
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND THE CALL FOR FINANCIAL AUTONOMY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The inability of Local Government to determine its finances is a major hindrance confronting the practice of decentralization of power in the administration of Nigeria. This situation has led to the incapacitation of local government administration in the country. The renewed call for financial autonomy for Local Government in Nigeria is at the heart of ensuring that local government is able to fulfill its mandate of bringing development to the doorstep of Nigerians. However, a critical appraisal of the political and historical of the system shows that at no time have Local Government been truly financially autonomous in evolution Nigeria. This work traces the trajectory of tax exactions and financial allocation to Local Government from pre-independence era to this present time. The study which relied on secondary data and other similar resource materials in its analysis, revealed that Local Government in Nigeria have always been overshadowed by the interference of both the national and sub-national governments, thereby, making the Local Government ill-equipped to carry out its functions. The paper concluded by recommending amongst others, that for Local Government to live up to its mandate, the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (As Amended) must be further amended to free Local Government from the strangulating interference of national and sub-national governments. The current stipulations by the extant fundamental laws of the land are skewed against a financially autonomous Local Government practice.

Keywords: Decentralization, Local Government, Local Government Finance, Financial Autonomy

Introduction

Local Government remains a crucial instrument for decentralizing political authority to the people at the grassroots by creating governmental and administrative structures and powers for the people at this level to manage their particular needs in their various communities making use of their commonality in experience, exposure and economic situation to engender cooperation. The fact of its existence at the doorstep of the ordinary people makes it a veritable tool for galvanizing development from the bottom. The challenge of infrastructure decay in Nigeria has been attributed to the failure of Local Government to fulfill its constitutional mandate of providing political and administrative platform for rural transformation essentially because the system is left exposed to the machinations of higher levels of government who from the very early beginning have appropriated the resources that should ordinarily be local revenues for local development to themselves.

It is in view of the renewed call for financial autonomy for Local Government in Nigeria that this paper seeks to take a closer look at whether there has ever been financial independence in Local Government in Nigeria. This work embarks on defining Local Government and local government finance before delving into the political and historical trajectories of revenue generation, mobilization and allocation from pre-independence to this present time. The work is segmented into the following sub-headings; introduction, what is Local Government? what is Local Government finance? what is financial autonomy? what is Decentralization? Local Government Finance: 1953-1976, Local Government Finance: 1976-1979, Local Government Finance: 1984-1999, Current Issues in Local Government in Nigeria, Conclusion and Recommendations.

What is Local Government?

Local government is the tier of administrative structure established to decentralize governance with the purpose of bringing government closer to the people at the grassroots in order for it to be able to render social services to the people at a more cost efficient and effective way. Local government is critical for stimulating national development. Temple (1998) says it is a system of administration created by the natives themselves whose source of authority and finance are located within the traditional political arrangement of the locality but which was adopted by European colonialist as an indirect rule mechanism to administer Nigeria. Local government can also be defined as a political subdivision of a constituent unit or non-central government in a federal system, which is constituted by law and has substantial control over local affairs including the powers to impose taxes or exact labour for prescribed purposes, having a governing body which is elected or selected from the locality (Abubakar, 2014). For Enemuo (2008), local government is the lowest level of government in a modern state, it has legal distinction and has powers to raise revenue and undertake assigned responsibilities under a leadership that is elected and answerable to the local population. Egunjobi (2020) quoting Imam (2007), identified the following attributes as differentiating local government from other levels of government.

- i. It is a subordinate level of government
- ii. It is empowered legally and constitutionally to undertake legislative, executive/ administrative and pseudo-judicial responsibilities.
- iii. Has powers to enact its own bye-laws, policies, budgets and other financial expenditures and personnel control.
- iv. The council is often elected and can be occasionally appointed or selected.
- v. It is legal being who can sue and be sued.

- vi. It has authority and control over clearly defined territory and population i.e. it is delineated or demarcated in terms of land space and population.

Having defined local government, it must be noted that for local government to be able to fulfill its mandate of providing critical and pivotal economic and social services to its target local population it must possess appreciable human and material resources. And it is on this basis that we need to understand how local government is financed in Nigeria.

What is Local Government Finance?

Local government finance is an aspect of public finance which deals with the generation of revenue, expenditure and utilization of financial resources in order to bring the impact of government closer to the people at the grassroots (Agba; Ocheni, and Nnamani, 2014, Garba, Mamman, El-rufa'I and Jirgi, 2018). It is the means through which local government raise the monetary resources needed to facilitate its capacity to bring social and infrastructural transformation in roads, healthcare, education, commerce to its target population.

