

6. Local Government in Nigeria

6.1 INTRODUCTION: PRE-COLONIAL SYSTEMS

A knowledge of the pre-colonial system of local administration in Nigeria is a pre-requisite for a proper understanding of the development of Local Government system in Nigeria. This is so because the pre-colonial system tremendously influenced the development of modern local government. Before the advent of colonial administration in Nigeria, this part of the world was not known as Nigeria. It was the British that brought together various communities that shared no common political structures and values and called it Nigeria. Before this time, the various communities that constitute what is now known as Nigeria, governed themselves with their own respective traditional political institutions.

In the North, the Hausa/Fulani Emirate system was adopted. Under this system, the Hausa/Fulani North was organized into a number of Emirates. The Hausa/Fulani Emirates operated as highly centralized and hierarchically-organized authoritarian States. These were ruled by powerful Emirs. Each Emirate was sub-divided into a number of districts, each of them under the responsibility of an officer known as *hakimi*. Each district was further sub-divided into villages, each with its own village head appointed by the *hakimi*. Local Government under the Hausa/Fulani system was under the District and village Heads who were responsible and accountable to the Emir.

In the West, the Yoruba had a system of centralized chiefdom. Yoruba land was traditionally divided into fourteen kingdoms each of which was ruled by an Oba who played the role of constitutional monarchy. The Oba ruled his chiefdom with the aid of his chiefs. The Yoruba kingdom consisted of the Oba's town (capital city) and the subordinate towns. The Oba's chief known as *Baale* or *Oloja* ruled the subordinate town. The *Oloja* was assisted by the subordinate chiefs in the conduct of the affairs of the subordinate town. The *Oloja* and his subordinate chiefs played the role of local government in the Yoruba traditional political system.

In Eastern Nigeria, the Igbo had fragmented and diffused autonomous local communities. In this system, many groups and institutions like the age grades, women associations, *Ozo* titled society, the council of elders, *Oha* (People's Assembly) shared in political authority with the chief of the community. As a result of the fragmented nature of the political system, it is difficult to differentiate the authority that played the role of local government from the one that played the role of the central government. In most cases the same authority performed both the central and local government functions. In some cases however the community was a federation of many villages, the local government functions were carried out by the village authority.

The above are not the only traditional political systems in Nigeria, but rather, they serve as representatives of a host of others. As we noted earlier, these traditional systems greatly influenced the development of modern local government in Nigeria.

6.2 NATIVE ADMINISTRATION

The Charter of the Royal Niger Company was revoked in 1900. Following the revocation of the Charter, Lord Lugard was appointed the High Commissioner for Northern Nigeria in 1900. As the High Commissioner, Lord Lugard introduced the Indirect Rule system in Northern Nigeria as a style of administration for effective governance of the people. The Indirect Rule, which involved native administration, constituted the form of local administration. It was a system of local administration in which traditional rulers or indigenous leaders of the colonized people were employed by the British to rule their people with their existing traditional political institutions. Under the native administration system, the British exercised ultimate power in the control, direction and supervision of the traditional rulers or indigenous leaders in local administration. The British officials that were deeply and directly involved in the control, direction and supervision of the native administration were the Residents and District Officers. The Emirs, Obas and Warrant Chiefs were the principal actors of the Native Administration System. In fact, in most places, the Native Authority of an area was the Emir, the Oba or the Warrant Chief. But in all cases the traditional ruler was expected to rule his people with the traditional political institutions of the area. The Native Authorities provided law and order within their respective areas. They also provided basic rural services such as provision and maintenance of village markets and rural roads. Native Authorities settled disputes and prevented crimes. In Northern Nigeria, the Native Authorities collected taxes from the people for their services. Taxation was later extended to the West. However, attempts to extend it to the Eastern provinces were resisted. It was ultimately introduced in the Eastern provinces in 1928 when the first tax was collected in the area but the decision to impose tax on the taxable adults in the East was taken in 1926. It is worthy of note that various issues connected with this taxation led to the famous Aba Women riot of 1929. The riot, which demonstrated the significant role which women played in the Igbo traditional political process, was a vote of no confidence in the Native Administration in the East.

The Native Administration found very fertile ground in the Northern provinces. Consequently, it succeeded as a system of local administration in the area. Its success came as a result of the fact that the system of Native Administration was in agreement with the traditional political system of the Hausa/Fulani North. The Hausa/Fulani traditional political system was characterized by highly centralized authoritarian rule, hierarchically well organized political system with formal structures and definite functions, a system of taxation, and a well organized army. These four factors, which were the indispensable elements of the Native Administration system, were responsible for the success of the Native Administration in the North. The Native Administration system had no such fertile grounds in the West and East. In the West, the Oba, unlike the Emir of the North, was not authoritarian, but he was a constitutional monarch who ruled with the support of his council of chiefs. The Native Authority system vested with the Oba absolute governmental powers which was contrary to tradition and this was responsible to its partial failure in the West. In the Eastern provinces, the system was a complete failure since it was quite alien to the people. The Igbo traditional political system was republican and democratic. But the Native Administration system created Warrant Chiefs with absolute political authority. The dictatorial and corrupt Warrant

Chiefs who were in effect the Native Authorities in the ideal model of Native Administration were not acceptable to the people who expressed great resentment against the system. Thus the system suffered colossal failure in the East.

