



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

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**COURSE TITLE: ADVANCED COMPARATIVE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT**



**MAIN
COURSE**

CONTENTS		PAGE
Module 1.....		1
Unit 1	The Idea of Local Government.....	1
Unit 2	Conceptual Analysis of Local Government...	7
Unit 3	Theories of Local Government.....	11
Unit 4	Decentralisation and Related Concepts.....	17
Unit 5	Justification of Local Governments.....	24
Module 2.....		29
Unit 1	Structure of Local Governments.....	29
Unit 2	The Structure of Local Government in Nigeria.....	36
Unit 3	The Structure of Local Government in Britain.....	42
Unit 4	The Structure of Local Government in France.....	49
Unit 5	The Structure of Local Government in America.....	56
Unit 6	The Structure of Local Government in India.....	65
Unit 7	The Structure of Local Government in Tanzania.....	73
Unit 8	The Structure and Functions of Local Government in Nigeria.....	81
Module 3.....		88
Unit 1	Efficiency Theory of Local Government.....	88
Unit 2	Democracy Theory of Local Government.....	92
Unit 3	Accountability Theory of Local Government..	95
Module 4.....		98
Unit 1	Imperatives and History of Comparative Local and Public Administration.....	98

Unit 2	Nature, Utility and Problems of Comparative Local Government.....	105
Unit 3	Differences and Similarities in Strategies of Comparative Local Government Administration.....	111
Unit 4	Experimental, Statistical and Case-Study Strategies of Comparative Local Government.....	115
Module 5.....		120
Unit 1	Local Government as an Instrument of Development.....	120
Unit 2	Problems of Development at the Local Government Level.....	127

MODULE 1

Unit 1	The Idea of Local Government
Unit 2	Conceptual Analysis of Local Government
Unit 3	Theories of Local Government
Unit 4	Decentralisation and Related Concepts
Unit 5	Justification of Local Government

UNIT 1 THE IDEA OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	The Place of Local Government in a Nation
3.2	The Need for Local Government
3.3	The Meaning of Local Government
3.4	The Role of Local Government
3.4.1	Political Role
3.4.2	Socio-Economic Role
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, attempt is made to present the basic idea about the local government. This includes the philosophy, need for the institution, definition, and role of local government. You will need to understand these to be able to appreciate the specific issues you will follow in subsequent units. These issues here are actually background issues. The other way of stating all these, is what are local governments? Why do we need them? What role do they play in the life of individual and communities? What type of development do they facilitate?

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- advance five reasons why local governments are necessary
- define local government from the perspectives of two authors
- state five characteristics of local government

- outline the key issues on the political and socio-economic role of local government

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Place of Local Government in a Nation

Local government is the closest tier of government to the people. In a unitary system, power is shared between the central government and the local government. In a Federal system, power is shared among federal, state and local governments. Generally, we talk of a central-local relationship. In a Federal system however, the relationship is largely between the state or regional government and local government because, constitutionally, local government are within the constitutional mandates of the state or regional governments. Basically, in any system, local governments are created to decongest the functions and burden of central governments and to provide services that are local in character. The rest of this unit looks at the meaning of local governments, the specific purposes of local government and role of these institutions.

3.2 The Need for Local Government

The need for local government may be stated specifically as follows:

- a. it is more democratic. This is referring to the fact that it increases the scope for citizenship participation in the government of their locality
- b. it provides valuable political education. This type of education exposes citizens to power and authority. Its acquisition, its use and its risk
- c. it trains people for higher public offices. Local government becomes a platform or a springboard for acquiring experiences for higher career in government
- d. local knowledge is brought to bear on decisions by local government
- e. it is more sensitive to local opinion. Councilors and representatives are closer to the people and respond much easily to their demands or be voted out
- f. local initiative can easily be identified and taken on board especially in mobilising the community to gain local support for projects
- g. power is more widely dispersed which is a safeguard against tyranny. The local government system protects citizens against this

- h. local variations and needs in service provision can better be handled by local government since it understands the needs of its own locality.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Now that you have seen the need for local government, identify three contributions local government can make to your community and two negative things it can do to you and your community.

3.3 The Meaning of Local Government

Local government is grassroots government recognised by law. It is defined severally by authors and bodies. Let us look at the definition of local government from the perspective of one author and two bodies or documents.

Maddick (1963) defines local government as ‘a sub-unit of government controlled by a local council which is authorised by the central government to pass ordinances having a local application, levy taxes or exact labour on the limits specified by the central government’.

The United Nations Article of Declaration (1948) defines local government as ‘a political sub-division of a nation (or in a federal system, or state) which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the power to impose taxes or to exert labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected’.

The Nigeria Local Government Reform document (1976) defines local government as ‘government at a local level exercised by representative council, established by law to exercise specific power within defined areas’.

From the three definitions above, certain characteristic of local government stands out:

- a. the local government is a subordinate system of government
- b. it has both legal and constitutional power to perform certain legislative, administrative and quasi judicial function
- c. has the power to make policies, prepare budgets and a measure of control over its own staff
- d. its council could be elected or selected
- e. it has legal personality (can sue and be sued)
- f. it exercises authority over a given territory or population.

These definitions point to local government as having government character with limited powers. This can be further broken down more specifically as follows:

- a. legal entity which can sue and be sued for wrong doings
- b. power to make its own laws, policies, plans and budgets on what to do, how, why, where and when, for who and at what cost
- c. legislative body called a council composed of elected councilors and a chairman to make laws and policies
- d. executive body called the committee composed of appointed or elected officials and the chairman to formulate policies and laws
- e. administrative body called the local government services, composed of career civil servant to assist in formulating and in implementing laws and policies
- f. power to tap human, financial and material resources for public use within the geographical area
- g. answerable to a higher level of government (national or state or regional) on certain powers and functions it carries out (especially concurrent function). This is to say that a local government is not absolutely autonomous but semi-autonomous.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

From the characteristics of local governments, state five powers local governments enjoy.

3.4 Roles of Local Government

The roles of local government are in some ways similar to those of the central government. The central government exists to provide for development services to the people and provide security for the citizenry and ensures participation of the citizens in government.

To some extent, local government performs such roles even though with some varying degree of intensity. For easier understanding, such roles could be classified into two viz: political and socio-economic roles.

3.4.1 The Roles of Local Government

Local governments are veritable and appropriate institutions for promoting democracy at the local level. They are well-placed to mobilise the people politically through political education, political enlightenment and political actions. Local government has become very useful tool for the conduct of election at all levels of government. With such, the process of political recruitment is institutionalised and the institution can then help to train people for higher responsibilities.

Another political role is that of maintenance of law and order. Local governments have the instrumentality of the police at their disposal and therefore work with its leadership at the local level to enforce law and order and maintain security. Moreover, certain committees such as the security committees and the police committees, facilitate such exercises. Furthermore, to enhance responsive governance, local governments serve as a two-way channel of communication between the government and the governed. Just as it transmits the decision of governments to the local people, it also conveys or channel their demands and feedbacks on policies to government (local or central).

3.4.2 Socio-Economic Role

The exercise of democracy and human rights can only be meaningful if demands and policies can be translated into physical development, including the provision of basic socio-economic services. Services of local government are primary or basic in nature as reflected in their functions. Some of these are basic health, basic education, agriculture and revenue raising and regulatory functions. People expect such services to be delivered to make any meaning of democracy and bureaucracy at the local government. Whether it is a municipal council or a rural council, the complexity may depend on the level of urbanisation or the availability of funds.

In providing socio-economic services, local governments have to work with community groups and the citizenry to harness community energies and input into development. A greater part of the developmental initiatives and effectiveness in local government is a function of community development or self help groups.

These two roles of local governments will be revisited in another form when in a later unit; we take a look at the theories of local government and the argument for each of these roles, highlighting the importance of each.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Local governments, from the brief discussion on need, definition and roles above can be seen as the government at the grassroots level designed to decongest the activities of higher tiers, transmit policies and demands and promote democracy. Very importantly, it is supposed to bring about the development of communities, be they urban or rural.

It should be noted that in doing this, they enjoy some powers and at the same time some constraints. They are not autonomous or independent

entities but subordinate governments, subject to various forms of dictates and controls. Local government becomes indispensable because of what they do to affect the lives of rural communities and how their activities can also contribute to national development.

All these issues of need, roles and meaning will receive expansion in the subsequent units as we discuss powers, structure, function, personnel and finance etc.

5.0 SUMMARY

Let us recall the major things we have talked about in this unit. Local governments are the closest government administration to communities. They enjoy political, legal, constitutional, administrative, financial and territorial powers. Local governments help to enforce democracy at the local level while bringing about socio-economic development in rural areas.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the political, social and economic reasons why you feel your local government is important?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Akpan, P.C. (1984). 'Modern Local Government Administration in Nigeria.' (Unpublished: 1984, ch.1).

Barber, H. (1974). *Local Government*. (3rd ed.). London: Macdonald & Evans Ltd.

Maddick, H.A. (1963). *Democracy, Decentralisation & Development*. Bombay: Asia Publishing House.

UNIT 2 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Conceptual Analysis
 - 3.1.1 Definition of Decentralisation
 - 3.1.2 Local Government
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit familiarises you with two key concepts that are important to our discussions in the course. The definitions/interpretation of the two words is analysed in such a way that your understanding of the discussion will be facilitated and enhanced. Consequently, the conceptual analysis will focus mainly on the clarifications of decentralisation and local government.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the concept of decentralisation which is an essential term in the study and understanding of local government
- describe the concept of local government as a different level of government
- appreciate local government as a grassroots level of governance that is closest to the rural people
- recall the definitions of decentralisation and local governments.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Conceptual Analysis

3.1.1 Definition of Decentralisation

You will recall that each national capital, for instance, national capital of Nigeria, Britain, Ghana, France and Russia are respectively Abuja,

London, Accra, Paris and Moscow. Other levels of capital (tiers) may exist in a state depending on the political arrangement adopted by the country.

In a federal state, in addition to national capital, we also have regional or state capitals. For instance, in Nigeria, in addition to Abuja, thirty-six (36) other state capitals exist. National diversities usually inform the need for adopting a federal arrangement.

The largeness of a country in terms of geographical spread may further call for a lower form of government so as to make the work of government easier and make service delivery faster. Modern governments therefore decentralise authority and power to lower levels in order to facilitate efficiency and administrative conveniences.

Decentralisation, according to Osaghae (1990: 84) means a system of dispersal of power from a central government to other units or agencies of government. This implies that government power and authority are not concentrated but rather shared between the existing levels of government. Decentralisation of power lessens the burden of responsibilities on the higher levels of government. It is not everything that happens that respective higher levels of government may bother themselves with.

3.1.2 Local Government

As you have just learnt, decentralisation is about dispersal of power to other levels of authority. Local government is a form of decentralisation of power to the lowest level of government.

Local government is therefore defined by the United Nations document on public administration as a “political sub-division of a nation or state which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the power to impose taxes or to enact prescribed bye-laws” (Ajayi, 2000:1).

The 1976 Local Government Reforms Guidelines also defined local government as “government at local level exercised through representative council established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas”.

Very clear from these interpretations is the acknowledgement that local government is a government at the local level, established by law to perform specific functions within defined areas or jurisdiction. The definitions also reveal that local government is a lower-tier of government depending on the political arrangements in place.

Therefore, in a federal system, local government is the third-tier level of government while in a unitary, and non-federal states, local government takes the place of second-tier level of government.

Local government is also regarded as grassroots government for, it is the closest to the rural people, and in most cases, it is the most known level of government to the rural areas where most citizens live, particularly in the developing world where rural dwellers account for about 70% of the national population.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. What is meant by the concept of decentralisation?
- ii. What is local government?
- iii. Why is local government described as grassroots government?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this foundation unit, the conceptual interpretations of decentralisation have been examined. Decentralisation is seen as a way of making government easier by dispersing power and authority to lower level centers, agencies or government. Local government is seen as a form of decentralisation. It is a grassroots government, established by law to perform specific functions. The essence of decentralisation and establishment of local government is to bring government to the doorstep of citizens and more importantly to promote and enhance service delivery efficiency of government.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that decentralisation is about decongesting the central or upper level of government of some burdens by dispersing power and authority to lower level governments, agencies and other units. You also learnt that local government is a form of decentralisation, a grassroots government established by law to perform certain functions. It is referred to as grassroots government because it is the closest to the rural people and the most known level of government in most countries of the world. The essence of decentralisation and local government is to provide administrative convenience for upper levels of government.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Clarify the concepts of decentralisation and local government.
- ii. In what ways is local government regarded as grassroots government?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Ajayi, K. (Ed). (2000). *Theory and Practice of Local Government*. Ado-Ekiti: Ado Ekiti University Press.

Gboyega, A. (1987). *Political Values and Local Government in Nigeria*. Lagos: Malthouse Press.

UNIT 3 THEORIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Utility and Focus Theories
 - 3.2 Democratic Participatory School
 - 3.3 Efficiency Services School
 - 3.4 Comment
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 Reference/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we are interested in knowing the main purpose of local government. There has been a debate between two schools of thought (or theories). This unit addresses this debate and comes out with the different views. Knowledge of those theories will broaden your basic understanding of local government.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the two schools of thought on local government
- highlight three major points advanced by the schools
- explain the proposition put forward on these schools of thought
- apply both theories to the Nigerian situation based on findings from research.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Utility and Focus Theories

Theories deal with explanations. In this case, it is about how to understand local government or what local governments are meant for. It is important to understand this so that we become clear in our minds what the institution really stands for and what its priority should be. People also form their attitude to the institution based on their knowledge of the institution and what it should be doing. Furthermore, it will enable us appreciate the problems of the local government institution.

Some scholars argue that local government exists essentially as a democratic institutions and their job is to foster representative and participatory democracy at the local level. Other scholars feel local governments should focus more on services delivery for those tangible things communities require. The various arguments are presented below.

3.2 Democratic Participatory School

The influence on this school has largely been the work of John Stuart Mills, especially his work on utilitarianism, liberty and representative government. In it, he claims that the good form of government was representative government because it promoted liberty, equity, and fraternity, made men look beyond their immediate interest. Further, it recognised the just demands of other men; promote political education, participation and communication. Furthermore, he asserts that local government is a prime element of democracy and demonstrates the intrinsic values of democracy, irrespective of the services it provides in it. Government is truly representative when all types of people can take part. The local government level offers the closest things to widespread consultation and participation.

British and America governments are based on the tenets of democracy and representative government and the local government level is a haven for such activities. Local governments in such entities and indeed other advanced western countries, function to bring about democracy and to provide opportunities for political participation to the citizenry as well as to educate and socialise them politically. Politics, indeed development, is about making choices through informed opinion, conflicts and conflict resolution and these should be the priorities of local government. According to Panther (1953), participation is vital to democracy since it is in the community that people appreciate and tolerate each other's view and learn the art of practical politics. Local governments have become the training ground for political elites and higher level officers of government. Studies have been carried out to buttress this position. For example, Keith Lucas in an English study concluded that the number of British members of parliament, who had served on local government councils, demonstrated the importance of local government as a recruiting ground for the British Parliament. Specifically, David Butter found out in the 1964 general elections that 53% of the Labour members of parliament and 45% of the defeated members had been local government councilors. The figure is 29% and 40% respectively for the conservative party.

This point on parliamentarians benefiting from political apprenticeship at local government level is replete in these advanced democracies as confirmed by Mackenzie (1954) in his work entitled *Local Government*

in Parliament. A very important part of this democratic role is the opportunity it creates for political activity and social interaction. Such a forum helps to inculcate the ideals of democracy like election or selection of local government committee and boards, public debates, pressure and interest group activities, and community mobilisation. Local governments must continue to buttress democracy through these ideas.

3.3 Efficiency Services School

The advocates of efficiency services believe that the idea of democracy advocated by Mills and Bricks do not apply to different political system in the same manner, especially in the face of modern realities.

The crux of this theory is that the main purpose of local government is to provide services to the local people. Foremost among the advocates is the French scholar Langood (1953) who opined that democracy was the affairs of the nation state as a whole and that issues of majority rule, equity and uniformity are the norm. Local self-government by contrast was parochial and concerned with local differences and separation. The two are opposed and it was only a historical accident that they had developed together in the 19th century. He went on to say that it was equally false to see local government as a setting for political education and democracy. To him, the local government has only succeeded in breeding few national leaders. Local politics is more likely to reinforce narrow sectional interest than an appreciation of democracy. The citizen is more likely to learn about democracy from national politics and national issues.

Arguing in the same vein, Moulin points out that local government is so restricted while national goals are wider in scale. Local experience and knowledge is hardly appreciated to national affairs. Sharpe (1970) provided a very strong case for local governments on the grounds that it was the most efficient agent for providing those services that are essentially local. He suggested that the efficient performance of these services is so compelling that if local government does not exist, something else will have to be created in its place, meaning the institution is indispensable. Even a decentralised form of national government cannot be undertaken by such an alternative. The main functional responsibility of local governments therefore is to efficiently carry out local duties allocated to it, at the highest efficiency rate.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

List three key issues raised by the democratic school in its argument.

3.4 COMMENT

These two schools of thought on local governments appear to be extremes of the role local governments should play. Most of the advocates of the democratic theory are from the societies with the strong tradition of democracy i.e. Britain and America. A lot of the efficiency school is championed by French scholars with background of strong unitary (centralising) influences. (The role of the prefects in France before the 1982 reforms can attest to this).

These arguments look attractive. The point however is that one argument needs the other. Even some Third World or developing countries have looked at democracy in local government as a luxury and an expensive venture. They say developing countries need money to carry out services, not paying allowances and entitlements of councilors in local government. At the same time, representative government, which is a hallmark of democracy is not a luxury because various interests within the community have to be represented in government and their views articulated. Policies and programmes will have to be well debated before they are approved and implemented. Popular participation has to be mobilised.

These two theories therefore need each other. In developing societies, people are in a hurry to develop but, priorities must be set right and people's interest must be carried along. The question as Maddick puts it is "the clash between efficiency and popular control". How much of democracy is needed to provide efficient services at the local level. This is about "optimum administration", Maddick sums up the cross-fertilisation between democracy and service delivery.

The argument is that there is need in society for civic consciousness and political maturity if programs for both the locality and the state are going to be carried through adequately, with enthusiasm and in fact in some cases without the outbreak of violence. The spread of political maturity should bring with it thorough political participation and responsive governments which translate needs into politics, which can harness local energies, because it is a popular government, and which is acceptable by periodically having to show results for its activities.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

This author adopts what looks like a middle of the road approach. What is the main argument?

4.0 CONCLUSION

We would like to conclude by giving an example of what has happened on the Nigerian scene as regards the contending schools of thought since 1976. In Nigeria, the military paid attention to local governments during their tenure. There was an attempt at one stage or the other to make the institution autonomous and therefore viable. It got to a stage where people started questioning the efficacy of party politics in turning local government around. In a study carried out in 1989/90, people started having more faith in the performance of local governments under military administration than those under civilians (70%). To make matters worse for the advocates of local government as a tool for democracy, (62%) of the people claimed that party politics was undesirable in local governments because of its divisive nature. To them, it creates problems for communities which had lived peacefully before and breaks the peace of the communities. With the results from the military and the opinion of people, scholars and also workers in local governments started questioning the unity of democratic leadership in local government with all its cost of maintenance and the patronage system which endangers the lean resources of local government. To them, the sole administrator or the management committee systems were more effective for service delivery in local government and they saw no reasons why the democratic leadership has been brought back. Since 1999, the same complaints about its inverse relationship with service delivery and institutional development plus all the patronage politics have resurfaced. It therefore appears that democratic leadership in local government is a norm, a strong index of devolution and must not therefore be avoided despite public opinion. The panacea is to educate citizens to learn the virtue of this leadership which on its own should have no alternative because of its inherent virtues. Democracy must be the vehicle through which the resources should be fairly allocated, policies formulated and implemented in local governments and indeed higher government.

5.0 SUMMARY

You have been taken through the two contending schools of thought on what the purpose of local governments should be. The democratic-participatory school says local government is created to promote democracy and in doing so create the right political culture at the local level, which in turn reinforces what is done at the national level. The efficiency services school feels, emphasising democracy at the local level is unnecessary, duplicative and a luxury. Local resources cannot be channelled to such. It should be committed to efficient delivery of services which is of primary importance to people at the grassroots level. Efficiency services may be primary but the way they are decided,

allocated and implemented will require representation and participation for equity and fairness.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Maddick came up with a statement that captures the essence of the argument of both schools thus ‘the center of the problem however is the clash between efficiency and popular control’.

