns of benefits are encompassed by the geographical scope of their jurisdictions (Ikeanyibe, 2014). The theory is based on the philosophy that sub-national governments in the federation must be given power over their own life and development (Nyerere, 1972). It is believed that decentralization would make the local governments more competent in the management of their affairs (Murana, 2016). In relation to the fiscal transfer, the major element underlying decentralization theory is the need for fiscal equalization. This is in the form of lump sum transfers from the central government to decentralized governments. The arguments for equalization are mainly two. The first which is on efficiency grounds see equalization as a way of correcting for distorted migration patterns. The second is to assist more impoverished regions or jurisdictions. Equalization is essential in some federations (Ewetan, 2012). The decentralization theory is not without weaknesses. Falleti (2004) noted that critics of the decentralization theory argue that decentralization can lead to problems such as soft-budget constraints, macroeconomic instability, clientelism, and enlargement of bureaucracies.

Despite the shortcomings of decentralization theory, it is ideal for explaining the dynamics of intergovernmental financial transfers in Nigeria.

Empirical Review

Onwughalu, Obiorah and Ishaka (2018) undertook a study titled “the nature of the Nigerian state and challenges of its constitutional provisions skewed in favour of the federal government as evidenced in the Exclusive Legislative List”. It argued that this present arrangement inhibits the pace of development in the country. The study was qualitative in approach and gathered data through secondary sources that were content analyzed using the Structural Functional approach developed by Almond as framework of analysis. Because federal ascendancy defines the nature of intergovernmental relations in Nigeria’s federation, the observable functional cooperation is only a vertical pattern of relationship between the federal and state governments on the one hand, and amongst the federal, state and local governments on the other. It found out that in spite of the existence of informal structures like Nigeria Governors’ Forum (NGF), Conference of Speakers of State Legislatures of Nigeria (CSSLN) and Association of Local Government of Nigeria (ALGON), that should provide platforms for horizontal partnerships and co-operations between or amongst states and between or amongst local government councils, there is no evidence of such functional collaborations in any sphere which is one of the links that is missing in the inward approach to development in the face of challenges posed by the country’s constitution. In conclusion, the recently founded South-East/South South Governors Forum is a further expansion of horizontal co-operation and integration of states and local government councils in the two regions, which is a potential viable platform for rapid development and transformation of states in the zones if pursued with sincerity of purpose. It recommends functional partnerships, collaborations and co-operation between or amongst states and between or amongst local government councils in the following areas: tinkering with provisions of the 1999 constitution that are antithetical to development processes within its jurisdiction, recruitment of leaders, infrastructural development, capacity building, resource sharing. The key issues in this study is the management of intergovernmental relationship however, the study does not focus on Rivers state and specifically the development of Akuku Tura Local Government.

Chukwuemeka and Aniche (2016) examined inter-governmental relation and the performance of local government in Nigeria. The study adopted survey design, specifically descriptive research was adopted. Data was collected using questionnaire, focus group discussion. Secondary data was generated from government records and Central Bank of Nigeria. The findings revealed among others things that intergovernmental relation has to an extent helped to reduce tension among the three tiers of government in Nigeria. Also the imperfection of 1999 constitution has hampered fiscal relation in the three tiers of government in Nigeria. The study recommended among other things that effort should be made to ensure that all tiers of government should adhere to fiscal transparency, accountability and constitutional provisions on fiscal relations.

Azu (2017) examined fiscal relationship between the Abia State government and the local governments existing within its jurisdiction”. The objective was to find out whether the performance crisis of local governments in Abia State in the area of primary health care delivery is associated with the structure of state-local government fiscal relations. The study adopted the coordinate authority model of intergovernmental relations in explaining the dynamics of interactions between the Abia State government and its local governments. A descriptive survey research design was used to obtain primary data using questionnaires, interviews, researcher's observation and focus group discussions. Secondary data were

obtained from published works and organizational archives. Data was analyzed using simple percentage, frequency tables and Chi-square. Findings showed that the Abia state government has deviated from its monitoring role of local government finances, and assumed absolute control of local government funds, making it difficult for local governments to access their federal allocation and perform their primary duties. The study concludes that the major reason for establishing local government is to extend governance and development to the grass roots. However, until the lingering issues identified in this work are addressed, local government cannot be strategic in promoting any meaningful national development agenda.