The issue of local government finance hinges on the twin factors of fiscal relations of tiers of government and the concept of intergovernmental relation. In a federal system, the idea of fiscal relations is aptly captured in the concept of fiscal federalism. Fiscal federalism is the distribution of financial resources and responsibilities between different levels of government (Phillah, 2023). Intergovernmental relations is the formal and informal mechanism deployed to ensure coordination and cooperation between different levels of government in a decentralized and federal political systems (Heinemann-Griider; Keil; Kossler; and Woelk (2017) including Nigeria.

Sources of revenue as tax from internally generated revenue (which is revenue generated within the local government area of administration which monies gotten from rents, user fee, loans, tenements rates etc. and externally generated revenue which refers to the funds generated outside the local area of administration which includes allocations (statutory and special allocation) and grants (matching, equalization grants etc.) (Alo, 2012).

In Nigeria, the 1976 Local Government Reforms initially greatly improved the financial status of local government in Nigeria, however, the financial situation of Local Government have since retrogressed as it would be highlighted in this paper.

What is Financial Autonomy?

Financial autonomy is the situation when a person, an institution or level of government has the freedom to determine how it would generate its income and how it would expend same on such projects and ventures that are inspired by the conviction of the entity undertaking such financial engagement because it considers such spendings as important for the attainment of the purposes for which its existence is predicated. According to Belaid, Soudani and Liliana (2023), it is the freedom to impose local taxes, collect revenue and allocate financial resources without external interference. Similarly, it is an organization's ability to have control over its financial decisions and resources without significant external interference. This idea includes the authority to generate income, allocate funds, and establish budgetary priorities according to organization's unique needs and goals (Nkoro and Otto, 2023).

For Bello-Imam (2007), financial autonomy is the freedom of an organization to control and manage its financial resources independently, without excessive external influence or constraints. In like manner, Mudalige (2019), says it is the power of an

organization to allocate resources according to its own priorities. It is important to note that financial autonomy enhances organizational performance and effectiveness suggesting that organizations with greater financial autonomy have the flexibility to align their financial resources with their strategic priorities, therefore, resulting in improved performance outcomes.

What is Decentralization?

Decentralization, according to Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2023), is the dispersion or distribution of functions and powers specifically of government to lower units including the delegation of power from a central authority to regional and local authorities. It is also, the process of shifting control from one main group to several smaller ones, ensuring that power spreads away from the centre to local branches or government (Vocabulary.com Dictionary, 2023). Again, decentralization has been defined as the process in government which allows for creation of smaller local government with more autonomy, leading to a shift from hierarchical, centralized government to a distributed form of governance (Tobi, 2023).

Having defined the basic ideas in this analysis, the work shall progress by looking at the situation of Local Government in term of its financial autonomy relative to other levels of government in Nigeria. The bulk of the issues that would be discussed in terms of the financial situation of local government in Nigeria between 1953 and 1987 are taken from the classic done on the values and philosophical foundations of local government in Nigeria by Gboyega (1987).

Local Government Finance: 1953 – 1976

Prior to the reforms of 1976, what is today known as local government were first established as Native Authorities in Northern Nigeria. According to Gboyega (1987), the system emanated as a pre-colonial fairly developed system of taxation in the Emirates of Northern Nigeria that facilitated the organization of native treasuries and the collection of revenues in support of native administration.

Lord Lugard while addressing the leaders of Sokoto after the defeat of the Emir's forces in 1903 abrogated the right of taxation of the Emir and transferred same to the British Crown. The first major statute pertaining to local government finance was the Native Revenue Proclamation No. 2 of 1906 which consolidated the existing different forms of tax into a single, direct income tax and where relevant maintained the jangali or cattle tax of the pre-occupation era (Gboyega, 1987). What the Proclamation did was to apportion tax to communities and villages by the colonial authorities whose concern was majorly about affordability, this tax regime presented itself as a less extortionate system to the peasants. It also sought to eliminate multiplicity of taxes, gifts and tributes of the pre-colonial period. It likewise, back the collection of taxes with the weight of superior force by colonial power such that tax evasion or avoidance became more hazardous for citizens. What this situation resulted into was that it enhanced the financial security of the Native Authorities and the traditional rulers whose maintenance was a charge on local revenues.

