ASSESSMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF ANKPA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL OF KOGI STATE

By

ABUBAKAR IDU YANUSA
Directorate of Advancement Centre
Kogi State University, Anyigba
Kogi State, Nigeria.
08033729706
idu200520@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
This paper examined the challenges faced by the Nations Local Government Areas in Nigeria and in Kogi State in particular, this has affected the general performance and the ability of the local government system to deliver to the people at the grass roots the dividends of democracy effectively. This paper made several observations as regards the corruption and embezzlements of government funds by local government staff to the detriment of the development of the local government Nationwide and Ankpa Local Government Area to be precise. The state of development of Ankpa Local Government area has become worrisome considering the amount of allocation the local government get from the federal and State government and also from internally generated revenue sample size of 100 respondents was drawn from amongst the staff population of Ankpa Local Government, Which represents 20% of the total population of staff . The questionnaire instrument of research methods was used. The findings of this study that in-spite of the several sources of revenue available to Ankpa Local Government Council, it has the difficulty of discharging its constitutionally assigned responsibility of grassroots development. The challenges confronting Ankpa Local Government Council include: High level of corruption by Local Government functionaries who are often ill-equipped to perform the functions of their office. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that Ankpa Local Government Council, like other Local Government Councils must be given it's rightful place as provided for in the constitution, that is, allocation of local government funds must not be interfered with by the State.

Keywords; Local Government Areas, Dividend of Democracy, Revenue, Corruption and Accountability.

INTRODUCTION
The definition of Local Government (LG) by the Nigerian Federal Government leaves one with no iota of doubt that it is largely both theoretically sound and service oriented to the people. It talks of representative councils with substantial control over local affairs, for the provision of services and implementation of projects in their areas, to complement the activities of both the State and Federal governments. The definition also amply recognizes the need for Local Government autonomy as the substantial control of local governments (LGs) is aimed at staff, institutional and financial matters, among others (Nigeria, 1976).
The Federal Government of Nigeria is one of the few governments in the world perhaps in addition to Brazil (Erero, 1998) that have elevated Local Governments to a third tier of government. By so doing, the State governments do not exercise absolute control over Local Governments. As we shall also observe later, there are many checks and balances that have been formulated by the Nigerian Federal Government, to facilitate the effective operations of the local government councils (LGCs). Some of such checks and balances are guaranteed existence of Local Governments in section 7 of the 1999 Constitution, financial allocation from the Federation account and involvement of Local Governments in economic planning of the State governments (Nigeria, 1999a).

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM
There has been public outcry about the inability of Local Government Councils Nationwide to discharge their responsibilities of providing social amenities at the grassroots level. This is in spite of the fact that there are several sources of revenue available to them. It is in the light of the foregoing that it is essential to conduct a survey to actually establish if it is the inadequacy of funds or mismanagement that are responsible for the abysmal performance of Local Government Councils or a combination of both of them.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The general objective of this study is to examine funds available to Local Government Councils in Nigeria. The main objective is divided into the following working objectives:
1. To find out the various sources of funds available to Local Government Councils in Nigeria.
2. To identify if the available funds are adequate.
3. To identify if the available funds are well managed.
4. To analyze the available revenue to Local Government Councils, particularly Ankpa Local Government Council and see how it could be made more beneficial to the local community.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY
The need to understudy the abysmal performance of Local Government Councils in Nigeria, in-spite of the numerous sources of revenue available to Local Government Councils cannot be over emphasized because of the strategic position of Local Government Councils as a third tier of government and more so that greater majority of Nigerians reside in rural areas. Over the years, government had set up committees/commissions with a view to bettering the living condition of people at the grassroots level. Findings from this study will enrich the current database on Local Government Administration. It will also serve as a useful document for Local Government Administrators, Practitioners and Government on how Local Governments could better be managed to serve the purpose as enshrined in the founding documents.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY
This study covers Ankpa Local Government in Kogi State. The study is concerned with the analysis of the dismal performance of Local Government Councils in Nigeria, using Ankpa Local Government as a reference

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
In recent times, local governments in Nigeria have been assigned specific development roles by the constitution. But this should not be taken to suggest that in the past local governments did not contribute to economic development. For example, between 1955 and 1965, local governments were responsible for an average of 12% of total public expenditure in the country.