Taiwo (2016) undertook a study titled “competing perspectives on the beleaguered nature of intergovernmental relations in Nigeria”. Tracing the evolution of intergovernmental relation in Nigeria and espousing its legal, political and governance antecedents, the paper hazarded the undercurrent for the lingering conflicts between the center and the component units. The article also critically analyzed the impacts of the erstwhile British colonial strategy of division into regions as a means for administering the country and exploration of the mineral endowments in the 1950s on the composition and the current nature of predatory power that the center currently wields, much to the detriments and underfunding of the component units in the federation. The paper found evidences to showcase that because the British colonialists unduly queered the political pitch by allocating more seats to the North than to each of the other two regions at the center, intergovernmental relations in Nigeria has been quite contentious. If anything, a mutual suspicion between the North-dominated Federal Government and the Southern component units became a logical end. They concluded, among others, that notwithstanding the ample provisions in the 1999 Constitution for veritable intergovernmental relationship in Nigeria, there are still the intricate issues of regional domination of the center, leading to lack of political will to induce proper constitutional implementations.

Silk. Ugwu, Ogbuand Fred Ezeh (2019) focused on a topic titled “influence of inter-governmental relations, specifically, in terms of relations between the federal and state governments on road maintenance in Nigeria. The motivation for the study was the deplorable condition of several Nigerian roads which has been largely attributed to role conflicts between the two tiers of government. The influence of three types of inter-governmental relation (Partnership, Principal/Agent and Dual Functionalism models) on road maintenance was examined. The study conveniently drew its sample from staffs of federal and state ministry of works as well as staffs of the Federal Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA) in Enugu State. Data were collected using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by means of Cronbach Alpha which gave a coefficient of 72 percent. The data obtained were analyzed using frequency, percentages and multiple linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that the partnership model and functional dualism model of intergovernmental relations significantly influence road maintenance in Nigeria.

Osuagwu (2013) examined inter-governmental relations and the performance of local government in Imo State, Nigeria. The research was carried out through the use of secondary data collected from the review of textbooks, journals, magazines, internet materials, while the primary data collection was through questionnaires administered to 270 respondents, made up of thirty staff from each local government council drawn from nine (9) local governments, three of which were selected from each senatorial zone. The study found out that inter-governmental relations ensure the effective and efficient utilization of human and material resources among the different levels of government. It recommended that the irregularities found in the delivery of essential services can be

tackled by having elected officials serve in the local governments (as opposed to selected or appointed officers), practicing true federalism, applying the principle of rule of law, constitutional specification of the areas of jurisdiction for each of the levels of government and granting local governments autonomy to operate freely within the scope of their constitutional responsibilities.

Chukwuemeka and Aniche (2016) examined inter-governmental relation and the performance of local government in Nigeria. The study adopted the survey design and descriptive research method. Data was collected using questionnaire and focus group discussions (FGD). Secondary data was generated from government records and Central Bank of Nigeria. The findings revealed among others things that intergovernmental relations, have loan extent, helped to reduce tension among the three tiers of government in Nigeria despite the fact that the imperfection of 1999 constitution has hampered fiscal relations among the three tiers of government in Nigeria. The study recommended among other things that effort should be made to ensure that all tiers of government should adhere to fiscal transparency, accountability and constitutional provisions on fiscal relations.

