



## **IMPERATIVE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE AUTONOMY QUESTION IN NIGERIA: EXPERIENCE SINCE 1999 TILL DATE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The 1976 Local Government Reforms in Nigeria marked a watershed in the annals of local government. It brought with it uniformity which put an end to the regionalisation of local government before 1976. It was meant to make local government occupy its rightful position in local governance, thus it was enshrined in the 1979 constitution of the country. In spite of the constitutional provisions in the 1999 constitution for existence, functions and autonomy of local government on one hand, the same constitution subsumed local government under the state government. That is why there is a raging debate over the status of local government in Nigeria. This among others necessitated this work. The paper justifies the need for local government. It stated the statutory functions of local government as provided for in the 1999 constitution. The paper assessed local government since 1999 till date. It relied on secondary source of data. It concluded by making some recommendations.*

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**Keywords:** Local government, Autonomy, Constitution, Reform, Regionalism, Third-tier.

### **Contribution/ Originality**

This study documents the need for local government as well as the hurdles to effective performance of its roles since 1999. This study contributes in the existing literature for researchers in this area. This paper assists political actors and policy-makers.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Local Governance in Nigeria is crisis-ridden. The debate over the performance of its statutory functions has undermined the existentialism of local government whose authority is derived from the constitution. Small wonder or no wonder the fate of local government in Nigeria has assumed a

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worrisome dimension particularly since the democratic drive in 1999. This is aptly and rightly described by [Obi \(2013\)](#):

The place of the third-tier government, that is local government administration in Nigeria, has remained the thorniest and contentious issue in Nigeria federalism. It has to be, principally because it actually has led to general distortions in public service delivery at the most crucial levels of government.

Prior to the attainment of independence in Nigeria, there was no uniformity in the local government administrations. In the words of [Yahaya \(1989\)](#), 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.

The above got affirmation from [Okoli \(1989\)](#), when he submitted that “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 1967 and 1970, the names given to local governments were different in all regions or states. In the North, the local government was then called Local Authority, while 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 grass-root governments. This trend was in continuation until the Federal Military government in 1976 established a uniform and single-tier system of government throughout the country. This gained acceptance as it was entrenched in the 1979 constitution, thus enhancing its legality ([Ovaga, 2014](#)). It is in line with the above that the then Head of State, General Obasanjo declared that:

Local government is fundamental to building a stable government not just at the state level but also at the Federal level. It was recognized early in the deliberations on this subject that, the evolution of an effective system of local government throughout the country requires that the exercise be nationally coordinated so that Nigeria’s local government system achieves standardisation in terms of objectives and financing ([Obasanjo, 1976](#)).

In an attempt at making local government occupy its rightful place in the scheme of things, the 1976 reforms introduced the following measures:

- (a) Uniformity of local government areas based on a given population and size.
- (b) Formally recognized local government as the third-tier of government nation-wide.
- (c) Their functions and funding well specified.
- (d) 10% of the federally generated revenue statutorily allocated to local government.
- (e) Payment of fixed salaries for full time chairmen, supervisory councillors and councillors instead of the old system of paying sitting allowances.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1. Local Government**

The 1976 local government Reform Handbook defined local government as “Government at the local level exercised through representative councils established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas. These powers should give council substantial control over local affairs as well as the staff and institutional and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision

of services and to determine and implement projects so as to complement the activities of the state and federal government in their areas, and to ensure, through devolution of functions to these councils and through the active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, that local initiatives and response to local needs and conditions are maximised". The above definition is deeply rooted and has alliance with United Nations' Office for Public Administration which explained local government as:

A political division of a nation (in federal system), state, which is constituted by law, and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected.

The [Report of the Political Bureau \(1987\)](#), in Nigeria sees local government as widely acknowledged as a viable instrument for rural transformation and for the delivery of social services to people. Local Government may be seen as "a segment of a constituent state or region of a nation state", established by law to provide public service and regulate public affairs within its area of its jurisdiction ([Ikelegbe, 2005](#)). The above presupposes that it is the closest level to the people with powers to perform functions and mandate over its finances and manpower. While acknowledging its territorial and functional boundaries, some level of autonomy exists in relation to its functions.