In a federal system like Nigeria, local governments are close to the people and hence could effectively alter socioeconomic and political conditions within their jurisdictions. Apart from providing and maintaining basic infrastructures, local governments can complement the economic activities of other levels of government. The activities of the National Directorate of Employment, for example, or the back–to–land programmes that are agriculturally based, can have more positive impact at the grassroots level by working with local governments.

Fiscal operations at the local government (LG) level become significant if macroeconomic stability is necessary in the wider economy. If fiscal imbalance appears rampant at the local level, it could pose problems for macroeconomic management of the economy. The scenario is even more complex when local governments depend on transfers from the centre. In this era of structural adjustment, local governments
face more challenges in terms of struggling to be less dependent on the centre and the state for financial resources.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCES
Local Government Finance consists essentially of two fundamental aspects: namely, the raising of revenue and the expenditure of revenue. What distinguishes Local Government Finance from the monetary affairs of the private sector is, of course, that local government is aimed at supporting and maintaining public goods and services. To achieve these public goods and services, therefore, local governments must acquire funds through taxes, fees, charges and debt financing.

DEVELOPMENT
The rationale for creating Local Government anywhere in the world is to employ it to take responsibility for the development of the area directly and also contribute indirectly to the development of the Nation. This development has been conceptualized from two broad perspectives: economic and holistic. The economic perspective was the traditional or earlier conception which expressed concerns for issues of poverty, unemployment and inequality that must be reduced to usher in development to any area. If there is decline in a society, the earlier version insisted, that, there is development (Seers, 1969). The other newer perspective in the conceptualization of development was blazed by writers like Todaro and Smith (2003:17) who have presented a holistic definition:

Development must therefore, be conceived of a multi dimensional process involving many changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of absolute poverty. Development in its essence, must represent the whole gamut of change by which an entire social system turned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, moves away from condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory toward a situation or condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually better.

The modern or newer definition of development is therefore holistic, encompassing all aspects of life, including political, economic, social, cultural, religious, physical, etc. These can be further amplified to include all the good aspects of life that people cherish, make them feel relevant and enjoy their lives to the full.

HYPOTHESES
The following are the hypothesis the researcher intends to test in this study.

(1) The Abysmal performance of Local Government Councils in Nigeria is due to lack of funds.

(2) The poor performance at the Local Government level is not due to prudency of funds, but mismanagement.

Literature review
One of the most acceptable definitions of Local Government to us is offered by Mawhood (1993: VII & 2). He defines Local Governments as bodies

... separated by law .... (and have) local representatives (and) ... formal power to decide on a range of public matters ....
Their right to make decisions is entrenched by the law and can only be altered by a new legislation. They have resources, which subject to the stated limits, are spent and invested at their discretion.

Our only small observation in Mawhood’s definition is the failure to specify the mode of local representation in Local Government councils, that is, whether by selection or election. A definition of Local Government that is very acceptable to us is offered by Imhanlahimi and Ikeanyibe (forthcoming).

For them, a Local Government has a defined area and a popularly elected democratic council. It has formal powers derived from the laws or constitution of the land, to decide on a range of public matters in
consultation with other stakeholders, including traditional rulers, for the locality. The formal powers can only be altered by a subsequent legislation or constitutional amendment. The Local Government has personnel, financial and other resources, from whatever sources, which are deployed, spent and invested at its own discretion for the execution of legally or constitutionally assigned and mutually agreed functions for the overt development of the area.

This definition captures the essential characteristics in Local Government that we are interested in, in this work.

**EVOLUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION**

The local government system in Nigeria has experienced several reforms since the early 1950s. During that period, the system was modernized and constituted on a representative basis. Colonial local administration revolved around traditional rulers, with the unit of local administration referred to as the native authority. Executive authority lay with the district officer. The authorities at that time created administrative organizations that were ad hoc in nature. However, some success of this type of administration was noticeable in the centralized emirates of the former Northern Nigeria.

