

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN OSUN STATE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OF NIGERIA: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the various factors that influence political leadership on service delivery in Osun State Local Governments of Nigeria. It argues that effective political leadership is a cornerstone for sustainable development through the provision of social services. The study utilized both primary and secondary data. The study further revealed that political leadership at local level embarked on services based on the whims and caprices of the state government (80%), state-local fiscal relations was unfavorable to political leaders (90%) as well as disenchantment of political leadership from accessing grants and loans from international agencies (62%). Also the study showed that corruption among political leaders has become a major clog in the provision of adequate service (94%). The paper highlighted some recommendations and concluded that political leaders at local level had momentous impact on service delivery but the major hindrance is the way and manner the State Government operates with them.

Keywords: Political Leadership, Sustainable Development, Service Delivery, Local Government, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Effective leadership is a critical ingredient in achieving organizational success. Leadership gives vision and directions, Leadership influence the followers towards achieving a goal. Government exists primarily to secure lives and properties and to provide services that will make life worth living. Osun State was carved out of old Oyo State on August 27 1991. Hence, the State's Local Governments were not isolated from all the developments that affected the Local Governments in the country. Accordingly, Local Governments as third tier government are created to bring government closer to the people at the grassroots and for transformation of lives at the rural level. One of the ways of bringing government closer to the people at the grassroots is through the delivery of service in a satisfactory, timely, effective and adequate manner. Local Government serves as a form of political and administrative structure facilitating decentralization, national integration, efficiency in governance, and a sense of belonging at the grassroots. However, it is pertinent to state that the kind of political leadership that exists will definitely affect the service delivery at the grassroots level. So also a visionary Leader should be able to act in accordance with the tenets of sustainable development which implies poverty reduction, access to basic health services, education among others.

Though the Constitution emphasized on elected council but most of the state governments hide under the power given to them by law to establish, structure, composition and finance to redirect especially the political structure and composition of political leadership, in terms of caretaker committee (appointed council) which creates a lot of concern in service delivery at the local level. Political leadership determines the level of efficiency or deficiency in provision of social service that is needed at the local level, thus one of the most important indicators in assessing the transformation of local government is the experiences and perceptions the people have about service delivery in their day-to-day lives. The implication of this is for Political Leaders at local level to transform their words into deeds, and thus to prioritize and satisfy the needs of the communities they serve but there are still other factors that affect the political leadership in deliver the service that is expected of them. This study therefore examines Political Leadership and Service Delivery in the Local Governments of Osun State, Nigeria.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership has been defined in so many ways that it is hard to come up with a single working definition. However, leadership may be defined as a body of people who lead and direct the activities of a group towards a shared goal. It also denotes the ability to lead, direct and organize a group. In line with this understanding, Norman Schwarzkopf (quoted in Reed, 2001) describes leadership as a potent combination of strategy and character and strongly emphasized that, of the two elements, character as the most preferred for leadership. Gardener (2004), on his part, explains leadership as the process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers. Consequently, leadership is a process of social influence by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent (Chemers, 2002). A leader therefore is expected to demonstrate qualities, which embrace but not limited to good character, vision, tact, prudence, and ability to lead by example because people basically ascribe leadership to those who they feel can most enable them achieve important goals or objectives.

Yukl (2006) defines leadership as “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives”. The very act of defining leadership as a process suggests that leadership is not a characteristic or trait with which only a few certain people are endowed at birth. Defining leadership as a process means that, it is a transactional event that happens between leaders and their followers. Viewing leadership as a process means that leaders affect and are affected by their followers either positively or negatively. It stresses that leadership is a two-way, interactive event between leaders and followers rather than a linear, one-way event in which the leader affects the followers but not vice versa. Defining leadership as a process makes it available to everyone— not just a select few who *are born with it*. More important, it means that leadership is not restricted to just the one person in a group who has formal position power (i.e., the formally appointed leader).