6.3 MODERN LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA (1950–1966)

Eastern Nigeria

The failure of the Native Administration in the East, the non inclusion of the educated elites in the Native Administration and the increase in the number of educated elites, led to a serious search for a new and more acceptable form of local administration. This search culminated in the *Local Government Ordinance of 1950*. The Eastern House of Assembly created in 1946 as a result of the Arthur Richards's Constitution made its first memorable mark in 1949 when it adopted a Memorandum which in 1950 gave effect to a new Local Government system patterned on the British Local Government model. Eastern Nigeria was the first in British West Africa to introduce the modern democratic system of Local Government. The Local Government Ordinance of 1950 created a democratic system of local government in which the elite were selected as Councillors through popular election. In place of the authoritarian Native Administration, the Ordinance created a three-tier system of local government. The tiers were the *County*, the *District* and the *Local* Councils. Each of the Councils was established separately by a legal instrument. The legal instrument established by the government defined the geographical area, functions, powers, among others of a Council. The County and District Councils were all-purpose authorities. The local council which was the third tier had very small geographical area with very limited functions and powers. The local council was not empowered to employ its own staff. It also did not receive grants-in-aid from the Regional Government.

Initially great powers were given to the Councils. They employed and controlled their personnel and awarded contracts. District Officers who controlled the Native Administration ceased to exercise such controlling and supervisory powers and served as advisers to the popularly-elected councils. The system initially suffered two critical problems. The first was that the Councillors abused the wide powers given to them through corruption, bribery, nepotism in the appointment of staff and award of contracts. The second was that the three tier-system brought about a struggle for powers, friction and conflicts and therefore did not function effectively. The County was abolished in April 1958 and the three-tier system was reduced to two-tier in Rural Districts while Urban and Municipal Councils became single all-purpose Councils. Further reforms were made under the Local Government Law of 1960. Under this Law, Rural District Councils were re-named County Councils, while Urban District Councils were known as Urban County Councils. The Law curtailed the great powers of the Councils by providing for strict control over their activities with particular reference to staffing, financial management and award of contracts.

The local government was responsible for maintenance of law and order within its area of jurisdiction. It maintained other services such as local roads, markets, health, primary education, sanitation, and others. The main sources of revenue were local rates, government grants, fees from licences, market dues and fines for breach of by-laws. Local Government Councils could also secure loans for development projects.

The Local Government councillors were popularly elected under universal adult suffrage. The Regional Electoral Officer was responsible for the conduct of Local Government elections and the Federal Electoral Register of voters was used. A few chiefs were appointed

as members. The Chairman of the Council who was a part-time Councillor was elected annually by the members of the Council. Councillors received sitting allowances instead of fixed salaries.

This system of Local Government was popularly known as County Council system. It was generally criticized for corruption, mismanagement, nepotism, poor staffing and financing, and maladministration. The system collapsed with the advent of military rule in 1966.

Western Nigeria

Western Region copied the Eastern Region example. The government of Western Region introduced in 1952 the modern democratic Local Government system, essentially the same as that of Eastern Region — three-tiers of Divisional, District and Local Councils.

The councils consisted of elected Councillors and few traditional Councillors. The traditional Councillors were recognized Chiefs appointed by government. The law provided that elected members in any Council must *not* be less than three quarters. These Councillors were elected by secret ballot under universal adult suffrage. The Chairman of the Council was elected by the Council annually. The Council had a ceremonial President who was a recognized traditional ruler. The duties and powers of the Councils were essentially the same with those of the Eastern Region. Two or more Local Government Councils that wished, were empowered to co-operate to run together a service through a Joint Board. Local Government authorities could also establish their own Police Forces — Local Government Police. This however must be done with the approval of the Regional Government and must conform strictly to the standards established by the Regional Commissioner of the Nigeria Federal Police.

The revenue of Local Government Councils came from taxes, rates, fees and dues, fines from Customary Courts, profits from industrial and commercial undertakings, grants from Regional Government and loans. The councils in the Western Region had two types of staff — the unified local government staff and the non-unified local government staff. The unified staff were the clerks, treasurers, local education officers, while the rest were non-unified. The unified staff were appointed through a central Local Government Service Board. This category of staff were trained, posted to the councils by the Ministry of Local Government which could also transfer them. The non-unified staff were appointed by individual councils.

The system was also criticized for bribery and corruption, nepotism and maladministration. It also collapsed with the advent of military rule in 1966.

The Federal Capital Territory of Lagos

After Lagos had gained the status of the Federal Capital Territory in 1954, it ceased to be under Western Region. It had a council known as the Lagos City Council. The Council was under the control of the Federal Government. The Lagos City Council was set up under the Lagos Local Government Act of 1959. Lagos was legally granted the status of a city under the City of Lagos Act of October 1963. The Lagos City Council consisted of forty-two elected members, four traditional members and a President, who was the Oba of Lagos. The Council was an all-purpose Council and performed all the traditional functions of local government as they affected the city of Lagos. These functions include construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, markets, provision of health services, primary education, fire brigade, and so on. The day-to-day work of the Council was controlled by the Chairman of the Council who was elected annually by the Council. The Council appointed all its own

staff. The main source of revenue of the Council was property rate. Other sources of revenue were rates from public corporation, market fees, fees from various licences, Federal Government grants and loans. The Councillors were elected by secret ballot under universal adult suffrage for a tenure of three years. Generally the electoral procedure followed the same pattern as those of the East and West. As we noted earlier, the Council was under the control of the Federal Government. The Council was supervised by the Federal Minister of Lagos Affairs. The President-in-Council had the powers to dissolve the Council and order a new election if it failed to carry out its duties. The Council operated with the Lagos Executive Development Board. The membership of the Board consisted of ten appointed members, a representative of the Chamber of Commerce, two members of the Lagos City Council, the Medical Officer of Health, representatives of the Federal Ministries of Works and Finance. The Board was entrusted with the responsibility of town planning and slum clearing in the city of Lagos.

