

# The 'Locals' and Local Government Bureaucracy: Implication on the Attainment of Developmental Goals in Nigeria

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**Abstract:** *This study examined the effect of the exclusion of community representatives (locals), local traditional structures and values from the local government bureaucracy and its implication on attaining developmental goals in selected States in Nigeria. The study was situated within the ambits of the Weberian and Marxian bureaucratic theories to consider the subject matter and generate analysis. The study adopted the survey research design with a mixed-method approach to generate both primary and secondary data. Using the multi-stage sampling technique, a total number of nine electoral wards across the three states of Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers were covered. One thousand one hundred ninety (1,190) copies of a self-constructed questionnaire were administered in the study areas. The figure was arrived at with the use of the Taro Yamane method of calculation. Besides, in-depth interviews were conducted with key informants in the selected states. Quantitative data were analysed using the Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient, while qualitative data were subjected to both thematic and descriptive methods of data analysis. It*

*was found out that community participation and the inclusion of traditional structures and values in the local government bureaucracy could enhance the attainment of developmental goals at the local government levels. It was recommended that the National and State Houses of Assembly in Nigeria amend existing local government laws to restructure the local government bureaucracy to include community representatives at the local government bureaucracies with traditional institutions given specific roles.*

**Keywords:** The 'locals', Community participation, Local government, Bureaucracy, Developmental goals.

## 1. Introduction

Historically, local governments in Nigeria, since independence, have gone through a chequered progression. It remains the closest governmental apparatus to the citizens that are supposed to relate more swiftly to the needs of the people and charged with bringing the profound benefits of governmental administration to the citizens. These benefits, among others, include making democratic practices proximate and delivering efficient services to the masses. However, some of these benefits, so far, have remained largely elusive at the levels of local government in Nigeria. Many communities in Nigeria are dotted with abandoned local government projects, which are most likely never to be completed. There is a disconnect between the communities and their representatives herein referred to as "the locals" and those charged (bureaucrats) with overseeing the completion of these projects aimed at driving developments. The concept of 'locals' as it relates to this study refers to the community representatives that will constitute the staff of the ward/community bureaucracy. They are to be charged with local supervision of community projects with a view to ensuring that such projects are efficiently implemented. The 'locals' in this sense are different from elected and appointed councillors who are situated within the prism of the political class.

In spite of past reforms, which included the 1976 Local Government Reforms; the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; the Dasuki 1984 Report of the Nigerian Local Government; the 1992 Handbook of Local Government Administration; the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; and the governments at the local level in Nigeria, still, grapple with the challenges of efficiently delivering services and bringing development proximate to the people. Governments at the local level in Nigeria in the past years have received trillions of naira in taxes as internal revenue and from external sources. However, there seems to be a lacuna between the

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huge income received by these governments at the local level in Nigeria and the delivery of development. There is a significant relationship between bureaucracy and development at the local government levels, especially in a developing country like Nigeria. This is because the bureaucracy, being the engine house for the actualisation of policies, privately or publicly, remains a major instrumentality that can drive development. However, development is undermined and retarded by the menace of corrupt practices at the local government levels in Nigeria, which has led to projects abandonment

Eme and Emeh (2012) stated that government bureaucracy is a very important factor required for the process of rural development. In their opinion, the strength of any bureaucracy defines its output. The greater the strength of the efficiency of the bureaucracy to tackle intricate and societal development plans, the greater the development potentials of that society. Local government management in Nigeria, according to Agba, Stephen and Nnamani (2014), has been bedevilled by open market mentality, that is, an all-comers affair, pitiable accounting processes, absence of reliable data needed for planning, excess politicisation, insufficient funding and reduced revenue, greed, higher government interference, lack of direction and corruption. The bureaucracy at the local government level accounts for, and in some other cases, implicated in some of the aforementioned pathologies. Therefore, there is the need to look again at the bureaucracy at this local level to reposition it to deliver development by ensuring that projects meant for the local communities are not abandoned.

Contemporary discourse on local government reforms in Nigeria has focused mostly on the political facets. For example, the call for autonomy (Mordi, 2018; The News, 2017, Aziken, Agbarakwu & Ajayi, 2017) abolishment of the state/local government joint account, the supervisory function of the sub-national governments' ministry of local government, the superintending supervision of personnel matters by their Local Government Service Commission, are political prescriptions for reforms. Little attention is paid to bureaucratic reforms, being the engine house and the wheel for the smooth running of government at the local level of governance. There is the belief that the bureaucracy at the local government levels perfects corruption.

