

Olawale Olufemi AKINRINDE

Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria  
ORCID ID: 0000-0001-7350-2376

Ademola Mubarak ADEBISI

Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria  
ORCID ID: 0000-0003-0899-5121

## A Micro-Political Analysis of Local Governance in Nigeria: The Case of Irepodun Local Government Authority

**Abstract:** The study examined local government autonomy and local government service delivery in Nigeria. The study discovered that, Nigerian local government needs to be autonomous in the discharge of its statutory responsibility, if ongoing agitation for local government autonomy from different quarters in Nigeria is given an approval, this will strengthen local government's service delivery. The study discovered that some states in Nigeria oppose local government autonomy due to political and economic considerations. The study further revealed that Irepodun local government (the micro-case study) in Nigeria is not totally autonomous. Although, local governance is transparent and accountable in Irepodun Local Government, especially in the identification, formulation and execution of its projects, Irepodun local government authority has a huge financial challenge in carrying out service delivery. The study therefore recommends that; the state joint local government account should be abolished from the Nigerian constitution to enable allocation of funds directly to the local governments from Federation account. They should also put a stop to the persistence deduction from the monthly allocation of local governments. Again, states should henceforth be made to remit regularly the constitutional 10% of their internally generated revenue to the local government authorities. Irepodun local government and other local government authorities in Nigeria employ more efforts on sustainable wealth creation rather than depending solely on the grants from the federal and state governments.

**Key words:** local governance, local government autonomy, service delivery, micro-political analysis, irepodun local government, Nigeria

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### Introduction

The adoption of a federal arrangement in a country presupposes that there is division of powers among levels of government with a written constitution showing the division, and the coordinate relationships between the levels with regard to their respective functions. This means that each level of government can decide and act on issues within its defined jurisdiction, irrespective of whether or not other levels are disposed towards such decisions and/or actions (Abubakar, 2017). However, it does appear that the various reforms and the practice of local governments in Nigeria over the years have tended to remove much of the autonomy granted this level of government. For example, in an attempt to distinguish local governments from higher levels of government the Guidelines of the 1976 Local Government Reform stipulate that the powers of the local governments are derived from state governments and the local communities, which they represent. This appears to contradict the concept of coordinate relationship (Anyebe, 2017).

The inherent constraints on the autonomy of Local governments have had serious implications for the level of government in the area of decision-making and the mobilization of resources to carry out the functions assigned to it. Local government autonomy can be considered within the context of the classical theory of federalism epitomized by Wheare, which stresses a formal division of powers between levels of government. According to Wheare (2003) federal principle means the method of dividing powers so that general and regional governments are each within a sphere coordinate and independent. This means that the federal principle includes the division of powers among levels of government, the existence of a written constitution showing the division, and the coordinate supremacy of the levels of governments with regard to their respective functions. Birch (2009) agree with Wheare that some degree of coordinate relations and independence is crucial if federalism is not to become a sham. Local governments are sub national units in a federal state with power legally conferred on them over specified functions and territory. To that extent, the local governments should be free to decide and mobilize resources to execute and manage development activities within their area of jurisdiction without any interference from higher levels of government (Birch, 2009). However, a comparative analysis of local government practices in federally governed countries shows that the degree of autonomy varies from country to country. This study, therefore, examines the level of autonomy enjoyed by local governments in the Nigerian Federation with a view to drawing lessons for the future.

## **Literature, Conceptual and Theoretical Reviews**

### **Local government autonomy**

According to Adeyemo (2005), it is rather paradoxical that the foundation for a democratic, freestanding, autonomous local government system in the Nigerian federation was laid by the military, a form of government usually noted for undemocratic rule. While the various military governments in Nigeria were accused of distorting the federal balance in favour of the central government (centralization), it is ironical that most of these military regimes gave considerable attention to decentralization through local governments, local democracy and autonomy. Before the issuance of 1976 Local Government Reform Guidelines, local government control had been state-dominated. Though the three pre-Independence federating units in Nigeria – the three Regions – had desired from the 1950s to establish democratic local governments, it is generally agreed that these regions had strong grip on the control of local governments for varying political reasons (Adeyemo, 2005). This practice of Regional dominance was inherited by the states after subsequent state creation exercises in 1963, 1967, 1975, 1976, 1991 and 1996.

The 1976 reform was aimed at creating a uniform practice of local government in the federating units, and, more importantly sought to sever “the extra strong controlling hands of the state governments on local governments” (Ademolekun, 2004). Commenting on the objectives of the reforms, Ademolekun (2004) remarked that “what distinguished the 1976 reforms from all previous reform exercises in the country is the formal and un-

equivocal recognition of local government as constituting a distinct level of government with defined boundaries, clearly stated functions and provisions for ensuring adequate human and financial resources.” The reform is seen as elevating the local government to the status of the third tier of government. The key points of this third tier status as noted by Asaju (2010), are: Local government should become a legal entity distinct from the state and federal government; Local government should be administered by democratically elected officials; Local government should have specific powers to perform a range of functions assigned it by law; Local government should enjoy substantial autonomy to perform array of functions, plan, formulate and execute its own policies, programmes and projects, and its own rules and regulations as deemed for its local needs. This autonomy includes power to control its finance, recruit and discipline its staff.