6.4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NORTHERN NIGERIA (1950–1966)

After the Local Government Reforms in the East and the West, the North continued with the Native Administration system. This was explained by the fact that the Native Administration system was in consonance with the traditional political system of the Hausa/Fulani. However, influenced by the reforms of the East and West, the Northern Nigeria government made a detailed investigation into the structure and operation of the Native Administration of the Region. Based on the findings of this investigation, the government reformed the existing Native Administration system under the *Native Authority Law of 1954* which introduced more democratic authorities and fostered delegation of powers to subordinate District or Village Councils by the Native Authority. Under this Law, Native Authority was set up in one of the four forms described below:

- (i) **Chief-in-Council:** The Chief-in-Council was an authority in which the Chief (Emir) was the executive authority. All powers of the Native Authority was vested on him. He presided over the Council which in fact played advisory role to the Emir. Thus the Emir could even dispense with the full Council in emergency or minor issues of local administration. However, he must consult the Council on *all major* policy matters. But he had powers to over-ride the majority decision of the Council. The Chief-in-Council authority was normally set up in an area which was traditionally ruled by an autocratic Emir. In this form, the Chief was not democratic but authoritarian.
- (ii) **Chief-and-Council:** The Chief-and-Council form, was the authority in which the Chief (Emir) had no absolute powers. In this form, the Chief also presided over the Council but he had no powers to overrule a majority decision of the Council. All issues of the Authority were brought before the Council, debated and decided upon on the basis of the majority opinion of the Council. The Chief under this form was bound by law to always comply with the decision of the majority of the Council members. Here the Chief was governed by democratic principles.
- (iii) **Council:** This form of Authority existed where two or more Native Authorities combined to constitute a federation. The Native Authorities that formed the federation then became subordinate Native Authorities under the “Council” Authority. Each of the federating subordinate Authorities retained only those powers granted by the Federal Council. The Council was presided over by a Chairman. The

Chairmanship of the Council rotated among the various Chiefs of the subordinate Authorities.

- (iv) **Care-taker Government:** A care-taker form of Native Authority was generally a sole authority. In most cases the care-taker government was the District Officer of the area. It was generally a temporary authority.

The most remarkable element of the reform of the Native Authority was the introduction of elective Councillors. The law provided that all the Native Authority Councils must include a certain percentage of elected members. In fact in more than half the number of all the Native Authorities in the Region, their councils had the majority of popularly-elected members. Apart from elected members, there were traditional members who were, in most cases, nominated by the Minister for Local Government.

The election of Councillors was by secret ballot. The electors must be adult male citizens of Nigeria not below twenty-one years of age. Women were not allowed to vote or be voted for. The Council operated through its Committees and Traditional Councillors that held portfolio (full-time Councillors with portfolio). The Authority employed their respective staff. The functions and powers of local authorities were as provided in the Native Authority Law. These include maintenance of law and order, rural health services, primary education, animal health, agricultural and forestry extension services, local police force, rural water supply, native courts, prison services, and social welfare services. The duties and powers of Local Authorities in the North were wider than those of the East and West.

The Local Authorities derived their revenue from community tax, cattle tax, Native court revenue, Regional government grants, fees, dues, licences, interests on investments and loans. The major criticism against the Native Authority system of the North which operated between 1954 and 1966 was that the system was autocratic and undemocratic. It served as an instrument of oppression and victimization of certain sections, groups and individuals.

6.5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT DURING THE MILITARY RULE OF 1966–1976

The collapse of the First Republic in January 1966 was followed by a series of epoch-making events. These were the military intervention and the secessionist attempt with the concomitant civil war. The third was the creation of the 12 state structure. These factors created new political orientation, attitudes and values among Nigerians which called for significant changes in the entire political system. More particularly these factors called for changes in the local government system in Nigeria. Consequently these events were followed by reforms by various State Governments in the Federation of their respective local government systems. It will just suffice to outline the main features of the reforms carried out by all the states at this period. The main features are as follows:

- (i) **Attempts Toward Democratization of Councils:** In Northern Nigeria, the State Governments abolished the term “Native Authority Council”TM and replaced it with “Local Authority Council”TM. This change was necessary because the term “Native Authority”TM carried with it the negative and repugnant connotation of the oppressive policy and practice of Indirect Rule. The Chief-in-Council form of Native Authority was completely abolished. It was replaced with Chief-and-Council Local Authority. The Chairman of the Council had no veto powers and must always act in accordance with the majority decision of the Council. All the Local Authorities in the Federation (Northern and Southern States alike) had the majority of Council members

elected. This was a bold step towards the democratization of Local Government in Northern Nigeria since this had been the practice in the East since 1950 and Western Nigeria since 1952.