Leadership is also typically seen as different to management although they are related. Kotter(1990) concludes that “management is about coping with complexity” whilst “leadership, by contrast, is about coping with change”. He proposed that good management brings about a degree of order and consistency to organizational processes and goals, whilst leadership is required for dynamic change. The distinction of leadership from management as represented by Kotter (1990) and his contemporaries clearly encourage a shift in emphasis from the relatively inflexible, bureaucratic processes typified as ‘management’ to the more dynamic and strategic processes classed as ‘leadership’, yet even he concludes that both are equally necessary for the effective running of an organisation:

Leadership is different from management, but not for the reason most people think. Leadership isn't mystical and mysterious. It has nothing to do with having charisma or other exotic personality traits. It's not the province of a chosen few. Nor is leadership necessarily better than management or a replacement for it: rather, leadership and management are two distinctive and complementary activities. Both are necessary for success in an increasingly complex and volatile business environment (Kotter, 1990, p. 103).

Management relies more on planning, organizational and communication skills. Leadership relies on management skills too, but more so on qualities such as integrity, honesty, humility, courage, commitment, sincerity, passion, confidence, a positive attitude, wisdom, determination, compassion and sensitivity.

Grint (2004) identifies four problems that make consensus on a common definition of leadership highly unlikely. Firstly, there is the ‘process’ problem – a lack of agreement on whether leadership is derived from the *personal qualities* (i.e. traits) of the leader, or whether a leader induces followership through what he or she *does* (i.e. a social process). Secondly, there is the ‘position’ problem – is the leader *in charge* (i.e. with formally allocated authority) or *in front* (i.e. with informal influence)? A third problem is one of ‘philosophy’ – does the leader exert an intentional, causal influence on the behaviour of followers or are their apparent actions determined by context and situation or even attributed retrospectively? A fourth difficulty is one of ‘purity’ – is leadership embodied in individuals or groups and is it a purely human phenomenon?

Northouse (2010) also identifies four common themes in the way leadership now tends to be conceived: (1) leadership is a *process*; (2) leadership involves *influence*; (3) leadership occurs in a *group context*; and (4) leadership involves *goal attainment*. He thus defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.” This is a good definition, but it still locates the individual as the source of leadership. A more collective concept of leadership arises out of a review by Yukl (2002): “Most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation” (Yukl, 2002, p.3). Even this definition, however, obscures as much as it reveals. Just what exactly is the nature of this ‘social influence’; how can it ‘structure’ activities and relationships; and when applied in a group setting who is the ‘leader’? In short, leadership is a complex phenomenon that touches on many other important organizational, social and personal processes. It depends on a process of influence, whereby people are inspired to work towards group goals, not through coercion, but through personal motivation.

Leadership is therefore a critical requirement in preserving and promoting the integrity and cohesion of the political community. Leadership could be political, bureaucratic or traditional in form. The stability and cohesion of any society is inconceivable without an effective leadership to shape the policy direction of that society (Akande- Adeola 2013). Leadership includes the achievement of goals. Therefore, leadership is about directing a group of people toward the accomplishment of a task or the reaching of an endpoint through various ethically based means. Leaders direct their energies and the energies of their followers to the achievement of something together.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

Most people have a personal view about who would make a good political leader, but these views are often little more than subjective judgments about personality or whether a candidate is likely to meet their needs. Among the various aspects of leadership, political leadership, in particular in the nation - state, occupies a special position. It is not that it is intrinsically different in kind or character from leadership in other organizations, but it is vastly more visible and, ostensibly at least, vastly more important Blondel (1987).

Political Leadership prefers to the ruling class that bears the responsibility of managing the affairs and resources of a political entity by setting and influencing policy priorities affecting the territory through different decision-making structures and institutions created for the orderly development of the territory. It could also be described as the human element that operates the machineries of government on behalf of an organized territory. This includes people who hold decision making positions in government, and people who seek those positions, whether by means of election, coup d'état, appointment, electoral fraud, conquest, right of inheritance or other means (Ogbeidi, 2012).

Ogbeidi(2012) observes that, political leadership goes beyond the ruling elites that directly manage the affairs of a territory; it embraces the totality of the political class that has the capacity to manipulate the machineries of government even from behind the scene. Blondel (1987) opines that among the many issues that political science deals with, the problem of leadership clearly stands out. Leadership is an essential feature of all government and governance: weak leadership contributes to government failures, and strong leadership is indispensable if the government is to succeed. Wise leadership secures prosperity in the long run; foolhardy leadership may bring about poverty.