However, the extent of realizing these intentions, which was later transcribed into the 1979 Constitution and subsequent editions of the Nigerian Constitution, is generally agreed to be very low (Adeyemo, 2005). These studies provide various reasons for the poor performance of the local governments in Nigeria, including the reasons of lack of autonomy and democracy. Oviasuyi (2010) for instance, underscores issues of corruption, lack of financial and human capacity, constitutional inadequacies, confusion and complexities. Adeyemo (2005) points to the challenge of conflicting constitutional provisions, political instability and financial/fiscal problems. Ikeanyibe (2008) observes that the constitutional recognition or the third tier status leads to inflexibility that constrains dynamism and adaptability necessary for effective local government; Ojo (2009) points to the problem of poor management and corruption. Most of these studies also underscore the issue of lack of autonomy and local democracy. For instance, Odo (2014) asserts that “the local governments suffer from constant whittling down of their powers by the state governments. The excessive control of some local governments by the states has reduced them to local administration or local arms of state administration.” Despite the merits of these studies, it is apparent that the root causes for the persistent abuse of the Constitutional provisions by most state governments over the years, have not been properly conceptualised. Roberts (1999) remarks that from the viewpoint of constitutional jurisprudence, the important issue is the extent to which constitutional provisions will enhance Intergovernmental Relations within the framework of federalism. Hence, constitutional provision is one thing, and compliance to it is another. It is clear to point out here that, actually, Nigeria is operating a federal system of government but it is obvious that local government which is a third tier of government has not been enjoying its total autonomy and this has led to the poor service delivery in various local governments in Nigeria.

#### Local government service delivery

Service delivery refers to the provision of social or public goods that will promote socio-economic wellbeing of the citizens. Public services offered by government are numerous and may include the provision of public utilities, security, economic development projects, and the enforcement of the law and so on. The delivery of public goods and services at the local government or the grassroots is aimed at moving the standard of living of the populace to the next level (Angahar, 2013). Consequently, the efficient

and effective provisions of basic amenities and social infrastructure, for the people at the grassroots are key factors to the existence of any government (Bolatito, 2014). In sequel to the above, the Nigerian Constitution assigns service delivery responsibilities to the three tiers of government with States and Local government playing the most significant role in the delivery of basic services. In support of this position, Akwara (2013) contends that local governments are to use funds made available to them by both the federal and state governments and their internally generated revenue to improve on the lives of the people within their areas of operation through initiating and attracting developmental projects to the local government, such as; access roads, water, etc.; apart from being a viable political and administrative organ for the transformation of rural communities, local governments also act as the training ground for the breeding of grassroots democracy, that is, fundamental in national development (Oladunjoye, 2010).

Local government as a system of governance was created to ensure meaningful and balanced development especially at the grassroots through participatory approach, maximize citizen's participation and arouse government responsiveness. It serves as a form of political and administrative structure facilitating decentralization, national integration, efficiency in governance, and a sense of belonging at the local levels. The local government is a unit of administration all over the world (Agagu, 2004). Although it is a universal institution, however, it exists in different forms and in different political systems. Whatever the form of existence, local governments have been essentially regarded as the path to and guarantor of administrative efficiency, effective service delivery and participatory development (Arowolo, 2005).

According to Gboyega (2009), local government is a critical tier of government because of its closeness to the people. Local government appeals to both the people and government as a feedback institution that relays the opinions and demands of the grassroots to a higher government. It serves as an instrument of service delivery, promotion of democratization at the local level, and mobilization of human resources for grassroots enhancement. These functions have placed the local government in a strategic position for sustainable development. The local government system has been a major feature of Nigerian government and politics since colonial rule. Though, over the years there have been changes in name, structure and composition.

Prior to the attainment of Independence in Nigeria, there was no uniformity in the local government administration. According to Yahaya (2009), two different administrations emerged in Northern and Southern Nigeria; each of them conformed strongly to the ideological orientation of the regional political class in power. There was relative democratic system in existence in the south where the people were allowed to participate in governance, while, the north was said to be highly centralized and undemocratic. Here the authority was rested in one person. From the foregoing, there was no uniform style of native authority administration throughout Nigeria. This means that each had its own peculiarities rooted and applied on the people under its domain, which had its belief rooted on the existing traditional norm. During the early post-independence era, the heterogeneous nature of Nigeria led to the emergence of various types of local governments, which were practiced by different regimes in Nigeria. According to Okoli (2009), the federal system of government adopted after independence further confirmed these differences, when it provided that each of the then four regions was responsible for the structure, legislation and operation of its

local government councils. That was why between the 1967 and 1970, the name of local governments was different in all regions or states. In the north, the local government was then called local authority, it was called local government in the west, and in the east, it was known as district council. During this period, the traditional rulers had overwhelming influence on these grassroots governments.

As elucidated by Ademolekun (2004) the difference in the local government administration among the regions continued until the federal military government in 1976 established a uniform and single-tier system of government throughout the country. This reform was later entrenched in the 1979 constitution, thereby giving it a full legal backing, and equally recognized it as a third-tier of government after federal/state governments. The uniformity is in the area of functions, structure, funding and management. The desire by the government to maximize rural and grassroots development is one of the major objectives of local system in Nigeria. Its traditional role is that of rural transformation, and improving the lives of the rural populace. The above role is very important as more than 70% of the country's population lives and operates in the rural sector of the economy where subsistence agriculture is the predominant way of life. It is however, disappointing to note that rural sector lacks the basic rural infrastructural facilities. As the closest level of government to the people, local government is thus strategically placed to perform this difficult but important task of rural development.

Abubakar (2017) submits that, development or service delivery is the most important of all the reasons for the establishment of local government. He posits that democracy has meaning only when it contributes to the progress of the people's state of living. The emphasis here is that local government as a small unit of government will stimulate participation that will lead to development. In agreement with the above perspective Ojo (2009) is of the opinion that local governments have to effectively and efficiently establish and maintain services and utilities in order to satisfy the basic needs of the people. It is therefore, expected that the devolution of power to sub-national units like local government will help the government in the centre generally and most importantly brings about development. In conclusion, in view of the above scenarios, local government is seen as a vital agent for the social, political and economic development of Nigeria. However, since the colonial era to date, there have been critical views of local government that it has not served as agent of development or service delivery. Local government being the lowest and closest level of government to the citizens is strategically well placed to serve as an effective instrument of development or service delivery and democracy (participation) at the grassroots level of society. In Nigeria, there is a general consensus in the literature that local governments have not performed satisfactorily as an instrument of development and service delivery.