It is on the strength of the above that ([Ikelegbe, 2005](#)) says that "it is government under the responsibility of the local people and in the interest of the local population by local representative bodies". As [King \(1988\)](#) observed, the local government is universally found in modern polities, although it goes by various appellations. Its legitimacy lies on its" claim to represent the interests or wishes of the local inhabitants and to administer to their needs". Founded on democratic ideals, it is required "that they be given an opportunity to control their affairs at this level, especially since this is the point at which their interests and welfare are most likely to be directly affected ([King, 1988](#)). Also, [Ola \(1984\)](#) identified three schools of thought in the functional conceptualization of the local government as a unit. The democratic- participatory school "holds that local government functions to bring about democracy and to afford opportunities for political participation to the citizen as well as to socialize him politically" This bothers on training and injection of democratic tenets in the grassroots. From the stand point of the efficiency- services school, the appropriate functional focus of local government should be the provision of services, and its success or failure has to be judged by this yardstick ([Ola, 1984](#)).

The third perspective is the developmental school. This school essentially seeks to make the local government a tool for the promotion of national consciousness and national integration ([Ola, 1984](#)).

Its emphasis is on political development which modernization theorists see as the breaking down of primordial loyalties and the transfer of such loyalties to the central and national development. It can act as a means of dispersing and localizing political tension, and in that way neutralising its impacts ([Abutudu, 2011](#)). As [Ola \(1984\)](#) puts it, by allowing local government to emphasise local interests and argue sectionally for parochial needs, a means is created for political letting off steam. A build-up of strong local feelings and sentiments without such a safety valves

this can mean an unwitting build-up of local tension which when it explodes, might hurt not only the local system but the national as well (Ola, 1984)

In spite of the dispersal of perspectives on the functions of local government espoused by these schools of thought, its unambiguity lies in the various angles of the responsibilities expected of local government whether in developed or developing democracies. This has fulfilment in the 'good governance' concept.

## 2.2. Autonomy

The word "autonomy" comes from the Greek roots auto meaning "self" and nomos meaning "custom" or 'law". This reflects the political sense of the word- a group's right to self-government or self-rule (Autonomy). It is important to note that there is never a time in Nigeria's post- colonial political history that local governments operated independent of both the state and federal governments, which is the crux of local government autonomy (Akpan and Okonette, 2013). The search for this kind of local government system has been a mirage. On this issue, three contending perspectives have emerged. The first group interprets local government autonomy to mean independence from the interference of state government in the activities of local government. The Second, perceives local government autonomy as the non- interference of the federal government in the activities of local governments, and the third group, maintains that local government autonomy means independence from both state and federal governments interference in the activities of local councils. This is the dilemma facing local government in Nigeria today (Akpan and Okonette, 2013).

Local Government autonomy is the freedom to the Local Governments to exercise authority within the confines of the law or constitution. This is to enable them to discharge legally or constitutionally assigned responsibilities satisfactorily, but without undue interference or restraint from within or higher authority. "Local Government autonomy is perceived as local self-government or grassroots democracy". This grassroots democracy is primarily aimed at giving the vast majority of the people the fullest opportunity to participate in determining their own destiny. But it is obvious that we cannot have complete autonomy or complete local self-government within sovereign states. If local governments were completely autonomous they would be sovereign states (Adeyemo, 2005). Nwabueze (1983 as cited in, Nwabueze and Adeyemi (2005)) defines the autonomy under a federal system to mean that "each government enjoys a separate existence and independence from the control of the other governments" It is an autonomy which requires not just the legal and physical existence of an apparatus of government like a legislative assembly, Governor, Court etc. but that each government must exist not as an appendage of another government but as autonomous entity in the sense of being able to exercise its own will in the conduct of its affairs free from direction of another government. According to Nwabueze, autonomy would only be meaningful in a situation whereby each level of government is not constitutionally bound to accept dictation or directive from another. In the view of the defunct Centre for Democratic Studies (cited in Adeyemo (2005)) local government autonomy refers to "the relative discretion which Local Governments enjoy in regulating their own affairs", the extent to which Local Government are free from the control of the State and Federal Governments

encroachment in the management of local affairs. In the same vein, (Davey *et al.*, 2013) contends that: Local autonomy is primarily concerned with the question of responsibilities, resources and discretion conferred on the local authorities. As such discretion and responsibility are at the core of local government". It presumes that local government must possess the power to take decisions independent of external control within the limits laid down by the law. It must garner efficient resources particularly of finance to meet their responsibilities, put differently; local autonomy is the freedom of independence in clearly defined issue, areas, as well as separate legal identity from other levels of government