- i. To what extent can we consider the two schools of thought a clash?
- ii. To what extent can we blend these schools for a better conception and organisation of local governments?

7.0 REFERENCE/FURTHER READING

Hill, D.M. (1974). *Democracy, Theories and Local government*. Allen & Unwin.

UNIT 4 DECENTRALISATION AND RELATED CONCEPTS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Nature of Decentralisation
 - 3.2 The Meaning of Decentralisation
 - 3.3 Why Decentralisation
 - 3.4 Objectives of Decentralisation
 - 3.5 Factors Affecting Decentralisation
 - 3.6 Contribution of Decentralisation
 - 3.7 Other Related Concepts
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will be introduced to some basic concepts that describe local governments on the basis of how much power local government enjoy *vis a vis* the central government. It is on this basis, that local governments are classified.

The major concept is that of decentralisation. Other associated words are defined and in some cases applied. You are required to familiarise yourself with meanings and usage of these concepts because this will be useful at a comparative level. For example, if we say local governments in France before 1982 was a deconcentration, we expect you to figure out the meaning without much stress (watch out for the question that applies to Nigeria at the end of the unit).

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define decentralisation and the various associated with it
- differentiate between decentralisation, devolution and deconcentration
- differentiate between local authority, local government and local self government
- appreciate the element of power in all the above definition and differentiation

- list five contributions of decentralisation to developing governments

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Nature of Decentralisation

Local government is a decentralised political entity. You may recall in the first unit how we identified what types of power local governments enjoy, including constitutional, legal, political and administrative etc. The powers of local governments are subject to various forms of control by the central government etc. The balance of this control is the power enjoyed by local government (which is technically referred to as autonomy). It is therefore possible to say that the less control on local government by the central government, the more autonomy conceded to these units. In this same vein, the tighter the control of local government affairs by the central government, the less the autonomy of local government powers.

Decentralisation is a term that summarises this spectrum of power relations or levels of institutional powers. In some systems, local governments enjoy greater control over their affairs (especially federal system) while in unitary system, the tendency is for greater control of local government.

The concept of decentralisation refers to the transfer of government functions and power to both agents and units of government in a given country. What makes this term or concept important for local government is its types. There are two types of decentralisation: deconcentration and devolution.

Deconcentration is the delegation of authority, adequate for the discharge of specified functions to staff of central departments who are situated outside the headquarters. Aldermen (1967) adds that it is the transfer of powers to subordinate authorities, whether offices, individuals or field units.

Devolution is the legal function instrument of conferring powers to discharge specified or residual power upon formally constituted local authorities. Local governments can therefore be classified as a deconcentration (deconcentrated units) or devolution (units with substantial power). Local governments that enjoy devolution of powers are likely to be more autonomous (or exercise greater powers over its local affairs) than local governments that are deconcentrated.

Local governments that enjoy devolution are likely to exhibit the following characteristics:

- its existence is constitutionally guaranteed
- it also has constitutional backing to perform certain statutory functions
- exercise power or control over policies, budget preparation, its revenue and its staff
- the council is democratically constituted and therefore accountable to the people (the people become a primary source of power).

A deconcentrated arrangement denies local governments of the powers enjoyed especially in (c) above.

3.2 The Meaning of Decentralisation

As can be appreciated by now and as a matter of fact, local governments are forms of decentralisations. We have also explained the two forms of decentralisation, namely, deconcentration and devolution and their meanings. Some authors will equate devolution with decentralisation because it is closer in usage to local governments. Remember deconcentration means transfer of powers to subordinate authorities, whether offices, individuals or field units. Such transfer of powers is done by central governments for ease of administration. Such arrangement is close to what is referred to as Field Agency i.e. any organisation or ministry or department of the central government operating outside the headquarters. The characteristics of devolution or decentralisation outlined above explains why they are synonymous with local governments, especially the attribute of elected leadership and measure of control over staff and finance, all of which are lacking in field agencies. One thing we can say is that the more the devolution of powers the more autonomous local government will become.

3.3 Why Decentralise?

- a. Decentralisation becomes imperative because of the need for social change (especially in developing countries) and the difficulty of communication
- b. There is need to establish local governments to serve as a nuclei of local energies, enthusiasm and initiative for a more virile system of local authorities. Such units will take care of diversity, local variations and the difficulty in (a) above.
- c. Not all functions can be performed by the centre, some functions are local in nature. Decentralisation therefore is a device to aid the achievement of the ends of government or aid development.

3.4 Objectives of Decentralisation

The objectives of both deconcentration and devolution are:

- a. to decongest the functions of government from one centre to various parts of a country or state
- b. to provide government services and facilities to every nook and corner of a country or state i.e. to promote even development of all parts
- c. to involve all citizens of a country and or state in governance through political means and policy making
- d. to tap human, financial and material resources from all parts of a country or state for public use
- e. to take care of peculiar needs and or problems of each parts of a country or state.

3.5 Factors Affecting the Decision of Government to Decentralise

For government to be able to carry out its domestic services, it requires organisations outside its headquarters. This applies to traditional centered functions like tax collection, policing, post and telecommunication, to personal services of citizens such as agriculture, education, health and welfare or the supporting services of these, such as irrigation, forestry and trunk road construction. The level of decentralisation will depend on the general conditions or the phase of development in which the administration and the people are in each country.

3.6 The Contribution of Decentralisation

The most important contributions that agencies can make to the tremendous problems facing governments are as follows:

- a. the provision of services in the area where they are required, matching central government policy and local need
- b. close contact with the local area, enabling detailed plans to be evolved
- c. economy in men, materials, and equipment
- d. flow of information recurring from the rural areas and outwards to the headquarters
- e. intimate association with local people to aid societal and economic change
- f. protection of rural inhabitants and aid in emergencies
- g. maintenance of infrastructures and capital work
- h. development of local government system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

List two advantages and two disadvantages of decentralisation.

3.7 Other Related Concepts

- Centralisation is the concentration of powers in the hands of the central government. Inability or unwillingness to delegate or decentralise power, as a result of constitutional or institutional constraints or attitude of higher civil servants and political officials.
- Local Government: the system of local authorities
- Local Authority: a system of government controlled by a local council which is authorised by the central government to pass ordinances having a local application. Levy local taxes or exact labour within the limit specified by the government, vary centrally decided policy and applying it locally
- Note that in a unitary system where local governments are created by acts of parliament and not enshrined in the constitution, the term local authorities is often used to describe these units
- Local Self-Government: traditionally associated with local government in England, Wales and Germany and a principal feature of the English local government system. Very crucial is the idea of the electoral basis of the system which shields it from becoming purely dependent elected existence. The electoral feature mitigates its existence as mere local administration or just local organ of the central government. This shows that even though these are local authorities, they are safeguarded in their right to regulate under their own responsibility all the affairs of their local community within the limits of law.
- Field Agency: any sub-organisation or ministry, department, or administrative agency, operates in the field that is outside headquarters
- Community Development: the process by which the effects of the communities themselves are united with those of governmental authorities, to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of a nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

The following are five statements. Match the appropriate statement with the concepts defined in the unit.

- i. Power exercised by local government is enhanced by electoral basis of the system
- ii. The people and government interest are united for development purpose
- iii. Tendency for more powers to be concentrated at the centre
- iv. The twin concept of deconcentration
- v. Created by Act of parliament

4.0 CONCLUSION

This unit has attempted to define some basic terms or concepts essential to the understanding of local government. Of special note have been decentralisation and its twin concepts. From decentralisation to community development, the idea has been that of control over resources (power) and power relations. In any polity, local government is at the lower rung and indeed the receiving end. It is therefore important to appreciate these power relations so as to understand the classification of local governments and you have to learn and differentiate this. One feature that stands out is that despite all these administrative and political powers or decentralisation, electoral power is very important because that will be the basis for relating to the community and it is also the basis for political accountability and other facets of accountability. As we saw in the local self-government, it is the point at which central control and local administration is mitigated. This is therefore the major source of power and autonomy for local government.

5.0 SUMMARY

You have come across the following concepts in this unit:

- decentralisation
- devolution
- deconcentration
- centralisation
- local government
- local authorities
- local self-government
- field agency
- community development

All these concepts as you have seen have to do with power relationship. It is the amount of power enjoyed by local government that determines its classification. Remember however that local government that enjoys devolution are more likely to be viable and autonomous (i.e. enjoy more

power and control over its resources) than those that are deconcentrated. Can you apply the above statement to Nigeria local governments since independence?

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. State and explain four characteristics of local government that enjoy devolution of powers
- ii. Explain the term deconcentration and how it relates to field agencies

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 5 JUSTIFICATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Justification of Local Governments
 - 3.1.1 Justification
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit deals with the reasons why local government has become an attractive level of administration in most countries of the world. Contemporary states see it as ideal to provide for the welfare and happiness of their citizens through efficient provision of services. Grassroots local government has the potentials to be more efficient because of the smallness of the geographical area and population they cover.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- recall the definitions of local government
- describe decentralisation in relation to local government
- explain reasons for the desirability of local government
- explain the inter-connecting role of local government between the grassroot people and the upper tiers of government
- appreciate the development role of local governments at the grassroot level.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Justification for Local Governments

3.1.1 Justification

Let us recall what you learnt in unit 1 of this course. In the unit, you learnt of the concepts of local government and decentralisation. Decentralisation was described as a system of delegating power and

authority from a central government to other units or agencies of government. You learnt that the implication of decentralisation of power is that power rather than being concentrated on a single focus of administration, is shared among other lower levels unit of government. You also learnt that local government is a form of decentralisation which can be defined as a political sub-division of a state as approved by law and for specific functions. It is a government at the grassroots level exercised through representative council, established by law to perform specific responsibilities in defined areas. Decentralisation and local government have their purpose in promoting administrative efficiency. There are some other globally acknowledged reasons why local government has become an attractive administrative system.

1. The Need for Decentralisation

The first justification for local government is the need for decentralisation due to largeness in terms of geographical area as well as large population. For instance, let us take Nigeria as our unit of analysis. Nigeria as a very large country geographically and demographically, would have been very difficult for government to effectively rule directly from Abuja, the Federal Capital. Therefore, there is the need for decentralisation for the purpose of administrative efficiency and effectiveness so as to be able to satisfy the basic needs of the people. Government realised this fact and consequently divided the country into 774 local governments. State governors have started creating more local governments in the states, though not approved by the federal government.

2. Trends in Contemporary Administrative Practice

Decentralisation of political and administrative powers has been the vogue throughout the world which has resulted into the creation of local governments. This global trend of which Nigeria has become a part is made possible because of contemporary dynamics. New problems are emerging for government's attention every day, the population is growing, new diseases such as AIDS is in the increase, there are inter-ethnic and national wars, problems of hunger and internally displaced people to mention a few, have all pre-occupied government and subsequently brought up the need for administrative decentralisation.

3. Grassroots Accelerated Development

Nigerian leaders also realised that local government as the closest government to the people, will easily know the problems of its people to cope with because of their closeness, small population and geographically united area. That local government will respond quickly

to their development aspirations than the other higher levels of government, that is, state and federal governments makes it imperative.

4. Bridging Communication Gap

You should recall that we said that Abuja is too far away to people at the remote areas of Nigeria. The president and the governors do not know many of these areas. A gap of communication therefore exists between the grassroots people and the two higher levels of government. Therefore, local governments serve to bridge the communication gap that exists. Therefore local governments act as the link in terms of knowing the problems of the people by government on one hand, and what government is doing about the plight of the people on the other hand.

5. Training of Future Leaders

Local government is seen as a training school for future national leaders. It is the belief that entering into political leadership right from the local level, either as chairman or councilor, will confer the necessary leadership training that will enable them to lead at the state regional level and from that level to the federal level. Passing through from local to state government would have conferred the necessary leadership qualities and training for a higher task at the federal level. You will recall that many of our relatives or friends are now either chairmen of local governments or councilors of their wards in their respective local governments. These political office holders at the grassroots are indirectly being groomed for higher political calling (Ajayi, 2000: 1-7).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Examine the concepts of decentralisation and local government?
- ii. Account for the reasons why local government has become attractive as an administrative system to most countries of the world.
- iii. In what ways can local government be regarded as a political training school?

4.0 CONCLUSION

The acceptance and practice of local government as a lower level of government in most state of the world is a reflection of the utility of the administrative system in some ways. Local government is first seen as a means of decentralisation of power to lower levels in order to ensure

efficiency in social service delivery especially for the rural people. The rural people most often are not aware of the existence of the higher levels of government, and on the other hand, the higher levels of government are ignorant of the needs and problems of the rural people. The local government therefore acts as the connecting bridge between the higher level governments and the rural people. It bridges the communication between the two ends. Local governments, in modern times, have transcended beyond a mere administrative centre. More importantly, they are now regarded as political schools for the training of future political leaders who will eventually take up the mantle of leadership. Local government offers the necessary training and provides the initial knowledge and experience for such tasks.

5.0 SUMMARY

You learnt in this unit that local government has become an enduring administrative system as it provides the need for decentralisation of power to lower levels in order to provide for administrative efficiency.

You also learnt that developments in contemporary states, involving increased complexities of governance arising from new problems emerging everyday and calling for government attention make local government indispensable. These problems are more often than not very difficult for the central authority alone to handle without involving lower levels of government and external assistance. Therefore, it becomes very imperative for higher levels of government to decentralise power.

You also learnt that local government is an engine of facilitating accelerated grassroots rural development. The remoteness of the rural areas is a disadvantage to the rural dwellers who on many occasions are forgotten by the scheme of development by the central authorities. The local government is to correct the development negligence of the rural people by the central authorities. The local government is primarily empowered to engineer development at the rural area. This is made possible because of the smallness of the local government areas.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Justify the place of local government as an engine of development in the rural areas.
- ii. Account for the reasons why local government system has become attractive to modern states.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Adewale, A. (1990). *Issues on the Practice of Local Government in Nigeria*, Ikeja: Comfort Press.

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MODULE 2

Unit 1	The Structure of Local Government
Unit 2	The Functions of Local Government
Unit 3	The Structure of Local Government in Britain
Unit 4	The Structure of Local Government in France
Unit 5	The Structure of Local Government in the United States of America.
Unit 6	The Structure of Local Government in India
Unit 7	The Structure of Local Government in Tanzania
Unit 8	The Structure and Functions of Local Government in Nigeria

UNIT 1 THE STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Types of Structure in Local Government
3.1.1	Tiers of Local Government (as Structure)
3.1.2	Political Structure in Local Government
3.1.3	Administrative Structure in Local Government
3.2	Relationship between the Political and Administrative Structure in Local Government
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Now that you have understood the basic concepts underlying local government and what local governments stand for, let us look at the structure of local government. Understanding the structure of local government will provide the basis on how these institutions operate. In this unit, two types of structures are presented viz: political and administrative. You will also to see the relationship between the political and administrative structures. A diagram of these structures and their relationships is also presented. An understanding of this unit will facilitate the understanding of local government in other countries.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- differentiate between single and multi-tier structure of local government
- differentiate between politics and administrative structures of local government
- describe the composition of the political structure in a few countries
- describe how the administrative structure relates to the political structure
- present the political and administrative structure in a diagram.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Types of Structures in Local Government

Every organisation or institution has a structure. By structure we mean the components of an organisation that perform certain functions geared towards the achievements of organisational goals. In administration, these component or structures are hierarchically organised. This therefore entails that the structures offer positions that are stratified i.e a superior/subordinate relationship. In local government, just like in other governments, the administrative structure is patterned along these lines. Local government also has a political structure. All elected officials fall into this structure and it is principally made up of the legislature and the executive.

In the local government, there are also committee structures set up to look at issues and take decisions on behalf of the government – a lot of such decisions are subject to ratification by the council or the superior body as the case may be.

The structure of local government can also refer to the status of local government i.e whether it is all or multi-purpose or single tier local government or a multi-tier local government with layers of local authorities below the local government structure.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

State three levels at which we can look at the structure of local governments.

3.1.1 Tiers of Local Government

There are two types of structure related to the status of local governments. First is a single-tier (multi-purpose) structure in which only one authority is recognised by law at the local level. Any other arrangement under local government is a matter of administrative convenience. A good example of this is the Nigeria local government system which is described as single tier. Only this level of authority is recognised by the 1979 and 1999 constitution. Districts, villages, wards and even area development authorities are just for administrative purpose and thus vary from state to state.

The multi-tier system is one where the authorities under the local government like districts, counties, borough, special districts, home rule, etc are recognised by the Law and related with appropriately by the central/state governments. However, in some countries like Britain, the lower authorities are not responsible as such to the higher authorities i.e. within its own sphere. It enjoys a functional independence, meaning that it is responsible for the administration of a group of services or parts of services. In France on the other hand, the level of decentralisation makes the communes subordinate to the department in certain cases. So also are the sub-districts to the districts in India.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Would you think there are unique advantages to be enjoyed operating a single tier as against a multi-tier structure of local government? (State two of these).

3.1.2 Political Structure

Local governments are politically structured and constituted. This is also a fall-out of the system of leadership in local governments. As pointed out earlier, the political structure is responsible for policy making, law making and even policy implementation at the local level. The major organs of the political structure are the executive, the legislature and committee. These committees can be standing committees (statutory) or house/executive committees set up to study issues and report to the parent body. The legislature is made up of councilors and in some cases alderman. The executive could be made up of supervisory councilors or supervisors together with the chairman.

The political structure varies from country to country depending, sometimes, on the system of leadership. Some systems advocate a strong chairman while others a weak one. Some have a large number of

councillors, others small. The executive may also follow the same pattern.

In the US, the political structure addressed four types of leadership, namely the strong mayor, the weak mayor, the commission system and the council or city manager system. Structure can also refer to the minimum population spelt out for the creation of local governments. In Nigeria, the 1976 Reform spells out a population of 150,000-800,000. This is done in such a way as to respect the issue of viability. On this basis, 301 local governments were created. In multi-tier system, the population of the smaller units is bound to be much less.

The administrative structure of local government is hierarchical as in any other government. At the head is a secretary to the local government (which in France is referred to as the prefect). In some local government systems (e.g. Nigeria) the secretary is the chief executive but through reforms he had come to be answerable to the chairman. He is the head of administration. Under the secretary, are departments which are headed by heads of departments. The departments in local governments are created in such a way that they perform a group of functions. Normally, such departments are those of finance, personnel (administration), agriculture, education, health, works, social welfare and community development, etc. The number of departments a local government should have will depend on the complexity of the local government (e.g. urban-rural) or the laws setting up local governments.

Sometimes these departments are classified as service and operational departments. The service departments are normally those that deal with staff and finance, both of which support service delivery. The operational departments deliver the services on the field.

Each department is organised in such a way that there are sections and units or divisions and branches which deal with particular services that add up to the entire services of the department. The operational departments also have their structure right into the community where they deliver these services. These are called field or extension workers and they could be of a technical, professional and administrative nature. The sections and units are answerable to the heads of department while the local government secretary coordinates the activities of the heads of departments. The secretary in turn is largely responsible to the chairman in some system. The secretary is expected to be the watchdog for effective administrative practice at the local government level.