The evolution of local government administration in the country must be seen in the context of regionalism. The old regions of the East, West and North, as a result of different levels of development traversed different paths to strengthen their systems of local administration.

The 1976 reform represented a fundamental change in the development of Local Government in Nigeria. For the first time, the country was given a common, single-tier structure of local government in place of the different structures of various states. Our interest in the 1976 reform hinges on the restructuring of the financial system. The reforms instituted statutory allocations of revenues from the federation account with the intention of giving local governments fixed proportions of both the federation account and each state’s revenue. This mandatory allocation was entrenched in the recommendations of the Aboyade Revenue Commission of 1977. The 1979 constitution empowered the National Assembly to determine what proportion of the federation account and a state’s revenue should be allocated to local governments. In 1981, the National Assembly fixed these proportions at 10% of the federation account and 10% of the total revenue of the state. In 1985, the States’ proportion was reduced to 10% of internal revenue. Local Governments allocation from the federation account was later amended to 20%. At present, statutory allocation to local governments stands at 25% of the federation account, reflecting the larger development role, local governments are expected to play.

These changes were due to the 1976 local government reforms, which also stated that the internal revenue sources of local governments would include:

- Rates, which include property rates, education rates and street lighting
- Taxes such as community, flat rate and poll tax
- Fines and fees, which include court fines and fees, motor park fees, forest fees, public advertisement fees, market fees, regulated premises fees, registration of births and deaths and licensing fees
- Miscellaneous sources such as rents on council estates, royalties, interests on investments and proceeds from commercial activities.

This clear delineation of revenue sources was to avoid the usual encroachment on local government sources of revenue by states.

**AUTONOMY**

Autonomy -The Local Government autonomy we have in mind is the one that is adequate, not absolute, for the Local Government Councils to perform their responsibilities optimally.

Two types of autonomy appear to have been canvassed in the literature: absolute and adequate/relative. Chaturvedi (2006:19) represents the absolutist school as he states that ‘in local autonomy, the local body has financial and management autonomy’ to decide and determine its own course of action. There is no rider whatsoever. Mawhood (1993:8) straddles both schools because he insists that there is relative
separation of central and local spheres of government on the one hand. On the other hand, he says that the central government should only ‘monitor the activities of local authorities without intruding into their domain’

For these writers, autonomy for the Local Governments in Nigeria, as indeed in all the emerging or less developed councils (LDCs) of the world, should be relative, not absolute. The rationale for this is that there is in fact one territory that is being developed by all the three tiers of government in, for example, Brazil and Nigeria. The resources for development in the less developed councils are very scarce and should therefore be cooperatively managed for optimality, in the interest of the localities. Indeed, it has been gradually recognized that politics – administration cooperation in the less developed councils, for example, Nigeria, appears to be healthier than the dichotomy which Wilson (1887) had stressed.

And it has also been gradually agreed that active, competitive and cooperative intergovernmental relations (IGRs) (Erero, 1998) in the less developed councils, for example, Nigeria and Brazil, seem healthier than The literature on this matter (see, e.g., Aghayere, 1991; Aghayere, 2008; Nchuchukwe, 2003; Ikelegbe, 2005; Imhanlahimi and Ikeanyibe, forthcoming) and available information agree that the Local Governments have not been doing enough to protect their financial autonomy. It was further revealed that Local Governments have been receiving the bulk of their funds from external sources, that is, the federal government. For example, between 1993 and 2006, the Nigerian federal government’s finances to the Local Governments have ranged between 88.8 per cent in 1995 and 96 per cent in 2006. From 1999, the federal government’s financial allocations to the Local Governments have not been below 91 per cent.