Some scholars focus on social leadership as a whole, and deal with political leadership as a part among parts (such as Grint 2000; Grint 2005). Social leadership and political leadership manifest themselves in formal positions and behaviourally. Scholars who stress that political leadership is a special part of social leadership also affirm that leadership is 'related to power: a leader (in the behavioral sense) is a person who is able to modify the course of events' (Blondel 1987; Wildavsky 2006). There is an overlap between social and political leadership, but the latter is 'thicker' than any other type of social leadership in having a monopolistic or preferred access to coercive and inducing hard power, in addition to attracting, persuasive soft power based on ideology, symbolism, ethical/non-ethical character, and perceptions of followers about leaders.

Political leadership implies followership, as well as group tasks to be accomplished through innovative adaptation in a specific situation and institutional cultural context (Heifetz 1994; Tucker 1995; Nye 1999; Bennis and Thomas 2002; Nye 2008). Leadership-followership is part of the social reality of any group confronting its environment as problematic, in which the group must continually adapt and innovate. The leadership-followership exchanges evolve.

Kellerman (1984) points out that political leadership prefers to control over public policy decisions. Political leaders derive their authority from the fact that they occupy high office in a legally sanctioned government, which by virtue of its legitimacy, has the power and authority to choose between alternative goals and courses of action. Aransi (2012) is also of the opinion that political leadership lay down broad policies and takes related decisions while the employees of the organization strive to implement same.

Political office-holder is an official type of leader; it is an 'engine' of governmental organization in Nigerian administrative setting.

Akande- Adeola (2013) broadly asserts that leadership in Nigeria could be viewed from two perspectives. One is the constitutional perspective and other one is the unconstitutional perspective. The constitutional perspective in the context of this discourse refers to all positions that are embodied in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. These include political and bureaucratic offices to be filled either through election or appointment as the case may be. For instance, the office of the President, State Governor, Local Government Chairman, Senate, House of Representatives, State House of Assembly, Local Government Council and a host of others are good examples of political offices expected at all times to be filled through election. The holders or occupants of these offices are elected periodically for fixed tenure and subject to renewal for another term in the case of executive offices and for unlimited tenure for the legislative arm of government. Another set of political leaders are ministers, commissioners, supervisory councilors, heads of boards and parastatals, etc. these are leaders appointed to provide political direction for their respective establishments. Bureaucratic offices are those filled through appointment such as permanent secretaries, head of service, directors, civil and public servants and a host of others. While all the foregoing represent constitutionally prescribed offices, unconstitutional leaders are leadership positions not provided for in the constitution. Head of private establishments, traditional institutions, religious and ethnic organizations, etc, are not constitutionally prescribed leadership positions. However, this study is limited to political leadership in the formal sector and is expected to serve as a compass in terms of providing policy direction for all citizens and to promote their welfare at all times. Akande- Adeola (2013) also affirms that Political leaders can either be elected or appointed within the formal setting with the

mandate to expand the frontiers of the welfare of citizens either through the enterprise of law making or the implementation of those law validly made by the competent organ of government.

Some scholars agreed that political leadership could be either elected or appointed (such as Akande- Adeola 2013; Aransi2005) and similarly, Lamidi&Adeyeye(2014) also agrees that political office holders could be elected or appointed. Aransi (2005) also asserts that for both elected and appointed local councils, leadership play a very significant role. In fact, the leadership styles of the elected and appointed local council executives differ. The leaders are seen as symbols of some sort for the local councils.

In appointed local councils, for example, the sole administrators or the chairmen, caretaker committees are the leaders from whom all other functionaries of the local government councils take directives. However political leadership under elected councils assume the position after a successful electoral process, unlike the appointed executives who are nominated to manage the local councils pending the election of substantive elected chairmen for the local councils in the state. It is pertinent to note here that though appointed local government council are nominated to manage the local councils pending the election of substantive elected chairmen probably for some months but what occurred in Osun State especially between the year 2007 and 2014 was that elected local executives councils was in practice between 2007 to 2010 and appointed local executives councils between 2011 to 2014 under different regimes and political parties respectively.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Berry (2004) opines that Service Delivery is conceptualised as the relationship between policy makers, service providers and poor people. It encompasses services and their supporting systems that are typically regarded as a state responsibility. These include social services (primary education and basic health services), infrastructure (water and sanitation, roads and bridges) and services that promote personal security (justice, police).