3.1 Relationship between the Political Structure and Administration Structure

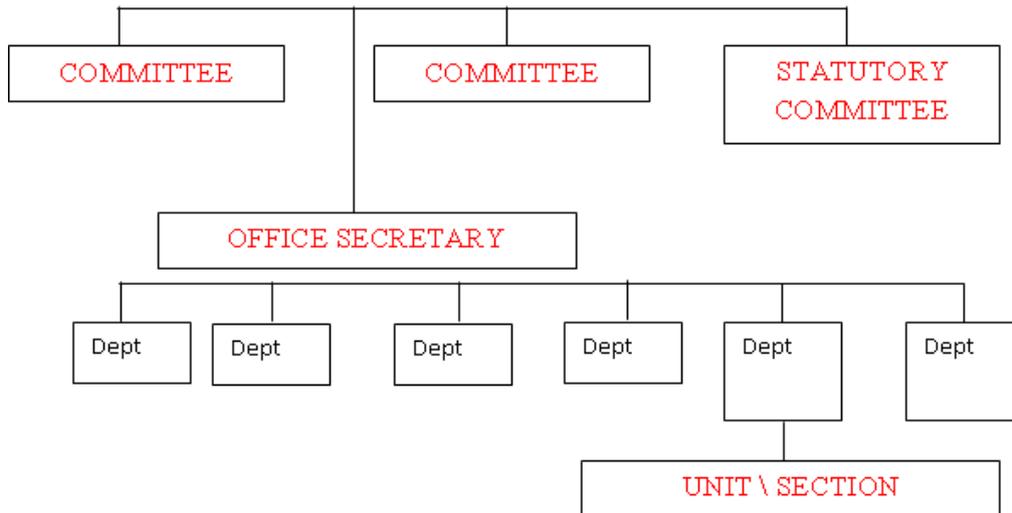
As shown earlier in Unit 3 (i.e. theories of local government), local authorities are about democracy and service delivery. The political structure in local governments represents the democratic concern of local government while the bureaucracy or the administrative structure represents the instruments for effective services. The problem with local government is how the political structure can use the administrative structure for providing efficient service.

The political structure makes laws and policies for local government including approval of local government's estimates and budgets. The chairman works closely with the secretary and heads of departments to implement policies agreed at the executive and legislative councils. To forge a close link between the political and administrative structure, political heads are attached to each department. These are called supervisory councilors or supervisors (depending on the system of government). These supervisors control the activities of heads of departments. Policies agreed upon in the executive council are implemented by the supervisors through their heads of departments. These Heads also channel the needs and activities of their department to the council through their supervisors. The supervisors are therefore the eyes of the chairman at the level of the department.

In the same way, the secretary is the chief adviser to the chairman on local government administration. Such advises are on administrative procedure, planning, financial management, staffing and inter-governmental relations. The chairman may be eager to ensure the implementation of his programmes but the secretary is there to ensure proper implementation procedure.

In all these, there is bound to be friction between the political office holders and the key administrative functionaries (i.e. career officials). The challenge of administration at the local government level is how to forge more of cordial relationship between the political and administrative group as they perform their roles. A typical structure of local government will look like this:

POLITICAL OFFICE HOLDERS



SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is the composition of local government political structures and that of the administrative structures?

4.0 CONCLUSION

You can now agree that understanding the structure of local government is the basis for understanding the composition and roles and even relationships of actors within this structure. The political structure is supposed to use administrative structure for translating political promises into services. How well this takes place depends on the type of relationship between the political and career staff of local government.

Sometimes, this relationship is cordial, other times the relationship is strained and conflictual, especially as a result of personality clash, and interpretation of guidelines. Other times, the political office holders are impatient with the regulations governing administrative practices especially financial management. Such crises slow down the operation of local government and this had become a big source of worry in local governments in developing countries. This is where qualities of good leadership are called into question. It may not be structures that create the problem but the people that manage it.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt about the following that:

- structures are classified based on the status or system of local government-single tier or multi-tier
- political structures contain the legislature and executive organs of local government
- administrative structures deal with the office of the secretary and the departments, sections and units within the local government
- the political structure deploys the administrative structure policies into services and in so doing, actors in both structures must work towards a cordial relationship.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

How does the political and administrative structures relate in the local government.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Barber, M.P. (1974). *Local Government*. London: Macdonald & Evans Ltd.

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UNIT 2 THE FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Principles
 - 3.2 Comparative Perspective
 - 3.3 The Nigerian Example
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By now, you are supposed to be familiar with the concept and role of local government. Whichever way you look at local government, it is the functions they perform and how much of it they perform efficiently at a given point in time that matters. In this unit, you will be taken through what these functions are, how these functions are allocated and comparative experiences as to the classification and nature of these functions in a few advanced and developing countries. The function of local governments in Nigeria is also presented in full. Some of the problems associated with these functions are briefly highlighted.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify three principles governing the assigning of functional responsibilities to local government
- differentiate between the various classification of functions in three countries
- list the various functions of local government in Nigeria under two classification.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Principles in Functions Allocation in Local Governments

There are certain principles to consider while allocating functions to local governments.

- The nature of such local government – urban or rural. The functions of rural local governments are more mundane and simple than urban ones.
- Viability of the local government. The question here is whether the local government has the capacity (human, material and financial resources) to discharge these functions.

The local government will be subjected to the standards required by the central government, especially in efficient services and planning management.

In general, the functions which local governments should perform are:

1. that which require detailed local knowledge for efficient performance;
2. that in which success depends on community responsiveness and participation;
3. that which are of personal nature requiring provision close to where the individuals affected live; and
4. that in which significant use of discretion or understanding of individuals are needed.

3.2 Comparative Perspective

Local government as the lowest tier of government performs primary functions. This is deliberate since the central government controls more funds and has better competence and expertise to handle more secondary or gigantic programmes. However, city governments, borough and urban or municipal councils take up greater and more sophisticated functions than rural councils.

Most constitutions or statutory Acts establish functional areas that local governments can engage in. In such an exercise, some functions are concurrent between the local government and the state or regional governments while others are exclusive to local governments.

The Nigerian constitution makes these distinctions. While exclusive functions include planning, revenue-generation related functions, welfare-like services like maintenance of roads, street lighting; the concurrent ones include agriculture, health, education (especially primary education) and many other functions prescribed from time to time by the state house of assembly (Constitution 1999 – Schedule IV).

In Britain, local authorities perform three broad functions:

- i. environmental
- ii. protective and
- iii. personal.

Environmental functions concern the citizens' immediate physical surrounding-road construction, provision and maintenance of street light, water supplies, recreational grounds, street clearing and refuse disposal.

Protective functions are those that deal with safety of citizens (police and fire services).

Personal services - deal with individual well-being such as housing, education, libraries and museum, schools and health services. It should be noted that in Britain today, the most significant, complex and cumbersome function of local authorities is housing. However, not all local governments can perform these functions. In rural districts, parish councils have limited control in matters of local interest such as allotments, burial grounds, lighting, and provision of amenities, such as recreational grounds, shelters and parish halls.

Local authorities can in addition acquire further power through delegated legislation or bye-law. They also have general powers to acquire land by agreement through the means of purchase, lease or exchange.

In the United States, special districts are created to carry on specific functions or projects. The most numerous of such is the management of the public school system.

Other functions performed by local governments in the US are policing and fire protection, public works, libraries and recreation, public utilities, city planning, public health, airports, harbour and housing. These are indeed gigantic functions which municipal, especially city governments can take on.

In India, the functions of the Panchayati Raj (i.e. local government) follow a similar pattern like the one above except for police and the gigantic function of harbours and airports. The functions here are similar to the Nigerian situation. Briefly, the functions can also be classified as obligatory and discretionary. Such functions include agricultural programmes, animal husbandry, buildings and communications,

education administration, fishery, forestry, small-scale industries, irrigation and medical services, etc.

The urban councils could perform obligatory functions like conservation, street lighting, drainage and construction and maintenance of roads. Larger ones could also engage in water supply, street cleaning, refuse disposal, fire service and being in charge of primary schools.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Urban local government performs more complex functions than rural ones. List five of such functions.

3.3 The Nigerian Example

To deliberate on this functional responsibility of local government, a rundown of the functions of local government in Nigeria is done below as contained in the 1999 constitution (fourth Schedule). The main functions of a local government council are as follows:

- a) the consideration and the making of recommendations to a state commission on economic planning or any similar body on the economic development of the state, particularly in so far as the area of authority of the council and of the state are affected, and proposals made by the said commission or body
- b) collection of rates, radio and television licenses
- c) establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for the destitute or infirm
- d) licensing of bicycle, trucks (other than mechanically propelled trucks), canoe, wheel barrow and carts
- e) establishment, maintenance and regulation of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs markets, motor parks and public conveniences
- f) construction and maintenance of roads and street, 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 road and street 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 or 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 boarding

- ii) movement and keeping of pets of all description, shops and kiosks restaurants, bakeries and other places for sale of food to the public
- iii) laundries; and
- iv) licensing regulation and control of the sale of liquor.

The functions of a local government council shall include participation of such councils in the government of a state in the following matters:

- provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocational education centre
- development of agriculture and natural resources, other than minerals resources
- provision and maintenance of the health services, and
- such other functions as may be conferred on a local government council by the house of assembly of the state.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

List five mandatory and three concurrent functions of local governments in Nigeria.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Local government can be seen to be saddled with a lot of functions from the trivial to the gigantic. The problem in performing these functions is with the resources available to do them. Such resources may include financial and manpower. In the advanced countries, these worries are not as acute as in developing countries. Most developing countries depend on grant from the central governments to run these functions. To reduce such problem of funding, a lot of functions, especially the exclusive or mandatory functions have revenue attached to them. In most cases, these functions can be referred to as extractive functions because in performing them, local government is indirectly raising revenue for its services.

In Nigeria, the experience has been that the tax base of the rural community is very low and therefore local government experiences great difficulty in performing these functions. At times, it neglects such extractive functions and wait for grants to carry out the other functions. The implication had been low viability and low level of autonomy since these units are largely dependent on statutory allocations to function. This issue is raised again in subsequent unit under local government finance and problems of local government.

5.0 SUMMARY

You have come across different types of functions that local governments perform. On the one hand, they have been classified as exclusive (mandatory) and concurrent. In India, the classification of obligation is discretionary and similar to Nigeria's classification.

In Britain, the classification is on the basis of environmental, protection and personal. The United States' classification is close to this. Some of these functions irrespective of countries are mundane while others are complex (e.g. harbour, airports, etc.).

Performance of these functions requires lots of money. In developing countries, functions that ought to generate funds for local government are not as attractive as that of the advanced countries because of the low taxable capacity of individuals, communities and their economies. However, the best way to judge a local government is through its functional performance.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

What do you understand by executive (mandatory) and concurrent functions of local government in Nigeria and why are they so classified?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Barber, M .P. (1974). *Local Government*. London: Macdonald & Evans Ltd.

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UNIT 3 THE STRUCTURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN BRITAIN

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The State of Local Authorities in Britain
 - 3.2 Units of Local Government
 - 3.3 Democratic Structure and Administration
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In unit 4, you were introduced broadly to the structure of local governments. In these series that follow,, we narrow down our focus to specific countries. For this unit, the United Kingdom (particularly England and Wales are examined). The major units of local government are identified, so also are their relationships. A diagram representing these structures is also presented.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the key units of local governments in Britain
- describe their functions
- describe their relationships
- represent these units diagrammatically

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Status of Local Authorities in Britain

Local governments in Britain are principally referred to as local authorities. They are created by an act of parliament. Even though there are various forms of control, the idea of democratic self-government is a serious form in the power structure of these authorities. The government however hesitates to give appreciable autonomy or independence to these units because such may act as distractions in the face of the social,

economic and political unity needed by Britain as it forges integration democratically and with the rest of Europe.

Despite this fundamental hold on local governments, in practice, things are not as tight as it may seem (because of this general disposition to make the system work and the powers local governments derive from acting *intra vires*). For example, Pollard reports that:

Local authorities in Britain are not emanations of the State but are responsible bodies, competent to discharge their own functions and although they may be the statutory body through which government policy is given effect and may operate to a large extent with government money, they exercise their own responsibility in their own right, not ordinarily as agents of government departments.

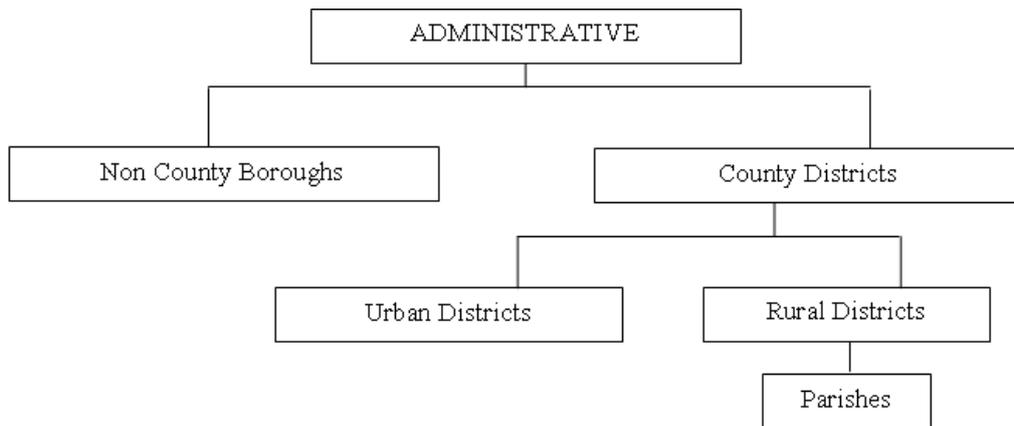
This means that government, having given their local authorities certain powers and functions by statutes, thereafter allows these authorities to discharge their functions without interference as long as they do so effectively and justifiable.

3.2 Units of Local Government

The main units of local governments are counties, urban municipalities and rural local authorities, (urban municipalities consists of county boroughs, a non-county and metropolitan boroughs councils). Traditionally, the main pattern of local government organisation in England and Wales outside Greater London is a division of the country into county boroughs and administrative counties.

County boroughs are mainly chartered towns with population of over 75,000. In other words, boroughs are based on charters granted at different times by the monarchy to small towns to exercise some right in its own justices and courts and settle dispute locally. Furthermore, provision was made for separate parliamentary representation which the other types of councils did not have. The county borough has the power over a non-county borough council, which a county council does not have. This also includes police affairs.

However, administrative counties are the more numerous and popular. Administrative counties can be broken into non-county borough and county districts. The latter consists of urban districts and rural districts, while rural districts are made up of rural parishes (or 20-30) in a district. This may be shown diagrammatically as follows:



Each of these divisions or units has its own powers and duties and administration by its elected council. But meanwhile, the number of these units is as follows:

- 58 County councils
- 82 County borough councils
- 264 Non- county borough councils
- 532 Urban districts councils
- 3,300 Parish meetings

Greater London boroughs are responsible for such issues as, housing, water supply, sewage, minor roads and bridges buildings, etc. Services of urban and rural district councils are similar to those provided by non-county borough councils except that the rural districts are not responsible for highways, bridges and libraries.

Parish councils are able to provide local amenities including allotments, village halls, playing field, street lighting upkeep of footpath, etc.

However, a new structure emerged as from 1974 even though it did not affect Greater London. This is diagrammatically represented below:

ENGLAND NON-METROPOLITAN AREA (54.5%)		ENGLAND NON-METROPOLITAN AREA (24.0%)	WALES
LEVEL		AUTHORITY	
First Tier	MMCC (39)	MCC (b)	CC (8)
Second Tier	MMCDC (296)	C (39)	CDC (37)
Third Tier	Parish Government	Virtually none	Community

Note: The structure of local government in Greater London left unchanged, (%) shows estimate in proportions of the population of England and Wales.

Key: MMCC = Non-Metropolitan County Council
MCC = Metropolitan County Council
CC = County Councils (Wales only)
MMCDC = Non-Metropolitan County Districts
CDC = County Districts Councils (Wales only).

There has been no fundamental difference between the traditional and new structure. First, the structure of Greater London was untouched. Second, the plurality of administrative counties have been neatly divided into non-metropolitan which is now used to qualify the type of county council except that the use of “Urban” has been dropped with only “districts” retained. In Wales, there is no such broad distinction but the name “urban” is also dropped.

Generally, non-metropolitan area local governments parade a three-tier structure (just as in the traditional local government system). The same is true for Wales except that the name of the “parish” has changed to “community”. For metropolitan areas in England, a two-tier system is still visible as in the traditional system, except that the term “urban” has been removed. Of course it should be noted that the number of councils has changed.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Present a diagram showing the structure of local government in England and Wales from 1974.

3.3 Democratic Structure and Administration

Local government councils act on behalf of the people since they are elected bodies. The elective offices are mainly those of the chairman and councilor plus the alderman. Let us see how this operates.

In administration of counties, the post consists of chairman, alderman and councilors. The chairman is elected annually from council or alderman to hold that office. Alderman is actually drawn from the pool of individuals who possess sterling qualities, and who may not want to subject themselves to elections but whose contribution to local governance may be highly cherished. He possesses qualifications equivalent to a local government councilor. Alderman is elected for six years by the councilors in a proportion of 1:3 with half retiring every 3 years. Councilors are elected every three years and are all eligible for re-election. Note that by the time council is dissolved at the end of every three years, with half of the aldermen, the other half provides continuity in running the local government.

For urban and rural district counties, the chairman is also chosen from among council who is a justice of the peace of the county. Elections for district councilors take place either annually or tri-annually. On annual basis, 1/3 ceases to hold office unless re-elected so that by the end of the three years, the whole council must have been renewed. Normally meetings are held four times in a year.

Rural parishes with a population of 300 or more are under one parish council. However, a parish council consists of chairman and not less than 5 or not more than 21 members (as may be determined by the county council). They hold office for three years. The members are elected tri-annually as a whole.

County and non-county boroughs have councils along the lines of administrative counties i.e. who are elected from councils one in a year and exercises ceremonial powers while council determines his remuneration. The Mayor may appoint his deputy councilors who are elected for three years but 2/3 of them retire annually. Alderman consists of 2/3 of total number of councilors either elected from among councilors or persons qualified to hold office. Their tenure is 6 years, half of the number retiring every three years. (This is usually referred to

as aldermanic elections). Meetings are normally held in these councils four times in a year.

Looking at the British democratic structure of council, there are certain striking features. First is that unlike the American strong mayor system, chairmen are chosen from among councilors. So also is the fact that his tenure is only for a year in each case. Second, the aldermanic factor is an innovation which combines democracy with merit and provides for continuity in administration. Third is the fact that 1/3 of councilor retires every year implying that such an exercise is capable of gingering them to brace up to their responsibilities squarely. The point of interest in either the American or British experiences, however, is that no matter the population of the local unit, councils are run through representative government.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Make a list of political office holders at the local government level in Britain and express their roles in a sentence each.

4.0 CONCLUSION

British local government system is multi-tier and each level is responsible for a ground of local functions. The plurality of authorities may have been confusing to you but the 1974 reform has simplified this. You can recall that in Britain today there is the three-tier system of county council, district council and parish council especially in the non-metropolitan area which constitute 54.5% of councils. The metropolitan area including Greater London takes 24.0% but with a two-tier structure. There is no parish government because it is difficult to find such communities in metropolitan areas.

Note that in our discussion, the responsibilities of these councils have been stated. You have also seen the democratic basis for administration with actors like councilors, chairman/mayor and alderman.

5.0 SUMMARY

Let us summarise this unit thus:

- that modern British Councils are structured into county councils. Districts councils and parish councils at the level of Non-metropolitan councils while for metropolitan councils, we have only a two-tier structure of metropolitan county councils and metropolitan county districts councils

- the most numerous councils are the administrative counties ranging from 58 county councils to 3,000 Parish meetings
- each council is responsible for a group functions with the parish performing the most basic functions
- the major political actors in British local authorities are the Mayor (Chairman) or the Lord Mayor (in London), the Councilors and the Alderman. Germany is provided in local administration by the latter as 1/3 or 2/3 of councilors retires every year, depending on the council.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Compare County Boroughs and Administrative Counties.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Humes, S. & Martins, E.(1961). *Structure of Local Government throughout the World*. The Hague.

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UNIT 4 THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 System and Structure of Government
 - 3.2 Units of Local Government
 - 3.2.1 Counties
 - 3.2.2 Rural Municipalities
 - 3.3 Democratic Structure
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

American local governments operate under the control of state governments. Despite this control, they have wide variety of powers. Such powers are informed by their democratic base and its attendant quality services and accountability.

The structure of American local government is like the British system, i.e. multi-tier. In this unit, you will be introduced to the various units of local government and their responsibilities. While emphasis in this unit is on counties and rural municipalities, the next will be devoted to city governments in America. Find out what is more unique and exciting about city governments in the next unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the major units of local governments in the US
- present the structure in a diagram
- appreciate the role of democracy in these units especially with the 'home rule'
- comment on the composition of the country executive and rural municipalities
- state some functions of these units

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 System and Structure of Government

The United States of America operates a federal system of government and as such powers are shared between the federal and state governments. (There are 54 States in all). Federalism was adopted as a way of reacting to the vast size of the territory, the nationality problem, the forces of diversity and very importantly, the most viable option for an amicable harmonious co-existence after the historic war between the northern and southern states in the country between 1861 to 1865.