- (ii) **Proliferation of Local Government Units:** There was a general trend of proliferation of Local Government Units throughout the Federation. For instance, in the former East Central State, the basic unit was the Community Council. There was a total of 642 Community Councils in the state whose population ranged between 298 and 54,871. Two factors were responsible for the proliferation. The first was that with the breaking down of the four Regions into 12 states it was natural that the existing Local Government would be broken into smaller units. The second factor was the quest for rapid community development by the military which required bringing the government nearer to the people.
- (iii) **Unified Staff System:** There was a trend in many states of the Federation towards unified staff system with the State Civil Service and these were appointed and controlled by the State Government. For instance, in the former East Central State the Local Government Council had no powers to employ their own staff. Their staff who were civil servants were posted to them by the State Government and enjoyed the same rights and conditions of service with civil servants.
- (iv) **Excessive Control by State Governments:** There was excessive control of Local Governments by State Governments through the Ministry of Local Government using its field officers eg Divisional Officers. The excessive control stemmed from the military nature of the government.
- (v) **Administration Oriented System:** The system of Local Government at this time placed emphasis on "administration" rather than "government". Local Government Councils were placed under the control, supervision and direction of the Divisional Officer, Development Officer and Resident. In many states, Local Government System was variously termed Divisional Administration as in East Central State and Bendel State and Development Administration as in South Eastern State. In fact there was an attempt to destroy the concept of Local Government in some States.
- (vi) **Poor financing:** Local Government Councils were poorly financed. The State Governments took over most of their viable sources of revenue like property rate, control of markets, etc. Moreover, State Governments did not give them grants nor did they provide them with facilities for loans for development projects. Thus Local Government Councils lacked revenue for meaningful existence. One of the factors responsible for this was that the Federal government took over some of the revenue sources of State Governments thereby making them poor. Moreover, with the creation of more States, they became smaller and relatively economically unviable. In order to survive, the State Governments "pounced" on Local Governments which were under their absolute control. But a saving device for the development of rural areas under this poor financial state of Local Government Councils was that State Governments particularly in the Eastern State evolved the strategy of mobilizing the people for community development through self-help efforts. The poor financial position of the Councils also resulted in poor remuneration of Councillors. For instance, each Community Councillor in the East Central State was paid only one

naira (₦ 1.00) sitting allowance for each day he attended Council meetings which was once a month.

6.6 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM OF 1976

During the Gowon administration, Local Government was toyed with by various State Governments of the Federation resulting in a number of inadequacies like proliferation of Local Government units, inadequate funding, poor staffing, excessive control of Local Governments to the point of regarding them as mere extension of State Governments and many others. This resulted in the failure of Local Governments to perform. When Murtala Mohammed took over political power in July 1975, he made the reorganization of the Local Government throughout the Federation a major part of his political programme for the return to civil rule in 1979. So in February, 1976, the Federal Military Government embarked on a fundamental reform of the Local Government System in Nigeria. This action was historic because this was the first time ever in the history of Nigeria when the Federal Government involved itself in the reform of Local Government. This was hitherto an exclusive subject of State Governments. The action was made possible by military rule and its centralization principle.

The main features of the 1976 Local Government Reform are as follows:

- (i) **Uniform system:** The most remarkable feature of the Reform was that it created a uniform system of Local Government for all the States of the Federation. This was the first time in the history of the Nigerian Federation when this was done. In fact it is very unique in true federal systems. Prior to February 1976 when the Reform was made, each State Government had its own different systems of Local Government which it patterned to suit its own peculiar circumstances.
- (ii) **Enlarged Size:** The Reform created large-sized Local Government areas throughout the Federation. The Local Government areas were based on a minimum population of 150,000 inhabitants and maximum population of 800,000 inhabitants. Federal Government approval was obtained in special cases for establishing Local Governments with population below 150,000. But these were very few cases. This definite population requirement resulted in uniformity and in very large Local Government Areas some of them lost touch with the local people as a result of their size. Under the Reform, a total of 301 Local Government Areas were created in Nigeria.

The Reform created a system of a single-tier multi-purpose Local Government. This implied that each Local Government performed all the functions assigned to a Local Government. There were, no sub-units of Local Government authorities, (multi-tier system) as we had during the First Republic. Consequently there was no sharing of powers and functions of Local Government between the main unit and sub-units of authorities which occurs in a multi-tier system. This eliminated rivalries and conflicts that accompany power sharing.

- (iii) **Third Tier of Government:** The Local Government was made a third tier of the government of the Federation and it was a recognized level of government in the Federation with definite powers and functions. With this status it operated like a government at the local level and cannot be dispensed with by the State Government.

- (iv) **Universal Democratization of Local Government Councils:** The Reform brought a democratization of Local Government Councils throughout the Federation. The members of the Local Government Councils were popularly elected under universal adult suffrage. For the first time in the history of Nigeria, women in Northern Nigeria were allowed to vote. The traditional rulers had no significant role in the Local Government throughout the Federation. Following the democratization introduced by the Reform, the first ever nation-wide Local Government election was held in Nigeria in 1976.
- (v) **Full-time Chairman and Supervisory Councillors:** To justify the concept of a *third-tier* of governmentTM, the Reform created, for the first time, full-time Chairman of Council and the posts of four full-time Supervisory Councillors. The full-time Supervisory Councillor (Councillor with portfolio) was akin to the Commissioner at the State level and Minister at the Federal level. The Chairman and Supervisory Councillors were paid improved salaries and allowances. Although Councillors were not full-time, yet they were paid fixed monthly allowance instead of sitting allowances.
- (vi) **Staffing:** There was a systematic training of Local Government Staff in which the Federal Government was involved. As a result, the Federal Government established three centres for Local Government staff training, one at the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria for Northern States, one at University of Nigeria Nsukka for Eastern States, and one at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife for the Western States. The Reform provided for uniform conditions of service for Local Government Staff with their counterparts in the civil service. It also made it mandatory for State Governments to establish Local Government Service Commissions for the appointment, transfer, promotion and discipline of Local Government personnel. The Local Governments in a state had their own Staff under a common control and management of the Local Government Service Commission.
- (vii) **Functions:** Under the Reform, Local Governments were assigned a wide range of functions — Exclusive and Concurrent. The exclusive functions assigned to Local Governments included markets and motor-parks, sanitary inspection, refuse and nightsoil disposal, slaughter houses and slabs. These functions also include the provision of public conveniences, burial grounds, local recreation centres, parks and open spaces. They were also empowered to register births, deaths and marriages; license and regulate bakeries, bicycles, carts and wheelbarrows, sale of liquor. They were also allocated the control of advertisements, use of loud-speakers and keeping of animals. They were empowered to name roads and streets, number plots/buildings, and collect property and other rates fees, fines and other designated revenue sources.