(Clark, 1984) identifies four types of local autonomy:

- Type 1 Initiative and immunity • Type 2 Initiative and no immunity •
- Type 3 No initiative and immunity • Type 4 No initiative and no immunity

Type 1 autonomy could be characterised as complete or total autonomy. Type 2 autonomy allows local governments complete authority to regulate and legislate in their own interest, but makes every decision subject to review, modification, or outright negation by higher tiers. Type 3 autonomy provides no power of local initiation, implying that whatever local governments do, their agendas, regulations, or even actions are set by higher tiers of the state. Type 4 autonomy could be characterised as absolutely no local autonomy.

These typologies are lucidly described by Clark (1984) by paying attention to how each can be justified and what its relationships are to more general normative conception.

A type 1 locality, characterised by both the power of initiative and immunity from higher tiers of the state, could be described as autonomous city-state. Higher tiers of the state are irrelevant both as institutions defining the arena of local autonomy and, as watchdogs over the legitimacy of local actions. Local officials have discretions in how they act. The limits to action are imposed not by other institutions but by the local population. Hence, legitimacy derives from local citizens who have significant power.

The ideal type 2 can be described as decentralised liberalism. Local governments in this model decide their own agendas, functions and actions. They are democratic, although this is not required for the model to function. All that is required is that initiative rests with the local government. But discretion is not complete, lack of immunity means that local actions are closely scrutinised and reviewed. Autonomy therefore is limited, but in a way different from the representative autonomy model. Legitimacy resides with the local government; its actions can only be constrained, and in this manner legitimacy flows from "bottom- up"

The ideal type 3, immunity but no initiative, is related to the bureaucratic apparatus model of local autonomy. With no power of initiative, this model must respond to centrally defined functions and orders. Local residents cannot mandate specific tasks to be carried out by the local government. Although it cannot choose what to do, once given a specific task, it can implement it in any way thought consistent with its tasks. Thus, to the extent that local constituents have power to affect the implementation practices of local government, there may be significant differences among localities in how they implement tasks assigned by a higher order.

The local state is representative of higher-tier interests and is responsive to local concern regarding appropriate forms of implementation. Legitimacy in this type of system is predominantly

“top-down”; that is higher tiers have ultimate responsibility for the actions of local governments. To the extent that local governments respond to these interests, local governments will be legitimated and protected by state legislatures.

In type 4 model, the local state with no initiative and no immunity must be described as having no autonomy. Its agendas, actions and responses are set by higher tiers, and its compliance with instructions is continually monitored. Such local governments are essentially administrative arms or apparatuses of the higher tiers of the state. Such a local state will have no discretion; could not initiate legislation and would act according to received instructions.

Both authority and responsibility for local actions are centralised. In this respect legitimacy devolve from higher tiers to lower tiers, and depends on the extent to which lower tiers of the state faithfully carried out their instructions. The fact that local citizenry have no direct say in the affair of the local state does not necessarily mean that such system is undemocratic; it may simply be that political discourse is conducted at the higher tiers. The local state in such a system is simply a convenient vehicle for carrying out instructions (Clark, 1984).

### **2.3. Theoretical Framework**

This work is anchored on the theoretical framework of prebendal theory that has its origin in Richard Joseph’s work when he used the term to describe patron-clientelism or neopatrimonialism in Nigeria. According to the theory of prebendalism, “state offices are regarded as prebends that can be appropriated by officeholders, who use them to generate material benefits for themselves and their constituents and kin groups...” (www.en.m.wikipedia.org) The prolong debate over who controls local governments that is woven around autonomy in Nigeria centres on pecuniary benefit not on service delivery. It is reflective of the shared expectations about the appropriation of state offices, and the use of revenue accruing to them. Having local government within the control of state governments in particular will enhance the control of their allocation which is the crux of the argument over autonomy. This is why local governments core mandates seem unattainable.