By 1914, following the amalgamation of Nigeria, it was imperative to harmonise the administrative structures and procedures of the two protectorates. With Lord Lugard emergence as the Governor-General, it was undoubtedly clear he sought the extension of the principle and procedures already fairly well-established during his time as the leader of Northern Nigeria to Southern Nigeria. The introduction and establishment of treasuries and application of the taxation system became prominent. Having replaced the 1906 Proclamation with the Native Revenue Ordinance of 1917 in the North same became

enforceable in the West in 1918 with minimal resistance of anti-tax agitations in places like Abeokuta, Ogbomoso and Delta area because of existing semblance of the tributary system in the region.

In Eastern Nigeria, there was much more difficulty to apply direct taxation because there were no centralized political authorities and the ones that were created were arbitrarily created making it to be bedeviled with the lack of inherent right to take taxes and tributary from the people. Even the Native Courts which were the precursors of the Native Authorities were arbitrarily composed thereby making them to lack legitimacy in the reckoning of the people of Eastern Nigeria. The resentment by people led to the anti-tax agitation of Aba riots of 1929.

The sharing formula under the provisions of the Native Revenue Ordinance of 1917 was that revenue accruable from local taxations was shared equally between central Government and the Native Authorities. In 1927, sharing formula was tinkered with, and this development saw shares given to Native Authorities increased to 75% from 50% especially, for native authorities classified as "fully organized" while those not so "fully organized" retained their 50%. Most of the "fully organized" Native Authorities were in Northern Nigeria (Bello-Imam, 2007).

The recession of the 1930s saw the imposition of austerity measures by Nigeria's colonial administration. For instance, in 1930, certain Northern Native Authorities though still maintained their classification as "fully organized" but could not assess their 70% but instead only got 50%. However, by 1932 the colonial Government reduced by 10% revenue allocation to "fully organized" Native Authorities to relieve pressure on government finances. In 1935, the principle of giving "fully organized" Native Authority preferential allocation of local revenue was abolished with the decision that favourable consideration should be granted to less privileged Native Authorities so as to assist them to catch-up with the "fully organized" ones.

Subsequent administrative changes starting from Sir Bourdillion up till 1976 cemented the view that Native Authorities had no inherent financial autonomy as could be seen that their finances were always unilaterally determined by the central Government despite the fact that the bulk of the revenues accruing to the national and regional (later State) governments were collected at the local level. Though, that there had been Native Authority Ordinance in 1933 and the Direct Taxation Ordinance of 1940, the imminent possibility of regionalization of governmental structure saw Mr. Sydney Phillipson appointed to examine the financial and administrative relationships between the Native Authorities and the Government. His report led to the amendment of the Direct Taxation Ordinance, 1948 which further cemented the idea that taxes collected were for Government. The amendment stipulated that tax returns should be made to the Resident and that the receipts should be paid to Government treasury rather than to the native treasury in the first instance (Phillipson, 1946). This singular action addressed beyond any iota of doubt that the idea of Local Authority as repository of direct tax was after all not genuine. The central Government was unequivocally accorded the primary right to the proceeds of local direct taxation.

The Direct Taxation Ordinance of 1948 was repealed and replaced with the Income Tax Law of 1957. Under the new regulation, Native Authorities were permitted to collect general and special rates while the Government took over the collection of the regional income tax. Under the new arrangement Native Authorities had powers to fix rates but with the approval of the Minister for Local Government. The Income Tax (Amendment) Law, 1960 and the Local Government (Amendment) Law, 1960 abolished the provisions for general and education rates given to local authorities instead, the power to collect income tax

on all people including salary earners who were hitherto under the purview of Native Authority in 1957 arrangement were given to the Regional Government. Special rates, other than for education were permitted for Native Authorities but only with the approval of the Minister (Gboyega, 1987).

In April 1961, the Pay-As-You-Earn (P.A.Y.E) system was introduced by the Government while also taken over the collection of tax for all tax-payers whose income was in excess of £300. The local government where, however, empowered to collect tax from the lower income group. In 1962, the income tax law was amended to allow local authorities to collect Development Contribution. In 1968, another change was done to exempt women with income below £100 from paying tax, this move was targeted at stemming the anti-tax agitation that was gathering momentum. In many localities, the tax burden was viewed by the citizens as outrageous when juxtaposed with the services being rendered.