The functions which Local Governments performed concurrently with State Governments were health services, nursery, primary and adult education, scholarships and bursaries, information and public enlightenment, agricultural extension services, rural and semi-urban water supply, provision of roads and streets, fire services, social welfare services, operation of commercial undertaking, provision of public utilities, control of traffic and parking, regulation and control of building, town and country planning.

- (viii) **Finance:** The Reform provided a wide range of revenue sources for Local Governments. These included property rating, capitation or general rates/community rates, fees from various forms of registration like births, various forms of licencing, markets and motor parks, fines from breach of bye-laws, profits from commercial undertakings and government grants. Local Governments for the first time were given statutory allocation from the Federation Accounts and a share of State Government total revenue. This under the 1982 Revenue Allocation Act was 10% of Federation Accounts for the 301 Local Governments in the Federation and 10% of the State Government's total revenue for the Local Governments in the state. There was also provision for loans for Local Governments. These sources greatly improved the financial base of Local Governments. But this was to face the new wide powers and functions of Local Government.

6.7 LOCAL GOVERNMENT DURING THE SECOND REPUBLIC (1979–1983)

The 1979 Constitution which was the instrument of the government of the Second Republic adopted the basic principles of the 1976 Local Government Reform. It recognized the Local Government as the *third-tier* of the government of the Federation. Consequently, for the first time ever, the structure, financing, functions and democratization of Local Government Councils were entrenched in the Constitution. Section 7 of the 1979 Constitution enjoined State Governments to ensure the existence of Local Governments under a Law. The Constitution also upheld the Federal Government's involvement in the affairs of Local Governments. One can state firmly that the Local Government System of the Second Republic followed significantly the Provisions of the 1976 Local Government Reform with a few operational amendments. We shall here concern ourselves only with the areas of operational amendments and Constitutional emphasis.

- (i) **Structure:** A single-tier all-purpose Local Government system was retained. A further step was taken in entrenching the 301 Local Government Areas into the 1979 Constitution. The implication of this, as interpreted by some legal luminaries, is that any change in the Local Government structure would require an amendment in the Constitution. Nevertheless, State Governments claimed that the same Constitution gave them power under Section 7 to create new Local Governments. Consequently, every State Government in the Federation embarked on the creation of new Local Government Areas. This led to the proliferation of local government units which rose from 301 in 1979 to 1,000 in 1983 when the Military took over power.
- (ii) **Finance:** All the sources of financing Local Governments as provided by the 1976 Local Government Reform were retained. The Constitution went further to guarantee through specific provisions in Section 149 the Statutory allocations of public revenue from State and Federal Governments — 10% of the State Governments' total revenue. But in practice the State Governments did not remit fully to Local Governments these statutory allocations which in fact constituted their major source of revenue.
- (iii) **Functions:** The functions were as provided by the Local Government Reform of 1976 as discussed earlier. To ensure that the basic functions of Local Government were not taken over by the State Government, these basic ones were entrenched in the Constitution. They were enumerated in schedule four.

- (iv) **Democratization of Local Government Council:** The democratization of the Local Government which was a central feature of the 1976 Local Government Reform was strengthened by the Constitution of the Second Republic. The 1979 Constitution Section 7 provided that “the system of local government by democratically-elected Local Government Councils is under this Constitution guaranteed.” This implies that all Local Government Councils in Nigeria should be composed of councillors elected by the people. It made Care-taker Councils illegal and unconstitutional. But ironically, the civil administration which ought to have promoted the practice of democracy appointed Care-taker councils during the Second Republic. None of the State Governments conducted local government elections between 1979 and 1983.

6.8 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FROM 1983 TO THE PRESENT

- (i) **Council – Sole Administrator Model:** When the Military, under Muhammed Buhari, came to political power on 31 December 1983 the administration abolished the Care-taker Councils created by the civil rulers and appointed Secretaries of Local Governments as Sole Administrators of Local Governments. The Sole Administrator performed the role of the Council of the Local Government as well as the Chief Executive of the Council. It was a one-man government. This is in agreement with the dictatorial principle of military administration. This model ended on 1 April, 1986 when it gave way to Local Government Management Committee.
- (ii) **Local Government Management Committee Model:** The Management Committee which served as the Council of the Local Government consisted of five members. The five members, one of whom was a woman, were all full-time portfolio Councillors (Supervisory Councillors). The Committee was headed by the Chairman/Administrator who was the Chief Executive of the Council. The Chairman/Administrator was appointed by the Military Governor from the public service. The Council had, as under the 1976 Reform, the Secretary of the Local Government who served as the Secretary to the Management Committee and head of the Administration Department of the Local Government. The Local Government Management Committee gave way in December 1987 to a democratically elected Local Government Council.
- (iii) **Dasuki Committee on the Review of Local Government Administration in Nigeria:** On 29 May 1984, the Buhari Administration set up a committee known as Dasuki Committee. The Committee was charged with the responsibility of examining the existing structure, functions, finance, staffing problems and management of Local Governments in Nigeria. It was also to examine the place of traditional rulers in Local Government. The report was submitted on 14th September 1984. Although the Dasuki Committee did not make fundamental recommendations in the Local Government system, yet most of its useful recommendations were not accepted by government as contained in the government White Paper published in 1985 by the Babangida Administration. Consequently, the existing structure, functions, staffing, management and financing of Local Government remained basically the same as those in the 1976 Local Government Reform and the provisions of the Constitution of 1979. However some significant reforms were made in 1987, 1988 and 1989. These were embodied in the 1989 (Third Republican) Constitution.