Similarly, World Bank (2004) sees Service delivery as a relationship of accountability between users, providers and policy-makers and proposes a possible framework for conceptualising pro-poor servicedelivery that examines the relationships of accountability between the policy maker, the provider and the citizen. It highlights the central role of the state in guaranteeing the provision of pro-poor services and the role of politics in this process. Accountability initiatives in service delivery are more difficult to define. What counts as an accountability initiative? The clearest and most basic exposition of the concept of accountability is provided by Schedler (1999) in which public accountability comprises of a relationship between the power holder (account-provider) and delegator (account-demander). There are four elements to this accountability relationship— setting standards, getting information about actions, making judgments about appropriateness and sanctioning unsatisfactory performance. However, the report (World Development Report of 2004) emphasized accountability as a central theme of the debates on service delivery and identified failures in service delivery squarely as failures in accountability relationships (World Bank 2004). By showing how the ‘long route’ of accountability (via elected politicians and public officials through to providers) was failing the poor, the WDR argues in favour of strengthening the ‘short route’—direct accountability between users and providers. The WDR sparked off a spate of work that examined ways of strengthening the short route: from amplifying voice, increasing transparency and enhancing accountability (Sinker and Cosic 2007; McNeil and Mumvuma 2006).

Joshi (2010) observes that transparency initiatives in service delivery are relatively easy to define: any attempts (by states or citizens) to place information or processes that were previously opaque in the public domain, accessible for use by citizen groups, providers or policy makers. Moreover, accountability for service delivery can be demanded from a range of stakeholders: of politicians (e.g. not adopting appropriate policies); or of public officials (not delivering according to rules or entitlements, not monitoring providers for appropriate service levels); or of providers (not maintaining service levels in terms of access and quality). Further, initiatives to hold these multiple actors to account can be state-led or citizen-led Joshi (2008).

VNG (2007) opines that Service delivery is an essential function in the relation between government bodies and citizens. Over the years the realization that citizens are customers has become increasingly important to the way governments think and act. It is good that in the world of government, and in particular, in the world of local government, we look at ourselves in a more critical way. Customers have a right to demand services from their suppliers that meet their needs: fast, accessible, of good quality and at modest cost, and all wrapped in friendly treatment. This applies particularly to the government as a supplier of key public services. The fact that the government is a monopolist in products that are often either not or hardly wanted, gives the government's relationship with its clients a double loading, and in fact mandates extra effort. Good quality and affordable service delivery is also a condition for the good image of government. The meaning of good service delivery for the image that citizens have of the government is not always valued fairly. Service delivery is not an isolated something, but is part of a complex relation between government, society and citizens. In assessing the citizen's opinion of government, this proximity and the fact that it concerns very basic matters for citizens is critically important. Improving service delivery has large similarities with improving the relationship between citizens and administration. The quality requirements made of the service delivery can be broadened to a complete municipal task package. While it is tempting to make very precise descriptions of services, it is more important to consider the broad working of the relations between local governments and their environment. Attention to service delivery does not stand alone. In today's society people expect a lot from their suppliers and in citizen's first perception they do not distinguish between market parties and local government. Citizens expect full attention and this has consequences for the method of approach by local government. This applies equally to direct delivery as to public action as authority VNG (2007).

VNG (2007) also analyze service delivery in the following ways;

Service delivery as key task

Service delivery is the government's key task. Government exists among other reasons because it is the only structure that can properly provide the guidance of certain critical services such as public order, safety, infrastructure, management and maintenance of public roads and so forth. The requirement and concern for such provisions gives legitimacy to government activities. It is laid down in constitutions and international treaties that government is responsible for basic services in many social areas including:

- Education and schooling
- Social security and basic provisions

- Legal protection
- Housing for the less advantaged.

The government must provide citizens with guarantees on the continuity of service delivery: equal access to all irrespective of social and cultural background, and affordable prices. Citizen satisfaction is crucial here. Citizen satisfaction in the interplay between government and citizens is the determining factor for government acceptance (VNG (2007)).

Service delivery as key trust

Trust is a key element in the relationship between voters and elected representatives and forms part of the representative legitimacy of political system. The power of the sword – action by army, police and justice and religious foundations are at present no longer sufficient for a large proportion of citizens and authorities (or are no longer relevant) to serve as basis for government action. Trust needs to be earned through transparent decision making, through effective and efficient action by the government and a clear role for the elected representatives. Trust is the first responsibility of the political administration. It must constantly strive to gain trust, to maintain a sustainable position of the government as carrier of public authority. The key task of political administrators is to reproduce this legitimacy. The aim in elections is to achieve an election mandate for the making of statutory rules, to take measures, to collect tax from citizens and to provide services that are of a valid public nature.