Onwughalu, Obiorah and Ishaka (2018) examined a topic titled “the nature of the Nigerian State and challenges of its constitutional provisions skewed in favor of the federal government as evidenced in the Exclusive Legislative List”. It argues that this present arrangement impedes the pace of development in the country. The study was qualitative in nature and gathered data through secondary sources that were content analyzed using the Structural-Functional framework. Findings from the study revealed that federal ascendancy defines the nature of intergovernmental relations in Nigeria, therefore, the observable functional cooperation is only a vertical pattern of relationship between the federal and state governments on the one hand, and amongst the federal, state and local governments on the other. It found out that in spite of the existence of informal structures like Nigeria Governors’ Forum (NGF), Conference of Speakers of State Legislatures of Nigeria (CSSLN) and Association of Local Government of Nigeria (ALGON), that should provide platforms for horizontal partnerships and cooperation between or amongst states and between or amongst local government councils, there is no evidence of such functional collaborations in several spheres which indicates a missing link in the inward approach to development and integration, especially in the face of challenges posed by the defects in the 1999 constitution.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design of this study is explanatory, historical and of a correlational nature. The focus of an explanatory research project is how to effectively explain the characteristics of a population or a social phenomenon (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007). This is usually effective when a quantitative framework for the study is adopted, where it is possible to establish the relationship or influence in one variable over the other.

Population of the Study

Neuendorf (2002) stated that research population is the set of units to being studied, the set of units to which the researcher wishes to generalize. The population of this study comprised the entire population of the three select Local Governments Areas of Rivers State drawn from the three senatorial districts in the State namely Port Harcourt City (756,600), Eleme (267,200) and Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni (398,000) Local Government Areas. According to the 2016

projection figures of the National Population Commission, the population of the three Local Governments in Rivers State cumulatively is 1,412,800.

However, considering the fact that the present study is being carried out in the year 2020, using 2016 population figures was not appropriate. The researcher did a projection using an annual growth rate of 3.2 percent according to the United Nations Development Population (UNDP, 2014). The projection formula as present thus

$$Pp = GP \times Pi \times T \quad 1$$

Where Pp = Projected population

Gp = Given population (as at last census)

Pi = Population increase index

$Pp(T)$ = Period between the given population and year of study

Thus: $Pp = 1,421,800$, $Pi = 3.2\%$ 2

Or 0.032 , $2016 - 2020 = 4$ years 3

$Pp = 1,421,800 \times 0.032 = 45,478$ 4

$Pp = 45,478 \times 4 = 181,912$ 5

Therefore, the population had increased by 181,912 by the year 2020.

Total Population (Tp) = $Pp + Gp$ 6

$181,912 + 1,421,800 = 1,603,712$ 7

This brings the total population to 1,603,712.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size was 400 as determined by the Krejcie and Morgan table. This made the spatial distribution of each Local Government Area to be approximately 133 respondents. The convenience sampling technique was used to reach out to the respondents. This is most suitable for the study because it gives the researcher the latitude to reach out to the respondents in a stress-free fashion.

Method of Data Collection

Copies of the questionnaire were administered by the researcher to the respondents in the Local Government Areas. The researcher was able to collate the filled copies of the questionnaire after they have been filled by the respondents through the help of three trained research assistants. For the illiterate respondents, the researcher in collaboration with the research assistants, read the items on the questionnaire for them and ticked the responses in accordance with the options chosen by the respondents.

Method of Analysis

The researcher presented the data using simple tables and percentages and further analyzed same using the Weighted Mean Scores on a Four Point Likert Scale. This was done to determine the degree of agreement to each questionnaire item, means scores is used to answer question. In taking a decision in each of the research question, mean scores of 2.50 and above on the four-point rating was chosen as acceptable, while those below 2.50 will be regarded as negative and not accepted.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This study adopted a survey research design. To this end, a total of 400 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents and all 384 copies of the questionnaire were properly filled out and retrieved. This represents a 96 percent retrieval rate. The availability random sampling technique was used to select respondents for the survey.

Table 1: Administrative Relationship and Local Government Development in Rivers State

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark	Conclusion
Ministries and agencies are empowered to regulate the local government activities	4.0700	.66828	SA	Reject H ₀
Apart from the three major areas of transactional interactions among levels of government there exist intergovernmental social service delivery	4.0435	.60746	SA	Reject H ₀
There is the need for development project which is made by federal and state agencies	4.1014	.69169	SA	Reject H ₀
The administrative function of the two tiers of government have great extent to which it affect the local government	4.0652	.63476	SA	Reject H ₀
It theoretically that collaborative administrative capacity of the three tier of government enhances local government development	4.0435	.67765	SA	Reject H ₀
Average Mean	4.06	0.65		