6.9 BABANGIDA'S ADMINISTRATION REFORM OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (1987–1989)

- (i) **The executive chairmanship:** As part of its programme towards evolving a new political order in 1992, the Babangida administration directed the National Electoral Commission to conduct a nation-wide Local Government election in Nigeria on 12 December, 1987. During the formulation of the electoral procedure, a very fundamental reform was made in the Local Government System of Nigeria. For the first time ever in the history of Nigeria, the Executive Chairmanship form of Local Government was introduced. This operated like the Presidential system of government at the State and Federal levels. This reform was in line with the principle of third-tier of government of the Federation. Under this system, the Local Government Chairman was elected by the entire electorate in the Local Government Area which constituted his constituency. The Chairman was vested with all the executive powers of the Local Government. He appointed the Vice-Chairman and Supervisory Councillors who were responsible and accountable to the Chairman and the Council. There was a Secretary to the Local Government who acted as the Secretary to the Local Government Council and head of the Administration Department of the Council. The Chairman acted as both the Chief Executive of the Local Government and Chairman of the Local Government Council. The offices of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Local Government were established by the 1989 Constitution.
- (ii) **Structure:** The structure remains a uniform, single-tier and all-purpose Local Governments for all States of the Federation and Abuja Federal Territory. However, the number of Local Government Areas was increased from 301 as in the 1979 Constitution to 453. These 453 Local Government areas are entrenched into the 1989 Constitution. The 1989 (Third Republican) Constitution Section 7 (3) provides that a State Government may by law create up to a maximum of 7 Development Areas for a Local Government Area. The new Constitution provides that each Local Government Area should have not less than 10 or more than 20 wards and each ward should be represented by one Councillor.
- (iii) **Tenure of local government council:** The tenure of the Local Government Council as provided by the Constitution is fixed at three years. This means that the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Supervisory Councillors and Councillors remain in office for 3 years subject to "recall".
- (iv) **Recall:** The Constitution, for the first time ever in Nigeria, provides for recall of the Local Government Chairman, Vice Chairman, Supervisory Councillor or Councillor whenever his constituents lose confidence in such an officer. This requires a petition by the voters of the constituency of the member to the NEC which thereafter is approved by a simple majority of the votes of the registered voters in the members' constituency.
- (v) **Supervisory councillors:** The Constitution provides for not less than 3 and not more than 5 offices of Supervisory Councillors for each Local Government. The Supervisory Councillors are appointed by the Chairman of the Council from among the elected Councillors of that Local Government.

- (vi) **Local government elections:** The responsibility for conducting Local Government elections is now on the National Electoral Commission (a federal agency). This was unlike during the Second Republic when Local Government elections were conducted by the State Electoral Commission (state agency). To qualify for election as a councillor, the person must have been educated to at least the School Certificate level or its equivalent, among other requirements.
- (vii) **Traditional council:** The new constitution provides for a Traditional Council for a Local Government Area or a group of Local Government Areas for any State that desires it. The Council should be presided over by a Traditional Ruler. The primary function of the Council is to advise the Local Government on any development plan, assist in the collection of taxes and assist in the mobilization of human and material resources of the area for community development. The Council's functions are purely advisory.
- (viii) **Finance:** As we noted earlier, the sources of finance for Local Government remains basically the same with the provisions of the 1976 Local Government Reform. However two slight modifications have been made by the Babangida Military Administration. The first which came as a result of the Dasuki Committee recommendations was that the 10% statutory allocation from State Government should now be based on total *internally generated* revenue and no longer on all its total revenue. State total revenue included share from Federation Accounts while state total internally-generated revenue excluded all forms of external revenue like share of Federation Accounts. The second modification is that the Local Government's share of the Federation Accounts should now be paid straight to Local Governments instead of through State Government. This measure is aimed at preventing State Governments from high-jacking Local Governments' allocations as they did in the past. There is a provision for the appointment of an Auditor-General of the Local Government of a state responsible for auditing Local Government's funds whose report shall be laid before the House of Assembly of the State.
- (ix) **Abolition of State Ministries of Local Government:** The Babangida Military Administration in October 1988 abolished the Ministries of Local Government in all the States of the Federation. This was aimed at ensuring the integrity and autonomous status of Local Governments. This measure removed the excessive control of Local Governments by the Ministries of Local Government. This made Local Government the real third-tier of the Government of the Federation. However, this reform provided for the creation of the Department of Local Government Affairs in the Office of the Governor of a State. This Department is headed by a Director-General. It is observed that in practice, this Department of Local Government Affairs still exercises control on the Local Governments but not with the same degree as the former Ministry of Local Government.
- (x) **Constitutional provisions for Local Government as a Third Tier of Government:** The 1989 (Third Republican) Constitution made provisions for Local Government (structure, executive, Council, finance, Local Government Service, recall etc) as it provided for other levels of government. This implies that individual state Governments have no powers to establish and conduct their own Local Governments as they desire. These provisions can only be altered through the process of

constitutional amendment as provided in Sections 9 and 10. For the first time ever, the Constitution provided a rigorous procedure which must be satisfied before a new Local Government area is created. This requires

- a request by two thirds of members representing the area concerned in the National Assembly, the State House of Assembly and the Local Government Council;
- an approval at a referendum by at least two-thirds of the people of the Local Government Area concerned;
- an approval by a majority of all the Local Government Councils in the state; and
- an approval by a resolution passed by two-thirds majority of members of each House of the National Assembly.

The provisions are landmarks in the history of Local Government in Nigeria as they guaranteed its autonomy.

6.10 PROBLEMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA

Local Government in Nigeria is faced with a number of problems. These problems have adversely affected its performance. Consequently efficient basic services are not provided and the impact of Local Government is not felt in most rural communities. The most important of these problems are discussed below.