On the other hand, the Local Governments have contributed paltry sums between 1993 and 2006 as their internally generated revenue (IGR) to their financial needs. These have ranged from 3.5 per cent in 2006 to 8.7 per cent in 1995. Information available shows that Local Governments’ Internally Generated Revenue in Nigeria has been going down since 2001, ranging between 3.5 and 5.6 per cent as against 5.1 and 8.7 per cent between 1993 and 1999. This is an average of 5.83 per cent which is even higher than the average of about 4.18 per cent that Aghayere (1997) found in respect of Local Governments in Edo State, which placed much emphasizes on low internal revenue generation by Local Governments.

The State governments as another external revenue source have not been very helpful to the Local Governments as their contributions have ranged between 0.3 and 0.9 per cent between 1993 and 2006. More disturbing, as Ola and Towe (2005) and Aghayere (2008) have reported, is that the State governments interfere with federal government’s financial allocations to the Local Governments. This is in addition to the said default in State governments’ statutory contribution of 10 per cent of their Internally Generated Revenue to the Local Governments.

Local Governments in Nigeria need adequate autonomy that can facilitate their operations and development of the localities. This should emanate from institutionalized democratic process of elections for representative Local Government councils as and when due. This should be in line with what obtains at the State and Federal government levels where elections are timely conducted. More will be said about democratic consolidation below.

Adequate autonomy should be manifestly accorded Local Governments in other areas such as finance, revenue generation and expenditure, personnel administration and development matters. The literature that has largely, if not indeed entirely, agreed about poached Local Government autonomy will recognize adequate Local Government autonomy when it is granted by higher level governments. Adequate Local Government autonomy will forestall the current alibi that Local Governments make with inadequate autonomy for their diminutive development impact in their areas.

**CHALLENGES OF FUNDING NIGERIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS**

Worried by the poor performance of the Local Governments, in spite of their empowerment through what Ikelegbe (2005: 48) called ‘increasing autonomy’ since the 1976 Local Governments reforms, the government set up the Dasuki Committee in 1984. Its report expressed confidence in government’s structural, financial and personnel arrangements for the Local Governments, among other matters. It however noted that the problems of the Local Governments were basically operational, ‘arising directly from the behavior and attitudes of the persons who operated the system’ (Nigeria, 1987: 120). Yet there is
quite some agreement in the literature that Local Governments in Nigeria encounter all the above problems.

Local government is the third tier of government as contained in the section of the 1999 constitution. In-spite of the powers vested in this tier of government, there has been public outcry about its poor performance, in-spite of the several sources of revenue available to it. This study intends to verify the genuineness of the public outcry particularly that Local Government Councils has at its disposal about 25% of its allocation from the Federation account.

Local Governments have depended extensively on allocation from the Federation account which accounts for between 88-91% of their total income which is often mismanaged due to high level corruption by the local government functionaries who are often ill-equipped to play the expected roles.

Added to the above is the fact that not only that the states fail in their duties to remit 10% of their Internally Generated Revenue to Local Government Councils but also interfere with the allocation from the Federation account to Local Government Councils, thereby reducing what is accruable to the Council.

Another problem is lack of respect for the constitution. Both the Military and Civilian Governments have illegally dissolved Local Government Councils and in their stead constituted unconstitutional structure that will dance to their whims and caprices which has often subjected Governance at that level to a lot of corruption and abuses.

By the existing guidelines, each Local Government is expected to have a population size of 150,000, so that through collection of taxes and levies they will be able to raise enough Internally Generated Revenue to run an efficient Local Government Administration, but since the creation of later Local Governments were politically motivated, about 242 Local Government Councils (31.27%) have a population of below 150,000 people and so are unable to stand on their own as they cannot obtain adequate revenue for their operations.

Personnel Administration is one area of Local Government Administration that is not covered by any constitutional, legal, but administrative provisions, which accounts for why (Local Government Service Commissions) all over the country, claim monopoly of personnel matters with the result that Local Governments have little or no control over their personnel. In Kogi State, all employees on Grade Level 07 and above are unified staff of Local Government Service Commission. For example, Kogi state Local Government Service Commission stated in its manual that it has responsibility “to appoint, post, promote and discipline employees of the Local Government on salary Grade Level 07 and above. it is largely a situation in which the end users of personnel have little say in their administration. Most Local Government Service Commissions exchange their annual reports so as to know what others are doing. Though it has some advantages of uniformity but it limits the power of Local Governments because “he who pays the piper dictates the tune”.