There is a Constitution of the United States of America which shares powers among the tiers of government in a way that federal-culture enjoys “exclusive and concurrent” power only. Local governments are created by the states even though they are the pillars of the entire state structure. They however receive mention in the constitution and they enjoy residual powers.

Government administration is manifested in such political institution as the executive and the legislature. The U.S. operates the presidential system of government where the president is an executive one – a chief executive and the whole nation is his constituency. His cabinet is separate from parliamentary status.

Parliamentary (or congress) at the national level consists of two houses – House of Representatives and Senate, the latter being the upper house. This bicameral legislature makes laws for the good governance of the state, sometimes having enormous powers to hold the president to ransom even in finance matters. The president of course evokes his veto on certain occasions.

The state has governors as chief executive running similar administration as in the centre. Parliament however is unicameral. It makes law for the good governance of the state, and like the centre, it is a “watchdog” over the executive.

One thread that runs through the organisation of government at the various levels is the fact that political activity is generated and governed by institutions like the political party. All elective posts in government are to very large extent filled through party candidature except for one or two independent candidates. Even appointive posts are largely colored by the incidence of party candidature and interest. Let us now look at how local governments operate within such a democratic and constitutional framework.

3.2 Units of Local Government

Alderman captioned his book *80,000 Governments*. In it, he discussed the politics of sub-national America. This description is apt of the American system with one federal government, 54 states and the rest are local governments. This alarming figure arises not just out of the various units of local government, but also the closeness of these units to the common man. Prominent among these are the counties (most representative nomenclature for local government). Counties could consist of township (rural counterparts to municipalities and rural counties).

The second classification of the units of American local government is incorporated place or municipalities. This includes cities, boroughs village and incorporated towns. (Some of these were created at the instance of the people's desire for the provision of services).

It should be noted that although the municipalities are geographically included within the county, they are not administratively subordinate to the county government. County government has no power of review over municipal government activities. Where ever there are no rural municipalities the county becomes the basic unit of government.

System of Administration

Local governments in the US are governed by laws of the states and not those of the national government; therefore no national pattern of local government exists. The law and practice of local government varies from state to state.

State governments have direct legal control over the counties which operate as agencies of the state to enforce state law. Nevertheless, these local units are powerful because they enjoy enormous power by way of legal competence, financial resources (especially in cities) and their democratic base.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Classify the major units of local government in the US.

3.2.1 Counties

American counties are agencies of state government which also may be abolished. The nature and functions vary from place to place. In the New England states, this unit of government is primarily a judicial district, in the southern and far western states; it serves as the primary

rural units, controlling courts, education, health, public welfare works and roads. In a greater number of the state, urban municipalities are within the county and their residents pay taxes to support the county government as well as that of their municipalities. Councils are democratically constituted on the composition and size of membership could depend on the complexity of the county.

Generally, the governing organ of countries may levy taxes, appropriate money, issue bonds, maintain law and order, care for prisoners, maintain roads, record deeds and vital statistics, settle estates, care for dependent and negated children, advance agriculture and assume certain public education responsibilities. It can also execute optional powers granted to it by the state, such as county planning and zoning, various public health and recreation activities and housing.

Note that in the interest of good government, some counties have elected chief executive or presidents whose duties are similar to those of the strong mayor. In other small counties, the county council may appoint a county administrator, whose duties are similar to those of the manager. (the concepts of strong and city manager are explained in the next unit).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

State four functions performed by the county executives in the US.

3.2.2 Rural Municipalities of Towns

The township or town exists in a large number of American states. A few of these town governments cover all rural areas. Generally, large densely populated areas are not included within township government although the smaller ones may be and their residents then pay township taxes and vote in township elections.

Some states having township governors, charge the township government with only the assessment and collection of taxes and acting as a judicial and election area. In other states, the townships have large urban areas and must provide many of the services of the incorporated municipality. In general, the townships assume such functions as maintaining roads and administering certain health and public welfare services. The trend had however been to transfer these functions from township to the county.

The town government is elected and headed by a superior or a trustee (but popularly called a chairman). He serves a two or three-year term and his primary concern is with coordinating township activities. Apart from three other people who may be elected with the chairman to serve

as the governing organ, officials of the town administration may be a clerk, assessor, justices of the peace, constable, treasurer and tax collector.

3.3 Democratic Structure of Local Government

Local governments in the US are constantly democratic in nature. To the people, there is the belief that “small local government is better than distant big government”.

In connection with this, the “Parent Commission” has once observed that it is only at “the lowest level of government that every citizen had the opportunity to participate actively and directly”. So also has the Advisory Committee on Local Government expressed the following views on local government “local governments are to total government what basic tissues are to the human body. Within them, government would have no vitality”.

All these observations point to the fact that the system is imbued with a heavy dose of democracy. One appreciates this at a glance if informed that all the “80,000 governments” practice some form of representative democracy, including counties or schools districts some with a population of 227 people. (This population must have changed with time).

One of the hallmarks of this democracy is the “home rule charter”. This is an attempt by communities to seek legislation through which they could rule themselves. “Home rule means simply that local units are granted powers of self-government without interference from state law”. (note however that there is nothing like complete autonomy for local units. It is a relative matter). The objectives of home rule are three:

- to prevent legislative interference with local government
- to enable cities to adopt the type of government they desire
- to provide cities with sufficient powers to meet the increasing need for services

Moreover, local units are said to be the pillars of American democracy. The various types of local governments down to the lowest unit (i.e. the districts) have their own executive bodies elected by the people. In fact, local authority units serve as returning officers in both state and national elections. Through such representative bodies, the will of the people is expressed and public accountability ensured. This democratic variable in addition, confers on city government wide powers in budget preparation while the state government hardly interferes with local government. On accountability, any executive that does not perform stands the risks of

being voted out or removed by the people. On the other hand, local governments are open in their administration and ensure prudence in financial management.

Furthermore, this democratic structure shields local government from the excesses of state council, in such a way that even though these units are established by state charters of legislation, no state government can dissolve a county or city council, since their primary mandate is from the people who elected them. In most cases however, the relationship is that of co-operation rather than antagonism.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, you have been introduced to the structure and responsibilities of American local governments, especially the counties and townships. You were informed that the county is the basic tier of local government. Other local governments operate within this.

The major features of these local governments are that their governing body is elective, they assess and raise taxes in some cases (rating and electing authorities) and in some cases also, they are judicial and electoral units. Attention is placed on the county and township councils. What is left to be done is to look at the city councils. What is interesting in the city council is their type of executive. This will form the subject of the next unit.

5.0 SUMMARY

The major points learnt in the unit are as follows:

- local governments in the US are the concerns of the state
- the county is the basic unit of local government under which are municipal, township, city and district councils (a multi-tier structure)
- the executives of these councils are elected .
- many communities seek 'Home Rule' to enhance democracy autonomy
- some council especially those in the townships could be a rating authority, a precepting authority, a judicial and electoral area
- counties perform functions like maintenance of law order, road maintenance, child welfare, advanced agriculture, public education.
- rural municipalities perform functions such as road maintenance, public welfare, health services, and tax collection.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Comment on the democratic nature of American local government.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 5 THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN FRANCE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Nature of Decentralisation
 - 3.2 The Structure/Administration of Local Government
 - 3.2.1 Departments
 - 3.2.2 The System of Preference Today
 - 3.2.3 Regions
 - 3.3 Functions/Responsibilities
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

French local government presents a good example of both aspects of decentralisation. You may realise that the American system, even though unitary in nature, significantly devolves powers to the counties and Britain and promotes local self government. In this unit, French local government will be x-rayed before and after 1982. The functions and responsibilities of these councils and the democratic content of the councils will be discussed. At the end of the unit, you may (as in the American case) want to look at the epoch of local government administration in Nigeria and see how the French model applies to them.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the major units of French local government
- classify and explain the type of decentralisation that went on before and after 1982
- compare the role of the Prefect in the administration of 'departments' before and after 1982
- state the functions of each tier of government
- identify the types of executive or system of government as practiced in French local government

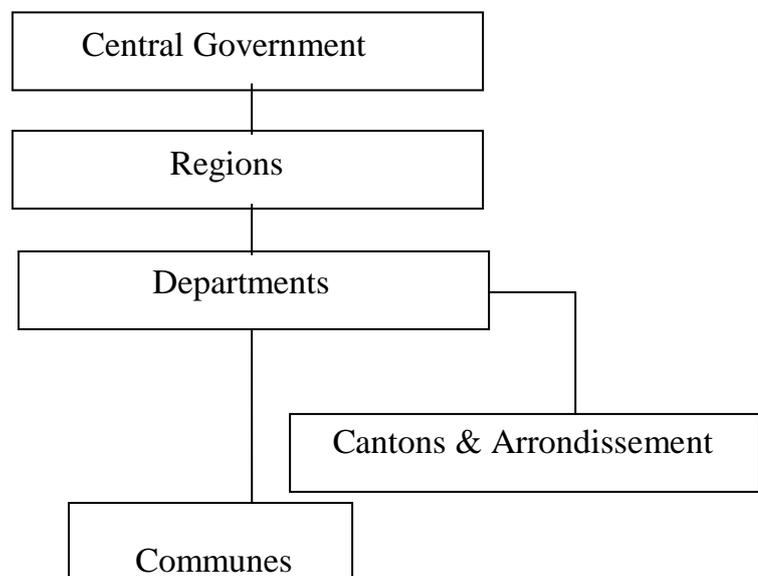
3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Nature of Decentralisation

French operated a unitary system of government and by implication exercises much control over the local authorities. The structure of local authorities in France is multi-tier. The effective or basic unit of local government administration before 1982 has been the power of the prefect. During this period, the Prefect was more powerful than the elected local government executive council. But from 1982, the powers were greatly reduced. Let us now discuss the units, their administration, their functions or responsibilities and their power more systematically.

3.2 The Structure/Administration of Local Government

The structure of government in France is as follows:



Note that before the creation of regions, the province which is the department was the first local unit under the state. When regions were created in 1972 (as administrative unit) it pushes the department below it. Arrondissement and cantons are like sub-provinces and districts. The municipality is actually the commune.

The commune is the lowest unit of government in France. They were born out of the French Revolution and replaced the old parishes of the ancient regime. The whole of France is divided into 38,000 communes to make sure local uniformity is ensured.

It had served basic administration unit over the three centuries or more. The population of 38,000 communes leaves an average population of

1,300. As Blondel points out, if one excludes the large towns and cities such as Paris, Marseille, or Lyons, the average communes' size is even much smaller. For instance, 35,000 communes have less than 2,000 inhabitants as their average population.

This may look so small for any viable or credible administrative unit to emerge let alone of mobilising resources to develop such area. Nevertheless, the democratic principle is very strong here and the principle of representation forms the basis of administrative organisation. In this connection, the commune has a “deliberate body” elected by direct universal suffrage, (i.e. the municipal council) and an executive arm (the mayor) himself elected by the municipal council. (Mayor of communes have been elected since 1882 but under the Napoleonic order they were appointed by the central government, making the system authoritarian in nature).

The council holds at least four sessions in a year and its role is to primarily supervise the action of the mayor and to deliberate on the budget. Even though the council elects the Mayor, it does not have the right to vote him out or force him to resign. This is not true of the parliamentary system. In matters of budget, where the council refuse to approve the mayor's budget, he may be led to resign and government is then likely to dissolve the council and call for fresh elections.

Such exercises are rare because the majority party more often than not dominates the council and the mayor enjoys the goodwill and support of these members – at least a majority. This is not to talk of the fact that many Mayors have considerable personal followers in the communes and can distribute patronage store to parliamentary or higher governmental carrier.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Present the structure of French local government in a diagram.

3.2.1 Departments

“Departments replaced the old provinces whose continued stay was seen as a danger to national unity”. There are 96 departments in France and they are supposed to have been created out of a group of communes. In other words, they oversee the activities of communes and either pool their activities together or support them individually to make them viable, considering their very small population and resources.

However, communes can be said to be more democratic than departments because of the nature of representation and leadership.

There was normally a weak elected council of the department known as “general council” (conseil generale) in which executive power remained in the land of Napoleon’s creation, the Prefect.

The prefect was the representative of government in each department and also the executive agent of the department. He corresponds with the mayor of the commune but he is an appointee of the central government. He is more like a colonial governor than like the head of a local authority. The prefect before 1982 detracts from real local democratic activity in two ways. First, he is not local and does not come from the area; second, prefects are moved every two or three years as matter of policy so as not to get involved in local troubles as a result of a long stay. This would enable him concentrate on government policy.

In a lot of cases, prefects are chosen from among sub-prefects whose men are posted in each arrondissement to supervise the activities of mayors and if necessary, block or reverse their decisions within the limits of the powers which the law gives them.

Furthermore, prefects have among their central government functions, that of supervising the activities of mayors and municipal councils. Prefects had power to alter budgets, to appoint officials and sometimes even to suspend elected councils. This used to be the practice for many years. Note that budgets of small local authorities are, for instance, often drafted by agents of the sub-prefect as these mayors do not have the skill, or the staff to draft the budgets themselves. Note also that the relationships between prefects and mayors are not necessarily antagonistic because the prefects help out the mayors and other councils in technical problems apart from the budgets stated above. But this is rather as a result of the small size of the local authority. It does not necessarily justify the control.

The point made from the beginning about the control system in the French system is not borne out of the relationship between prefect and council and its subsequent negation of the people’s supremacy.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

How does the council of a committee operate vis a vis the mayor?

3.2.2 The System of Prefecture Today

France today has moved away from this tight control measures with its attempt to relegate popular will. This is because of the 1982 Reforms which came into operation as a result of a “socialist government” which

regarded “decentralisation as a cornerstone of local government administration”.

Briefly what this reform has done is to water the power of the prefect and enhance the power of council and the mayor. This was to affect all the communes, departments and the 22 regions. It embodied measures which rendered these authorities relatively more “autonomous and fully accountable”. Secondly, it transferred to local authorities powers hitherto enjoyed by the central government and exercised by its national region of departmental representatives. Some of these newly devolved or decentralised powers include:

- Rights and liberties of communes, departments and regional Act of March, 1982
- Abolition of a priori powers i.e. Prefects veto power on measures adopted by local assemblies was reduced to advisory role
- Transfer of executive power in regions and departments i.e. the prefect no more served as the executive head of department and region (as the representative of central governments and regional councils). Prefects now prepare the measures adopted by council and ensure their implementation – some civil servants rather than policy-maker role
- Accountability of local government. Local government activities must however be overseen by the state in spite of the above concessions. Even though these concessions are wide, the prefect still serve as a watchdog for council activities. The only change now is that decision may only be reviewed by a superior. In this case, prefect may not overrule but the judiciary can review both administrative and financial acts. Prefects (now known as the commissioner of the republic) can refer illegal acts to administrative/legislative units. Local government can only act *intra vires*.

3.2.3 Regions

The regions are a recent creation in France. The communes and departments were found too inappropriate for certain planning and development objectives to be implemented. Regions are more of planning units than overtly political as in the preceding two.

Actually a referendum was held in 1969 under De-Gaulle as to the need for regions but this was rejected. In 1972, however, the region appeared as a new administrative unit, with a council of its own (i.e deliberate body) whose members were appointed by departments and the communes. Membership also includes all the region members of Parliament plus an executive arm who is the regional prefect. This is

another attempt in French administration towards decentralisation which, as was indicated earlier, picked up momentum with the 1982 reforms. Altogether, there are 22 regions.

It appears from all we have said on these local units that their central administrative control is an important feature of French politics but also that local autonomy is conceded, especially with the decentralisation reform which eroded some of the powers of the prefect.

One other important feature is that French politics is that of “politics of access”. By this we mean ability to go to Paris and get as much cake for the periphery. The good Mayor or parliamentarian is one who is able to accomplish this. This is possible because of the structure and mobility available to the political elites within the system. For example, a mayor could be a member of the departmental council, the regional assembly and even a parliament in Paris or the central legislature. And that is why we said from the beginning that despite the seeming tight control by virtue of this multiple membership, which is locally sourced and rooted, the local units tends to enjoy autonomy because of this organic link between the centre and the periphery.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

How did decentralisation affect ‘provinces’ and regions?

3.3 Functions/Responsibilities

These include:

1. Adoption of budget
2. Approval of the yearly financial records
3. Maintenance of public property
4. Building and road
5. Provision of public education, health, sanitation and assistance services

Cantons are a collection of communes initially found for the army, judicial and electoral administration and for the collection of taxes as well as for registration of various kinds of required information. The Arrondissement is purely administrative with elective body but purely to care of the administration of departments. The head of this body is the sub-prefect who is appointed by the central government. The sub-prefect has as his functions the following:

- receives and passes official papers, documents and orders from the governor to the municipalities

- approves the appointment of certain officials (including local police)
- arranges the details of elections
- has certain supervisory powers over municipal mayors within his territory (particularly on budget and police ordinances)
- he/she gives technical assistance to those officials and liaise between the local and provisional governments
- advised the central government on putting into effect state or provisional policy within the area.

The function of the council here is to adopt a budget (which before 1982 was presented to the governor (i.e. prefect) after the local council have approved it. Council also does the following:

- dispose of provincial and estates matters
- build and maintain highways
- provide public assistance institution and welfare services
- provided certain aspects of public education
- can also set municipal rates and appropriate taxes for municipal development
- exercise control over the province (department) as the representative of the central government in the department. This is a source of sweeping powers over mayors and councils.

4.0 CONCLUSION

You can see from this exposition on French local government that control under unitary system can be more exerting to local government. It has also demonstrated a classical case of decentralisation, meaning that devolution did not quite start until 1982. Even then, the prefect still remains the effective central government representative at the local level. (this chief executive status has not been totally eroded). Such systems have their advantage of ensuring accountability and efficient management of resources. The disadvantage is the encroachment on local democracy and hence local autonomy. The communes continue to perform their basic functions under same democratic inspiration and just like the department; their deliberative body operates the parliamentary system. The experience also demonstrated a situation where in a multi-tier arrangement, the departments exercised extensive control over the communes than in the other experiences we have come across. The experience (before 1982) is very relevant to the Nigerian experience before the 1976 Reform.

5.0 SUMMARY

Having completed this unit, the highlights could be stated as follows:

- France operates a unitary system and this makes control over local government enormous
- Even though the mayor of the communes has a lot of initiatives, the Department exercises extensive control over him especially that his action in most cases has to be *intra-vires*
- The department is the major unit of local government and under it are arrondissement and cantons. The primary level in this multi-tier system is the commune. Note: communes can be both municipal and rural
- The local authorities have a deliberate body headed by a mayor or chairman who has wide ranging powers but whose powers are often monitored by the prefect (secretary general). He is however subjected to his council and implements council's decisions. The council acts as a check on the chairman
- The reforms of 1982 brought in more devolution of powers and so it is properly tagged the decentralisation reforms. The main feature of this is that it waters down the powers of the prefect and increases council control of local affairs. The chairman is largely a policy maker and political leader while the prefect is charged with daily administration
- French local governments perform not too different functions from earlier ones in Britain and the U.S - education, works, building of roads, rates and police are the major functions. You may have noticed however that there is much talk about budgeting approvals, supervision and control

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Why are Departments and the Prefect remarkable features of French local government administration?