- (i) **Structural problem:** It has always been a great problem for Nigeria to determine an appropriate structure for the Local Government. In our attempt to design units which are very near to the people and thus take into full account the culture and traditional political organization of the people, the units become economically unviable. An example is the Community Government under the 1971 Divisional Administration System of the East Central State of Nigeria. On the other hand, in our attempt to create large units that are economically viable that can cope with a wide range of functions, the units lose touch of the local people they are designed to serve. An example is the present size of Local Government Areas which are too large to serve the needs of vast rural population. To reconcile this problem of size, the former Eastern and Western Regions during the First Republic created three-tier system which provided for both large areas, medium areas and small areas but this created rivalries, competition and conflicts among the tiers.

The solution to the problem of size of Local Government units where people are very much attached to their traditional communities is the creation of a two-tier system - one big one and a small one each assigned functions appropriate to it. Furthermore, in structuring local governments, care should be taken to ensure that the units are in consonance with the people's indigenous political organization and culture.

- (ii) **Inadequate finances:** Inadequate funds has been a chronic problem of local governments in Nigeria. Local Governments are not given adequate independent viable sources of revenue. Most of them cannot generate adequate revenue for their services. Consequently, they cannot employ and retain well qualified and competent staff. They cannot discharge the functions assigned to them. Thus Local Governments

generally are ineffective and unproductive. The solution is that Local Governments should be well funded. State and Federal Governments should give more grants to the Local Governments. The Local Government percentage share in the Federation Accounts should be increased. Local Governments themselves should make more efforts in generating more revenue internally. They should establish commercial ventures and manage them effectively. They should exercise more prudence in the use of funds.

- (iii) **Low quality of staff:** Generally the quantity and quality of the Local Government staff are very low. Local Governments are not able to recruit and retain good numbers of well qualified and experienced professionals, technical staff and craftsmen. This is caused by the fact that Local Governments lack the necessary funds needed to hire and retain them. Moreover, most well qualified Nigerians do not want to work in rural areas where most Local Government Headquarters are situated.

To solve this problem, Local Governments should be better funded to enable them employ enough and well qualified staff. Professionals should be given more incentives to motivate them to work with local governments. Local government staff should enjoy the same conditions of service as their counterparts in the civil service. There should be a systematic and comprehensive programme for continuous and intensive training of the available staff.

- (iv) **Poor quality of Councillors:** The quality of Nigerian Councillors had been very low. Some of them were semi-illiterates. Most of them lacked experience in public affairs. Consequently, their level of debate in the Council was low while their general performance in the council was poor in most areas. This was caused by the fact that many people looked down on the job of a Councillor. Moreover, most experienced and educated people did not like to reside in rural communities but in urban centres. However, the 1989 Constitution has provided Secondary School Certificate or its equivalent as the minimum qualification for a person to be a Councillor in Nigeria and this should improve the situation. Retired public officials should be encouraged to reside in their communities and contest membership of the Council.
- (v) **Corruption and misappropriation of funds:** There was a general complaint of widespread corruption and mis-appropriation of funds among both staff and councillors. Councillors were charged with bribery and corruption in the conduct of Council business. They also misappropriated Council funds. The staff also embezzled and misappropriated Council funds. Revenue collectors adopted all sorts of fraudulent practices to enrich themselves with Local Government revenue. To solve this problem, effective checks and controls should be devised to minimize corruption. Salaries and allowances of Councillors should depend on the total internal revenue they can generate. Corrupt officials and Councillors should be removed from office immediately they are detected.
- (vi) **Excessive control:** Local Governments in Nigeria suffered from inadequate autonomy in the performance of their assigned functions. Before the abolition of the Ministries of Local Government, they exercised excessive control in the approval of Local Government budgets, byelaws, major programmes and awards of major contracts. During this period a lot of delays were caused in the process of the approvals to the point of sometimes frustrating their programmes. There was often

centralization in the supplies of such materials as receipt booklets, certificates for licences, rate tickets etc. In such situations of centralization of supplies a lot of delays were caused before they were received by the Council officials. However, since the abolition of the Ministries of Local Government in all States of the Federation, the controls were greatly reduced but not completely eliminated.

- (vii) **Inadequate representation of the people in council:** There is inadequate representation of the people in the Council. For instance in Imo State of Nigeria, Orlu LGA which had a projected population of about 240,000 in 1989 had a Council of 12 in 1989, while Aba LGA with a projected population of over 220,000, had also a Council of 12 members. This is grossly inadequate, and as such, the people did not participate sufficiently in the process of government. This made their mobilization for rural development difficult. It is therefore suggested that for adequacy in representation and for effective participation of the people in government, representation in the Council should be on the basis of one councillor to 8,000 inhabitants. This implies that a Local Government area with 240,000 inhabitants would have 30 councillors.
- (viii) **Negative party politics:** Councillors see themselves as first and foremost representing their party interest in the Council. The result of this is that party interests over-ride Council and constituents' interests. Party politics in the Council results in conflicts among Councillors, oppression and victimization of political opponents, and neglect of certain areas on political considerations and favouritism to party supporters. An effective measure for solving this problem is by removing party politics at the local government level. Councillors should be elected on a "non-party" basis as in the 1987 Local Government Elections of Nigeria.

6.11 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS

The Local Government has a complex pattern of relationships with the State and Federal governments.