#### Local government autonomy and local government service delivery

According to Yusuf (2012) local government creates an appropriate and conducive environment for the people at the local level through efficient and effective service delivery. The value of local government in a country is inestimable because it is an indispensable arm of government. As a result, the link between the qualities of service that citizens

enjoy is very significant. As enunciated by Okoli (2009) local government is the closest government to the people at the grassroots level, so it is expected to play significant roles in providing the social services for the people in order to improve their standard of living if absolute autonomy is given. But in Nigeria, the impact of local government is so far limited, especially with regard to improving service delivery. As puts by Hassan (2011) despite the strategic importance of local government to the development process through effective service delivery, there has not been much development in most local governments in Nigeria. Hassan further asserted that for Nigerian local government to be effective, local governments in Nigeria need adequate autonomy that can facilitate their operations and development of the localities through effective service delivery.

As viewed by Odo (2014) sees local government autonomy as the freedom of local government to recruit and manage its own staff, raise and manage its finances, make by laws and policies and discharge its functions as provided by law without interference from the higher governments while he sees local government service delivery as situation where the delivery of public goods and services at the local government is targeted at advancing the standard of living of the populace to the next level. He was quick however to add that local government autonomy in theory and practice is never absolute. Like the doctrine of separation of powers which is limited by checks and balances, local government autonomy is limited by local government relations with higher levels of government.

In sum, it could be seen from the above that, despite the frantic efforts made by successive governments through various administrative reforms to make local government autonomous in Nigeria to ease local government service delivery. It is obvious to state that local government still remained, in practical terms, far from being autonomous and still remains an appendage as being controlled by the state and federal levels which has hindered its effectiveness when it comes to local government service delivery in Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Review and Frame of Analysis**

This study adopted the Structural functionalist theory as postulated by Gabriel Almond, James Coleman and Bingham Powell. Almond (1960) started his study of the various political systems with an attempt at defining what a political system means. He disagreed with the definition provided by Max Weber, that a political system is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory (Weber, 1946). He argued that this definition with its emphasis on territory as one of the characteristics and on the right to use physical force being ascribed to other institutions or to individual refers only to the state rather than to the political system. To Almond (1960), "Physical" means separating out a certain set of interaction in society in order to relate it to other sets, a "system" means process of interactions. A system is comprehensive in the sense that it includes all the interactions, inputs and outputs which affects the use of physical coercion, in all the structures, including undifferentiated structures, like kinship, lineage and anomic phenomena like riots and street demonstrations and not merely the interactions which takes place within the structures associated with the state, like parliaments, executive,



bureaucracies and formally organized units like parties, interest groups and media of communications.

Structural functionalist theory is then, a form of systemic analysis which looks at political systems as coherent wholes which influence and are in turn influenced by their environments. The interactions which characterize political systems (as particular kinds of social systems) take place between, not individuals, but the roles individuals adopt: these are the basic unit of structural functionalist theory. The structural functionalist theory revolves around certain concepts, more important of them being the concept of functions and structures. Three basic questions are involved: What basic functions are fulfilled in any given system? By what structure, and under what conditions? Functions deal with the consequences involved, objectives as well as processes of pattern of action, structures refer to those arrangements within the system which performs the functions (Almond, 1960). Several analyses by scholars have tried to prepare lists of functions which a given system has to perform in order to survive though most of them have allocation for a certain amount of variation when it come to the analysis of specific cases. Almond (1960), for example, has talked of conversion functions, capabilities functions and adaptive and maintenance functions as the functional requirements of a political system. Almond (1960) structural functional theory attempts to shift the locus of analysis from the observable institutional political mechanism to any area where the actual performance of the functional requirement is actually located. This approach inclined to emphasize the search for process that maintains the stability of the system. Almond (1960) stated that all systems perform two basic set of functions. The input and output functions. For him, the political systems are made up of a set of roles, structures and subsystems whose interaction are affected to a great extent by the psychological attribute and properties of the actors involved. Moreover, the process can be seen in relation to its environment so that the whole range of interactions can be interpreted as consisting of either input from the environment. Through time, the output may produce environmental changes which may lead to new demand being made on the system or change in the system itself. It is this notion of feedback which enables the system theorist to incorporate in the analysis an account of the dynamic factors within which lead to change and development. Almond (1960) discerns four input functions and three output functions: The four input functions are as follows:

**Political socializations and recruitment:** This refers to the transmission of a political culture from one generation to the next. It also includes dissemination of new culture.

On other hand, political recruitment includes the selection and training of leaders.

**Interest Articulation:** refers to the identification of demands and their transmission from society to authoritative decision making. That is to say, it implies the process whereby opinions, attitudes, beliefs, preferences and other impulses from groups are converted into coherent demands on the political system. Various structures perform this function, but interest groups perform it best.

**Interest aggregation:** refers to the filtering and consolidation of demand to a management load to the political system. Political parties are most suited to perform this function.

**Political communication:** refers to the transmission of message among the elements of a system and between its environments. Mass media agency or establishment controlling the media of mass communication are most suited to perform this function.

Also, other output functions are as follows:

**Rule Making:** It is synonymous with legislation. However, rules must be made in a certain way and by specific institutions with certain kinds of limitations.