Reliability

Reliability is another key element in the relationship between the government as organization and society in all its forms - individual citizens, companies, civil society organizations and so forth. It is determinant for the legitimacy of government as institution. We can thus speak of institutional legitimacy. ‘Saying what you do and doing what you say’, indicates clearly what citizens can expect and keep these agreements. This is the primary responsibility of government’s management and derivative of this (day-to-day) administration. For local governments this is critical. A well performing local authority paves the way for the strengthening of local autonomy. Conversely, poor reliability, in the same way as poor service delivery, is disastrous to the image and autonomy of a local government. It means delivering what has been agreed, keeping promises and deadlines. Then government can serve reliability by being clear, by providing explanations and sometimes by contributing to the search for alternatives.

Legitimacy

Reliability, trust and customer satisfaction build on one and other. So service delivery is not purely an economic process. It is a determinant factor in the image of government, the position of government and the legitimate basis of its work. Service delivery is one of the pillars of the government’s legitimacy and that requires awareness of its effectiveness and efficiency.

Citizens sometimes feel that services should be offered free of charge as the service comes ‘from government’. Simple explanations and citizens understanding that political representatives, officials and administrators are all seeking to guard the efficient handling of government processes only increases citizens’ acceptance of the need to pay for services. Where public service delivery is concerned, the people’s representation is also a kind of consumer panel. Political representatives also have

to behave accordingly. It necessitates in reality and not deceitful the provision of such services as health, education, housing, roads, portable water and electricity. It also encompasses “reduction of poverty, improvement of women and workers”.

However, local government play a critical role in their provision and maintenance because they are services which often require individual and humanitarian handling, services in which the advantages of large-scale mass organization at higher levels of governments could be dysfunctional. This is the sense in which one understands why primary education was left as an exclusive responsibility of state government while secondary education is placed on the concurrent list in the Nigerian constitution. It also explains why significant services such as health services; nursery, primary and adult education; the provision of public libraries and reading rooms; agricultural and health extension services; water supply; fire services; provision of homes for the destitute, the infirm and orphans; public housing programs’ town and country planning; sewerage; etc., are placed as schedule B of local government functions in the 1976 Reform Guidelines.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Robson (1949), Local Government is seen as “a territorial non-sovereign community possessing the legal rights and necessary organization to regulate its own affairs.” Muttalib and Khan (1982) “Local government is an ancient institution with a concept of administration having a direct bearing with provision of services to local clients of the state. It is multi-dimensional, and is politically expressed as governing institution presiding over a specific local sub-division of a state.

Bryne (1994), a British scholar, defined local government as a self-government involving the administration of public affairs in each locality by a body of representatives of local community; although subject to the central government, it still possesses considerable amount of responsibility. Agagu (2004) conceives the local government as a government at the grassroots level of administration meant for meeting peculiar needs of the people. In his analysis, he viewed local government as a level of government which is supposed to have its greatest impact on the people of the grassroots.

Abubakar (1993) contends that some form of local government council exists in each country the world-over. Even though they differ in such distinguishing features as constitutional status, historical experiences, structure and organization, as well as in the scope of their statutory, delegated or devolved responsibilities and functions among others, local government councils are consensually regarded as governmental/ administrative units closest to the people, or in a general parlance, the grassroots. Invariably therefore, they act as a veritable agents of local service delivery, mobilizers of community-based human and material resources, and organizers of local initiative in responding to a wide variety of local needs and aspirations. Importantly also, local government provide the basic structures and conditions for grassroots participation in the democratic process.

Oyediran (1988) agrees that local government council means different things to different people. Corroborating this position, Wraith (1972) argues that local governments differ from one country to another and even differ within the same country. He agrees that the different forms of local government are determined by a variety of factors, which are very complex in nature. According to him: the factors which bring about these differences, and help to determine different patterns and purposes for local government are very complex, and include the historical, the geographical, the sociological, the political and the economic.