### **3. IMPERATIVE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

The universal need for the establishment of Local Government system, as a unit of administration, is incontrovertible. Some of the justifications are:

- a. There are many amenities and services which can be best provided on a local basis rather than on central basis especially where the needs of the people are many and the resources of the central government are insufficient to cover all the requirements demanded. In such cases local initiatives and efforts must be called upon to provide the money, material and manpower for services which are beyond the capacity of the central government.
- b. The central Government in most cases is remote from the local community and cannot be expected to know the individual wishes of the many communities carrying on their lives all over the country. This problem is better solved by having Local Government.

- c. Different towns and districts have different traditions and customs perhaps different languages. The people are proud of their home towns and their fellow citizens who live here. These traditions and customs are better preserved under Local Government.
- d. Local Government provides a healthy spirit of competition between units of population making them jealous of each other's standard and eager to develop their own standard of living.
- e. Local Government provides a secure and peaceful background in which the individual members of the society may pursue their prosperity and happiness.
- f. Local Government provides services which members of society want and are prepared to pay for but as individual citizens they could not buy or provide for themselves, e.g roads, water supply. (Egonmwan, 1984).

Concurring with the above (Madison) postulated that the more diverse the elements within a political system, the better it is suited for federalism; conversely, the more homogeneous a political society, the more suitable for the unitary form. This is also the opinion of Beloff (1953), who says that a federal constitution is necessitated where size, cultural and linguistic diversity, historic particularisms and considerable decentralization prevail. Federalism, therefore, is a device for the management of diversity. This is true of Nigeria's situation in which attempts are being made to promote unity without uniformity amongst her geographically, ethnically and religiously diverse groups. (Egonmwan, 1984).

The Cambridge University Overseas Studies Committee Summer Conference on special value of Local Government in African Development as far back as 1961 also noted the special importance of Local Government as an aid to national unity, when it concluded as follows:

Most African countries are not homogeneous and contain within them potentially disruptive minorities. This threat to national unity is greatly diminished, if not entirely removed by the institution of Local Government in that it provides a lawful outlet for local interests. If properly organized, it is the best Means of taking into account the Interests of minorities and drawing them into a broader framework of national unity and policy.

#### **4. EXPERIENCE FROM 1999 TILL DATE**

Regarding the status of Local Government, there is no ambiguity as far as the 1999 constitution of Nigeria is concerned. Section 7(1) states that:

The system of local government by democratically elected local government councils is under this constitution guaranteed; and accordingly, the Government of every state shall subject to section 8 of this constitution, ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils.

In the same vein, the 1999 constitution, first schedule, part I listed the states and local governments in the country to lend credence to their legitimacy. Equally, the fourth schedule itemised the functions of local government as follows:

- a. the consideration and the making of recommendations to a state commission on economic planning or any similar body on

- i. the economic development of the state, particularly in so far as the areas of authority of the council and of the state are affected, and
    - ii. proposal made by the said commission or body;
  - b. collection of rates, radio and television licensees,
  - c. establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for the destitute or infirm;
  - d. licensing of bicycles, trucks ( other than mechanically propelled trucks), canoes, wheelbarrows and carts,
  - e. establishment, maintenance and regulation of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs, markets, motor parks and public conveniences,
  - f. construction and maintenance of roads, streets, street lightings, drains and other public highways, parks, gardens, open spaces or such public facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the House of Assembly of a state;
  - g. naming of roads and streets and numbering of houses,
  - h. provision and maintenance of public conveniences, sewage and refuse disposal;
  - i. registration of all births, deaths and marriages;
  - j. assessment of privately owned houses and tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of a state; and
  - k. control and regulation of:
    - i. out door advertising and hoarding,
    - ii. movement and keeping of pets of all description,
    - iii. shops and kiosks,
    - iv. restaurants, bakeries and other places for sale of food of the public,
    - v. laundries, and
    - vi. licensing, regulation and control of the sale of liquor.
2. The functions of a local government council shall include participation of such council in the Government of a state as respects the following matters:
  - a. the provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocational education;
  - b. the development of agriculture and natural resources other than the exploitation of minerals;
  - c. the provision and maintenance of health services, and
  - d. such other functions as may be conferred on a local government council by the House of Assembly of the state.