NATURE AND PATTERN OF FUNDING NIGERIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS

The guidelines on the 1976 Local Government reforms gave clear powers to Local Government Councils when they stated that membership of Local Government Councils should be predominantly elected either by direct or indirect elections from local communities … (Nigeria, 1976, Para 21). This was further dragged into the 1979, 1989 and 1999 constitutions. In section 7, of each of the constitutions, it emphasized the need for a democratically elected council while in section 8, it discussed the issue of establishment, structure Finance and functions of such councils; by directing the state to enact a law to that effect.

The Federal Government has immensely contributed to the financial stability of Local Government Councils in two (2) basic ways. First through financial allocations to them which presently stands at 25% of revenue available to the Federation. And second, is through constitutional provisions for many of their revenue sources as enshrined in for example, sections 149 and 162 of the 1999 constitution. (see e.g. Aghayere, 1991, Aghayere, 2008, Nchuchukwe, 2003,) where state governments are required to remit 10% of their Internally Generated Revenue to Local Government Councils, other sources include Internally Generated Revenue to Local Government Councils which is the paltry collection of taxes and tenement rates.
PROBLEMS OF FUNDING ANKPA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS

The following have been identified as problems that have inhabited growth and development of Ankpa Local Government Council.

1. **HIGH LEVEL OF CORRUPTION:** Corruption was rated as the greatest indicator of underdevelopment in Ankpa Local Government Council. It was revealed that funds meant for capital projects were shared amongst party leaders and functionaries of Local Government Service Commission. The wages was also revealed to have been over bloated because of the presence of Ghost workers on its payroll. It was revealed that Ankpa Local Government Council which is 3rd in size has more workforce than even Dekina and Okene that are bigger in sizes.

2. Like other Local Government Councils, the staff of Ankpa Local Government Council are ill equipped to perform the functions of their office in such a way that there will be results.

3. The state is also a contributory factor as they do not only fail to meet their obligations of remitting 10% of their Internally Generated Revenue to the Councils but also interfere with the allocation from the Federation account.

4. Local Government Functionaries are not responsible to their immediate constituency but to Local Government Service Commission who are their employers, the end result is that they conserve funds to satisfy their employers so that they can remain relevant instead of developing their localities. The present arrangement where there are no elected Councils but appointed Directors of Local Government who function as Ag. Chairmen is an added problem.

A gap in literature that this study intends to fill is the fact that there is no record of any study in this area in the recent past, and so, what was found in other Local Governments/States will be related to Ankpa Local Government Council.

**GAP IN LITERATURE**

Literature abounds on the abysmal performance of Local Government Councils in Nigeria, in spite of the enormous sources of revenue available to them, but non relates to Ankpa Local Government Council. It is as a result of the limited number of literature on the subject under review that I found the works of the underlisted scholars very useful in explaining some issues on the funding challenges facing Local Government Councils. Commenting on that issue (e.g. Aghayere, 1997; Omoruyi, 1995, Ola and Towe, 2005) who in their works advocated that State Governments should extend the rightful financial allocations to Local Government Councils as the Federal Government does. State Governments should also totally eliminate all forms of interference with Local Government’s Revenue from the federation account.

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS**

The essence of theoretical frame work in Social Science research cannot be over emphasized. According to Obasi (1999) theoretical frame work means a device or scheme for adopting or applying the assumptions, postulation and principles of a theory in the description and analysis of a research problem. Theories are essential tools for scientific inquiry, analysis and reliable understanding of how social systems operate. Just as it is useful for the architect to build a miniature model of a proposed building, so it is useful for a Social Scientist to build conceptual model of such abstract matter as organization. According to French (1978) a model is a symbolic phenomenon. As observed by Oguonu and Anugwon (2006), the main reason behind the use of theoretical frame work is for the study to find a generalization to enable a validation of the theory at the end of the study. Theoretical frame work links the study theoretically with the state of knowledge in the area and gives the study the much needed theoretical backing. It is this assertion that underscores the importance of theories in understanding a study of this nature.