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UNIT 6 THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN INDIA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Structure, Composition and Power of Rural Municipalities
 - 3.1.1 Panchayats
 - 3.1.2 Panchayats Samiti
 - 3.1.3 Zila Parishad
 - 3.2 Functions of the Panchayati Raj
 - 3.3 Urban Councils (Composition and Functions)
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

India like the United States of America operates a federal system of government. The expectation therefore is that devolution should occur at the local level. States exercise some form of control but this is at the level of the district. There are some measures of autonomy to control funds and run services. In this unit, you will be introduced to the major units of local governments in India, their structure, functions and composition. You may at the end start thinking of any general observable pattern of local government in federal settings. This will later on be strengthened by the Nigeria system which is also a federal system.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

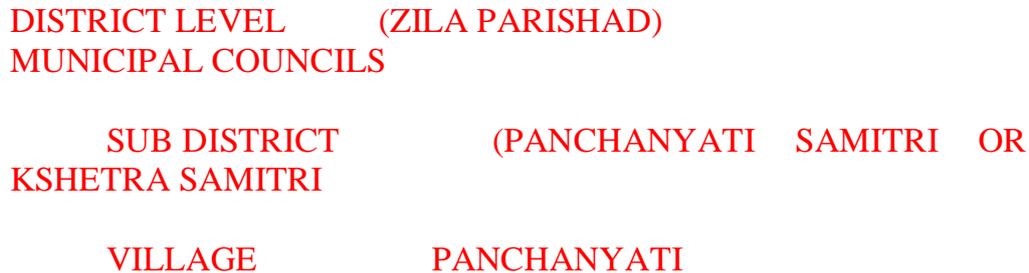
- identify the major units of local government in India and describe their composition
- explain the relationship between these units
- state the functions of these units

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Structure/Composition and Powers

Local government in India operates a three-tier system known as PanchayatiRaj. This actually sums up what an author refers to as a

“synthesis” consisting of the three levels of the districts, sub districts and the village levels. Locally, they are referred to as the Zila Parishad, the Panchayati Samitri (or Kshetra Samitri) and Panchayat respectively. They are normally structured according to ascending order of authority. This is represented in the diagram below:



These units were actually created as a result of the balwantraji mehta committee which suggested a 3-tier system of local democratic decentralisation of powers. The premise for this idea lies in the fact that the constitution after independence was based on the plural nature of the India society, including the realisation of the villages (which houses 80% of the population) as the basic springboard of democracy. Added to this is the fact that the Indian Government Act of 1956 had offered autonomy to the provinces (now states), which in turn gave further impetus to development of local self government which in turn was the foundation of independence. Such right hand also has to be further extended to the grassroots for the reason stated earlier on.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Graphically show the structure of local government in India.

3.1.1 Panchayats

Let us now look at the working of these units in ascending order of their authority.

This is the basic or lowest unit of local authority in India. Ordinarily, they are to be equated with villages which could be as large as 2,000 people and above. The major aim of this unit is to involve the people in government right from the grassroots level. Apart from this basic political function, there is the planning and functional dimension. The basic political arrangement is that the village panchayats is constituted on universal adult suffrage. There is some form of direct election into the village council but any other election to the higher authorities (smatia and parishad) are based on indirect or secondary elections. (mention must however be made of move by some states to have the higher authorities elected directly). Therefore there are variations in

pattern. Normally, the chairman of the village council becomes an ex-officio member of the kshetra samiti.

Furthermore, at the panchayats level there is the meeting of all adult members in the village normally known as the gram sabba. It is normally consulted by the panchayats on proposed budgets and plans for development, especially agricultural production. Such plans are supposed to guide the village for a particular period of time. It is also consulted on progress of work over a period of time. This body meets periodically about 2-3 times a year or as occasion demands.

There is no gainsaying that this level is the least financially equipped and even their secretary, is hired and paid from state offices or secondary by the district council. This staff acts as liaison between the state and the village in the collection of revenue and maintenance of records and other documents. Departmental officers also monitor the activities of these panchayats.

The panchayats have judicial powers, but of a very limited nature. These are in the areas of minor thefts, trespassing, encroachment on public property and civil suits up to a few hundreds of rupees. In fact, a special council, nyanya panchayats or adalat panchayats whose membership is elected from among councilors of four to five villages may decide minor dispute involving cattle trespass, theft or gambling.

3.1.2 Panchayats Samiti

This is also referred to as kshetra samiti. It is a form of “middle council” comprising a block or group of villages. They are more functional than political. Duties include more of execution of policy from districts and supervision of village activities. The population of such clusters of village or the samitis could range from 60000 to three million.

As pointed out earlier, the councils are constituted democratically, through the elected representatives of village on mostly indirect basis (i.e. from the panchayat). Their major function is sharing in development activities concerned with improving agriculture, forestry promotion, cooperatives, small industries, provision of educational, medical and public health services.

In terms of staffing, the chief executive officer is the “bloc development officer” who acts as secretary to the panchayats and responsible for ensuring that decisions of samatri are carried out. He in addition coordinates the activities of the various departments.

3.1.3 Zila Parishad

This is the colonial districts, basically carried out for the purpose of revenue collection and maintenance of law and order. It was inherited and adapted to suit post-independence structure. (It shares the same experience as in Tanzania). It is the most viable level of local government which works through the other tiers for grassroots development in revenue generation. It is also a vehicle for state government's presence in the rural area. The district therefore is important for development and for administrative purposes. Apart from these, it is also important as a representative body. It is the main local government council harbouring representatives of the panchayats, through the samiti to the districts. It can therefore be said to be an integration or synthesis of local democracy and administration, the embodiment of the unequal trinity – the Panchayats Raj.

Members of this body are elected either directly on the basis of universal adult suffrage or indirectly, for terms varying from 3-5 years. Such members could be between 20 and 40 in number. They could also include co-opted or association members in that area who may not speak but vote. The council could meet not less than 4 times a year or as often as possible. The president of the council is chosen from within the council in line with the cabinet system at the federal and state levels.

The major activity of the district is to meet, formulate and deliberate on plans and proper utilisation of resource, supervision and inspection by districts level officers of the various departments. Government or administration at this level could be organised through committees.

Its principal activities could also include construction and maintenance of roads and bridges and provision of education, mainly at the elementary level.

In its general administration, it exercises a lot of control over the units below it. For example, the zila parishad has power over grants going to the panchayats samiti and the latter over the panchayats. Zila parishad in every instance coordinates and supervises the work of the panchayats samiti in area of submission of budgets, of detailed development plans and of periodic progress report. Also, in administrative terms, the general administrator namely the collector, or deputy commission, the senior officer at the district level, is regarded by many as “the eyes and ears of the government”. This is in tune with what happens in other developing nations where as a point of interest to government, effective control of the grassroots, is necessary through its appointed agents, be he the secretary of the commissioner at that level. Needless to say it is a

colonial tradition. (Even the French have watered down the powers of the prefect considerably as seen earlier).

The technical officers at the district level are responsible for ensuring that in the panchayats samitis, both executive and technical departments are functioning efficiently and carrying through the programs properly. Thus, the framework exists through common representative, coordinating power and official hierarchy to bring together all three levels into a coherent system of local government and administration.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the major roles of village councils?

3.2 Functions of the Panchayati Raj

Besides the specific functions mentioned of each, there are certain general functions which are performed mainly by the zila parishad. These are functions found in any other setting in any developing country. These include all aspects of agricultural programmes affecting the former directly, animal husbandry, buildings and communication, education, administration (including secondary education) fisheries, forestry, small scale industries, irrigation, medical services, public health, social education and welfare and the collection of all land revenue. Many of these functions are handled by the district level while the minor ones are devolved to its subordinates. In some cases, subordinates are just used to execute these.

3.3 Urban Councils (Composition and Functions)

There are over 300 urban municipalities in India. While some could be as large as some state capitals, others are either medium or small cities. Urban municipalities are also democratic entities and administration is either through a council, committee or board. Election is based on adult suffrage on a single member constituency. The duration of council could vary from between threetofive years. Such councils consist of chairman and members. The chairman could be mayor of president, elected from council among its own members for between onetofive years. He provides leadership but cannot override council as in many urban types of council. He could either be removed by a vote of no confidence of 2/3 (two-thirds) of council members, or by the state government. This is the parallel of the cabinet system at both state and federal/union levels as regards the democratic practice of removal. The other aspect of removal by state government is common with Third World countries. The experience is also similar in district council.

Urban municipalities are viable because of their human, material and financial resources. They are also viable because of their strategic locations. They perform great tasks which could either be obligatory or discretionary. The former could include conservancy, street lighting, drainage, and construction and maintenance of road. Some larger ones in addition to the above embark on water supply, street cleaning and disposal of refuse and prevention of epidemics, while very large ones engage in additional functions like fire fighting services, health, markets, slaughters and primary schools.

Discretionary tasks include public concerns, public parks, gardens, museum, libraries, halls, rest houses, tree planting along roads, construction, or purchasing and maintenance of short distance railways and runways, providing public housing, city plan, land reclamation, census and other surveys, relief grants, and healthcare for the mentally ill.

From this listing, one could see that areas above the capabilities of local governments in certain other developing countries discussed in this work could be ventured into by urban councils here. Even in Britain, rail management is provided by British rail. Perhaps we can say at this juncture that those functions could be the prompting of certain ambitious councils. It may also depend on the national fiscal arrangement.

Broadly, urban councils perform both representative and administrative functions. At the political level, these councils make bye-laws, vote taxes budgets, sanctions above certain amount and appoint higher municipal employees. Administratively, they function through statutory and “permissive committee” which closely supervise the day-to-day functions of municipal operations.

4.0 CONCLUSION

You have just gone through the structure of local governments in India. These structures or local units are taken very seriously because of the rural development focus of government. Community and rural development is topmost in federal and state governments’ plans in as much as these are democratic structures. They are seen much more as instruments of change in rural areas. The colonial three-tier structure has lasted this while and has become very functional. In keeping with the rural development focus over the years, the panchayats have been turned into centers for agrarian development. Human resource development and mobilisation has become the cardinal strategy of India local governments.

Note that urban councils in a developing setting like India also undertake gigantic functions like short distance railways and support, public housing, land reclamation, census and other surveys. This tells you the rate at which urban councils have grown (i.e. in complexity).

5.0 SUMMARY

Having gone through this unit, we can try to recall some of the major highlights of the unit together, as follows:

- the major tiers of local governments are the zila parishad, the kshetra samitri and the panchayat. These are district, sub-district and village councils respectively. There is also an urban council which is single tier in nature. The government system is known as the Panchayats Raj
- the councils or executives of these councils are elective. At the panchayat level is the village council. Members from here represent the panchayat at the village, subordinate and district levels (secondary election). The chairman of the village council is however an ex-officio member at the next level
- the samiti contains a group of villages and they are more functional than political
- the zila parishad is the most viable and highest level of local government. It works through the other tier of local government for grassroots development. The council is elected for a tenure of 3-5 years and the system of government is parliamentary
- there are 300 urban municipalities in India, some of which are as large as state capitals. The administration is either through a council, committee or board. The Mayor or President runs the council in a cabinet or parliamentary system
- functions of the Panchayat Raj range from agriculture, to education (including secondary) and to economic functions like small scale industries and revenue collection (especially land revenue).

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Identify the main features of the zila parishad as the main unit of local government administration in India.

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UNIT 7 THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN TANZANIA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Setting
 - 3.2 Local Administration Before and During Arusha i.e. The Sixties
 - 3.2.1 Election and Composition of Council
 - 3.2.2 Administration and Functions
 - 3.3 Post-Arusha Governments: Major Changes
 - 3.3.1 Further Changes
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

You have just been introduced to the structure and functions of local government in India. You are about to be introduced to the same exercise in Tanzania which is another developing country. The only difference is that Tanzania operates a unitary system of government. India parades a history of successful democracy while Tanzania has gone through a history of one-party democracy and highly ideological leadership especially during the Nyerere era. In this unit, you will come across the ideological basis for local government structure, composition and how it operates. You will also encounter cases of deconcentration associated with most unitary systems (and more especially as conditioned by the ideological structure). The discussion will be organised into local government before the Arusha Declaration of 1972 and after.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the structure of local governments and their functions before 1972
- describe the major changes that took place after 1972
- explain the role of ideology and party machinery in local government administration during these periods.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Setting

Tanzania, a union or federation between Tanganyika and Zanzibar, became independent in 1961 from British colonial rule, even though the actual union took place three years after independence. With such a union, Tanganyika the senior and mightier partner, produced the president while Zanzibar the vice president (at least to start with).

Tanzania may not be a rich country but it has produced a main man of Africa, a talented and progressive leader, full of ideas and ready to go, but unfortunately constrained by both internal and external forces. Before we go into an exploration of this, let us go through a political structure/administration configuration of the country and the place of local government.

A one-party state, just like its Chinese and Soviet counterparts, the party was government and government was party. So every activity of government, every idea and every structure was either informed by or governed by party ideology.

Structurally, there is a central government in Dar es Salaam, below it are regions, then districts after which come division and villages. At least this was the position before Arusha and much of this was also retained even after Arusha. This is a unicameral parliamentary legislature at the center while each of these units except, perhaps the regions is democratically constituted. As pointed out above, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) is the sole party and the principal unifying force within the country. Politically, Tanzania has gone through three phases in its post-colonial history viz pre-Arusha, Arusha and post Arusha. These come with different ideological phases namely capitalist and socialist. The model local government system is discussed under the first era while changes to these are discussed under the other experiments.

3.2 Local Administration Before and During Arusha (i.e the Sixties)

The following is a diagram of the structure of local government before being restructured in 1972.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

REGIONS

DISTRICT/URBAN COUNCILS

DIVISIONS

SUB-DIVISION

VILLAGES

The effective nucleus of local government is actually the district. Above the districts are regions, 17 in number. Regions are more of coordinative and planning bodies with no elected representatives but with some controlling powers. They are headed by regional commissioners, who in most cases is the regional secretary of TANU (does this remind you of French local government?).

There was 60 districts in Tanzania with a distribution of two to six in each region. This was the effective seat of local government administration even though subject to the regional government. For urban councils, there are 15 of them. The style of administration in Dar es Salam and Tanga towns are based on different sets of laws modeled after English local government.

Division, (subdivision) and villages operate below districts for planning purposes, welfare and other basic functions. Of course, the villages are the most natural entities out of these, while the rest are either artificial creations or done for administrative convenience. The structure as it looks could also have some coincidence with some traditional native authorities but after independence and especially under guidance of TANU, these structures were either removed, ignored or where retained and modernised to suit the postcolonial drive for development.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Describe the structure of local government in Tanzania before 1972.

3.2.1 Election and Composition of Councils

Local governments, rural or urban are divided into wards, from where representatives are elected into councils. List of candidates are however drawn up by the local TANU while the president has powers and does actually appoint ten people into the council, mostly TANU district executive committee or civil servants. The local TANU leader becomes the chairman of the local council on ex-officio basis. Such exercise replicates themselves at the other subordinate levels. At the regional level however, the picture is much different. Because its major function is administrative i.e. development planning, its composition is that of a combination of party secretary, members, districts chairman and experts. Local governments can therefore be said to experience little democratic experience under an arrangement where list of candidates are pre-prepared and imposed. This of course is typical of one-party states.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is the composition of a typical planning committee for local government?

3.2.2 Administration and Functions

Normally, council is the highest authority in the local level but each subordinate authority is subject to that above it and entirely dominated in complexion by the TANU party at that level – a sort of “dual subordination” as in the socialist state

The bureaucracy of the local government is headed at the district level by the Head of the administration, sometimes referred to as the executive officer (who is directly in charge of personnel and administration. His counterpart at the urban center is called the town clerk (as in Britain). However, the rest of the departmental heads are the representative of the various central government ministries serving in the district. This personnel system may cut overhead costs as an advantage but could create problems for local unit.

At the divisional level, the executive officer is appointed by the district council with the approval of the regional commissioner, while an assistant divisional officer takes charge of the subdivision. Village executive officers are also appointed by the district to take charge of village administration.

The major function of these tiers of local government right from the region to the village is planning. As such, there are planning committees replicated at each level with a hierarchy of authority and accountability

in this respect. Development and planning committee become all too important in rural areas. The major function is to draw up budgets or annual development estimates which must be approved by council. On the other hand, these planning committees supervise projects through the various local committees i.e. right from regional to village level. Such plans must in the first case, pass through the estimated line of authority with much vetting done at the district planning committee level and “much politicking” at the regional and even central government levels.

A typical planning committee could include the regional commissioner as chairman, all members of the finance committee, all departmental and technical officers in the district, cooperative society officials, and the area chairman of TANU and the executive officer of the council who acts as the secretary. Such composition depicts politics, administration, and expertise at work but showing, of course, the overriding dominance of the political with both regional chairman and secretary (both TANU official) at the core.

The other functions which local governments perform are social and education (especially in the rural areas which are quite incapacitated by finance and personnel). District councils undertake roads, apart from trunk ones (for which grant is received). This is apart from the approval of plans from development and planning committee from below.

Much of the activities and administration of the councils are carried out through committees. One of it has been mentioned. Others could include finance committee. Central government officers serving in such areas could be co-opted into these standing committees. They normally make recommendation to council from time to time.

3.3 Post-Arusha Local Government: Major Changes (i.e. the Seventies and After)

In 1972, the blue-print of political reorganisation began to receive actualisation on the ground, especially with the decentralisation of government Act of 1972. This abolished the old local government but transferred many of the functions previously performed by national ministries to regions and districts, where former local officials plus technical officials continued to serve as members of the national civil service. Administration therefore became four tiers with the president and his ministers dealing with issues of national and international scope, while local administration became the prerogative of regions, districts, wards, villages. The regional and districts levels were headed by a commissioner assisted by development directors (to promote Ujama). Wards and villages were served or headed by party secretaries.

As pointed out above, the new structures were meant to decentralise power to the people. Instead of the usual administrative and bureaucratic structure interlocking with the party structure which was often in conflict, these were put strictly under party leadership and control and a fused structure, sort of, evolved. This was necessary because this phase of socialism was fused to be the new 'Ujamaa or Ujama'. The aim of such an exercise was to allow villages to pool resources together to be able to attract funding and become more viable and productive. Human resources would also be available for translating resources into service through such an experiment.

As would be experienced, such radical changes would move hamlets from their natural habitat to join more viable ones. Literature abounds on the Ujama programme and its successes and failures. The major failure of the programme, however, arose from the limited funds of government, apart from organisational problems.

So the elaborate plan of Nyerere in the 1970s to succeed, had to be village oriented/centered, a local democracy with some local autonomy. Following from the structure already discussed, there is the village development committee consisting of 25 members, chaired by the party secretary. Decision from here passed to the ward development committee for approval, then to the district development committee (to be received) and approved by TANU executive committee). From here, it passed to the regional development committee and then to the prime minister's office. The approval plans are then implemented by regional and district development directors.

The difference in the system of the 1970s was not much from what existed. As earlier indicated, the difference is in the area of invigorating the level of participation at the village, ward and district levels specially the first, but it appears the influence of the rural village man stops there. As can be seen, the same bureaucracy and control are evident by party and the service. It is not just enough to give the people more say. It is not an end in itself, especially when their input has no way of passing through bureaucratic and political channels un-mutilated. Even with the introduction of Ujamaa from 1973, with the demarcation of 250 families, and with its voluntary and later coercive results cannot register themselves where power is not located and where these results are supposed to be shown, which does not take us far as the Arusha stage. It meant there was still something fundamentally faulty with the society. The system of local government still required some shake up.

3.3.1 Further Changes

After some stock-taking over decades, another reform in 1982 made it glaring that neither the system of ideology, nor the structure it created nor the system of government worked.

The major functions are as follows:

- all major existing laws on local government were replaced by new legislation (including the 1975 Law on villages) showing the admission that accelerated development via Ujama had failed
- urban and district councils resurfaced
- regional development committee survived and was to be “coordinative” and “consultative” in role
- urban councils were to become more democratic, thus terminating some ex-officio and regional nominees and even the power of the regional commissioners on these councils
- rural district became multi-tier districts, wards and villages. Wards were for planning purpose so also were villages and their activities responsible to districts
- districts could establish town authority while three of its members must be part of the town executive
- districts council became the only local government or body with sufficient finances to employ its own fully qualified staff
- the composition and administration of these various councils are laid out
- on staffing, experienced staffs were recalled while others were seconded to the new councils. A unified local government service like one of the 60s was adopted
- note also that the president retained the power of appointment of chief executive officers of urban councils while districts councils could exercise this under the advice of the local government service commission.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Tanzanian experience has been interesting not because of the fluctuating changes but because the ideological option which was supposed to remedy the system crumbled under a supposedly charismatic leader and a socialist system. However, the structure of local government reflected the ideological and party structures. One sees control of party and ideology through the district down to village councils. Such controls were so excessive that it did not give breathing space for local energies to be released for development.

Nevertheless, the impact of ideology on such structures and the development process has been a high level of mobilisation, especially political education and participation. There was mass awareness of both the ideology and the party structure and this worked for mobilisation of the people. The problem has been that such mobilisation did not translate into much of concrete development. Other variables outside the subject under study like finance may be able to explain this better.

5.0 SUMMARY

Having gone through this unit, the following should occur to you as some of the main highlights.