According to Akindele (1997), Local government is defines as: an essential instrument of National and State government for the performance of certain basic services which could best be administered locally on the intimate knowledge of the needs, conditions and peculiarities of the areas concerned. As local government unites people in a defined area in a common organization whose functions are mutually complimentary to those of the central government and in the interest of the local residents for the satisfaction of common community needs. As government, it is the means by which the common problems and needs of a community consisting a country are economically and effectively catered for, so local government is the means by which a local community satisfies jointly its common problem and needs which would have been difficult by individual.

In distinguishing local government from central government, Okunade (1993), clearly emphasizes that local governments as described in the Guidelines, are bodies which are created by and derived their power from state government (i.e. they are derivative and not sovereign) and that “they spring from the local community of which they should be representative”. Moreover, they are nearer to the citizens than the state and federal governments. On the other hand, local administration lacks legal right of existence or legal personality, it has no substantial autonomy and its existence is at the mercy of higher level(s) of government, which established it. Furthermore, it is subject to all sorts of external controls. Central or state government appoints and controls its finances and staff. In fact, it is an extension of the central government and exercises only delegated power and not devolutionary powers.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The concept of sustainable development received massive impetus given the report of the UN Commission for Development popular known as the Brundtland reports published in 1987. Sustainable development can be defines as the “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. This remains the consensus definition of the concept. The essence of political leadership in service delivery is to ensure that certain goals which include poverty eradication, sustainable management of natural resources and sustainable patterns of consumption and production in tandem with the goals of sustainable development. However, achieving these goals especially in Nigerian context requires effective leadership at all levels of government. In this context, leadership traits or qualities become a fundamental requirement for sustainable development. The integration of numerous institutions at the local, state, national and international levels becomes a panacea to actualization of sustainable development across the world. Therefore, the inter-relationship between leadership and sustainable development are essential, this is because development requires effective leadership and a good management of available resources. Leaders are needed to provide vision and confidence in such as a way that encourages followers to support the achievement of stated objective. Adair (2002) opines that people will look to their leader for direction in their common enterprise. For Adair, the word “leader” can be seen as a road or path one follows in the course of a journey. In this study, good leadership is a roadmap towards sustainable development. Nevertheless, achieving sustainable development in Nigeria requires particular attention given to the myriad of social, economic, political and environmental challenges regularly experienced in the country. These challenges have been exacerbated by leadership failures. In order to correct this trend, political leadership is a necessity. According to Obasanjo (undated), he asserts that the importance of having visionary leaders who can act accordingly to the tenets of sustainable development need to be noted. For this reason, visionary leadership therefore remains a relevant tool in advancing the goals of democratic consolidation and sustainable development.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This study dwells extensively on **structural functionalism theory** because the individual is significant not in and for himself, but rather in terms of his status, his position in patterns of social relations, and the behaviors associated with his status. Therefore, political leaders are not there as individual but as leaders in social relations to the society they govern by delivery of service in adequate and effective manner. From the analogy of human body, just as the structural parts of the human body- the skeleton, muscles and various internal organs- function independently to help the entire organism survive, social structures work together to preserve society, political leaders as the head should be able to function and lead well by embarking on the policy that will cumulate in the development of the grassroots and the populace also should reciprocate it by discharging their statutory functions to the government. This buttress the believed of Talcott (1975) that developed the idea of roles into collectives of roles that complement each other in fulfilling functions for society. Some roles are bound up in institutions and social structures which help society in operating and fulfilling its functional needs so that society runs smoothly. Structural functionalism also sets out to interpret society as a structure with interrelated parts with each structure performing role function.

Political leadership as a structure at the local level has a mandatory functions of delivery service to the citizens at the grassroots and there inability to perform the expected mandatory functions of service delivery in a timely, adequate and satisfactory manner would lead to dysfunctionality or disorderliness. Structural functionalism theory have relevant applicability in understanding and analyzing political leadership be it appointed or elected executives in terms of service delivery in Nigerian local governments. Local governments are structures created in Nigeria to perform specific functions that will help bring government closer to the people and political leaders are the main actors in performing these specific functions.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through administration of questionnaire and conduct of in-depth interviews. A simple random sampling technique was used to select six Local Government Areas from the three senatorial districts in Osun State. In each senatorial district, one urban and one rural Local Government Area were randomly selected. The study population (1309) consisted of senior officers on grade levels 07-16 in Health (680); Works (180); Community Development and Information (202); Traditional Rulers (26); Executive Members of Market Women Associations (30); Executive Members of NULGE (42); and Executive Members of Community Development Associations (149). The sample size for this study was 262, representing 20% of the total study population. Thus, a total number of 262 copies of questionnaire were administered to gather information from the respondents, out of which 252 representing 96.2% were retrieved. In addition, a total number of 21 interviews were conducted with the following respondents in this order: Directors of the selected departments (9); Paramount traditional rulers (3); *Iyalojas* (3); NULGE Chairmen (3); and Chairmen of Community Development Association (3). Secondary data were obtained from academic journals, official document, government publications and internet materials. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The map below represents the study area in Osun state.