During this time tax ranged from a minimum of £3 to about £7 including special rate, the extended outbreak of anti-tax riots in some parts of the country, especially in Western State in late 1968 and early 1969 forced Government to reduce tax to £2 flat while minimum income was increased from £50 to £100.

Again in 1974/75, Western State Government took over the collection of tax of all categories of people from the local authorities and promised to pay flat rate tax to be collected on behalf of the Councils periodically in advance on the basis of the previous year's figures to the councils (MLGA, Ibadan (1974)). Tenement rate was also introduced as a source of local revenue to shore-up local government finances as a new system of Council Manager came into effect on 1 April, 1973.

It should be noted that these frequent changes negatively impacted the financial viability of local authorities. Apart from the obvious problem of instability in matters as important as the finances of local authorities, these changes also saw the gradual reduction in revenue accruable to local authorities if we take for instance in 1962 the reduction of flat rate to £6 which made some local authorities who were on £10 before the unilateral decision by the central Government to lose substantial revenue, so also was the situation in 1969 when it was reduced from £6 to £4. All these examples are clear indications that Local Governments in Nigeria have always been financially controlled by higher levels of government.

Local Government Finance: 1976-1979

Prior to the completion of the work of the 1976 Local Reform Committee, the Federal Military Government in 1973/74 financial year decided to provide financial assistance to local authorities. By this decision, the State Governments were required to establish a Local Government Loan to provide capital loans to local authorities. To ensure that this policy met its intended purpose, the Federal Military Government made available to each State ₦1 million as subvention with the instruction that the State Governments would match the contribution and make same available to local authorities. However, State Governments did not match the contribution despite that Federal Military Government increased its contribution to ₦1.5 million in 1974/75.

In 1976, as a result of the implementation of the Reform, the Federal Military Government's financial contribution to local authorities increased to ₦100 million which represented 1.4% of the total earning of ₦7,071 million for the fiscal year 1976/1977. There was an agreement that State Governments would also make grants available to local government to the value of 5% of their revenue and 10% by Federal Military Government but these promises were never fully met by both levels of Governments.

By 1977, the Federal Military Government referred the issue of statutory allocation of revenue to local authorities to the Aboyade Technical Committee on Revenue Allocation as one of its terms of reference and the Committee recommended that the Federal Government and each State Government should allocate 10% of their revenue for the use of local government. This recommendation formed the basis of revenue allocation to local authorities for the period April 1979 to September, 1979. However, when the civilian administration took office in October, 1979, the Aboyade Report was rejected outrightly as a basis of revenue allocation in the Federation, claiming that the Report was “too technical” (Federal Ministry of Information, 1980).

Despite this development, Federal and State Governments were under obligation to make revenue available to local authorities since Section 149(2) of the 1979 Constitution had made provision that any amount standing to the credit of the Federation Account shall be distributed among the Federal and State Governments, and the local government councils in each State, on such terms and such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly. After much consultation, the National Assembly in 1981 decided that local authorities shall be allocated 10% of Federation Account and 10% of total allocation of each State to her local authorities. Subsection (5) of Section 149 also made provision for “State Joint Local Government Account” which shall be paid all allocations to the local government councils of the state from the Federation Account and from the Government of the State (see Constitution of the Federal of Nigeria, 1979).

This scenario slightly positively impacted the finances and administrative performance of local government in the following ways:

- i. Affords local councils of their most crucial need i.e funds.
- ii. It enhanced the independence of local government as they could act with some level of autonomy.
- iii. Since allocation to local authorities are proportion of national and state revenues, it promoted joint commitment and obligation of the three tiers of government.
- iv. The certainty that some estimate of money will come in, gave local authorities favourable atmosphere to plan especially in respect to capital expenditure.

On the flip side, there were some negatives that occasioned this development, some of which include:

- i. Less effort on the part of local authorities to collect tax/revenue like community tax since allocation would surely be made available from the national and state allocations.
- ii. Many State Governments took the advantage of statutory grants to abolish some traditional sources of local government revenue while some took over these taxes. Similarly, local governments were saddled with financial responsibilities but not the executive responsibility to undertake such task.
- iii. The illusion of sudden wealth led to widespread wasteful expenditure and corruption in pursuit of party patronage and party-politics competition.
- iv. Dependency attitudes was fostered instead of policy-intention of quasi-autonomous operations and disposition as many community self-help initiatives lost their vitality because of the view that local government councils have adequate funds for local needs.