The theoretical framework for this study is the systems theory as propounded by David Easton. According to the systems theorists, “a system is essentially an assemblage of things interconnected or interdependent,
so as to form a complex unity” (Koontz et al, 1982). All systems, except perhaps the University, interact with, and are influenced by their environment (political, social, economic, ethical, technological etc), and in turn, influence its environment. An important element in the systems approach is the emphasis on input-output analysis.

According to Adamolekun (1983) “A system is represented as receiving inputs from the environment. Worthy of note is that a system needs support from its environment in order to survive. Thus, it receives inputs of support such as payment of taxes, obedience to rules and regulations etc. Equally important is the fact that consequent upon the outputs, some new inputs are generated and feedback into the system through the feedback mechanism. These are again processed and converted to output. Thus; the systems approach is cyclical”.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

A sample size of 100 respondents was drawn from amongst the staff population of Ankpa Local Government. Available statistics obtained from Local Government Service Commission indicate that the sample size of 100 represents 20% of the total population of staff of the Local Government. The questionnaire instrument of research methods was used.

**METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

In collecting data for this research, copies of questionnaire were delivered to the respondents by the researcher through the assistance of 6 members of Local Government staff representing various departments. The instrument was administered in about 3 instances at the Local Government Headquarters. A period of 7 days was allowed to enable respondents carefully respond to the questionnaire. At the expiration of the 7 days period, 98 of the 100 questionnaire were retrieved and used for data analysis.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

**ASSUMPTION OF THE STUDY**

In this study, questions were asked on adequacy or otherwise of funds available to local government and to also know whether the available funds were properly managed. Responses are presented in the Table below:

**TABLE I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/NO</th>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>% OF YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>% OF NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Is the Allocation from the Federation Account to Ankpa Local Government Council adequate?</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Is the Allocation from the State to Ankpa Local Government adequate?</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Are your salaries promptly paid?</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>96.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Is the Council living up to its responsibility of providing rural feeder roads/clinics?</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>94.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Has Ankpa Local Government assisted in the replacement of broken down transformers in recent past?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Has the Council assisted in the provision of Benches and other facilities for primary schools in recent past?</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

**TABLE II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.</th>
<th>If no, why?</th>
<th>Embezzlement and Mismanagement</th>
<th>% of Embezzlement and mismanagement</th>
<th>Inadequacy of funds</th>
<th>% OF inadequacy of funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>If no, why?</td>
<td>Embezzlement and Mismanagement</td>
<td>% of Embezzlement and mismanagement</td>
<td>Inadequacy of funds</td>
<td>% OF inadequacy of funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

**TABLE III**
1. Ankpa Local Government is living up to its responsibilities in terms of its obligation to staff/rural Community. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Strongly Disagree | Disagree |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. The poor performance of Ankpa Local Government Council is occasioned by the interference of the state and its agencies. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Strongly Disagree | Disagree |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Low moral standard is largely responsible for the poor performance at the Local Government Level. | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Strongly Disagree | Disagree |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2012

### TABLE IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>In your own opinion, what do you consider to be the major reasons for poor performance of Local Government Administrators?</th>
<th>Corruption, Inefficiency, Interference by the state and Local Government Service Commission and abuse of the constitution.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Make useful suggestions on how Local Governments could become more productive.</td>
<td>Training/re-training of staff, reduced corruption, increased autonomy, non interference by the state and fear of God.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2012

### IS THE ALLOCATION FROM THE FEDERATION ACCOUNT TO ANKPA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL ADEQUATE?

From table I above, about 91.8% of the respondents are of the opinion that allocation from the Federation Account is adequate while the remaining 8.2% indicated that it is not adequate. This goes to confirm that the allocation is truly adequate and the only challenge is in the management of available resources.