Ekeh (1975) noted that while some communities may tolerate public servants who stole at the governmental arena, such behaviour would be unacceptable by the people at their community levels. Wraith and Simpkins (1963) further explained that in the Nigeria first republic settings, stealing from the local authority usually does not unburden the conscience of the bureaucrats. Even then, his people may well think that he is smart and seizing opportunities. In the same vein, according to them, if that same person steals from the funds of the local union, it will offend the primordial public conscience, and such person may even suffer banishment from his community. This scenario has not changed in Nigeria until today. From the foregoing, the following questions abound: Will participation of the representatives of the communities ('locals') at the local government bureaucracies, especially in the implementation of developmental projects, assist in delivering development at the local levels in Nigeria? Will blending traditional structures, values, and processes help in delivering development at the local levels in Nigeria?

### **1.1 Objectives of The Study**

The major objective of this study was to ascertain whether participation by representatives of the communities at the local government bureaucracy, especially in the implementation of developmental projects, would assist in delivering development at the local levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers states of Nigeria. The study also examined whether the blending of local traditional structures, values and processes with the bureaucracy at the local level, especially in the implementation of developmental projects, will also assist in delivering development at the local levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers states of Nigeria. The below hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

### **1.2 Research Hypotheses**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the representatives of the communities participating in the local government bureaucracy, especially in the implementation of developmental projects and the delivery of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria.

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant relationship between the fusion of local traditional structures, values and processes with the local government bureaucracy, especially in the implementation of developmental projects and the delivery of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria.

## **2. Conceptual Framework**

Max Weber defined bureaucracy as a formal organisation with a hierarchy of paid full-time officials who form a chain of commands (Atemie & Okaba, 1997). Weber (1947) posited that bureaucratic offices involve a long life tenure and permanence of official position. A legal system that emphasises legal-rational authority as distinct or different from traditional and charismatic authorities.

Akpomuvie (2005) posited that bureaucracy is a rational response to administrative strategy, which is required for the demands of complex organisations and for the promotion of systemic efficiency. According to him, the concept of bureaucracy was highly amplified in the work of Max Weber. Akpomuvie (2005) elaborated Weber's view of bureaucracy as a counterforce against patrimony and patriarchal leadership, which characterised human organisation in Weber's time. Weber identified three types of organisations: the leader-oriented organisation, in which activities revolve around the leader; secondly, the patriarchal or patrimony-oriented organisation, in which activities revolve around the owner of the organisation. And lastly, the bureaucracy, which Weber viewed as the most efficient type of organisation because of its provision for rationality in the organisation (Akpomuvie, 2005). He also enumerated a number of professional qualities, which typified the bureaucracy, to include the free selection of staff based on ability and qualification, acquired skills by specialised training and experience, impersonal bureaucratic officeholders who are formal in the execution of their official duties and a bureaucratic officeholder that is subject to authority and control in the areas of his official duties. The bureaucrat is expected to act within the regulation of the organisation and must not do damage to the organisation or the government in his interaction with the public. His remuneration is fixed with a salary defined by the demands of the job and not his ability.

Ototokun (2005) sees bureaucracy as both a problem and a process that is most central to administration. He opined that bureaucracy not only denotes characteristics that are more than bothersome to a modern organisation but rather it also connotes the formal structure of the human organisation, particularly the collective personnel and structures of a government organisation. He posited that Weber's (1946) view of bureaucracy should be located within his general social action theory. This, according to him, is because meanings direct all human actions. Therefore, in order to understand and rationalise actions, the motives and meanings underlining such actions should be understood and appreciated. These actions, according to Weber, include affective or emotional actions, traditional actions and rational actions (Haralambos & Holborn, 2000). According to Weber (1946), effective actions emanate from individual emotional states at a given time. Traditional action usually follows established customs and values, while rational actions involve clear-cut awareness of objectives and goals, logical assessment of the various ways and means of meeting an objective or a goal and the decision to select the most appropriate means.