**Rule Application:** Rules are applied by the bureaucracy; it is up to the bureaucracy to do this. A bureaucracy is at the core of modern government. However, there are also needs to be some decentralization. The presence of differentiated and well developed rule application structures greatly expands the capacity of a political system to manipulate its environment.

**Rule Adjudication:** It is the duty of the judiciary to interpret the laws and determine guilt or innocence. An independent judiciary also works best for resolving conflicts which break out between citizens.

Structural functionalists like Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell posited that for proper understanding of the structures (institutions) in the society, there is need to place them in a meaningful and dynamic historical context. Situated within the present study, the above postulations have relevant applicability in understanding and analyzing service delivery in local governments. Local governments are structures created in Nigeria to perform specific functions that will help bring government closer to the people. As postulated by Almond and Powell, an historical study of local government has brought to the fore some of the service delivery functions of local governments in Nigeria. The idea of dysfunctionality or disorderliness advanced by structural functionalists could be used in explaining the incapacity of local government to deliver services to the people in a timely, adequate and satisfactory manner.

Local government is one of the subsystems or structures of the Nigerian political system or state; it has both inputs and outputs functions which the study seeks to assess within the period under study. It is also one of the structures of the state established to perform specific social, economic and political functions at the local level. It is also supposed to operate on the democratic tenets. As a structure has it performed its expected role within the period under study? The Structural Functionalist Theory enunciated that every structure performs a functional role, for the stability and maintenance of the system. As a subsystem or structures of the Nigerian political system or State. Local government has been given certain constitutionally assigned functions to perform e.g. Provision of basic social amenities, providing and maintenance of public conveniences etc. to enhance service delivery in its area of jurisdiction. As a structure, the third tiers of government (local government) are generally believed to have failed woefully in the discharge of their constitutionally assigned function (Okoli, 2009). This failure can justifiably be link to their lack of autonomy. For instance, in the area of authority relationship, the local governments are clearly subordinated to the other tiers of government. In fact, the 1999 constitution, at best muddles up the status of local governments and at worst denies local government independent existence. For instance, and fundamentally, of all the tiers of government in Nigeria, it is only the local government that does not have the characteristics of tripartite division of governmental functions. It is only at the local level, that the judiciary does not exist and function. Any government that can make, implement and cannot interpret and pronounce on its laws is, indeed, no government.



It is this structural deficiency that has greatly impeded the status of local government as a government. In the area of finance, local governments do not fare any better. Even though local government is the government closest to the grassroots, its statutory share of the federation account is not commensurate with its assigned functions and responsibilities. Moreover, even the amount that is due to it, does not get to it directly, but must be paid into state/local government joint account to be shared according to a law made by the State House of Assembly; this has further compounds the financial helplessness of the local government. In the area of fiscal rights and revenue sources, local government is constitutionally consigned to non-viable sources of revenue. There is also the problem of overlapping fiscal jurisdiction between the federal and local government and between the state and local government. With respect to personnel, local government's greatest albatross is political interference, leading to the politicization of appointments and general human resource management at the local government level. Even though the local government service commission is responsible for staff recruitment, training, posting and career advancement of the staff of the local government, at least from grade level 06 and above, the situation on ground shows that the entire process is being politicized. Therefore, all these constitutional, procedural and structural anomalies impoverish the local government and constrain its service delivery to the people.

### **Methodology of the Study**

The descriptive research design was purposively adopted for the study to examine local government autonomy and local government service delivery in Nigeria with a micro-case study of Irepodun Local Government Authority. The target population of the study consists of the workers and educated people residing in Irepodun Local Government area, and a total of one hundred and ten (110) respondents were selected for the study using simple random sampling techniques and participated in the study. Notwithstanding, both male and female participated in the study to avoid gender bias. Data collected are analyzed, and adequately summarized. Tables, simple percentage and simple regression analysis are used where necessary to aid the presentation and analysis of data for easy understanding and the actualization of the research objectives.

### **Presentation and Discussion of Results**

This section deals with the analysis, presentation and interpretation of the primary data collected from the field on Local Government Autonomy and Local Government Service Delivery. Primary data was gathered through a survey with the aid of carefully structured questionnaires which were administered to the respondents. One hundred and ten (110) questionnaires were administered in Irepodun Local Government area but ninety-eight were retrieved. The statistical results that were obtained in the research are presented in this here. Descriptive as well as the inferential.

Table 1

**Nigerian local government needs to be autonomous in the discharge of its statutory responsibility**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 42        | 40.0    | 40.0               |
| Agree             | 57        | 54.3    | 94.3               |
| Disagree          | 4         | 3.8     | 98.1               |
| Strongly Disagree | 2         | 1.9     | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   | 100.0              |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 1 shows that 40.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that Nigerian local government needs to be autonomous in the discharge of its statutory responsibility, 54.3% agreed, 3.8% disagreed and 1.9% strongly disagreed. In line with the above analysis, it could be concluded that Nigerian local government needs to be autonomous in the discharge of its statutory responsibility because it was agreed by almost 54.3% of the respondents.

Table 2

**If ongoing agitation for local government autonomy from different quarters in Nigeria is given an approval, this will strengthen Irepodun local government's service delivery**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 61        | 58.1    | 58.1               |
| Agree             | 32        | 30.5    | 88.6               |
| Disagree          |           |         |                    |
| Strongly Disagree | 9         | 8.6     | 97.2               |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   | 100.0              |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 2 shows that 58.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that If ongoing agitation for local government autonomy from different quarters in Nigeria is given an approval, this will strengthen Irepodun local government's service delivery, 30.5% agreed, 8.6% disagreed and 2.6% strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it could be inferred that If ongoing agitation for local government autonomy from different quarters in Nigeria is given an approval, this will strengthen Irepodun local government's service delivery.