Fig. 1



Political Leadership Structure and Social Service Delivery in Osun state

VARIABLES	STRONGLY AGREE		AGREE		DISAGREE		STRONGLY DISAGREE		N = 252	
	F	%	f	%	f	%		%	\bar{X}	Remark
Political leadership structures at local government level embarks on social services based on the whims and caprices of the state government	89	35.3	115	45.6	41	16.3	7	2.8	3.49	Agreed
Both elected and appointed political leaders are, in most cases, subjected to decisions that are detrimental to local development drive	83	32.9	104	41.3	48	19.0	17	6.7	3.30	Agreed
The state-local fiscal relations seems to be unfavourable to political leaders at local level	117	46.4	111	44.0	13	5.2	11	4.4	3.62	Agreed
The control of state government on local government elections is politically hazardous to the democratic practices which underlines the significance of governance at local level	151	59.9	87	34.5	11	4.4	3	1.2	3.48	Agreed
State government disenchant political leadership from accessing grants and loans from international agencies	68	27.0	89	35.3	84	33.3	11	4.4	3.31	Agreed
There is lack of constitutional adherence by state government on local governments	106	42.1	126	50.0	18	7.1	2	0.8	3.98	Agreed
Corruption of political leaders has inevitably become a major clog in the provision of adequate service at local level	128	50.8	109	43.3	9	3.6	6	2.4	3.76	Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2015

NB:f = Frequency

% = Percentage

\bar{X} = Mean value

N = Total Number of Respondents

FINDINGS

This section provides data analysis of the respondents assessment on the political leadership structure and service delivery in Osun state. To achieve this, the study set out seven (7) assertions in order to assess the influence of political leadership structure on social services delivery in Osun state.

The table above reveals the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents on each of the assertions and its values/responses are organized using likert scale of measurements, such as: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and respondents for each of the statements. As presented in the table, 204 (80.9%) of the respondents agreed that political leadership structures at local government level embarks on social services based on the whims and caprices of the state government. This implies that most of the projects executed at local level are not out-rightly initiated by their political leaders. Rather, execution of social projects is premised upon, in most cases, the wishes and interests of the state government. The \bar{X} (3.49) verifies that this result was not a mere guess as it indicates that more respondents tended towards agreement on the assertion as capable of influencing political leadership and social services delivery.

Also, an aggregate of 197 (74.2%) of the respondents agreed to the assertion that both elected and appointed political leaders are, in most cases, subjected to decisions that are detrimental to local development drive. This indicates that the political leaders are incapacitated by elite decisions or big-wigs decisions of their political godfathers which could be influential in the course of local development drive. The \bar{X} (3.30) shows that majority of the respondents acceded to this assertion as a potential factor that could, to a reasonable extent, influence delivery of citizens' demands and needs by political leaders at local level.

In the same vein, 90.4%, representing 228 respondents agreed that the state-local fiscal relations seem to be unfavourable to political leaders at local level. As confirmed by \bar{X} (3.63), this depicts that lack of financial autonomy by local government is an impeding factor for their political leaders to initiate policies and programs as well as provide social services in their areas.

Furthermore, it is asserted that the control of state government on local government elections is politically hazardous to the democratic practice. Reacting to this, 238 (94.4%) of the respondents fell in the agreement category with the assertion. The \bar{X} (3.48) affirms the strength of agreement to this statement. This avers that the electoral processes at local level are inhibited in excessive intervention of the state government, thus the choice candidate of the people become subjugated. This has, to a certain degree, tendering effect on political leadership and social service delivery.