A study of the bureaucracy can be viewed theoretically from two opposite and contending views: the Weberian view of the bureaucracy and the Marxian view of the bureaucracy. Weber (1946) sees the bureaucracy as a large scale hierarchical, complex and specialised organisation calculated to efficiently and effectively meet set objectives. The Weberian view of bureaucracy is characterised by formalism, impersonality, rule application, complex regulations in the management of an organisation. Max Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy is anchored on division of labour, specialisation, set guidelines for promotion and merit-based recruitment. These are also in addition to impersonality and neutrality in carrying out official duties and security of tenure, among others. According to Stivers (2015), neutrality is the same as anonymity, which has found expression as a moral law in bureaucratic practice. Weber (1946) also saw the bureaucracy as 'the means of carrying community action over, into rationally ordered social action... an instrument for socialising relations of power, bureaucracy has been and is a powerful instrument of the first order.

On the other hand, Eme and Ugwu (2011), in support of Marx's position on bureaucracy, posited that Karl Marx viewed bureaucracy as an instrument of domination, exploitation, oppression in the hands of the dominant ruling class who manipulate and control the apparatus of the state in the society. Marx sees bureaucracy explicitly as a tool employed by the dominant ruling class to amass wealth and maintain their dominant control of the state. Eme and Ugwu (2011) also stated that the dominant class and the bureaucrats mostly hide the basic driving force of the bureaucracy while they make efforts to project the bureaucracy as neutral and an agency for development working for the interest of the society. This, according to them, is only a cover-up to hide their real motive

The other two characteristics of the Marxian perspective of the bureaucracy are alienation and incompetence. The Marxian theory of the bureaucracy emphasises the bureaucrats' lack of imagination and initiatives who are habitually scared of taking responsibility. In addition to this, the process of self-glorification is accompanied by what Marx termed as "sordid materialism" of bureaucrats; in other words, the continuous and internal struggle for promotion, careerism and infantile attachment to trivial status symbol and prestige among bureaucrats (Eme & Ugwu, 2011:43).

In Uzoma's (2005) view, the Marxists' understanding of the bureaucracy is that it is a complete misrepresentation of itself. He elaborated that Marxists associate bureaucracy with over three forms of alienation: relations between bureaucrats and outsiders, alienation within the bureaucracy itself and the autonomous and oppressive force of the bureaucracy, which is largely felt by the majority of the people. Uzoma (2005) further posited that Marxists see bureaucracy as a form of imperialism. The bureaucrats aspire to extend the frontiers of their functions and prerogative to make themselves more relevant to society. The Weberian and Marxian views were used to explain the nature and character of the bureaucracy at the local government levels in Nigeria because of its peculiarity. The Weberian bureaucratic perspective best explains the structure of the Nigeria local government bureaucracy because it is mostly patterned along with its tenets, while the Marxian perspective explains the attitude and idiosyncrasies of some of the local government bureaucrats: corruption driven by sordid materialism.

### **3. Methodology**

The study adopted the survey research method with a mixed-method approach to generate both primary and secondary data. Using the multi-stage sampling technique, a total number of nine electoral wards across the three states of Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers were covered. 1,190 copies of a self-constructed questionnaire were administered in the study areas. The qualitative data entailed in-depth interviews with Heads of Local Government Administration (HOLGAs) in six out of the nine local governments studied across Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States. Three HOLGAs declined to participate in the study. The questions were weaved around the objectives of the study, while the quantitative data were sourced from the questionnaires distributed to respondents in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States, as shown in table 1. Data obtained from the interviews conducted with the aid of a digital tape recorder were transcribed into text and then analysed using the NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software. The NVivo software enabled the researcher to perform both deductive and inductive thematic analysis of the responses of informants.

#### **3.1 Sampling Technique**

The Multi-stage Sampling Technique was in determining the sample size for the study. Firstly, the number of local government areas in each of the senatorial districts in the three states and their total voting population were identified using the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) voters' register of 2015. The INEC voters' register was used for the sampling because, according to Oyedele (2013), the Nigeria National Population Commission has acceded to the fact their database is inaccurate. Elements from the population, who were 18years and above, and were registered voters, were randomly sampled from a local government, each, of the senatorial districts. The local government areas for the purpose of the research were further broken down into their various wards, where copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the individual elements according to a sample size arrived at using the Taro Yamane Formula.

The questionnaire, which was graded along the five-Likert scale elicited responses to observable performances (attributes) of the local governments studied, was adopted to test the study's hypotheses to establish the relationship between the variables of the study. The study determined if there is a significant relationship between the representatives of the communities participating in the local government bureaucracy, especially in the implementation of developmental projects and the delivery of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria, and if there is a relationship between the fusion of local traditional structures, values and processes with the local government bureaucracy especially in the implementation of developmental projects and the delivery of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria.