Table 3

**Some states in Nigeria oppose local government autonomy due to political and other consideration**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| 1                 | 2         | 3       | 4                  |
| Strongly Agree    | 31        | 29.5    | 29.5               |
| Agree             | 52        | 50.0    | 79.5               |
| Disagree          |           |         |                    |
| Strongly Disagree | 14        | 13.3    | 92.8               |

|          |     |       |       |
|----------|-----|-------|-------|
| 1        | 2   | 3     | 4     |
| Disagree | 8   | 7.6   | 100.0 |
| Total    | 105 | 100.0 |       |

Source: *Field Survey*, 2021.

Table 3 reveals that 29.5% of the respondent strongly agreed that some states in Nigeria oppose local government autonomy due to political and other consideration, 50.0% agreed, 13.3% disagreed while 7.6% strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it could be concluded that some states in Nigeria oppose local government autonomy due to political and other consideration because it was agreed by 50.0% of the respondents.

Table 4

**Irepodun local government in Osun State is autonomous**

|                | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree | 8         | 7.6     | 7.6                |
| Agree          | 18        | 17.1    | 24.7               |
| Disagree       |           |         |                    |
| Strongly       | 59        | 56.2    | 80.9               |
| Disagree       | 20        | 19.0    | 100.0              |
| Total          | 105       | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey*, 2021.

Table 4 shows that 7.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that Irepodun local government in Osun State is autonomous, 17.1% agreed, 56.2% disagreed while 19.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it could be seen that Irepodun local government in Osun State is not totally autonomous because it was rejected by almost 56.2% of the respondents that Irepodun local government in Osun State is autonomous.

Table 5

**Irepodun local government has judiciously used its resources for developmental projects**

|                | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree | 23        | 21.9    | 21.9               |
| Agree          | 57        | 54.3    | 76.2               |
| Disagree       | 17        | 16.2    | 92.4               |
| Strongly       | 8         | 7.6     | 100.0              |
| Disagree       |           |         |                    |
| Total          | 105       | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey*, 2021.

Table 5 shows that 21.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that Irepodun local government has judiciously used its resources for developmental projects, 54.3% agreed, 16.2% disagreed and 7.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it is evident to conclude that Irepodun local government has judiciously used its resources for developmental projects because it was agreed by 54.3% of the respondents.

Table 6

**Irepodun local government is transparent and accountable in the identification, formulation and execution of its projects**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 20        | 19.4    | 19.4               |
| Agree             | 49        | 46.7    | 66.1               |
| Disagree          | 22        | 20.9    | 87.0               |
| Strongly Disagree | 14        | 13.3    | 100.0              |
| Total             | 10        | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 6 shows that 19.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that Irepodun local government is transparent and accountable in the identification, formulation and execution of its projects, 46.7% agreed, 20.9% disagreed while 13.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it could be inferred from the analysis that Irepodun local government is transparent and accountable in the identification, formulation and execution of its project.

Table 7

**Irepodun local government has no financial challenge in carrying out his normal financial responsibility in the local government area**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 3         | 2.9     | 2.9                |
| Agree             | 4         | 3.8     | 6.7                |
| Disagree          | 70        | 66.6    | 73.3               |
| Strongly Disagree | 28        | 26.7    | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 7 reveals that 2.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that Irepodun local government has no financial challenge in carrying out his normal financial responsibility in the local government area, 3.8% agreed, 66.6% disagreed while 26.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it could be inferred that Irepodun local government has a huge financial challenge in carrying out his normal financial responsibility in the local government area because 66.6% of the respondents disagreed with the fact that Irepodun local government has no financial challenge in carrying out his normal financial responsibility in the local government area.

Table 8

**There are major obstacles militating against good service delivery to the people of Irepodun local government**

|                | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| 1              | 2         | 3       | 4                  |
| Strongly Agree | 23        | 21.9    | 21.9               |
| Agree          | 54        | 51.4    | 73.3               |
| Disagree       | 17        | 16.2    | 89.5               |

|                |     |       |       |
|----------------|-----|-------|-------|
| 1              | 2   | 3     | 4     |
| Strongly       | 11  | 10.5  | 100.0 |
| Disagree Total | 105 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: *Field Survey*, 2021.

Table 8 shows that 21.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that there are major obstacles militating against good service delivery to the people of Irepodun local government, 51.4% agreed, 16.2% disagreed while 10.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it was obvious to say that there are major obstacles militating against good service delivery to the people of Irepodun local government because it was strongly agreed by 51.4% of the respondents.

Table 9

**Absence of local government autonomy is the reason for lack rural and infrastructural development in Irepodun local government**

|                | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree | 33        | 31.2    | 31.2               |
| Agree          | 51        | 48.6    | 79.8               |
| Disagree       | 15        | 14.3    | 94.1               |
| Strongly       | 6         | 5.7     | 100.0              |
| Disagree Total | 105       | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey*, 2021.

Table 9 reveals that 31.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that absence of local government autonomy is the reason for lack rural and infrastructural development in Irepodun local government, 48.6% agreed, 14.3% disagreed while 5.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it was evident to conclude that absence of local government autonomy is the reason for lack rural and infrastructural development in Irepodun local government because it was agreed by almost 48.6% of the respondents.

Table 10

**Most local governments in Nigeria have financial challenge in carrying out its statutory functions**

|                | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree | 27        | 25.7    | 25.7               |
| Agree          | 51        | 48.6    | 74.3               |
| Disagree       |           |         |                    |
| Strongly       | 21        | 20.0    | 94.3               |
| Disagree       | 6         | 5.7     | 100.0              |
| Total          | 105       | 100.0   | 100.0              |

Source: *Field Survey*, 2021.