- Tanzania operates a unitary system and therefore the experience here is more of deconcentration than devolution
- Ideology and the single party system impacted heavily on the structure and functions of local government in Tanzania.
- Tanzania operated a multi-tier system of local government-district/urban council division and villages with changes after 1972
- Councils were elected with local TANU leaders taking charge of the local council as chairmen.
- Major functions of Council includes planning, drawing up budgets, social services and education, roads and rural development.
- Greater decentralisation was attempted as from 1972 since more functions were transferred to them while transforming local governments into 4-tier structure with the addition of Regions. Such decentralisation was an evidence that the Ujamaa programme has failed.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Highlight the major changes brought by the post Arusha Reforms of 1972 (i.e. before 1982 reform).

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UNIT 8 THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Single Tier Structure
 - 3.2 Political and Administrative Structure
 - 3.3 Functions
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A third of the federal system to be considered after US and India is Nigeria. We expect the level of decentralisation to be high. In Nigeria, it has been a vacillation between deconcentration and devolution, but since the landmark 1976 reform of local government, these units have become more of devolution, especially and ironically even though during a military administration. In this unit, you will be introduced to the structure of local government especially since 1976. Both political and administrative measures will be given attention. Functions are elaborately presented, classified and discussed. At the end of the unit, you will have a further chance to consider the pattern that still emerges from a federal structure.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the single tier structure of local government in the Nigeria local government system
- present the administrative structure of Nigeria local governments in a diagram (both for the 1976 structure and the 1998 structure)
- compare the political structure of 1976 to that of 1991
- state the mandatory and concurrent functions of local government in Nigeria and comment on what differentiates them.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Single Structure

The 1976 reforms explain this as follows:

All the statutory and public service functions of local government in Nigeria should be concentrated in multipurpose single tier institution called local governments with complete and self-contained budgets, so that the whole system of local government within any area can be identified, costed and coordinated.

It also went on to say this:

The term “tier” is used in this context as meaning a set of local governments with their own identity, powers and sources of revenue established under state legislation and with functions for which they are responsible to the state. Subordinate councils which are created by them and derive their funds by allocations from the “present” local governments do not comprise a separate tier but are part of the tier comprised of the parent local government.

Such local government should serve populations of between 150,000 and 800,000. The idea about the single tier structure here is that no unit created under the basic local government structure is recognised legally. They are just for administrative convenience.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Identify 5 main features of the single-tier structure of Nigeria local government as defined by the 1976 Reform.

3.2 Political and Administrative Structure

Local governments have come to have similar structure and perform similar functions since the 1976 reforms. This is because the reforms emphasised and standardisation throughout the federation. The 1976 structure, which endured up to early 1991 (with little modification), can be divided into two, viz: political and administrative structures. At the top is the political structure consisting of the local government council and chairman followed by the committees and supervisory councilors, then the office of the secretary to the local government and the various departments. Normally, the departments operated in sections and units in 1988 but there was a reform that broke them down into divisions, branches and sections. Under the 1976 reform, the parliamentary system was the vogue but even then the chairman of the local government was

picked out of 3 nominees of council by the state governor. He presided over council in both legislative and executive capacity. He was responsible for council but accountable to the governor who appointed him. The secretary was however the chief executive and acted like a Prefect.

In 1991, with the operation of the presidential system in local government (and its attendant principles of separation of powers), there was a plurality in the political structure, with even the office of the secretary becoming political. So, there was the executive council, the legislative council, office of the chairman, office of the secretary, and departments (with the personnel department exalted among the others because of additional responsibilities). The chairman nominated his supervisors outside council (3-5 of them). He depended on the council to approve his budget. Council also made laws for local government. The secretary as a political figure never enjoyed the power of the former secretaries. The power passed down to the director of personnel or administration department (such powers include signatory to cheques). Hitherto, the secretary was part of this. A diagrammatic representation of both structure are as follows:

Local Government Council
Chairman



This structure is typical of a cabinet system with the chairman and councilors belonging to the same council with a strong secretary as chief executive. In 1988 the civil services reform, changed the nomenclature of the two service departments of administration and treasury to personnel management and finance and supplies respectively. In the 1991 structure below, the executive council which is headed by the chairman operates separately but interdependently with the legislature council. This is a presidential type of structure.

The 1991 Structure

Executive Council

Office of the Chairman

Legislative Council

Office of the Secretary

Departments

Agric Works P/Mgt.Finance

Medical

Education

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Draw the structure of Local Government.

3.3 Functions

Local governments can be said to perform both mandatory and concurrent functions. The mandatory ones are the ones they have to perform without necessary assistance from higher governments. The concurrent ones are shared with the other tiers of government especially the state government. Before commencing on these functions, let us itemise them below:

1. Mandatory Functions

- a. Economic planning of the local government
- b. Collection of rates, radio and T.V. licenses
- c. Establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for the destitute or the infirm
- d. Licensing of bicycles, trucks, (other than mechanically propelled trucks) canoes, wheel barrows and carts
- e. Markets, motor parks and public conveniences
- f. Roads, streets, drains, public highways, parks, open spaces
- g. Naming of roads and streets
- h. Provisions and maintenance of public conveniences and refuse disposal
- i. Registration of births, death and marriage
- j. Tenement rates or property tax
- k. Control and regulation of:

- i) Out-door advertising and boarding.
- ii) Movement and keeping of pets of all description.
- iii) Shops and kiosks.
- iv) Restaurants and other places for sale of food to the public.
- v) Laundries.

2. Concurrent Functions

The functions which a local government can perform with other tiers government especially state are in respect of:

- a) Provisions and maintenance of primary education
- b) The development of agriculture and natural resources other than the exploitations of minerals
- c) The provision and maintenance of health services
- d) Such other functions as may be conferred on a local government council by the house of assembly of the state

Looking at the mandatory functions, there appears to be a wide range of such functions. Nevertheless, they look very mundane and residual. Of course, this is why local government should perform such functions. Moreover, apart from the functions of economic planning, all other functional items carry a financial implication with it, with further exception of function (f) on the list. Even then, good roads encourage the opening up of rural areas and markets and hence ability to generate revenue.

The key and major functional area that could generate revenue is rates and T.V. licenses, market and parks and property rating. In the rural areas, markets are the dominant sources of internal revenue while for urban, property rating and markets and parks contribute the most.

While the mandatory functions carry revenue implication with it, the concurrent functions emphasise provisions of certain costly social services. These are services that do not raise revenue directly. They are rather investment in human capital. Except for agriculture that produces food on the short run, all others produce results that may be more than short term. A lot of money is invested in primary education and health care. It is because of such expenditure implication that these functions are shared with other governments. Of course, if we take a look at local government capital estimates, most of the money goes into these areas especially primary education until very recently.

Finally on functions, we should note that certain changes have taken place between 1991 and the present, especially in the area of concurrent

functions. For example, a commission for primary education has been set up. The commission is now responsible for the funding and management of primary education in the country.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Structures of local government in Nigeria have remained fairly stable since the 1976 reform. More changes have been experienced at the political level because of the different stands of political leadership that run local government administration. At a point, it is the parliamentary type, at other point it is the presidential type. In between, there has been appointment of sole administrators and what is referred to as caretaker or management committees. These to a large extent are undemocratic, especially the sole- administrator system. Their administration of local government has been least responsive even though they record success at bringing into organisation efficiency in services division. The administrative structure was only modified by the 1988 civil service reforms and the presidential system. The single tier structure is still in vogue even though by 1984, the Dasuki Report on local government had recommended establishment of development area which was just for administrative purposes. The functions have however remained more stable with primary education as the knotty problem area.

5.0 SUMMARY

We shall give a summary of this unit as follows:

- local government in Nigeria is a third tier structure
- leadership and political structure have taken on several forms as the parliamentary system, the presidential system, sole administrator system and the caretaker/management committee system
- the secretary was the chief executive of local government between 1976 up to the 1988 civil service reforms. After this, the local government chairman took total charge
- the administrative structure of local governments have remained fairly stable with changes coming in the nomenclature of two departments in 1988. (namely personnel and finance). The director of personnel took effective charge of the functions of the administrative secretary when the latter became politically appointed
- functions of local governments have remained stable since the 1976 reforms with only education serving as the knotty problem area. The medical department has also changed to primary health care department and taken up enormous basic health activities.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Identify mandatory functions that are revenue raising and those that are service providing and those that are administrative.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Gboyega, A. (1987). *Political Values and Local Government in Nigeria*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Ltd.

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MODULE 3 THEORIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Unit 1	Efficiency Theory of Local Government
Unit 2	Democracy Theory of Local Government
Unit 3	Accountability Theory of Local Government

UNIT 1 EFFICIENCY THEORY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
	3.1 Efficiency Theory of Local Government
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have provided the justification for the existence and adoption of local government system in most countries of the world. This unit theoretically provides further explanatory opinions and assumptions for the relevance of local government in the administrative arrangement of a state. Three basic theories will be examined in three successive units. The theories are the efficiency, democracy and accountability theories of local government. This unit will first treat the efficiency theory.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- enumerate by way of recalling the justification for local government existence
- explain the basic values of Local government
- describe the efficiency service theory of local government
- explain the factors that made efficiency service delivery possible at the local level.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Efficiency Theory of Local Government

You have learnt the varied explanations why local government has become accepted to most countries of the world. As you will recall, one of these justifications was for the purpose of decentralisation in order to promote administrative convenience.

Decentralisation is thought necessary because many states are very large in area and in terms of population. It therefore becomes very difficult to administer all part of the nation concerned from the national capital. Decentralisation through local government made possible the creations of small units and centers of government power that can cater for equally smaller numbers of the population.

You also learnt that the burden of governance in the modern day world grows every day. Both man-made and natural disasters affect a nation's everyday existence. This therefore demands that the central government should only concern itself with national issues while minor and local issues should be left to the small units of government.

You were also told that local government serves to bridge the communication gap between the rural, grassroots people and the other higher levels of government. In most cases, the local people are not aware of the existence of the higher levels of government, and likewise, the higher tiers of government are too pre-occupied with national issues and therefore, may not have sufficient time to pay adequate attention to local issues. The local government becomes a tool to bridge the communication gap between the two.

The efficient services or efficiency theory of local government provides insights into the value of local government as a grassroots government. The efficient services theorists believed that the local government occupies the best position for the efficient performances of certain functions. This is made possible because of the nearness of the council to the people, and the smallness of the population.

Firstly, decisions on policy issues are easily and quickly arrived at since the targets of decisions can be quickly reached, consulted and responses (feedback) from them known quickly.

The closeness of the local government similarly makes possible in-depth knowledge of the nature of the problems of the people and invariably the appropriate solutions to the problems. Adequate understanding of the people's problems and the resultant solutions are easier to know because

a large percentage of the localities are indigenes that know the local government area inside-out and have adequate knowledge of the peculiarities of the area.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Highlight and discuss briefly four basic justification local government.
- ii. Discuss the claim that local government is in the best position to provide efficient services.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The smallness of local government area coupled with an equally small population avails local governments the advantage of small scale production of services, which therefore means dealing with a small number of clients, small number of problems, prompt, efficient and effective remedies to the problems. It is based on this very perspective that local governments are created to handle local problems; whereas higher levels of government with larger population and geographical area require more time, financial, personnel and material resources to handle problems within their respective areas.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you learnt the efficient services theory which believes that local government is best placed to engage in efficient service delivery to the local people, because of its narrow geographical area and small population and the limited level of resources required to perform. You also learnt that as a result of the limited operational scope of local government, they enjoy the merit of small-scale production with little capital and labour.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Identify and discuss the basic propositions of the efficiency theory of local government.
- ii. Account for the submission that local government is best positioned to serve the people more efficiently than other tiers of government.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 DEMOCRACY THEORY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Democracy Theory of Local Government
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit presents another theoretical view of local government. The last unit discussed the view of efficient services theorists on local government. According to them, local government occupies the best positions to provide efficient services to the people of the local area; the reasons being that local government operates on the basis of small scale due to the small population being served and also coupled with the smallness of land area. Due to the fact that it renders limited services, only small resources are therefore required to perform its functions.

The local government is also in a vantage position to know the nature of the problems confronting the people and invariably in a better position to know the appropriate solutions better than the higher levels of government. The democracy theory of local government perceived the system from another perspective.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- recall the cardinal opinions of efficiency school of local government
- explain the relevance of local government in the growth and development of democracy in any state
- appreciate the place of local government in political education
- evaluate the political training capacity of local government

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Democracy Theory of Local Government

There is the need to refresh your memory on what you have learnt in the last unit concerning the efficiency theory of local government. According to the theory, local governments occupy the best place in providing efficient theory services to the people because of the smallness of the geographical area, small population coupled with limited resources required. It is also averred that because the local government officials are closer to the people, they have the advantage to appreciate the nature of the problems of the locality and consequently provide the most suited solutions.

The democracy theory of local government focuses on the democratic benefits derivable from the practice of local government system. The theory believes that local government serves as a training ground for political leaders. It holds that most national politicians use local government as leverage for acquiring political training and leadership qualities by first contesting as councilors at the local government level (Ajayi, 2000:6).

After spending some years at the local government level and having secured the necessary experience at that level, these local politicians can then contest politics at higher levels of the state and federal governments. It is based on this opportunity provided that Lord James Bryce remarks that local government is the best school of democracy and the best guarantee for its success is the practice of local self-government.

The concept of self-government at the local level simply implies that it is the local people themselves that govern themselves. This is made possible because the indigenes of the local government area constitute more than 70% of the workforce in the local government. All the political offices in the council such as the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary to the local government, supervisory councilors, house leaders, councilors and other positions are occupied by the indigenes of the area. Even, the workforce mainly consists of the indigenes of the area.

Local government is also seen as one of the institutions which provide political education. This involves the political education of the citizens by the local administrative institutions.. The political role of local governments gives many people who lack either the opportunity or resources for national politics to participate in grassroots politics.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. In what ways can local government be regarded as political training school?
- ii. Discuss the assertion that local government is the best platform for self-government.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The democracy school of local government has projected the institutions as an avenue for political “apprenticeship” for future politicians and national leaders. This is so because it allows local politicians to undergo the necessary training and acquire the basic political and government experience to be able to cope with higher national callings that is necessary in governance and larger politics.

5.0 SUMMARY

You have learnt in this unit that local government serves as a kind of democratic, political school for people at the grassroots to enable them acquire the needed experience for higher political responsibilities. You also learnt that the concept of self-government is best demonstrated at the local government level. This implies that the political and administrative management of the local government is being shouldered by the indigenes of the locality that constitute the bulk of the workforce of the local government.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Discuss the assertion that “local government is the best guarantee for the success of self-government”.
- ii. In what way is local government regarded as a place of “apprenticeship” for local politicians?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3 ACCOUNTABILITY THEORIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Accountability Theory of Local Governments
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit will conclude our discussion on the theories of local government. The first and second units respectively treated efficient services and democracy theories. In this unit, you will learn about Accountability theory. The demand for accountability is germane to good governance. Those who control and manage public resources must be made accountable, while political office holders must be held responsible for their promises and manifestoes to the electorate. The concept of accountability and the demand for it permeates every level of government including the local government.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the basic tenets of efficiency and democracy theories of local government as a way of recalling what you learnt in the previous units
- explain the concept of accountability and what it constitutes
- identify and discuss the basic assumptions of accountability theory as it applies to local governments
- appreciate the important role of accountability in governance.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Accountability Theory of Local Government

It is important to recall what you learnt in the last unit which dealt with the democracy theory of local government. Democracy theory espouses that local government is a training school for politicians and future

leaders because it provides the primary avenue for knowing or learning about the intrigues of politics and complexity of governance. Local government is also perceived by this theory as the best parameter for gauging and guaranteeing the success of the practice of self-government. This submission is informed by the fact that majority of the workforce in the local government is made up of the sons and daughters of the local government area. You also learnt, according to the theory, that local government provides political education for the citizens and thereby affording people at the grassroots to be politically enlightened.

Accountability and control theory of local government views the institution from another perspective. According to these theorists, political participation of the citizens in their local affairs through election ensures they elect their representatives into the local councils. The electorate elects whoever they trust and is competent to shoulder the burden of responsibility of the council. The electorate elects the chairman, councilors, legislators and vice-chairman, from the locality.

The local election allows the electorate to choose between competing claims and contestants. It is through choosing their representatives by themselves that the people can make the representatives accountable (Ajayi, 2000:7).

The implication of the local electorate role of choosing their representatives directly is that they can be made accountable to the people. Again, a major advantage of this practice is that whatever may be the success or failure of the locality, they are in the best position to decide whether the political officials will be re-elected again or rejected at the polls. Consequently, the function of electing the council officials, and the duty of watching and checking them rest with the citizens who are the electorate in the locality.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Evaluate the major contributions of accountability and control theory to the understanding of local government system.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, you learnt the basic propositions of accountability theory of local government. It is the belief of the theory that local government provides the primary opportunity and best avenue to make politicians, right from the grassroots accountable for their political deeds in office. That the local electorate has the power to choose whoever they like to govern them based on the parties programmes (manifesto) which are promises made during electioneering campaigns.

The elected officials are held responsible for the advertised programmes and promises during the campaigns. Since the representatives are answerable to the people through the polls, the future of their political career lies with the people, and therefore, they (the representatives) will strive to perform while in office to the best of their ability. This will determine whether they will be re-elected or not. Participation of the local people in the local administration therefore teaches them the art of weighing and choosing between competing claims and the choice as a just one.

5.0 SUMMARY

- You have learnt in this unit the basic contributions of accountability and control theory to the understanding and relevance of local government institutions as a grassroots government. Specifically, you learnt that the local people participate directly in the choice of their representatives in the local council. They elect the political officials whom they can trust to fulfill their election promises and perform efficiently.
- You also learnt that once the representatives are chosen by the people themselves they can be made accountable to the people. You learnt further that the political future of the local politicians serving in the councils are determined by the people who will determine whether to return the representatives to power or not, based on their success or failure in office. The people are therefore the watchdog of political officials at the grassroots.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Discuss in details the basic propositions of the accountability and control theory of local government.
- ii. Examine the roles played by the local electorate to make council political officials responsible.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Gboyega, A. (1987). *Political Values and Local Government in Nigeria*. Lagos: Malthouse Press.
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MODULE 4

- Unit 1 Imperatives and History of Comparative Local and Public Administration
- Unit 2 Nature, Utility and Problems of Comparative Local Government
- Unit 3 Differences and Similarities in Strategies of Comparative Local Government Administration
- Unit 4 Experimental, Statistical and Case-Study Strategies of Comparative Local Government

UNIT 1 IMPERATIVES AND HISTORY OF COMPARATIVE PUBLIC AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Imperatives for Comparative Study
 - 3.1.1 Everyday Experiences
 - 3.1.2 Requirement for Science of Politics, Public and Local Government Administration
 - 3.1.3 Understanding Administrative Behaviour
 - 3.2 Historical Development before WWII
 - 3.2.1 Development from End of WWII
 - 3.2.2 Development in Contemporary Times
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall mainly focus on why it is necessary to embark on a comparative study of public and local government administration in different settings. You will learn the evolution of comparative public and local government administration as a discipline. A cross national comparisons of political systems is as old as history having had its root in Europe through the works of Aristotle in 4 B.C. You will learn in this unit the different phases of the growth and development of the study.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain why comparative public and local government administration has become an indispensable discipline
- explain how comparative public and local government administration emerged through the historical years
- analyse the nature of comparative public and local government administration
- identify and explain the fundamental motives why students study comparative public and local government administration
- evaluate reasons for different administrative behavior in various settings.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Imperatives for Comparative Study

3.1.1 Everyday Experiences

You go out everyday to your school or work place, market, church or mosque. You also travel to other cities, tourist center or to other countries to find out that in our daily contacts, we evaluate some people as beautiful or ugly, good or bad, hostile or friendly, tall or short, fat or thin.

We also compare non-human objects. Some houses are just simply beautiful and attractive, while others are adjudged as un-fascinating and inhabitable. When we do all these, we are directly or indirectly engaging in comparative analysis. To compare and identify similarities and differences by us are parts of the in-built nature of man. Comparison is therefore a daily affair in our contacts and observation with people and objects.