To elicit respondents' responses on each of the hypotheses, it was broken down into four observable attributes. From their observation, respondents were to either strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree. These observable measurement attributes were:

- (a) improvement in construction & maintenance of earth roads,
- (b) improvement in provision and maintenance of water supply,
- (c) improvement in provision and maintenance of health facilities, and
- (d) decrease in unemployment rate/ increase in poverty reduction

The number of questionnaires distributed at each of the twelve wards in each state was 44, except for South Uneme I (Ward 009) in Etsako Central Local Government of Edo State and Biseni I (Ward 012) in Yenagoa Local Government of Bayelsa State, which was 45.

### **3.2 Questionnaire Distribution in the States**

The quantitative data sourced were from the questionnaires distributed to 397 respondents in Bayelsa state, Edo state 397 and Rivers state, 396. The questionnaire was, divided among the nine wards in each of the three local governments sampled in the three states, as shown in tables 1-3.

*Table 1: Summary of Questionnaire Distribution. Bayelsa State*

| <b>Bayelsa State</b>                                    |                          |                                   |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Local Government</b>                                 | <b>Wards</b>             | <b>Questionnaire Distribution</b> |
| Brass   | Ewoama/Fantuo (Ward 003) | 44                                |
|   | Odioma/Diema (Ward 005)  | 44                                |
|   | Sangana (Ward 010)       | 44                                |
| Yenagoa   | Gbarain II (Ward 008)    | 44                                |
|   | Epie II (Ward 005)       | 44                                |
|   | Biseni I (Ward 012)      | 45                                |
| Sagbama   | Agbere (Ward 001)        | 44                                |
|   | Angalabiri (Ward 002)    | 44                                |
|   | Ebedebiri (Ward 005)     | 44                                |
| <b>Total Questionnaire Distributed in Bayelsa State</b> |                          | <b>397</b>                        |

Source: Field Data. 2018.

**Table 2: Summary of Questionnaire Distribution. Edo State**

| Edo State   |                          |                            |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Local Government                                    | Wards                    | Questionnaire Distribution |
| Ikpoba-Okha   | Ogbeson (Ward 003)       | 44                         |
|   | Obayantor (Ward 009)     | 44                         |
|   | Ologbo (Ward 010)        | 44                         |
| Esan North-East                                     | Ogbeidu (Ward 002)       | 44                         |
|   | Arue (Ward 003)          | 44                         |
|   | Ubierumu (Ward 011)      | 44                         |
| Etsako Central                                      | Fugar I (Ward 001)       | 44                         |
|   | Iruakhor (Ward 005)      | 44                         |
|   | South Uneme I (Ward 009) | 45                         |
| <b>Total Questionnaire Distributed in Edo State</b> |                          | <b>397</b>                 |

Source: Field Data, 2018

**Table 3: Summary of Questionnaire Distribution. Rivers State.**

| Rivers State   |                     |                            |
|--|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Local Government                                       | Wards               | Questionnaire Distribution |
| Ahoada-West  | Ediro I (Ward 001)  | 44                         |
|  | Ubie II (Ward 010)  | 44                         |
|  | Ubie IV (Ward 012)  | 44                         |
| Oyigbo   | Okoloma (Ward 001)  | 44                         |
|  | Azuogu (Ward 005)   | 44                         |
|  | Asa (Ward 007)      | 44                         |
| Emohua   | Ogbele (Ward 005)   | 44                         |
|  | Rumuekpe (Ward 008) | 44                         |
|  | Obimini (Ward 012)  | 44                         |
| <b>Total Questionnaire Distributed in Rivers State</b> |                     | <b>396</b>                 |

Source: Field Data, 2018

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Summary of sample size                 |                       |
| Sample size for Bayelsa State          | = 397                 |
| Sample size for Rivers State           | = 396                 |
| Sample size for Edo State              | = <u>397</u>          |
| <b>Total Sample Size for the study</b> | <b>= <u>1,190</u></b> |

### 3.3 Validity and Reliability of Data

The Test Re-Test Method was adopted to determine the validity and reliability of the primary data. As with the primary data, the questionnaire was used to source data for the validity and reliability test. 270 copies of the questionnaire were re-administered to almost the same respondents in the same wards in the selected local government areas of Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States, after an interval of a month. Ten copies of the questionnaire were redistributed in each of the wards in the areas of the survey. This questionnaire redistribution enabled the determination of the reliability

and validity of the first test. This was calculated using the Reliability Statistics – Cronbach’s Alpha. 88 copies of the questionnaire from Bayelsa State, 90 from Edo State and 88 from Rivers State were returned, as presented in table 4.