It must be noted that despite the constitutional and legal basis for revenue allocation to Local Government between 1979 and 1983, State Government took liberties with the funds of Local Government councils in complete violation of the Constitution and Revenue

Allocation Act, 1981. State Governments were reluctant to give their own 10% share to local government while also not disclosing the amount of 10% of remittance of Federal Allocation to their local government despite the fact that the Federal Government was consistent in releasing it to the State Government. The excuse of the State Government was that the 58.5% allocation to Federal Government was skewed against the States, as such that the State cannot afford to give 10% out of their paltry sum of 26.5% to the local government.

Local Government Finance: 1984-1999

The Military overthrow of the Shehu Shagari Administration (1979 - 1983) did not change the financial situation of Local Government. The Buhari/Idiagbon regime that assumed office in January, 1984 dissolved all Management Committees of Local Government and appointed senior civil servant as Sole Administrators to replace the dissolved Committees. The Federal Military Government then set-up a 21-member Dasuki Committee to among others re-examine ... financial resources available to Local Government. The Committee made many recommendations including that Government should establish management audit panel for each zone of the State to audit the finances of the local governments once every quarter. This recommendation was contained in a White Paper released in March, 1986 more than three years after its inauguration.

The Gen. Ibrahim Babangida military regime though tinkered considerably with local government administration in Nigeria by granting it financial autonomy but the challenges that bedevilled this move especially in area of payment and maintenance of primary schools personnel and infrastructure causing what was then known as zero allocation made the Gen. Sanni Abacha regime that took over from the Earnest Shoneken led interim National Government after the failed transition to civil rule programme to bring the financial administration of Local Government under control of State Government. The Gen. AbdulSalami Abubakar transition that culminated in promulgation of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that heralded this current civil administration did not mince words as its stipulations were clear on who controls local government administration in Nigeria. The provision of Section 7 was not vague about the authority of State Government in providing for the democratic establishment of Local Government in their domain including the determination of the financing, structure and composition of local councils (Egunjobi, 2020). The implication is that Local Governments have always financially been under the control of other higher levels of government in Nigeria.

Current Issues in Local Government Finance: 1999-2024

Today, relative to the situation during the Second Republic (1979 – 1983) nothing has really changed except for slight changes in revenue allocation formula. A cursory view of local government finance since 1999 reveals that the 1999 Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria (As Amended) provides for statutory allocations of public revenue to local government just as the defunct 1979 Constitution. For instance, Section 7 (6a-b) stipulates that State Government and Federal Government are by law required to provide funds for local government and pursuant to the fulfillment of this constitutional provision, president Olusegun Obasanjo in his May, 2002 (1st Executive Order) allocated 20% to Local Government while the Federal Government had 56% and 24% went to State Governments. The July, 2002 (2nd Executive Order) made slight adjustment to the revenue allocation formula by allocating 54.68% to the Federal Government, 24.72% to State Government and 20.6% to Local Government. However, by March, 2004 a modified allocation formula was released by the Federal Ministry of Finance which made provision for an allocation formula of 52.68% to Federal Government, 26.72% to State Government and 20.6% to Local Government (Agba; Ocheni and Nnamani, 2014).

Again, the 1999 Constitution just as the 1979 Constitution made provisions for the establishment of State Joint Local Government Account in each State of the federation where funds from the Federal Account are lodged before disbursement to local government. However, this arrangement allows for the hijacked by State Government of revenue that should accrue to Local Government thereby hampering the effective performance of this level of government. This situation was attested to by the Chairman of Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) by reiterating that a lot of financial malfeasance were being perpetrated by State Governments on local government just as it was during the Second Republic.

President Mohammadu Buhari signed an Executive Order that mandated that the federal allocation to Local Government be paid directly into its account having been deducted from State Government funds and for Nigeria Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) to ensure that Local Government independently exercise the powers to decide how it want to utilize its financial resources by putting in place a framework that would make Local Government accountable for its financial dealings to the Unit (The Guardian, July 23, 2021). This Order was challenged at the Supreme Court and the Court held that the president and the Federal Government did not have the power to determine the operations of Local Government because such powers were essentially reserved for State Houses of Assembly (The Cable, February, 11, 2022)

Conclusion

In view of all that have been discussed in this work, it is crystal clear that local government finance has been plagued with fundamental challenges that date back to its foundation (i.e origin) especially, considering the manner with which Local Government evolved and the purposes which successive administrations have deployed it to serve. What is certain is that Local Government is seen more as an instrument for political patronage and a tool for orchestrating high stake partisan-politics rather than as a tool for transformational agenda.