3.1.2 Requirement for Science of Politics, Public and Local Government Administration

Local government administration is a subset of a country's public administration. It is a special science or management discipline which relies on scientific approach in its findings. It is about understanding all variables/ phenomena in administrative setting. To make its findings valid, it relies on observations for factual data. Similar variables are grouped together, while variations are noted. Feit et al (1978) note that the more variations displayed by examples, the more likely it is that

many cases will have to be studied before reliable generalisations will be possible.

Thus, to make a valid explanatory generalisation on any issue, we need to compare assembled facts (data).

It is therefore a key requirement of science to gather information (data) with examples, compare them, and based on these, make accurate explanatory generalisations which are later built into theories. Observations make comparison possible; the later in turn makes scientific generalisation and theory building possible.

3.1.3 Understanding Administrative Behaviour

Your knowledge of comparative public and local government administration will enable you to appreciate the behavioral attitude in different milieu. Public and local government administration across countries address differently, exhibits various degrees of efficiency, earn different salaries, project differences in conformity with administrative law, perceive accountability and abuse of office (corruption) from different perspectives and so on. All these are as result of varied factors.

Administrative practices are therefore similar in some countries which share some commonalities of factors. Comparative public and local government administration provides the methodology and tool for understanding whatever similarities and differences there are in the different political systems.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. In terms of methodological approach, compare public and local government administration with other disciplines in the social or management sciences.
- ii. Discuss the requirement of scientific study.

3.2 Historical Development before WWII

Comparative study of public and local government administration in its rudimentary form evolved at about 4.B.C through the works of Aristotle. Aristotle was a western political theorist. How did Aristotle start this? In his curiosity to know what happens in other lands, government systems, laws, and regime types, he sought to find out perceivable similarities and differences. In doing this, Aristotle assembled about 130 different national constitutions and carefully studied them. His findings produced two major enduring outcomes namely: one, he was able to evaluate

some government as good or bad. Two, he categorised political systems into different classifications as shown in **fig. 1** below:

No of person who rules	In whose interest power is exercised	
	All (collective) monarch Aristocracy Polity	Themselves (sectional) tyranny kinship Oligarchy Democracy or mob rule

Fig. 1: Aristotle's Classification Scheme

Source: *Modern Political Analysis*. Robert, D. (1984:64). Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs.

The foundation laid by Aristotle later became the basis for contemporary comparative study in politics, public and local government administration. The development of comparative public and local government administration in its contemporary form is traceable to the periods between 1895 and 1920 when comparative research efforts gained momentum.

Max Weber, a German sociologist played significant roles in further advancing its status as a discipline. Robert Freud (1920; 318-344) acknowledged Weber's contributions when he opined that "lifting comparative political and administrative studies from a level of analysis to a height of sophistication, and with breath of scope seldom attained since". More European scholars during the 1930's carried out other comparative studies.

3.2.1 Development from End of WWII

At the end of World War II (WWII), the centre of comparative study of political, public and local government administrations shifted from its traditional European base to the United States. Interest in comparative study became high; a development fuelled by the American Political Science Association (APSA) and the Society for Public Administration (SPA). Several scholars in these associations demonstrated aggressive research efforts towards building a universal comparative theory of public and local government administration.

Another impetus for the growing interest by scholars in comparative studies was the technical assistance programmes of United States, United Nations and private foundations to countries after the war.

Consequently, American students, teachers of public and local government administration and professionals found themselves in foreign countries. This exposure therefore stimulated interest in making comparison between American and Western and nonwestern political systems and practices imperative (Dwight Waldo, 1984: 4-18).

The post war period also coincided with the behavioral science movement in Europe and particularly in America. The movement was characterised by scientific methodology in making enquires. Scientific enquiry became a norm in many discipline, and without being an exception, it was attended to by the study of administration. There was emphasis on observations and other techniques for data collection for hypotheses testing and generalisations.

3.2.2 Development in Contemporary Times

The impact of behavioral science continued to be felt in the field of comparative administration beyond the post war era. The Comparative Administration Group (CAG) was formed in the 1960s.

The group committed all available resources towards building a universally accepted theory of public and local government administration through comparative study and analysis. Toward this end, scholar's developed various theories for the understanding of different societies.

Fred Riggs, for instance, developed the theory of prismatic society based on his study of public administration in non western institutions that were legal-rational, in form but not in traditional as a matter fact (Riggs, 1964).

Scholarly interest in comparative studies not only continued during the 1960s but also spread beyond Europe and American sphere to the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America. Between 1965 and 1975, publications on comparative public and local government administration flourished as reflected in a number of books written basically on comparative public and local government administration, including articles on the topic published in journals, monographs and conference proceedings.

The scientific basis of the study continues to be consolidated and efforts intensified in its competition with the natural and physical sciences, regarding the scientific methodology approach. The era of globalisation and the ease in information gathering through super information technology has facilitated easier comparative research. This is because data on across national administrative practice can be sourced on the

internet and websites. Global system of mobile phones equally eased the problem of oral research interviews across the globe.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Examine the contributions of Aristotle, American government and other agencies to the development of contemporary public and local government administration.
- ii. Highlight the fundamental requirements for science of politics, public and local government administration.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, the basis for studying comparative public and local government administration was examined, as comparison is part of our daily life. As you move along, you compare in your mind the people, objects, houses, animals and musical songs we come across implying that, comparison is as old as man.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you learnt the imperatives and historical background of comparative public and local government administration. You learnt the comparison is as old as man because in our daily life we do compare things, people and institutions.

- You also learnt about the science of politics, public and local government administration which burdens on the application of science methodology to the study of comparative administration. You, in addition, learnt that the essence of science of comparative public and local government administration is to build theories of comparative public and local government administration which are universally acceptable and verifiable.
- You also learnt that enhancing your capacity for understanding administrative behavior is a key motive of comparative public and local government administration studies.
- Again, you also learnt that historically, comparative public and local government administration emerged in Europe through the works of Aristotle in 4 B.C. It was later that more European scholars joined in carrying out various comparative studies.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Explain reasons why you think the study of comparative public and local government administration is desirable.
- ii. Examine the basic contributions of Aristotle and American institutions to the growth and development of comparative administration.

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UNIT 2 NATURE, UTILITY AND PROBLEMS OF COMPARATIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Nature, Utility and Problems of Comparative Local Government
 - 3.1.1 Nature of Comparative Local Government
 - 3.1.2 Utility of Comparative Local Government
 - 3.1.3 Problems in Comparing Local Governments
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the last unit, you learnt the basis for studying comparative local government and its historical background. You specifically learnt that making comparisons between objects and people is as old as man. This is because our everyday activities are full of making comparison either directly or indirectly.

However, you learnt that the initial most systematic attempt at comparing local government system was made by Aristotle. His achievements invariably became the foundation for contemporary studies in comparative local government.

You also learnt that after WWII, the focus of development attention of comparative studies shifted from Europe to the United States, where the government, the United Nations and private institutions sponsored varied technical assistance programmes, which enabled local administration, lecturers of local government administration and professionals to travel to foreign countries. This exposure stimulated greater interest in comparative study resources on American, European and Non-western political systems.

In this unit, you will learn the nature, utility and problems of comparative government as a discipline. The nature of comparative government administration reflects its major concern as a field of study, while utility is concerned with its values. Like other disciplines, comparative study of local government has its own peculiar problems.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this study, you should be able to:

- explain the subject matter of comparative local government
- describe the values of the study
- appreciate the major constraints facing comparative studies researches
- evaluate why administrators behave the way they do
- explain the major problems confronting researchers of cross national administrative studies.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Nature, Utility and Problems of Comparative Local Government

3.1.1 Nature of Comparative Local Government

The nature of comparative local government reflects its major concern as a field of study. The primary goal of the discipline is in line with the scientific demand which is to build and test proposition about administration, and assumption that is universally shared within the public administration fraternity (Signalman, 1976; 621-25).

It is committed to verifiable generalised statement about local government across political systems and different environments. It is believed by scholars of comparative local government studies that public officials, the entire political process will perform better if local government and its practice can be rooted in developed theoretical and empirical foundations.

Signalman believed that local government which reflects theorising and empirical research as its core activities denies its adherents (and practitioners) any legitimate claim to political influence. Essentially, therefore, comparative local government's major interest is building theories from the study of local government practice in different political settings so as to generate a universal theory of local government that can be applied to varied cultures and political environments.

3.1.2 Utility of Comparative Local Government

Comparative local government has two major values which are enumerated as follows:

1. It affords us as scholars, analysts and practitioners greater understanding of local government across national boundaries. Observed difference in practice and scope can be situated within varied identifiable factors, including ecology which encompasses very many other factors such as the type of political system, culture, economy, level of education and other variables. These factors will also determine the level of efficiency of practitioners. Thus, the local government system can be evaluated as efficient or inefficient depending on the prevailing internal factors.
2. Understanding administrative behavior of bureaucrats and political officials is another enduring legacy of comparative administrative study. Bureaucrats or administrators of each country have their peculiar characters and behavior different from others in another country. Therefore, among the tasks of comparative local government is the administrative behavior which covers different political settings. Generally, knowledge of comparative local government administration saves scholars and practitioners some embarrassment and surprise when having the advantages to operate beyond their immediate political and cultural environments.

3.1.3 Problems of Comparing Local Governments

As a field study, comparative local government scholars are confronted with various limitations and challenges. First, is the problem of openness of some countries. Some countries are open, while others are closed in varied degrees. Freedom in terms of accessibility to crucial data is greater in the liberal developed western countries.

Data on issue, even including to a large extent, on security and defense, are readily made available to comparative researchers. But one cannot say the same about closed societies such as China and the former socialist states. Search for comparative data could be translated to espionage, stealing of cultural property, spying and sabotage. These are all criminal offences with heavy punishment. Therefore, concluding comparative research in these political systems is a high risk.

Further compounding the problem of data gathering is issue of differences in the level of information dissemination. Some countries such as the western world, enjoy advanced information technology, including modern telephone communication system and satellite, radio and television facilities, and marine and orbit information technology. These arrays of technological inventions afford easy data collection about other countries without leaving one's shores. The Third World does not enjoy these kinds of facilities as they lack the technological know-how for developing them.

While data collected through the internet and website exploration has become a tradition in America, Europe and Australia; it is yet to take proper shape in academic researchers in Africa, Latin America and Asia because of lack of basic infrastructure such as regular provision of electricity.

Regime types also condition accessibility to information and data. Some countries are democratic, while others are dictatorships including military rule. Democratic regimes afford researchers ample freedom to conduct investigations and collect data including interviews and examination of documents such as parliamentary proceedings, cabinet papers and so on. But dictatorship regimes foreclose such opportunities, and researchers can even be passed as spies, saboteurs and opposition agents. Comparative studies are therefore made difficult in such environments.

Introduction of behavioral, scientific approach to the study of administrative behavior is also faulted. It is believed by people, that political and bureaucratic officials are unpredictable and therefore not readily subjected to scientific assessment compared to non-living things and lower animals.

The non-predictability of political leaders had on many occasions led to frequent changes in administrative systems and styles. For instance, in Nigeria, during the Babangida administration, permanent secretary was changed to director-general in 1998, while the situation was reversed by the Abacha regime in 1997. Some other administrative changes were effected during Obasanjo's regime.

Therefore, behavioral instability of leaders, coupled with actual political instability is a major problem to comparative studies in local government administration.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

In what ways is the administrative behavior of local government administration in your country different from those of other country?

4.0 CONCLUSION

You have learnt that your daily experiences have always involved comparing people and objects. Comparative local government administration as a scientific discipline makes it possible for you to explain administrative behavior of administrators across national borders.

Its methodological orientation becomes more emphasised since the end of WWII and its progressive development has not waned since then. You also learnt that comparative study of local government administration goes beyond national borders and has its own limitations embedded in human factors and variations in level of political stability.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has explained to you why it is necessary to study comparative local government administration. You were told that it makes possible the understanding of administrative behavior in different political and cultural settings.

- You also learnt about the nature, utility and problems of comparative local government administration, which provides theories that can be universally applied in the analysis of local government administration of countries. The unpredictability of human beings coupled with variations in the degrees of openness and technological development of countries pose the most serious problem to comparative studies of local government.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Assuming, a German scholar is in Nigeria for comparative research investigations on the country's local government administration, enumerate and discuss the problems that may confront the German in the research endeavour.

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UNIT 3 DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES IN STRATEGIES OF COMPARATIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Differences and Similarities in Strategies
 - 3.1.1 Difference Approach
 - 3.1.2 Similarities Approach
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment.
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Strategies of comparative public and local government administration deal with the various methods of making comparative analysis. You will learn the differences, similarities, experimental, statistical and case study methods of comparative public and local government administration in general.

However, this unit will specifically address the differences and similarities strategies of comparative public and local government administration.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the basic approaches for making comparison
- identify differences between a seemingly similar people, object and institutions
- describe similarities between likely different people, object and institutions
- recall the basic explanations of the two strategies learnt

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Differences and Similarities Strategies

3.1.1 The Differences Approach

In your everyday contacts with people, objects, institutions and practices, you tend to believe that the only identifiable attribute between or among them is that they all look differently. The only perceivable difference between two women is that one is fat and the other is thin. One house is beautiful, the other one is not.

The differences approach proffers a contrary opinion. First, it acknowledges the fact that there may be differences between the people, objects and institutions, but at the same time, there are similarities between the compared people, objects or particles no matter how few or non-prominent.

For instance, the administrative behavior of public and local government administration in the Western world may be significantly different in forms of belief about corruption and abuse of offices, but the basic bureaucratic principles regarding hierarchical structure and which rules regulations are common and shared between the two.

Japanese workers are noted for their exceptional industry and efficiency contrary to Nigeria workers. On the other hand, the political officials of both political systems are corrupt with varying degrees. It is therefore the contribution of the approach that no two things or people are totally different without some element of similarity.

3.1.2 The Similarities Approach

It is often claimed that there are identical twins, or that there are people that look “exactly alike” to the extent that many people, including their parents on some occasions, cannot differentiate between the two. To compound the problems of observers, friends and relations, the identical twins most of the time dress and talk the same way. These are indeed realities.

However, despite the constraint in differentiating similar people and things, the similarity approach enables us to know that there are some differences in very similar cases, no matter how small or few. For instance, a small dot on the ear of the identical twins is enough to give him away. One may be a fraction of an inch taller than the other.

In terms of behavioral attitude, one may be polite than the other. Two cars of the same brand definitely have differences which could be in terms of colour, chassis number or year of manufacture. United States of America and Nigeria are both practicing democratic administration, but the America democracy is older than that of Nigeria. You should note that in all cases therefore, there are no totally similar people, things system or practice. In a way, things, people, system and countries have their differences.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Look very well around you and identify two people or objects that are contradictorily different. Highlight ten ways in which they look similar (variations of answers are acceptable).
- ii. Ghana and Nigeria are both developing African countries with emerging democracies, highlight ten attributes that makes them look un-similar.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This unit has treated two methodologies of analysis in comparative public and local government administration. Each discipline has its own way of doing things, ways of analysis, and ways of research enquiries. The two strategies you learnt here are unique in that you might probably in the past, like most other observers, thought that similar things are so similar or look alike in all respects. Or think that all things or people who look very un-similar or different do not have common features at all. You have learnt in this unit that is not the case.

5.0 SUMMARY

You have also learnt in this unit two major approaches in the practice of making comparisons in comparative public and local government administration. You learnt that the differences approach concern identifying points of similarities in two seemingly different objects, people, countries or practices. The approach believes that whatever may be the differences there is also a little similarity.

The similarity approach has a direct opposite thinking with the differences approach. It believes that differences exist between people, objects, particles and countries despite the fact they seemingly look similar. That though, the differences may be so insignificant, yet the little differences, really makes the difference.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- i. Identify and discuss the major attributes of differences and similarities in approaches in comparative public and local government administration.
- ii. Ghana and Nigeria are both developing countries in Africa with emerging democracies highlight 10 attributes that make them look un-similar.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Akindele, S. T. *et al.* (1996). *The Subject Matter of Political Science*. Ibadan: College Press.

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UNIT 4 EXPERIMENTAL, STATISTICAL AND CASE STUDY STRATEGIES OF COMPARATIVES LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Experimental Approach
 - 3.1.1 Experimental and Control Groups
 - 3.2 The Statistical Approach
 - 3.2.1 Partial Correlation of Variables
 - 3.3 The Case Study Approach
 - 3.3.1 Stereotypes
 - 3.3.2 Categories
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment.
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the last unit, you learnt about differences and similarities approaches in the study of local government. You should be able to recall the major facts in the two approaches.

You learnt that the differences approach concerns itself with identifying some similarities between the objects, people, practices systems and countries that we are comparing. The method makes us believe that no matter the degree of differences between what we may be comparing that there are some similarities also between them, no matter how little or insignificant.

You also learnt in the second approach, which is the similarities approach based on the same principles of differences method. It submits that no matter the level of similarities between what is compared, they are not totally similar as there are some differences between them, no matter how little.

In this unit, you will learn further about the other methods utilised in local government studies, such as the experimental approach. Each of them has its own uniqueness.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- recall the basic facts about differences and similarities approach
- explain the basic principles of experimental approach
- explain the concept of control group and experimental group
- analyse how case-study approach works
- describe how statistical tools can be used for comparative analysis.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Experimental Approach

3.1.1 Experimental Approach and Control Groups

You have learnt before that the goal of the experimental approach is to make verifiable comparison of cases based on scientific explanations. In doing this, two equivalent groups are provided, one group is labeled experimental group while the other is the control group. A stimulus which we may also call an independent variable is introduced by the experimental group, though it is derived from the control group.

Therefore, the two groups are kept on observation to evaluate the effects of the stimulus. A concrete example of this situation is testing the effect of alcohol on the two groups.

Some of your friends do take alcoholic drinks such as beer. It is therefore easy for us to predict the outcome on the experimental group to which it was introduced. Drunkenness is the effect experienced by the experimental group provided no variable was introduced.

The control group did not experience drunkenness because it was not introduced to the alcohol stimulus. Comparative explanations can be made on the two groups based on the scientific experiment on them. You need to know that experimental comparative approach has limitations bordering on what was previously said.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Design an experiment on your own which should involve an experimental group and a control group; introduce a stimulus to the experimental group only and later measure its effects. Compare the relationship between the two groups thereafter.

3.2 The Statistical Approach

3.2.1 Partial Correlation of Variables

You have just learnt that experimental approach aims at scientific explanation about certain issues. The statistical approach has similar aim, though its processes are not the same.

The difference in their processes concerns the manipulation of empirically observed data in the statistical method but which is not possible in the experimental method, so as to identify controlled relationship among the variables.

Partial correlation is used to deal with the problem of controlling the variables. For example Agagu (2001:21) said if you want to look into relationship between political participation and level of education attained, a student should control the influence of age because younger generations have received more education than older generations.

A student can achieve this by dividing his sample into a number of different age groups and looking at the correlation (relationship) between participation and education within each age bracket.

In essence, statistical approach is about identifying relationship between variables (education and political participation), pointing out how and to what degree one has brought impact or influence on the other.

You should note that statistical approach seems to be an approximation of experimental method as they both share the logical attributes of science, but this should not be taken to mean that they are equivalent to each other. This is because; statistical approach lacks the control aspect of the experimental method.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Appraise the essential distinctions between experimental method and Statistical approach of local government.

3.3 The Case Study Approach

3.3.1 Stereotypes

This is more common in the advanced world, where particular crimes are arrogated to certain groups and races because of past cases involving one of its nationals.

The case study approach in essence is about focusing on a single, specific case at a time. The value of this case study is that it gives ample opportunity for a thorough consideration of all attributes of a case at hand. And on the basis of the findings, propose general propositions that can eventually lead to theory building.

3.3.2 Categories

You learnt in unit **3.1.1** that the focus of the case study method is “one case at a time”, so as to generate proposition that can be applied to a larger group. Students should note the various categories of case study approach. They are the descriptive theoretical and hypothesis-generating case studies.