Table 1 is a summary of opinions of the respondents that participated in the study. The results showed that the respondents strongly agree on the impact of administrative relationship between the three tiers of government and local government development in Rivers State. This implies that administrative relationship between the three tiers of government enhances local government development in Rivers State. This finding confirms our expectations and the objectives of the inter-governmental relationship. The finding also confirms the decentralization theory and the theory of collaboration. The finding empirically confirm the findings of Onwughalu, Obiorah and Ishaka (2018) that should provide platforms for horizontal partnerships and co-operations between or amongst states and between or amongst local government councils, there is no evidence of such functional collaborations in any sphere which is one of the links that is missing in the inward approach to development in the face of challenges posed by the country's constitution, the findings of Chukwuemeka and Aniche (2016) that intergovernmental relation has to an extent helped to reduce tension among the three tiers of government in Nigeria and the findings of Azu (2017 that the Abia state government has deviated from its monitoring role of local government finances, and assumed absolute control of local government funds, making it difficult for local governments to access their federal allocation and perform their primary duties.

Table 2: State –Local Government Relationship and Local Government Development in Rivers State

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark	Conclusion
The State-Local government relationship is used for local government development	4.1498	.76424	SA	Reject H ₀
The state-local government relationship foster socio-economic development in the local governments	4.0797	.89656	SA	Reject H ₀
An analysis of the actual situation regarding interactions between local and state is transfer of functions to the local authorities for gross root development	4.0797	.82887	SA	Reject H ₀
The diversity of national systems requires a previous definition of the notion of local authority.	4.2899	.82128	SA	Reject H ₀
States share in common the existence of local governments as a territorial division for local development	3.9686	.83115	SA	Reject H ₀
Formal and informal interactions between the state and the local governments aims to developing the rural areas	4.1449	.94019	SA	Reject H ₀
Average Mean	4.12	0.85	SA	Reject H ₀

Table 2 presented respondents' view on the state-local government relationship and development of local governments in Rivers State. The opinion of the respondents' shows that state-local government relationship has significant effect on development of local government in the state as the mean of the items are higher than the 2.5 and standard deviation less than 1. The relationship between state-local government relationship and local government development confirm the expectations of the study and the objective of local government creation and the over sight functions of the state government to the state. Theoretically, the finding is in line with collaboration and the decentralization of theories. Empirically the finding of the study is in line with the findings of Taiwo (2016) that because the British colonialists unduly queered the political pitch by allocating more seats to the North than to each of the other two regions at the center, intergovernmental relations in Nigeria has been quite contentious, the finding of Silk. Ugwu, Ogbuand Fred Ezeh (2019) that the partnership model and functional dualism model of intergovernmental relations significantly influence road maintenance in Nigeria, the findings of Osuagwu (2013) that inter-governmental relations ensure the effective and efficient utilization of human and material resources among the different levels of government and the findings of Chukwuemeka and Aniche (2016) that intergovernmental relations, have long extent, helped to reduce tension among the three tiers of government in Nigeria despite the fact that the imperfection of 1999 constitution has hampered fiscal relations among the three tiers of government in Nigeria.

Table 3: Financial Relationship and Local Government Development in Rivers State

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark	Conclusion
Financial relationship between the three tier of government fosters local government development	1.3810	2.74001	SD	Accept H ₀
There are challenges in the financial relationship between local government and other tier of the local governments	4.1429	.65465	SA	Reject H ₀
The challenges have in financial relationship have hindered local government development.	4.4286	.59761	SA	Reject H ₀
Maintenance of special account called Joint-State-Local Government Account by the state is a problem to local government development.	4.5238	.60159	SA	Reject H ₀
The fiscal and monetary powers of each tier of government is delineated in the constitution	4.6667	.65828	SA	Reject H ₀
Average Mean	4.41	0.657	SA	Reject H ₀