King (1988), highlighted that Local Government [should] be [the] dynamic vehicle of rural transformation and development if they are well financed.... and, in the particular of case of Nigeria, allowed some level of autonomy to determine how it revenue would be raised and expended. However, Local Government in Nigeria have capitulated as it has abandoned its mandate because of the problems of unfavourable share of resources, absence of fiscal autonomy, over-reliance on Federal Allocation, indiscriminate creation and proliferation of non-viable local government, wasteful spending, lack of business acumen, poor leadership, corruption etc (Alo, 2012), just as Egunjobi (2020), similarly, identified the problems of over-politicization and unbridled partisanship by politicians in Nigeria as other factors that make local government vulnerable to abuse (Punch, 26/08/2023; 16/09/2023; 17/09/2023).

The unfavourable disposition of State Government to any form of autonomy for Local Government remains a herculean task for addressing the vex issue of weaponization of local administration as a tool for political aggrandizement by State Governor. This situation needs to be worked upon considering that every efforts so far made at constitutional amendment to guarantee a financially autonomous Local Government in Nigeria have been thwarted by State Houses of Assembly and local councils' officials acting out the script of the governor. (The Cable, 24/10/2014; Punch, 17/09/2023).

As things stand now, there have been calls by concerned Nigerians to the President Bola Tinubu administration to seek a determinative pronouncement through judicial interpretation of the constitution of Nigeria by tabling the matter of financial autonomy of

local government vis-a-vis the administration and legislative controls of Local Government by the State Government for the adjudication of the Supreme Court of Nigeria. This call may have far-reaching effects on the administration of local government going forward if not well handled. This cautious admonition is hinged on the possibility that the FG may not get what it wants from the Supreme Court since the Court has once ruled that it is illegal to deduct local government funds from the statutory allocation accruing to the state government. This was the judgement of the Supreme Court in nullifying the Executive Order signed by President Mohammadu Buhari in his attempt to address the challenge of financial autonomy of local government during his administration (The Cable, 11/02/2022). The implication is that should the Federal Government fail to have positive proclamation of its position for a financially autonomous local government that some stakeholders are calling for, the State Government would become emboldened to act with reckless abandon in the handling of local government finances (The Cable, 11/02/2022). Therefore, it is important that beyond the legal pursuit, political and administration strategies should be equally embraced to ensure that the lots of the people at the grassroots received the needed attention.

Recommendations

Consequent upon the various issues addressed in this paper, the following steps are recommended as steps that can be taken to address the challenges or problems confronting local government financing in Nigeria:

- Local government should be granted autonomy to generate and utilize its revenue by amending the various provisions of the 1999 Constitution that tied local government finance to the apron strings of Federal and State Governments. One major challenge of constitutional amendment in Nigeria is need to get two-thirds of 36 states to ratify the changes passed by National Assembly. To this end, stakeholders at all levels of government must lobby and pressure State Houses of Assembly to ratify the changes since they continuously been rejecting all the previous amendments in respect to granting autonomy to Local Government in Nigeria.
- The political class must jettison the concern for too much political patronage, free their stranglehold on the jugular of Local Government so that they can act autonomously in determining their finances and administrative responsibilities.
- Citizens at the various local communities should be more politically engaging by participating in their local affairs. When the mass of the people show interest in their own affairs, the resultant effect would be that they would seek to hold their political leaders accountable, thereby, minimizing flippancy and mismanagement that has been some of the reasons advanced by higher levels of government for encroaching on income generating spheres of Local Government and appropriation of the financial resources of this tier of government in Nigeria.
- Operators of Local Government should show readiness, maturity, responsiveness and prudence coupled with administrative and business acumen in their handling of local government finances. When this is done, the other higher levels of government especially, State Government would accord Local Government respect and latitude to act.
- Lastly, there must be reorientation and renewal of loyalty of Nigerian politicians so that they can embrace all the necessary democratic ethos such as tolerance, accommodation, probity, openness and accountability in the business of administering the institutions of state. When this is done, it is believed that political officials would uphold the tenets of constitutionalism and adhere to doctrine of delineation of jurisdictional power and respect for federal principles.

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