**Table 4: Frequency Distribution Table of Respondents for Validity & Reliability Test**

| Sex<br>(Gender)                                  | States                |                   |                       | Total no. of<br>respondents by gender |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
|  | Bayelsa (%)           | Edo (%)           | Rivers (%)            |                                       |
| Male   | 48 (54.7%)            | 42 (43.8%)        | 53 (60%)              | <b>143 (53.8%)</b>                    |
| Female   | 40 (45.3%)            | 48 (56.2%)        | 35 (40%)              | <b>123 (46.2%)</b>                    |
| <b>Total no. of<br/>respondents<br/>by state</b> | <b>88<br/>(33.1%)</b> | <b>90 (33.8%)</b> | <b>88<br/>(33.1%)</b> | <b>266<br/>(100%)</b>                 |

Source: Field Data, 2018.

**Table 5: Case-Processing Summary for Validity & Reliability Test**

|       |                       | N  | %     |
|-------|-----------------------|----|-------|
| Cases | Valid                 | 90 | 100.0 |
|       | Excluded <sup>a</sup> | 0  | .0    |
|       | Total                 | 90 | 100.0 |

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

**Table 6: Reliability Statistics for Validity & Reliability Test**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardised Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| .936             | .936   | 20         |

The Cronbach’s Alpha test of reliability was used to test the internal consistency of the research instrument. The Cronbach’s Alpha score, *r*, is .936, which indicates a high level of reliability. The data of this study from the reliability statistics are therefore valid and reliable

### 3.4 Research Sites

Edo and Rivers States were chosen for this study because of the heterogeneous and cosmopolitan nature of both states. They are ethnically diverse and are not contiguous. Both are oil-producing states. Therefore, derivative revenues from oil were supposed to impact their various local governments, especially the oil-producing ones. Bayelsa State, on the other hand, is generally homogenous, with Ijaw being the main language. Bayelsa is one of the newest states in the Nigerian federation, and it shares a boundary with Rivers State. The state, which is also an oil-producing state, has one of the largest crude oil and natural gas deposits in Nigeria. Apart from Yenagoa, most of the communities in Bayelsa are rural. The state is generally riverine with most communities surrounded by water instead of what generally obtains in Edo and Rivers States.

## 1. Results and Data Analysis

### 1.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

**Researcher:** Do you share the view that participation by representatives of the communities (locals’) at the local government bureaucracy, especially in the implementation of developmental projects, will assist in delivering development at the local levels of governance?

| NAME                            | DESCRIPTION   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Existing model of participation | Theme depicting that participation is the existing model used in a particular project |
| Grass root participation        | Theme depicting benefits of grassroots participation                                  |

| NAME                     | DESCRIPTION   |
|--------------------------|---|
| effective feedback       |   |
| psychological trade-offs |   |
| ownership of project     | Theme depicting the advantage of involving the local populace |
| Scale of participation   | Theme indicating a limit to participation                     |

There were differences in opinions on the involvement of the local people in participating in project conceptualisation and implementation. Some respondents held that it was already adopted as a respondent had this to say;

*As we speak, that is what is used in the CSDP model in some communities.*

There were themes indicating that participation has benefits of effective feedback, psychological tradeoff and ownership of the project. This was evident in the following responses;

**Effective feedback**

*It will also enable for quick feedback responses. It is a good development.*

**Psychological tradeoffs**

*My experience has shown that when the people participate in conceptualising their projects and are involved in the implementation process, there is the tendency that they will have a close affinity with the projects and they see such projects as their own, especially when such projects have a community-wide appeal.*

**Scale of participation**

*Nevertheless, it is good for micro-projects but not ideal for mega projects*

The analysis of NVivo here strongly points to the acceptance of people’s participation in projects conceptualisation and implementation as a means of improving service delivery and development at the community level. The existing success of the CSDP model is a pointer to the likely success of a bureaucracy driven by the people’s participation. It will promote grassroots participation and an effective feedback mechanism. The people are most likely to see the projects like their own. However, the NVivo result indicates that local participation is ideal for micro-projects.