### IS THE ALLOCATION FROM THE STATE TO ANKPA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL ADEQUATE?

Only a negligible 9.2% agreed that the allocation from the state is adequate while as much as 90.8% are of the view that it is far from being adequate. This confirms the views expressed by Ola and Towe (2005) and Aghayere (2008) that the state governments interfere with Federal government’s Federal allocations to Local Government. This is in addition to the said default in state government’s statutory contribution of 10percent of their Internally Generated Revenue to Local Government Councils”.

### ARE YOUR SALARIES PROMPTLY PAID?

A negligible 3.1% agreed that their salaries are promptly paid. This may be the favoured group who because of their intimacy with the power that be, are given salary advances because Governance is not run according to the rule of the game, while the absolute majority of 96.9% affirmed that salaries are not promptly paid. This is occasioned by inclusion of ghost workers on the wage bill which blow the salary of the Local Government workforce beyond proportion.

### IS THE COUNCIL LIVING UP TO ITS RESPONSIBILITY OF PROVIDING RURAL FEEDER ROADS/CLINICS

The 94.8% of the respondents said that Ankpa Local Government Council has failed in its responsibility of providing rural feeder roads/clinics, thereby defeating the purpose of its creation, which is the provision of grassroots development. Only a negligible 3.1% agreed that they provide these facilities and their evidence cannot be relied upon in the circumstance.
HAS ANKPA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL ASSISTED IN THE REPLACEMENT OF BROKEN DOWN TRANSFORMERS IN RECENT PAST?

A gulping 89.7% of the respondents have attested to the fact that part of the local government headquarters have been without power supply in the last four years due to breakdown of transformers and the Local Government Council has not been able to come to their rescue, whereas 11.3% agreed that they provide. The latter group may be those from the same constituency with the chairman. This inability to deliver the expected dividends of democracy has defeated the purpose of local government creation.

HAS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL ASSISTED IN THE PROVISION OF BENCHES AND OTHER FACILITIES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN RECENT PAST?

90.8% of the respondents have said no, while only 9.2% have agreed that they provide. It would be a statistical error to support the views of the later group.

The study also revealed that the abysmal performance of Ankpa Local Government Council is not occasioned by inadequacy of funds but embezzlement and mismanagement of public funds as evidenced by table III where 89.7% and 91.8% have agreed that….embezzlement and mismanagement of public funds are the bane of Ankpa Local Government Council as opposed to 11.3% and 8.2% respectively that had alluded the poor performance to inadequacy of funds.

Table III reveals that Ankpa Local Government Council is not living up to its responsibilities in terms of its obligation to staff/rural community as attested to by the respondent’s views.

It was further confirmed that states have not only failed in their duties to provide the 10% Internally Generated Revenue but also interfere with the allocation from the Federation account.

It was further confirmed that majority of functionaries at the Local Government numbering about 62.2% are of low moral standard which accounts for their poor performance as they appeared not to have conscience. This can be buttressed by the fact that 32 and 29 respondents have strongly agreed and agreed respectively that low moral standard is largely responsible for poor performance at the Local Government level.

The findings resulted from low moral standard, embezzlement and mismanagement.

Questions were asked on reasons responsible for the poor performance of Local Government Councils, in spite of available resources and they were further requested to proffer possible solutions on how Local Governments could become more productive.

On the poor performance, they adduced a number of reasons among which are low moral standard, corruption, inefficiency, mismanagement, interference by the state government in the appointment of local government functionaries instead of election, interference with the allocation from the Federation account and unholy influence of God Fathers.

The following suggestions were advanced with a view to making Local Government Councils more productive:

- Adherence to the constitutional provision so that functionaries of local councils are elected instead of being appointed.
- Non interference of the state in the allocation from the Federation account.
- Training and retraining of Local Government functionaries.
- Beaming of search light by anti corruption agencies like ICPC and EFCC on Local Government functionaries.