- **Descriptive Case Study**
Descriptive case study essentially describes the basic attitudes of a particular case. It does not aim at providing explanations for an action, but just to describe the actions exhibited by the case. It has the advantage of providing large volumes of data that are useful for theory building arising from generalisations.
- **Theoretical Case Study**
A theoretical case study has its goals in providing an extensive analysis of the areas of interests in the case being studied rather than trying to build theories. It throws more light on the case by examining it in all its ramifications.
A theoretical case study, according to Lizphart (1971), is a study in applied sciences since it does not aim to contribute to empirical generalisations. Consequently its value in terms of theory-building is nil.
- **Hypothesis Generating Case Study**
This type of case study is motivated by a desire to formulate general propositions that may lead to theory-building. It begins with some basic assumptions meant to be tested by gathering basic data.
Hypothesis generating case study is a direct contradiction to a theoretical case study. As you have learnt, a theoretical case study is motivated by the need to formulate a general theoretical construct.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Distinguish between theoretical and descriptive case study.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, you were introduced to various approaches (methods) which can be used to compare political and administrative systems and behavior. Some of these methods aim at generalisation that leads to theory building, while others are motivated by mere descriptions of the attributes of the cases rather than providing generalisations for theory-building. You should employ some of these methods on your own in your daily attempts at distinguishing people, things and issues.

5.0 SUMMARY

What you have learnt in this unit is the numerous methods you can use to compare administrative systems, practice and behaviour. You learnt five (5) methods altogether. The differences methods identify similarities in cases, while the similarity methods identify differences. The experimental and control groups for its comparative explanations, is based on the introduction and measurement of a stimulus in one group (experimental). Statistical approach uses partial correlation to gauge the relationships between variables such as education and political participation. The case study method concentrates on the examination of the attributes of only one case which is seen as sufficient enough to make generalisations .

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

The case study methods of local government studies gives room for stereotyping, describing in details the various categories of the method. Identify and discuss the major elements of experimental approach.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 5

- Unit 1 Local Government as an Instrument of Development
- Unit 2 Problems of Development at Local Government Level

UNIT 1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AS AN INSTRUMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Meaning of Development in Local Government
 - 3.2 Development Potentials of Local Government
 - 3.3 Planning and the Development Process in Local Government
 - 3.4 Achievements of Performance
 - 3.4.1 General Assessment of Performance
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

At grassroots level, people are more interested in imperial development, which has to do with institution building. In assessing the role of local government, people are interested in physical development by sighting physical infrastructures. These dovetails to the projects whose general functions can be of benefit to communities within a given period of time. The question is what have been delivered and what have been the obstacles in the attempt to deliver them. These are the concerns of this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify what constitutes development at the local government level
- describe the planning and development process in local governments

- identify the nature of projects associated with various sections in the budget
- give examples of what services have been actually delivered by local governments.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Meaning of Development in Local Government

The meaning of development may be difficult to pin down but it points at some quantitative and qualitative advancement in structures, values and skills in a society. It deals with advancement, progress, increase, transformation etc. Development therefore is movement to a much more desirable stage than the one presently experienced.

Development is supposed to tackle obstacles, be they human or physical. Conquering this means making progress. Overall, development should improve the content and quality of life of individuals or groups or the community as a whole.

In local government administration, such areas where such improvement is required are infrastructure like roads and markets. It also includes service areas like education, health, sanitation, works etc. This is a breakdown of local government services and functions. The question is how have local governments gone ahead to handle these projects and services and what has actually been delivered and at what cost.

3.2 Development Potentials of Local Government

Local governments are known as agents of transformation at the grassroots level, because of the capabilities of local government to bring about development at the local communities. These capabilities are based on their potentials. Such potentials are sourced from their constitutional basis, their financial wherewithal, their quality of personnel, the quality of leadership and the support they get from the local communities. When these variables are rolled together in an optimum mix, there should be no reason for not performing its role of socio- economic development.

What is required of local governments is how to plan for resource mobilisation (both funds and community resources) and translate these into services. Planning becomes the key instrument here which must be backed up by good and dynamic leadership and a good human and capital resource base.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What constitutes the development potentials of local government?

3.3 Planning and the Development Process in Local Government

Planning is considered as a proposal of action of a person, group or government within a given environment, providing obstacles and opportunities which the policy is proposed to utilise and overcome in an effort to reach a goal or realise its objectives or a purpose (Frederick, 1963).

Simply put, planning brings to focus the need for efficient allocation of scarce resources in any society or by every organisation. Planning therefore refers to the process of preparing a set of decisions for future action directed at achieving goals by some means. The key elements in a plan therefore are:

- it is futuristic in nature
- it is goal oriented
- it is prescriptive (i.e. based on existing order, it prescribes steps to follow in future)
- planning is an administrative and management ability undertaken by government's organisation and groups.

A planning document at the local government level goes through the following process:

- a. the statement of goals or objectives
- b. an analysis of system structure i.e. components of the problem and how they are interrelated
- c. evaluation and selection of possible solution to problems
- d. the design of the implementation procedure (i.e how these solutions are to be translated into concrete actions).

In a local government set up, there are short, medium and long-term planning structures. The importance of planning for development, therefore, is that the plan states its objectives in relation to development, the activities to be engaged in and how they are arrived at, the cost of the activities and projects, and the strategies for implementing the activities. It is these activities that translate into policies, programmes, sub-programmes, and projects in local governments. These are concretely conveyed or elaborated on by the local government budget, where concrete plan for the year is drawn and concrete projects and services are itemised, including their costs; the approval of this

kickstarts their implementation. It is the implementation of these that translates into infrastructural and other socio-economic development in the local councils. When a particular project in the plan cannot be implemented in a given year, it is rolled over into the following year. But the pending issue(s) still remains, what is the impact of grassroots development as regards the rural existence.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What constitutes developments in a local council?

- i. Planning
- ii. Policies
- iii. Programmes
- iv. Budgeting
- v. Implementation
- vi. Project and Services
- vii. Development

3.4 Achievements or Performance

It is very difficult to put the achievements of local government in a project form. There are however different ways of assessing achievements or physical performance.

One of the ways of assessment is to look at the functional schedule of local government and measure to what extent each has been performed. Another way is to look at the plans of local government and assess them in terms of implementation according to the time frame and the projects.

Moreover, assessment can be done by taking a look at the local government capital budget and assess how much of the projects and services that are targeted have been implemented. One can also look at the chairman's annual address on achievements in his local government and get a feel of what the local government has been able to do. There are various sources and yardsticks and many studies and evaluations carried out in the local councils' physical performance are drawn from these sources.

3.4.1 General Assessment of Performance

In Nigeria, the exclusive or mandatory functions of local governments have lagged behind the concurrent functions. The first mandatory function of local governments is that of planning. Local governments have not taken the issue of planning very seriously. They rather engage in perfunctory planning, but sooner or later jettison the document partly

because of the instability in government leadership. The incoming executive does not always believe in the efficacy or relevance of the plan he meets on the ground and so it is avoided. Some chief executives do not even believe in plans as they feel that plan do not support their own attitude to development.

The other mandatory functions which are largely revenue generation do not receive considerable attention either. Apart from markets and motor parks, community tax and collection of rates on shops and business premises, the very lucrative ones like radio and television licensing and property rating do not appear to be exploited. In fact, most local governments in the rural areas rely on markets as their major source of internal revenue. In the same vein, services like roads, naming of streets, street lighting, recreation, sanitation and burial grounds and cemeteries are not given the right priorities.

On the other hand, local governments concentrate on the concurrent functions of agriculture, health and education where the tendency for expenditure is higher. They do not emphasise revenue generation but prefer to wait for the monthly grants from the federation account to pay salaries and pay contractors for projects whether executed or not. Local governments do more of expending than generating. This is one of the biggest problems of local governments in development today. When politicians campaign, nobody asks them about where they are going to get money to deliver on their campaign promises. The answers are of course from the federation account. There is almost a zero initiative about transforming the rural economy in order to expand the wealth and tax base which in turn will provide adequate funds for local administration.

The vibrant departments in the local councils are the primary health care, education and until recently agriculture.

Primary healthcare is implementing the national primary health care policy and therefore receives additional funding or assistance from the federal and state governments and even international donors from time to time. In local governments, the United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) assisted programmes on capacity building and safe delivery are evident. The Bamako initiative has also been a big project of the international agencies and the federal government. Local government builds, equips and staffs rural health facilities. The major problem has been the sustainability of drug supply.

Primary education was hitherto a programme of local governments, but the national primary education commission has taken this over. Nevertheless, local governments still control this aspect due to

deductions from the source of teachers' salaries. This has thrown many local council into debts. This is the source of the 'Zero Allocation'. The commission builds schools, so do local governments. Both bodies also equip them. The local inspection and coordination however rests with the local authority education committee of which the chairman of local governments still head.

Agriculture is not vibrant as other sectors. Most of the activities associated with agriculture are fertilizer procurement and distribution, farm inputs, seed multiplication, tractor hiring and forestry. Serious funds are not allocated to this sector. Fertilizer appears to be the most vibrant activity in a lot of local councils especially in the north. Animal husbandry is also an activity that is promoted. Tractor hiring is important, especially, for people in the North because of the suitability of the land for mechanical ploughing.

In terms of rural works, local governments can boast of attempts to provide trunk C roads, culverts, drains, building of markets, and motor parks, small scale irrigation works, boreholes as well as television viewing centers, staff houses, district heads' house, latrines and a few demonstration.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

In what ways can we assess development at the local level?

4.0 CONCLUSION

Development in local government may not be straight forward to report. This can however be done by looking at functions, projects in plans and budgets and the physical or actual budgets on the ground. To be meaningful, the financial allocation to these projects and services will allow the reader appreciate the nature and quality of such projects.

The clue to understanding development at the local level is the capital budget. The amount allocated to this vis-vis the recurrent expenditure is indicative of the development potentials and attention.

Local governments tend to perform more of the concurrent functions than the exclusives ones. This is because it is less painful to spend than to generate revenue. The statutory allocation encourages them to spend without recourse to their internal source which leads to their lack of attention to these sources.

The items of expenditure of local governments remain very basic yet local governments find it difficult to implement these. The difficulty in

providing services is as important as the level of services that has been delivered.

5.0 SUMMARY

Having gone through this unit, it can then be summarised as follows:

- development at a local level, especially as contained in the functional schedule of local governments, is mainly a socio-economic issue. These consists of projects, infrastructure and services
- a local government's development potentials lie in its revenue base, leadership quality and personnel quality, and support from local communities
- general achievements or performance of local governments lie in the concurrent functions and a few items under exclusive functions
- local governments spend more than they generate. The statutory allocation has been responsible for this.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

In what ways can we describe local government as an instrument of development at the community level?

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UNIT 2 PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Finance
 - 3.1.2 Personnel Incompetence
 - 3.1.3 Politics and Leadership
 - 3.1.4 The Community
 - 3.1.5 Intergovernmental Relations
 - 3.1.6 Planning and Ideology.
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further-Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you can state categorically that measuring development in local councils can be done in form of structural facilities provided and service delivered. Development has been largely discussed around functional, budgetary and project activities. In this unit, you would be concretely exposed to the specific problems local government are facing in the provision of efficient service delivery or rural infrastructure. These problems revolve around the finances of local governments, personnel, politics, community or societal problem, inter governmental relations and a lack of effective planning and local government ideology.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the major problems militating against local governments (in Nigeria) in their developmental efforts
- raise two issues discussed under each of these factors or problems

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Problem Areas

As mentioned in the introduction, the problem areas to be discussed are, finance, personnel, politics and leadership, community attitude,

intergovernmental relations, planning and ideology. This is one way of classifying these problems.

3.1.1 Finance

Finance is mainstay of local government development, but too much money is spent on recurrent budget, sometimes up to 80-90% leaving a smaller percentage for social and economic services. This is in consonance with the low base of internally generating revenue capacity of local governments, which amounts to only 10% of the total local government revenue. The over-dependence on statutory allocation has made the prospect of economic and social development rather slow in the local government. Coupled with this, leadership is slow to explore alternative sources of revenue in local governments.

Despite the low level of finance, massive corruption takes place in the local government. Both administrative and political officials are involved. Contracts are issued even to council staff and politicians. Evidence of corruption surfaces from inspectors reports and probe panels into local government council funds.

3.1.2 Personnel and Competence

Surveys have shown that in recent years, the quantum of staff has increased. Also, there has been more quality staff in administration than the technical and professional fields in local governments. A survey in 1977 by the UNDP shows that the planning and research unit of local government has been under-staffed and those that managed these units do not receive any special training to prepare them for the job. One also hardly finds an economist or a statistician or a social scientist in this department. Many of the staff in the health departments are merely community health workers. Medical doctors are difficult to come by. Agriculturalists are largely those who have gone for one diploma course or the other. The import of all these is the fact that planning for development is handicapped in local governments because of the dearth of qualified staff. Plans therefore become an incremental thing, a traditional muddling through, than an objective and data fed-document. Professional advice to politician too suffers as a result of the quality of intellectual weight brought to bear on the exercise. When it comes to implementation, it is replete with the same stories. Targets and standards in plans may suffer as a result of paucity of professional requirement and competence. Even where there are qualified staff to do this, they will still fall victim of the corruptive influence of society brought to bear by either the contractor or politicians or community pressure. In summary, local government lacks the executive, technical and

professional competence to formulate good plans and to implement them.

3.1.3 Politics and Leadership

The attitude of politicians to development may not coincide with established ways to doing community needs assessment by the local government bureaucracy. Some projects are outrageously sited even without assessing their utility. Political criteria overrides data based issues. The politician imposes his will partly because of the impulse driven by his constituency needs and because of his party manifesto. More importantly is his perception of community and the goings in the other tiers of government. Because corruption is fashionable and politics has become an avenue of getting rich, the chairman sees his period in power as his own opportunity to amass wealth. So the few resources base of the local government is illegitimately depleted leaving the crumbs for developmental purposes. This is the problem of development today. Governance has become a reward system for contractors and party supporters. There is a large retinue of local supporters who have to be catered for from the lean resources base of local government.

3.1.4 The Community

The communities often feel marginalised in development. Even community development efforts are not adequately supported by local government. Even where the intervention occurs, it is not done in a participatory manner. The net effect of this is that the community feels marginalised from development programs and efforts.

This also affects the sustainability of projects. The more programs and projects are community-driven and participatory, the more the community would want to own and sustain the program. This is a far cry from what happened at the local level. This is why the community is not bothered on the issues of theft or fraud.

Community attitude also reinforces the corruptive attitude of politicians. Instead of demanding for accountability from politicians who amass lots of wealth and status symbols while in office, they perceive this as the ultimate objectives of politics. Going into politics means going to defraud the council and where politics stops at primitive accumulation without results, development hardly becomes an objective.

3.1.5 Intergovernmental Relations

Intergovernmental relationships in Nigeria are usually associated with control. Too many things are being controlled like the personnel,

finance, guidelines for administrative practices, budgets, projects etc. Control may be functional but to the extent that it facilitates the business of government in an efficient and effective manner. It has been realised, however, that control in a lot of cases impede development. Control of finance which is revenue and disbursement has hampered development in the past. When money is centrally paid into a joint account for local governments, local government tampers with this thus reducing the volume of funds coming to local government for development. In Nigeria, most state governments do not remit their 10% statutory allocation of their internal revenue to local governments. Worse still, local governments keep getting circulars and directives from the state that amount to extra budgetary commitment. This is because even without their knowledge, approval would have been issued by the state government directing them to do certain purchases or contribute to one project or the other, which in almost all cases, may not have been their budgetary commitment. The implication is that they have to abandon their original budget to take care of such projects. This is not healthy for development, let alone planned development at the local government level.

Furthermore, call circular from the ministry at the beginning of the budget exercise restricting the expenditures of local government and allocations to certain areas or sectors expenditure is not healthy for local government development. Development ought to be based on a need assessment of local communities. These functions should be performed by operational departments in the local governments and with ready-made data from extension workers. Such imposition does not always augur well for elected officials who want to deliver on their promises.

Inter-governmental relations and politics also demoralise the local government development efforts. Sometimes, some state chief executives impose candidates on local governments or communities and by the time candidates get power, he sees himself as more accountable to the state rather than to the people. Some sections of the community may avoid his administration and refuse to be drawn into any participatory overtures. The rapport between communities and such chief executive cannot guarantee the necessary development.

State policies on personnel may also end up being detrimental to development in a way. Certain personnel of local government are key to development efforts, but some of these personnel insist on the right thing- an internal auditor who insists on standards before approvals are given and cheques released. The impatient local government chairman may consider this as an affront, or politicise these actions and brand these personnel as enemies of his administration. He could liaise with state officials at the service commission and ministry and effect such an

officer's transfer. Pliable officers could replace them and that would be the end of efficiency and quality project in that local government.

Associated with the above is the way inspectors' reports are treated at the state level. Many of their reports are politically treated rather than the administrative consideration they deserve. This encourages corruption at the local councils.

3.1.6 Planning and Ideology

Local governments' plans in Nigeria are supposed to fit into state and national plans. In the 1975 plans, the federal government came up with very sketchy phrases that defined the objectives of the plan such as 'a just and egalitarian society'; 'a land full of promises and opportunities' etc. These were supposed to serve as the ideology of the plan. Since then, subsequent plans built their overall objective around these.

However, the implementation of plans since 1974-80 has not demonstrated any systematic effort to achieve the objectives. Instead, plans have become more and more meaningless because they become mere documents of intentions rather than documents of commitments.

This attitude has spilled over to the state and local governments. State governments have not demonstrated any leadership planning, and neither have they showed any commitments. If plans are instruments for developments, which they are, the lack of commitments to them means lack of systematised development. The type of development that takes place at the state and local government levels are impulsive, haphazard and un-coordinate. The cumulative effects of the plan cannot be seen; neither can the evidence of phased development.

Even in the type of development, planning has not benefitted the rural population much. The state and local governments are satisfied with the provision of social services and rural infrastructure. Their hope is that this will always stimulate the rural economy. There is no direct or concerted efforts or attempt in their part to intervene in real economic development. Attempts have stopped in either agriculture or building of rural markets. Agricultural production is not enough to stimulate the rural economy. Even then, it is bedeviled by many problems. Markets can be seen as mere social and commercial entities that facilitates trade. The real problem is in the area of production. Agricultural production alone cannot improve the economic nature which ought to have been promoted by now; so also glaring area like small scale industries of an agrarian nature relevant to community resources. Such direct interventions are lacking and until more investment is planned in

employment-generating ventures in rural communities, the standards of living of the rural person will not appreciate. This is really the challenge of local government as they plan rural development. The capitalist ideology which operates at the national level must also start penetrating the rural areas for concomitant development.

All these will require a more positive, dynamic and even selfish attitude to development on the part of leadership. This is so because this requires substantial capital outlays and sustained monitoring and interaction with local communities.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Highlight the main issues under the financing of local councils.

4.0 CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, local government problems can be classified as institutional problems, political problems and societal problems. A lot of problems have been institutional, which includes personnel, finance, planning, and intergovernmental relations that relates to the way the local governments operate.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, the problems of local government administration in its developmental process were identified to include:

- 1. Finance**
This is the bedrock of local government development but in terms of revenue base and even the way these revenues are managed, they do not portend good prospects for development.
- 2. Personnel and Competence**
There is the problem of qualified personnel in the technical and professional departments in local government and unfortunately these are the staff that implements and monitors local government developments projects.
- 3. Politics**
The attitude of politicians is such that they see local government as a rehabilitation center rather than as an instrument of development. They pursue policies that promote their welfare rather than the overall development of the institution and the society. A very important factor in policies and leadership is the unstable leadership at the local level. This encourages disjuncture

in development, which incidentally is an important factor in policy formulation.

4. **Community Attitude**

The value system of the community is such that does not promote development. It encourages and condones corrupt practices which are antithetical to development. Furthermore, local government policies alienate communities, especially at the level of participatory decision-making and so communities feel marginalised and are unaffected by the government programmes.

5. **Intergovernmental Relations**

Control of local governments can be negative to development. This manifests in interference in local government service. Such interference prevents local governments from implementing their plans and budgets, since state governments direct from time to time new expenditures to be funded by local governments (outside local governments own budgets). So also are delays in approvals of budgets, thereby threatening the timing and target of activities planned for.

6. **Planning and Ideology**

The plan document has become just a document of intention and not commitment. All tiers of government pay lip service to plans. There is no sustained ideological commitment to the spirit of the plan. A lot of effort has been placed on social service and infrastructural development at the local level and very little on economic development. There is no way the rural area can be developed. There has to be concerted and sustained economic development programmes by all tiers of government.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

In what ways have planning and ideology become a problem of development at the local government level?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Aliyu, A.Y. (1980). *The Role of Local Government in Social, Political and Economic Development in Nigeria*. Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University.

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