In view of the expected functions of local government chronicled above, it is trite this paper examines the encumbrances since 1999 till date.

Firstly, contrary to the provision of 1999 constitution, sections 7 and 8 earlier mentioned, most state governors have retained the tradition of controlling the affairs of the third tier through caretaker committees. The above has almost been legitimised in the country. In the few states where elections were conducted into local governments, gross manipulation of the process abounds amounting to selection, synonymous with caretaker arrangement. The concomitant effect has been summed up by Okwe (2013), “funds meant for developmental projects in local government area



councils have been fraudulently diverted into some sort of sludge funds with which the state governors finance their extra-governmental activities at the expense of the public good and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Similarly, there is also the issue of intervention over the local governments' financial operations by the higher tiers of government. This has attracted opprobrium. This is why (Olamilekan, 2006) frowned at such interruptions when he noted that "the control of the revenue accruing to local governments by both federal and state governments was not indicative of genuine desire to strengthen the local governments or meet the high expectations of the people. This is done in utter neglect and deliberate circumvention of rules and regulations guiding the system's operations.

Closely related, and more recently in what looks like a reversal of our federalism and constitution, the People Democratic Party led central government for the past ten years has implemented a policy, which rather than encourage local governments to provide affordable services for their localities by strengthening their political and fiscal autonomies, has embraced the opposite: annexing them to the state governments and treating them like fiefdoms instead of independent third tier of government. The two culprits that enabled this "annexation" of local governments in the 1999 constitution are the creation of State Local Joint Account and the State "Independent" Electoral commission. These have undermined economic development and political accountability. Obviously, neither the states that have swallowed the local governments by collecting their monthly subventions nor the local governments themselves are offering any core service to Nigerians. (El-Rufai, 2012). The position of (El-Rufai, 2012) is not only capturing but also revealing when he submitted thus "In the year 2011, the 774 local governments and the 6 Area councils in Nigerian received almost N1trillion (about \$7 billion) from the Federal Account, which is equivalent to the entire annual budgets of Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Burundi and Togo combined. These transfers were to enable them carry out their functions, which include the administration of primary education and primary health care, constructions of market and borehole, and rural development in general. Most Nigerians would agree that there is little or nothing to show for this huge transfer of free cash to the local governments. It has not always been this bad".

Not too long ago, all the governors in Nigeria, under the auspices of Nigeria Governors Forum (NGF) vehemently opposed a proposal for the autonomy of the local government in Nigeria, describing it as an aberration. They argued that under a federal system, there is no room for a third tier of government asserting that only two federating units; federal and states, are to be recognised. They also described as absurd, the listing of the local government areas in the Nigeria Constitution, arguing that the actions are out of place in a true federal system.

Worthy of mentioning is the recommendation of the House of Representatives regarding autonomy of local government. It recommended as part of the amendment processes the autonomy of local government after considering reports of public hearings. While the amendment process was ongoing, the latest is the National Conference whereby its committee on structure of government recommends scrapping of local government. The two contradictory positions are not legal yet; even the legal ones exist in negligence. While not having much quarrel with the protagonists and antagonists of local government autonomy, neither of the two opposing groups is basing their

arguments on performance to say the least. My take are: Is the scrapping of local government or making it semi-autonomous a substitute for service delivery? Who assesses state governments on their expected roles? What is the alternative to local governments? Is the position of the governors not informed by their selfish interest? What can be done to strengthen local government to fulfilling its mandates earlier stated in this work? The above questions in my own understanding are germane and beg for answers in view of the doldrum state of development in the country.