**Researcher:** Should traditional institutions and values be allowed a place in the local bureaucracy?

| NAME                                    | DESCRIPTION  |
|---|--|
| Gatekeeping roles of traditional roles  | Theme shows cognitive appeal to the role of traditional rulers |
| advisory roles                          |  |
| alternative dispute resolution avenue   |  |
| Traditional authorities evolving        | Theme depicting the problems of the traditional authority      |
| corruption in the traditional authority | Theme depicting the corruption of the traditional authority    |

Responses to the traditional institutions depict the roles of the traditional rulers as gatekeepers of their communities. Some respondents indicated that the involvement of the traditional institutions has some benefits based on their position in their societies; other respondents indicated that the traditional authorities had been corrupted. Below are responses;

**Gatekeeping roles**

...they know the culture and tradition of the people, and given the right orientation, they too can enforce the cultural values of the various communities.

**Advisory roles**

...The aspect of their assistance, therefore, will have to be defined. To me, I think they can play the role of advising the ward bureaucracies on preventing issues that may cause disharmony within the community and play the role of advising on issues that bother on security.

**Corruption in the traditional institution**

...Our traditional setting is being militated against by the newfound religions from the east – Islam and Christianity. Our old traditional values are completely submerged and most times not respected. The community I come from abhors stealing, but there are limitations. The effect of globalisation has added to the challenge. A man steals here, goes to Germany, comes back, settles in Lekki and comes home to the warm embrace of the people he stole from. The other challenge is the corruption of our institutions.

The major theme of the NVivo analysis indicates a cognitive appeal of the gatekeeping role of traditional rulers in their various communities.

The analysis further indicates that traditional rulers play advisory roles and are alternative avenues for the resolution of disputes. Therefore, they have a role to play in the deconcentrated bureaucracy. However, respondents were of the opinion that their role might be challenged by corruption, which generally pervades society.

**4.2 Analysis of Quantitative Data**

**Hypothesis 1 Testing using the Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient**

*Table 7: Justification of Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient as tool for Hypotheses Testing*

|                    | N         | Range     | Min.      | Max.      | Mean      | Std. Deviation | Skewness  |            |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
|                    | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic      | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Devpt_goal         | 1116      | 75.00     | 24.00     | 99.00     | 85.6810   | 12.78959       | -1.302    | .073       |
| Fusion             | 1116      | 16.00     | 4.00      | 20.00     | 17.1048   | 3.10659        | -1.470    | .073       |
| Participation      | 1116      | 15.00     | 4.00      | 19.00     | 17.3387   | 2.44399        | -1.976    | .073       |
| Valid N (listwise) | 1116      |           |           |           |           |                |           |            |

Table 7 indicates the general responses of respondents are unevenly skewed to the left; therefore, it is appropriate to analyse the responses using a non-parametric test. The spearman rho was, therefore, aptly deployed in this regard.

**Hypothesis 2 Testing using the Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient**

*Table 8: Justification of Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient as tool for Hypotheses Testing*

|                    | N         | Range     | Min.      | Max.      | Mean      | Std. Deviation | Skewness  |            |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
|                    | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic      | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Devpt_goal         | 1116      | 75.00     | 24.00     | 99.00     | 85.6810   | 12.78959       | -1.302    | .073       |
| Fusion             | 1116      | 16.00     | 4.00      | 20.00     | 17.1048   | 3.10659        | -1.470    | .073       |
| Participation      | 1116      | 15.00     | 4.00      | 19.00     | 17.3387   | 2.44399        | -1.976    | .073       |
| Valid N (listwise) | 1116      |           |           |           |           |                |           |            |

Table 8 indicates that the general responses of respondents are unevenly skewed to the left; therefore, it is appropriate to analyse the responses using a non-parametric test. The spearman rho is, therefore, used.

**Hypothesis 1 (H<sub>01</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between the representatives of the communities participating in the local government bureaucracy, especially in the implementation of developmental projects and the delivery of developmental goals.

*Table 9: Spearman's Rho Correlations*

|                |               |                         | Devpt. Goal | Participation |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Spearman's rho | Devpt. Goal   | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000       | .853**        |
|                |               | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .           | .000          |
|                |               | N                       | 1116        | 1116          |
| Participation  | Participation | Correlation Coefficient | .853**      | 1.000         |
|                |               | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .000        | .             |
|                |               | N                       | 1116        | 1116          |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 9 indicates a strong significant relationship between community representatives' participation in the local government bureaucracy, especially in the implementation of developmental projects and the delivery of developmental goals. From the table, the Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient is .853. The null hypothesis, as stated, that there is no significant relationship between the representatives of the communities participating in the local government bureaucracy, especially in the implementation of developmental projects and the delivery of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers's state, is rejected.