In addition, 157 (62.3%) of the respondents agreed and 95 (37.7%) of the respondents disagreed that state government disenchant political leadership from accessing grants and loans from international agencies. In spite of the difference in respondents' opinions, this is equally a confirmation of the assertion since the \bar{X} (3.31) is above the mid-point of 2.50. It was also asserted that there is lack of constitutional adherence by state government on local governments. In their responses, over

90% of the respondents acknowledged to this statement. This calls for constitutional amendments so as to strengthen the political leadership institutions in the responsibility of social services delivery ($\bar{X} = 3.98$). Lastly, 237 (94.1%) of the respondents acknowledged that Corruption of political leaders has inevitably become a major clog in the provision of adequate service at local level ($\bar{X} = 3.76$). The agreement with this type of assertion implies a strong confirmation of what obtains in the system.

Complement the data gathered through questionnaire administration, some key personalities, numbering 21, were interviewed. Most of the interviewees agreed that there are factors militating against Political Leaders in providing services to the people at the local level. According to a Director of Community Development and Information(CDI), he said in most cases people cannot decipher party loyalty to serving the people. Some of the Directors, Traditional rulers,*Iyalojas* (Market Women) and Community Development Associations(CDAs) Chairmen is of the view that one of the major factors that militating against Political Leaders in providing services to the people at the local level is when their function are been overtaken by the state government, when they do not have direct access to there funds in the federation account, drycollian policies which hamper smooth performance of local government responsibilities.

On the other hand, some of the interviewees also disclosed that the idea of joint account is not helpful, state government only give what they think is enough for the people not minding the federal allocation which makes sustainable development to be in mirage. The state government decides the allocation to be given to local government. If there is no fund to execute programs there is little anyone could do. The idea of joint account is seriously militating against service delivery.

Also most of the interviewees disclosed that the idea of appointing political leader has not been helpful. If an elected officers is on ground he would do more because before he was elected in that office he has campaigned throughout the council and he has promised them what he will do if elected and he will want to fulfill his promise but for somebody who has just been appointed will want to dance into the tune of who appointed him not to the wishes of masses or the local government.

Some of the *Iyalojas* and NULGE Chairmen also disclosed that godfatherism is one of the banes confronting Political Leaders in providing services to the people at the local level. Almost all the Traditional Rulers, CDAs Chairmen and *Iyalojas* also disclosed that corruption of Political Leaders is also a major factor that service delivery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is obvious that political leadership at local government level embark on social services based on the whims and caprices of the state government. This should be addressed urgently. Since there is distinct statutory functions of each tiers of government, Local Government should be allowed to embark on service delivery that is peculiar to them and the responsibility of such service should be accrue to local government without the interference of State Government.

There is urgent need for enforcing local Government autonomy by amending the 1999 constitution to give Local government its rightful place in enabling the political leaders at local level to provide services that is needed by the people at local level and not the wishes of state government.

The needs of the local populace should be paramount to political leaders at the state and local level and local government should be allowed to be accountable to their subjects.

Also, state-local fiscal relation seems to be unfavorable to political leaders through the illegal deduction of local government funds in the name of joint account by the state government. Just recently Mallam El-Rufai the Governor of Kaduna state abolished the joint account and also promise to release the 10% internally generated revenue of the state to the local governments in the state and this would be of great benefits if other states of the federation can follow the suit.

The control of state government on local government election is very hazardous and barbaric, the authoritarian character of most State Governors in the conduct of local governments' affairs under their care deepens crisis of democracy and this has been a major clog in local government administration in Nigeria. Since constitution guarantee elected council, then let there be elected council and let the people choose their leader freely through ballot box. Local councils should be run as institution of democracy by democrats periodically, not as a garrison command that is being run by dictators in form of state governors. In a democracy, leadership succession is expected to follow some clear process of democracy. Leaders should normally emerge freely through party congresses and general elections.

Lastly, mechanism to reduce corruption to minimal should be employ and basically the wellbeing of the people should be paramount to the political leaders.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated Political Leadership in terms of Service Delivery at Local Government level of Osun State. it also established and reaffirmed the existence of *cankeworms* such as lack of constitutional adherence by State Government on Local Government, excess and dubious control of Local Government by State Government, state-local fiscal relation and corruption among others which is detrimental in achieving the goals of sustaining development and sustainability is in mirage. Above all, the political leaders at local level had momentous impact on social service delivery but the major hindrance is the way and manner the State Government operates with them.

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