HYPOTHESIS ONE

The abysmal performance of Local Government Councils in Nigeria is due to lack of funds. The hypothesis was formulated to know if truly it was the lack of funds at the Local Government Level that is responsible for the poor performance of Local Government functionaries. From the findings of the study as
evidenced by the response on Section A, Question I, Section B Questions 4 and 6 where their views…. Respectively are that 91.8% of the respondents agreed that the allocation from the Federation account is adequate. Furthermore, in Questions 4 and 6 of Section B, 89.7% and 91.8% of the respondents as opposed to 11.3% and 8.2% have agreed that embezzlement and mismanagement rather than inadequacy of funds is responsible for poor performance at the Ankpa Local Government Area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>If no, why?</th>
<th>Embezzlement and Mismanagement</th>
<th>% of Embezzlement and mismanagement</th>
<th>Inadequacy of funds</th>
<th>% of Inadequacy of funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>If no, why?</td>
<td>Embezzlement and Mismanagement</td>
<td>% of Embezzlement and mismanagement</td>
<td>Inadequacy of funds</td>
<td>% of Inadequacy of funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>If no, why?</td>
<td>Embezzlement and Mismanagement</td>
<td>% of Embezzlement and mismanagement</td>
<td>Inadequacy of funds</td>
<td>% of Inadequacy of funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

HYPOTHESIS TWO

The poor performance at the Local Government level is not due to paucity of funds, but embezzlement and mismanagement.

It can be seen from the table above that, 11.3% and 8.2% of the respondents respectively have agreed that it is not the paucity of funds that is responsible for poor performance of Local Government functionaries; rather, embezzlement and mismanagement of funds.

Findings

The findings of this study that in-spite of the several sources of revenue available to Ankpa Local Government Council, it has the difficulty of discharging its constitutionally assigned responsibility of grassroots development. The sources of revenue available to Ankpa Local Government Council include: 25% of the allocation from the Federation account to all the 774 Local Government Councils; 10% of Internally Generated Revenue from the state which is not often remitted in full, tenement rate and community tax, fees, charges and debt financing, etc. The challenges confronting Ankpa Local Government Council include: High level of corruption by Local Government functionaries who are often ill-equipped to perform the functions of their office, if not, an allocation of 25% from the Federation account is high enough for the third tier of Government to discharge its responsibilities.

Added to the above is the fact that not only that the state fail in its duties to remit 10% of its Internally Generated Revenue to Ankpa Local Government but also interfere in the allocation from the Federation account that often reduce what accrued to Ankpa Local Government Council. The lack of respect for the constitution was identified as another problem as both the military and the civilian administrations have illegally dissolved elected Local Government Councils and appointed in their place, caretaker committees or Ag. Chairman which has often subjected Governance at that level to corruption and abuses.

It was also found that Ankpa Local Government also shy away from the collection of the personal income tax from the citizenry and tenement rates in order to avoid the harsh criticisms from the public over non-performance.

The study having identified the fact of poor performance of Ankpa Local Government Council has advanced a number of suggestions with a view to bettering the lots of people at the grassroots level though improved performance of Local Government functionaries.

CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded from the findings of this study that there are several sources of revenue available to Ankpa Local Government Council which has not been well managed.

It can also be concluded from the findings of this study that not minding the enormous challenges facing Ankpa Local Government Council and other councils Nationwide, they are not insurmountable. According to the study, it is acknowledged that if the identified suggestions are utilized, the third tier of government will perform better.
RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that Ankpa Local Government Council, like other Local Government Councils must be given its rightful place as provided for in the constitution, that is, allocation to the Council must not be interfered with and that the state must as of necessity remit 10% of its Internally Generated Revenue.

One of the reasons adduced for poor performance at the Local Government level is the Quality of its personnel. Therefore, Local Government functionaries should be trained and retrained in order to enhance their efficiency.

Officers to be appointed into the key positions of Local Government Council must be men and women of proven integrity that will live above board, so that all revenues, to the council are promptly collected and utilized for the good of all.

The present situation where Local Government employees are under the unified Local Government Service Commission should be modified to reduce abuses.

The role of God Fathers in election and appointment of Local Government functionaries should be carefully investigated and modified in order to reduce the high level of corruption. The governor should take personal interest in this matter and closely monitor it.

Ankpa Local Government should be given the desired autonomy so that people of no consequence are not allowed to erode their powers.
REFERENCES