A close look at the requirements for the creation of local governments will reveal some ambiguity and power tussle between the federal government and state government. Section 8 (3) of the 1999 constitution states as follows: a bill for a law of a House of Assembly for the purpose of creating a new local government area shall only be passed if:

- a. a request supported by at least two-thirds majority of members (representing the area demanding the creation of the new local government area) in each of the following namely:
  - i. the House of Assembly in respect of the area and
  - ii. the local government councils in respect of the area is received by the House of Assembly.
- b. a proposal for the creation of the local government area is thereafter approved in a referendum by at least two-thirds majority of the people of the local government area where the demand for the proposed local government area originated;
- c. the result of the referendum is then approved by a simple majority of the members in each local government council in a majority of all the local government councils in the state; and
- d. the result of the referendum is approved by a resolution passed by two thirds majority of members of the House of Assembly.

While the above has to do with the power conferred on the House of Assembly, section 8(5&6) say thus:

(5) An Act of the National Assembly passed in accordance with this section shall make consequential provisions with respect to the names and headquarters of states or local government areas as provided in section 3 of this constitution and in parts I and II of the First schedule to this constitution.

(6) For the purpose of enabling the National Assembly to exercise the powers conferred upon it by subsection (5) of this section, each House of Assembly shall, after the creation of more local government areas pursuant to subsection (3) of this section, make adequate returns to each House of the National Assembly.

The inference from the above is that the constitution makes provision for a joint endeavour for the House of Assembly and National Assembly for the purpose of creating local government. That is why no local government has been created in the real sense of it since 1999. The case between Lagos State government and Federal Government during the days of Tinubu and Obasanjo captured the scenario. It led to withholding of money meant for local government in Lagos because Tinubu created Development Areas when he could not scale through the requirements for local

government creation. The case was finally settled at the level of Supreme Court and the money meant for Lagos local government was released. Few other states have followed suit but the point being stressed here is that local government has become a child of circumstance being tossed around for so many reasons analysed so far in this work.

While not saying that the logjam in respect of local government creation has been responsible for encumbrance in terms of effective functioning, one cannot gloss over it in a discourse of this nature. The question now is where do we go from here?

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

That local governments have not lived up to expectation is acknowledged. Beyond this, the trouble with local government and by extension Nigerian federalism is a blame to be shared amongst all levels of government occasioned by power play. The Holy Bible sheds light on it in (Roman 6:1) 'what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? The above touches on the need for sincerity at both leadership and followership levels to solving some of the challenges head-on. This must have rubbished the intention(s) of the reforms in local government. It is not clear what the intention of those agitating for the scrapping of local government is. Nonetheless, it is the view of this paper that local government is a necessary evil that must be nurtured. The view of De-Tocqueville below is supportive of the above position:

The strength of free people resides in the local community. Local institutions are to liberty what primary schools are to science: they put it within the people's reach, they teach people to appreciate its peaceful enjoyment and accustom them to make use of it. Without local institutions a nation may give itself a free government, but it has not the spirit of liberty, passing passions for monetary interest, or chance circumstances may give it the despotic tendencies which have been driven to the interior of the body social will sooner or later break out on the surface.

To solving some of the teething problems bedeviling local government within the present Nigerian federal structure, some of these options are suggested:

- \* Intergovernmental linkages should be adequately adopted including redefined federal, state and local governments' roles that will not only allow sustainable local development but development at other levels of government.
- \* Retention of the present local structure and strengthening it with a charge to live up to expectations because it is now a pipe drain antithetical to its raison d'être.
- \* Evolving a truly home grown federal polity that is capable of addressing the present challenges and enhancing citizens' welfare rather than over-emphasizing federal models in other countries.
- \* Removing the unnecessary interference from other levels of government particularly the State – Local Joint Account Commission
- \* Denying any State that fails to conduct Local Government election its allocation. This will be meant to discourage caretaker or interim arrangement that is rampant yet undemocratic.
- \* Increased sense of vision, commitment and political will on the part of leadership particularly at the federal level.

- \* A lot of lapses are inherent in the constitution, an amendment is required not the emotional issues being raised. It must be sincerely done in the overall interest of the majority of the people.

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