Table 3 presents respondents' view on the financial relationship and development of local governments in Rivers State. The opinion of the respondents' shows that financial relationship does not significant effect on development of local government in the state as the mean of the items are higher than the 2.5 and standard deviation less than 1 except item one. The study found that financial relationship does not affect the development of Rivers State local government. The findings contradict our a-priori expectation but justify the ongoing war between the local government chairmen and the state executives in the area of state local government joint account. Theoretically, the finding is not in line with collaboration and the decentralization of theories. Empirically the finding of the study is not in line with the findings of Taiwo (2016) that because the British colonialists unduly queered the political pitch by allocating more seats to the North than to each of the other two regions at the center, intergovernmental relations in Nigeria has been quite contentious, the finding of Silk. Ugwu, Ogbuand Fred Ezeh(2019) that the partnership model and functional dualism model of intergovernmental relations significantly influence road maintenance in Nigeria, the findings of Osuagwu (2013) that inter-governmental relations ensure the effective and efficient utilization of human and material resources among the different levels of government and the findings of Chukwuemeka and Aniche (2016) that intergovernmental relations, have long extent, helped to reduce tension among the three tiers of government in Nigeria despite the fact that the imperfection of 1999 constitution has hampered fiscal relations among the three tiers of government in Nigeria.

Table 4: Constitutional Relationship and Local Government Development in Rivers State

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark	Conclusion
The constitution empowers the federal and state development functions to the local government	4.3373	.69363	SA	Reject H ₀
There has been substantial powers on the state to develop the local government	4.6926	.61173	SA	Reject H ₀
The federal and the state government has over the years committed the constitutional function to the local government	4.1178	.62748	SA	Reject H ₀
State government shall ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils, this have affect the development of local government	4.0793	.79368	SA	Reject H ₀
The constitutional/legal approach emphasizes the centrality of constitutional and legislative provisions in the study of IGR	4.2783	.61835	SA	Reject H ₀
Average Mean	4.30	0.66	SA	Reject H₀

Table 4 presents respondents' view on the constitutional relationship and development of local governments in Rivers State. The opinion of the respondents' shows that constitutional relationship significant effect the development of local government in the state as the mean of the items are higher than the 2.5 and standard deviation less than 1 except item one. The study found that constitutional relationship affects the development of Rivers State local government. The findings confirm the expectations of the study and the constitutional functions of the federal and state governments on the local government. empirically, the findings confirm the findings of Onwughalu, Obiorah and Ishaka (2018) that federal ascendancy defines the nature of intergovernmental relations in Nigeria, therefore, the observable functional cooperation is only a vertical pattern of relationship between the federal and state governments on the one hand, and amongst the federal, state and local governments on the other.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the effect of inter-governmental relationship on the development of local government in Rivers State. From the findings of the study, the study conclude that administrative relationship, constitutional relationship and state –local government relationship have significant effect on local government development while financial relationship does not affect the development of local government in Rivers State. From the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. From the findings of the first study objective, the study recommend that strategies such as constitutional reforms, revenue sharing formula and re-structuring of the federal system of government should be carried out to management the challenges in intergovernmental relationship in Nigeria. Enhancement of intergovernmental relationship should be encouraged at the local government level to make the system truly emanate from the people. In so doing, it will enhance transparency, accountability and rule of law. By extension, it will also promotes democracy at the local government level, enhances participation and the delivery of services.

2. The study found from the second objective that 1999 constitution and other legislations impact on the management and implementation of intergovernmental relationship. the study recommend that relevant sections of the 1999 constitution such as the state-local joint account should be amended to strengthen the intergovernmental relationship and enhance financial resources to the local government areas.
3. From the third objective, the study found that the federal, state local government relationship have no significant impact on the development of local government in Rivers State. the negative impact can be traced to the poor allocation from the federal and state to the local government, therefore this study recommend that policies for a new revenue sharing formula should be put in place as this would enhance local government revenues. A law criminalizing non-remittance of 10 percent of State Internally Generated Revenue to local government councils should be enacted by the National Assembly. This will stem the non-remittance of local government share of state internally generated revenue.
4. From the findings of the fourth objective, the findings of the study revealed that, the federal, state and local government financial relationship have no impact on the development of Toru Local Government in of Rivers State. From the findings the researcher recommends that direct allocation of finances to local government is important for their development. The issue of state/local government joint account is a strangulation of the system, as often state government makes substantial deduction from the local government funds and uses other financial instruments to control local government chief executives for their selfish interest.

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