Table 10 reveals that 25.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that most local governments in Nigeria have financial challenge in carrying out its statutory functions,

48.6% agreed, 20.0% disagreed while 5.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it was revealed that most local governments in Nigeria have financial challenge in carrying out its statutory functions.

Table 11

**Non-performance on the part of local government in service delivery can be attributed to inadequate resources**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 29        | 27.6    | 27.6               |
| Agree             | 50        | 47.6    | 75.2               |
| Disagree          | 21        | 20.0    | 95.2               |
| Strongly Disagree | 5         | 4.8     | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 11 shows that 27.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that non-performance on the part of local government in service delivery can be attributed to inadequate resources, 47.6% agreed, 20.0% disagreed while 4.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above it could be deduced that non-performance on the part of local government in service delivery can be attributed to inadequate resources.

Table 12

**In comparative terms, Irepodun local government has performed excellently under democracy than the previous military rule**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 61        | 58.1    | 58.1               |
| Agree             | 23        | 21.9    | 80.0               |
| Disagree          | 16        | 15.2    | 95.2               |
| Strongly Disagree | 5         | 4.8     | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 12 reveals that 58.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that in comparative terms, Irepodun local government has performed excellently under democracy than the previous military rule, 21.9% agreed, 15.2% disagreed while 4.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it could be inferred that in comparative terms, Irepodun local government has performed excellently under democracy than the previous military rule because it was strongly agreed by 58.1% of the respondents that in comparative terms, Irepodun local government has performed excellently under democracy than the previous military rule.



Table 13

**The absence of local government autonomy in Nigeria has adversely affected development of policies and programmes at local government level**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 23        | 21.9    | 21.9               |
| Agree             | 53        | 50.5    | 72.4               |
| Disagree          | 20        | 19.0    | 91.4               |
| Strongly Disagree | 9         | 8.6     | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 13 shows that 21.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that the absence of local government autonomy in Nigeria has adversely affected development of policies and programmes at local government level, 50.5% agreed, 19.0% disagreed while 8.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it could be confirmed that the absence of local government autonomy in Nigeria has adversely affected development of policies and programmes at local government level because it was supported by 50.5% of the respondents.

Table 14

**Irepodun local government has impacted significantly in the areas of education, roads and water**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 20        | 20.0    | 20.0               |
| Agree             | 45        | 45.0    | 65.0               |
| Disagree          | 28        | 28.0    | 93.0               |
| Strongly Disagree | 7         | 7.0     | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   | 100.0              |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 14 shows that 20.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that Irepodun local government has impacted significantly in the areas of education, roads and water, 45.0% agreed, 28.0% disagreed while 7.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it could be concluded that Irepodun local government has impacted significantly in the areas of education, roads and water.

Table 15

**There were recruitments of enough qualified teachers in primary education by Irepodun local government**

|                | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| 1              | 2         | 3       | 4                  |
| Strongly Agree | 23        | 21.9    | 21.9               |
| Agree          | 49        | 46.7    | 68.6               |
| Disagree       | 22        | 20.9    | 89.5               |

|                   |     |       |       |
|-------------------|-----|-------|-------|
| 1                 | 2   | 3     | 4     |
| Strongly Disagree | 11  | 10.5  | 100.0 |
| Total             | 105 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 15 shows that 21.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that there were recruitments of enough qualified teachers in primary education by Irepodun local government, 46.7% agreed, 20.9% disagreed while 10.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed. From the above analysis, it is evident to conclude in line with the analysis that there were recruitments of enough qualified teachers in primary education by Irepodun local government.

Table 16

**There were provision of fertilizers and agricultural inputs to local farmers in Irepodun local government**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 24        | 22.9    | 22.9               |
| Agree             | 49        | 46.7    | 69.6               |
| Disagree          | 20        | 19.0    | 88.6               |
| Strongly Disagree | 12        | 11.4    | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   | 100.0              |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 16 shows that 22.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that there were provision of fertilizers and agricultural inputs to local farmers in Irepodun local government, 46.7% agreed, 19.0% disagreed while 11.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed. In line with the above analysis, it could be seen that there were provision of fertilizers and agricultural inputs to local farmers in Irepodun local government because it was agreed by 46.7% of the respondents.

Table 17

**There were provision of roads/drainage/culverts by Irepodun local government**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 20        | 19.0    | 19.0               |
| Agree             | 36        | 34.3    | 53.3               |
| Disagree          | 31        | 29.5    | 82.8               |
| Strongly Disagree | 18        | 17.1    | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   | 100.0              |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 17 reveals that 19.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that there were provision of roads/drainage/culverts by Irepodun local government, 34.3% agreed, 29.5%

disagreed while 17.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed. In line with the above analysis, it is evident to indicate here that there were only little provision of roads/drainage/culverts by Irepodun local government because it was only partially supported by 34.3% of the respondents that there were provision of roads/drainage/culverts by Irepodun local government.

Table 18

**There were provision of healthcare facilities in primary health care centres in Irepodun local government**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 23        | 21.9    | 21.9               |
| Agree             | 48        | 45.7    | 67.6               |
| Disagree          | 21        | 20.0    | 87.6               |
| Strongly Disagree | 13        | 12.4    | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   | 100.0              |

Source: *Field Survey*, 2021.

Table 1.18 shows that 21.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that there was provision of healthcare facilities in Primary Health Care centres in Irepodun local government, 45.7% agreed, 20.0% disagreed while 12.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed. In line with the above analysis, it could be seen that there was provision of healthcare facilities in Primary Health Care centres in Irepodun local government.

Table 19

**Irepodun local government has impacted positively in the areas of electricity, and health services in your locality**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 21        | 20.0    | 20.0               |
| Agree             | 41        | 39.0    | 59.0               |
| Disagree          | 29        | 27.6    | 86.6               |
| Strongly Disagree | 14        | 13.3    | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   | 100.0              |

Source: *Field Survey*, 2021.