**Hypothesis 2 (H<sub>02</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between the fusion of local traditional structures, values and processes with the local government bureaucracy, especially in the implementation of developmental projects and the delivery of developmental goals in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States of Nigeria.

*Table 10: Spearman's Rho Correlations*

|                |             |                         | Devpt. Goal | Fusion |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------|
| Spearman's rho | Devpt. Goal | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000       | .930** |
|                |             | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .           | .000   |
|                |             | N                       | 1116        | 1116   |
| Fusion         | Fusion      | Correlation Coefficient | .930**      | 1.000  |
|                |             | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .000        | .      |
|                |             | N                       | 1116        | 1116   |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 10 indicates a strong significant relationship between fusion of traditional structure, values and processes with bureaucracy, and attaining developmental goals with the Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient of .930. The null hypothesis, as stated, that there is no significant relationship between the fusion of local traditional structures, values and processes with the local bureaucracy and the achievement of developmental goals at the local government levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers's state is rejected.

## 5. Findings

The objectives of this study were to ascertain if participation by representatives of the communities and the blending of local traditional structures, values and processes with the bureaucracy at the

local level bureaucracy, especially in the implementation of developmental projects, would assist in delivering development at the local levels in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers states of Nigeria.

The study found out that there is a significant relationship between participation by representatives of the local communities ('locals') relating to decisions and implementation of developmental projects and the delivery of developmental goals at the local governments in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers states of Nigeria. This finding validates Uhunmwangho and Aibieyi (2013) position that every local area has its peculiar social structure that is better understood and served by the people. It also validates Fatile and Ejalonibu (2015) position that decentralising the local government structure can reduce poverty and facilitate a gradual increase in development efforts. Uzoma (2005) argues that ecological factors like those of loyalty to tribe or locality negatively impinge on bureaucratic practice can no longer be sustained at the local government bureaucracies in Nigeria in the light of these findings.

The results from the interviews of key informants also revealed that participation of the community representatives ('locals') would be beneficial to development and service delivery at the local levels of governance. According to them, this model is already a success in the Community and Social Development Program (CSDP) in most communities. They also agreed that communities' participation would promote grassroots participation and give the people a sense of belonging by having a close affinity with their projects, especially when such projects have community-wide appeal. This finding justifies the recommendations of Kobani and Nkpolu (2014) that community members be carried along in the planning and implementation of projects and programs

The responses from the interviews also indicated that traditional rulers depict the roles of gatekeepers in their community. The study also found that the involvement of traditional rulers in the local bureaucracies would be beneficial considering their respected position in their communities. This finding validates the non-experimental study of Salisu, Muhammed and Enojo (2017) that bureaucratic powers should be devolved to traditional authorities, including the delegation of discretionary powers to drive development at the local levels of governance. The study established that the existing Weberian principle of neutrality and impartiality in the bureaucratic staffing arrangements can no longer drive efficient service delivery at the local government levels in Nigeria.

## **6. Conclusions And Recommendations**

The study established that the present staffing of local governments across the country, which is patterned along with the Weberian bureaucratic model, would need to be altered considering Nigeria local peculiarities if local governments must effectively and efficiently deliver on development. Bureaucratic neutrality and impersonality have also alienated the people from governmental activities because the people at the community levels do not assist in driving the bureaucracy, which is the operating arm of government. The bureaucrats, who are mostly non-indigenes, in some cases, do not relate with the people. They are concerned mainly with implementing policies, which may be people-oriented but poorly implemented. The present staffing of the local government bureaucracy, which has some of the characteristics of Weber's neutrality and impersonality principles, have, so far, not yielded the desired result of efficient service-delivery of development at the local government areas.

The study, therefore, recommends that Part X, Sections 68 – 75 of the 2000 Local Government Bye-Laws, as applicable in Bayelsa, Edo and Rivers States (and indeed all other states in Nigeria), which deals with the appointments of local government secretaries and local government directors, etc. should be amended by their various Houses of Assembly to include positions that will be created for traditional rulers and representatives of the communities in the ward bureaucracies. This is to reposition the local government bureaucracies towards efficient performances in implementing projects in line with the findings of this study. Community and traditional involvements in the local government bureaucracy will close the existing gaps between the people and their local governments.

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