Table 19 reveals that 20.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that Irepodun local government has impacted positively in the areas of electricity, and health services in their locality, 39.0% agreed, 27.6% disagreed while 13.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed. In line with the above analysis, it could be concluded that Irepodun local government has partially impacted in the areas of electricity, and health services in some localities because only just 39.0% of the respondents agreed the fact that Irepodun local government has impacted positively in the areas of electricity, and health services.

Table 20

**The services rendered in Irepodun local government are consistent with the campaign promises of the political leaders**

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 23        | 21.9    | 21.9               |
| Agree             | 51        | 48.6    | 70.5               |
| Disagree          | 20        | 19.0    | 89.5               |
| Strongly Disagree | 11        | 10.5    | 100.0              |
| Total             | 105       | 100.0   | 100.0              |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 20 reveals that 21.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that the services rendered in Irepodun local government are consistent with the campaign promises of the political leaders, 48.6% agreed, 19.0% disagreed while 10.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed. In line with the above analysis, it could be concluded that the services rendered in Irepodun local government are consistent with the campaign promises of the political leaders.

Table 21

**The activities of the local government have impacted positively in uplifting the standard living of people of Irepodun local government**

|                    | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly agreed    | 24        | 22.9    | 22.9               |
| Agreed             | 53        | 50.5    | 73.4               |
| Disagreed          | 20        | 19.0    | 42.9               |
| Strongly disagreed | 8         | 7.6     | 100.0              |
| Total              | 105       | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 21 reveals that 22.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that the activities of the local government have impacted positively in uplifting the standard living of people of Irepodun local government, 50.0% agreed, 19.0% disagreed while 7.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed. In line with the above analysis, it could be concluded that the activities of the local government have impacted positively in uplifting the standard living of people of Irepodun local government because it was agreed by 50.5% of the respondents.

Table 22

**Mismanagement of funds, corruption and incompetent/bad leadership prevents service delivery in Irepodun local government**

|                    | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly agreed    | 58        | 55.2    | 55.2               |
| Agreed             | 31        | 29.5    | 84.7               |
| Disagreed          | 10        | 9.5     | 94.2               |
| Strongly disagreed | 6         | 5.7     | 100.0              |
| Total              | 105       | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 22 reveals that 55.2% of the respondents strongly agreed mismanagement of funds, corruption and incompetent/bad leadership prevents service delivery in Irepodun local government, 29.5% agreed, 9.5% disagreed while 5.7% of the respondents were strongly disagreed. In line with the above analysis, it could be inferred that mismanagement of funds, corruption and incompetent/bad leadership prevents service delivery in Irepodun local government because it was strongly agreed 55.2% of the respondents.

Table 23

**The service delivery in Irepodun local government meets the needs and aspirations of the people of the local government**

|                    | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Strongly agreed    | 20        | 19.0    | 19.0               |
| Agreed             | 49        | 46.7    | 65.7               |
| Disagreed          | 26        | 24.8    | 90.5               |
| Strongly disagreed | 10        | 9.5     | 100.0              |
| Total              | 105       | 100.0   |                    |

Source: *Field Survey, 2021.*

Table 23 reveals that 19.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that the service delivery in Irepodun local government meets the needs and aspirations of the people of the local government, 46.7% agreed, 24.8% disagreed while 9.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed. In line with the above analysis, it could be inferred that the service delivery in Irepodun local government meets the needs and aspirations of the people of the local government although not in totality in line with analysis.

**Discussion of Findings**

The question one which stated that Nigerian local government needs to be autonomous in the discharge of its statutory responsibility was tested. The findings revealed that Nigerian local government needs to be autonomous in the discharge of its statutory responsibility. The question two which stated that if ongoing agitation for local government autonomy from different quarters in Nigeria is given an approval, this will strengthen Irepodun local government’s service delivery was tested and the findings revealed that if ongoing agitation for local government autonomy from different quarters in Nigeria is given an approval, this will strengthen Irepodun local government’s service delivery.

The question three which stated that some states in Nigeria oppose local government autonomy due to political and other consideration was tested. The result from the findings showed that some states in Nigeria oppose local government autonomy due to political and other consideration because it was agreed by 50.0% of the respondents.

The question four which stated that Irepodun local government in Osun State is autonomous was tested and the findings showed that Irepodun local government in Osun State is not totally autonomous because it was rejected by almost 56.2% of the respondents that Irepodun local government in Osun State is autonomous.

The question five which stated that Irepodun local government has judiciously used its resources for developmental projects was tested. The findings showed that Irepodun local government has judiciously used its resources for developmental projects.

The question six which stated that Irepodun local government is transparent and accountable in the identification, formulation and execution of its projects was also tested and the result from the analysis revealed that Irepodun local government is transparent and accountable in the identification, formulation and execution of its projects.

The question seven which stated that Irepodun local government has no financial challenge in carrying out its normal financial responsibility in the local government was tested. The findings revealed that Irepodun local government has a huge financial challenge in carrying out its normal financial responsibility in the local government area because 66.6% of the respondents disagreed with the fact that Irepodun local government has no financial challenge in carrying out its normal financial responsibility in the local government area.

The question eight which stated that there are major obstacles militating against good service delivery to the people of Irepodun local government was tested and the findings revealed that there are major obstacles militating against good service delivery to the people of Irepodun local government because it was strongly agreed by 51.4% of the respondents.

The question nine which stated that absence of local government autonomy is the reason for lack rural and infrastructural development in Irepodun local government was tested and the findings revealed that absence of local government autonomy is the reason for lack rural and infrastructural development in Irepodun local government.

The question ten which stated that most local governments in Nigeria have financial challenge in carrying out its statutory functions was tested. The findings revealed that most local governments in Nigeria have financial challenge in carrying out its statutory functions.

The question eleven which stated that nonperformance on the part of local government in service delivery can be attributed to inadequate resources was tested. The findings showed that non-performance on the part of local government in service delivery can be attributed to inadequate resources.

The question twelve which stated that in comparative terms, Irepodun local government has performed excellently under democracy than the previous military rule was also tested. The findings showed that in comparative terms, Irepodun local government has performed excellently under democracy than the previous military rule.

The question thirteen which stated that the absence of local government autonomy in Nigeria has adversely affected development of policies and programmes at local government level was tested. The findings showed that the absence of local government autonomy in Nigeria has adversely affected development of policies and programmes at local government.

The question fourteen which stated that Irepodun local government has impacted significantly in the areas of education, roads and water was tested. The findings showed that Irepodun local government has impacted significantly in the areas of education, roads and water.

The question seventeen which stated that there were recruitments of enough qualified teachers in primary education by Irepodun local government was tested. The findings



revealed that there were recruitments of enough qualified teachers in primary education by Irepodun local government.

The question fifteen which stated that there were provision of fertilizers and agricultural inputs to local farmers in Irepodun local government was tested. The result showed that there were provision of fertilizers and agricultural inputs to local farmers in Irepodun local government because it was agreed by 46.7% of the respondents.

The question sixteen which stated there were provision of roads/drainage/culverts by Irepodun local government was tested. The result showed that there were only little provision of roads/drainage/culverts by Irepodun local government because it was only partially supported by 34.3% of the respondents that there were provision of roads/drainage/culverts by Irepodun local government.

The question seventeen which stated that there was provision of healthcare facilities in primary health care centres in Irepodun local government was also tested. The findings revealed that there was provision of healthcare facilities in Primary Health Care centres in Irepodun local government.

The question eighteen which stated that Irepodun local government has impacted positively in the areas of electricity, and health services in your locality was tested. The result showed that Irepodun local government has partially impacted in the areas of electricity, and health services in some localities.

The question nineteen which stated that the services rendered in Irepodun local government are consistent with the campaign promises of the political leaders was tested. The result showed that the services rendered in Irepodun local government are consistent with the campaign promises of the political leaders.

The question twenty which stated that the activities of the local government have impacted positively in uplifting the standard living of people of Irepodun local government was tested. The findings indicated that the activities of the local government have impacted positively in uplifting the standard living of people of Irepodun local government because it was agreed by 50.5% of the respondents.

The question twenty-one which stated that mismanagement of funds, corruption and incompetent/bad leadership prevents service delivery in Irepodun local government was tested. The result revealed that mismanagement of funds, corruption and incompetent/bad leadership prevents service delivery in Irepodun local government because it was strongly agreed by 55.2% of the respondents.

The question twenty-two which stated that the service delivery in Irepodun local government meets the needs and aspirations of the people of the local government was tested. The result revealed that the service delivery in Irepodun local government meets the needs and aspirations of the people of the local government although not in totality in line with the analysis.

## Conclusion

The study examined local government autonomy and local government service delivery in Nigeria with Irepodun Government Authority as a micro-case study. The study therefore discovered that Nigerian local government needs to be autonomous in

the discharge of its statutory responsibility, if ongoing agitation for local government autonomy from different quarters in Nigeria is given an approval, it will strengthen local governance in general and Irepodun local government's service delivery in specific. It was discovered in the study that some states in Nigeria oppose local government autonomy due to political and other consideration. It is therefore the position of this study, arising from evidences from the field, that until local government authorities are truly autonomous, local governance and service delivery would continue to be a fleeting mirage.

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## Analiza mikropolityczna samorządu lokalnego w Nigerii: przypadek władz samorządowych Irepodun

### Streszczenie

W artykule przeanalizowano autonomię samorządu lokalnego i świadczeń usług samorządowych w Nigerii. Badanie wykazało, że nigeryjski samorząd lokalny musi być niezależny w wykonywaniu swoich ustawowych obowiązków. Czynnikiem wzmacniającym świadczenie usług przez samorząd lokalny może być skuteczna agitacja różnych środowisk na rzecz niezależności samorządu Nigerii. Analiza wykazała, że niektóre stany w Nigerii sprzeciwiają się autonomii samorządów lokalnych ze względów politycznych i ekonomicznych.

Wykazano ponadto, że samorząd lokalny Irepodun (studium przypadku mikro) w Nigerii nie jest całkowicie autonomiczny. Chociaż samorząd lokalny w Irepodun jest przejrzysty i odpowiedzialny, zwłaszcza w zakresie identyfikacji, formułowania i realizacji swoich projektów. Musi on sprostać ogromnemu wyzwaniu finansowemu w realizacji świadczenia usług. W związku z tym badanie rekomenduje, usunięcie z konstytucji Nigerii zapisu dotyczącego wspólnego konta samorządowego, aby umożliwić alokację środków bezpośrednio do samorządów z konta Federacji. Należy zmusić państwo do regularnego przekazywania władzom samorządowym konstytucyjnym 10% ich wewnętrznie wytworzonych dochodów. Samorząd lokalny Irepodun i inne władze samorządowe w Nigerii powinny podjąć więcej wysiłków na rzecz trwałego tworzenia dobrobytu, zamiast polegać wyłącznie na dotacjach od rządu federalnego i władz stanowych.

**Słowa kluczowe:** samorząd lokalny, autonomia samorządu, świadczenie usług, analiza mikropolityczna, samorząd lokalny, Nigeria