A. Relationship with the State Government

- (i) **Legislative:** Before the establishment of the Local Government in the 1989 (Third Republican) Constitution, the State legislature created Local Governments under a law. Where a State legislature did not exist as in a military rule, this was done by the Executive. The State Government had the power to modify the law creating local governments thereby abridging or expanding their powers and functions. However, under the 1989 Constitution, the Legislature has no power to create Local Governments as it is established by the Constitution. However, the State legislature has the power to discuss the activities of Local Governments in the Assembly. The State legislatures participate with the Federal Government in any amendment of the Constitutional provisions on Local Government under the 1989 Constitution.
- (ii) **Functional:** The Constitution of the Federal Republic assigns functions which are exclusive to the Local Government. Then there is a category of functions which the Local Governments join with the State governments to perform. These functions include primary education, health services, agricultural extension and industrial

services. In such services the State governments provide the standard and general control for these services. The State government can also assign any other functions, apart from those assigned by the Constitution, to the local government. A State government can prosecute its functions jointly with or through its local governments if it chooses.

- (iii) **Financial:** The State Government had the statutory obligation to pay 10% of its internal revenue to the Local Governments within its jurisdiction. It could also give other specific grants to its local governments to enable them prosecute certain specific programmes. The auditor-General of the Local Government, appointed by the State Government, audits the Accounts of Local Governments annually with his team. The report of the Auditor-General is presented to the State Legislature for scrutiny and sanctions can be imposed on erring officials and councillors.
- (iv) **Executive:** Before the 1989 Constitution, the State Governor could dissolve a Local Government Council within his area and appoint a Care-taker Council to manage its affairs until another election was conducted. But under the 1989 Constitution he has no such powers. However, he has power to institute a Commission of Inquiry into the operations of any Local Government which does not perform satisfactorily and can give appropriate punishment to offenders.
- (v) **Judicial:** The state courts can declare any act or by-law of a Local Government null and void if such action or by-law exceeds the powers of the Local Government. It can also compel a Local Government to perform its duty under the writ of mandamus. It can also prohibit a Local Government from performing certain intended action under the writ of prohibition.
- (vi) **Departmental:** The State Government relates extensively to the Local Governments through its Department for Local Government Affairs. Firstly, the department is charged with the duty of approval of Annual Estimates, by-laws, major contracts of local governments before they are implemented. Secondly, it provides inspectors who visit Local Governments regularly to inspect their operations. Local Government inspectors inspect the records of income and expenditure and other records of local government, and offer advice to the officials. Thirdly, the annually audited accounts of the Local Governments are presented to the Ministry for scrutiny. Fourthly, the State government provides Local Governments with financial memoranda.
- (vii) **Amendment of constitutional provisions on local government:** Under the 1989 (Third Republican) Constitution, certain aspects of the Local Government are provided for in the Constitution e.g. structure, functions, finance, tenure of office for the Councillors, etc. Before any of these Constitutional provisions are altered, there must be a resolution by each of the Houses of the National Assembly supported by two-thirds majority votes of members of each House. This amendment shall be made by the Act of the National Assembly.
- (viii) **Election:** During the First and Second Republic, it was the responsibility of the State Government to conduct Local Government elections. However, during the 1987 Local Government Elections, the Federal Government through its Agency — National Electoral Commission, conducted the election. The 1989 (Third Republican) Constitution empowers the National Electoral Commission to conduct Local Government elections.

B. Relation with the Federal Government

Since the 1976 Local Government Reform the Federal Government started to have close relationship with Local Governments in the following areas:

- (i) **Reform:** Since 1976, the Federal Government could undertake reforms of Local Governments. A celebrated example was the 1976 Local Government Reform. The Federal Government appointed the Dasuki Committee on the Review of Local Government Administration in Nigeria. With the recommendations of that Committee, the Federal Government made some reforms on the Local Government. The Federal Government has a Unit responsible for local government matters in the executive office of the President.
- (ii) **Financial:** The Federal Government has a statutory obligation to pay 10% of the Federation Accounts to the Local Government. The Federal Government determines how much Local Governments get from the Federation Accounts and provides the formula with which it is shared among Local Governments. The Federal Government determines the percentage of share which Local Governments should get from the state's total revenue. The Federal Government also gives special grants to Local Governments for specific projects and determines how these grants are used. It also monitors the use of the grants through its officials. Local Governments account to the Federal Government on how Federal grants are used. The Federal Government has powers to institute an investigation into any Local Government to probe the use of its share of Federation Accounts if certain allegations of misappropriation are made before it.
- (iii) **Functional:** The Federal Government can prosecute its community development programme through or jointly with the Local Government. The Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) works with the Local Government in executing its projects.
- (iv) **Staff training:** The Federal Government provides staff training programmes and facilities for the Local Government Staff. For instance, the Federal Government created three centres for Local Government staff training at University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. These centres are well funded annually for this programme. These Centres have designed various Local Government programmes, and train many Local Government staff annually.

6.12 THE PLACE OF TRADITIONAL RULERS

During the First Republic, traditional rulers played a central role in local government administration. The traditional rulers in the North were Chief-in-Council and Chief-and-Council. These councils were dominated by traditional rulers. In the East and West the chief was the ceremonial president of the council. Today traditional rulers are no longer members of the Local Government. However, traditional rulers still perform certain functions at the local level which are discussed below.

- (i) **Membership of traditional council:** Traditional rulers are empowered to preside over the traditional councils where they exist. But this traditional Council is not a tier of the Local Government System. Consequently, the traditional Council has no

executive or legislative authority. Its role is advisory. The primary responsibility of the Traditional Council is to advise the Local Government concerned on proposed development plans and assist in the mobilization of human and material resources for community development. Traditional rulers as heads of their communities help the government to maintain law and order and check crimes.

- (ii) **Advisory role:** Traditional rulers through the Traditional Councils, where they exist, are empowered to formulate general proposals, from time to time, which they offer as advice to their respective Local Governments. It is their duty to discuss through their Traditional Councils the problems affecting their Local Government Areas with their Local Governments and offer advice and guidance. They can be involved in the development plans of Local Governments through joint discussions and advice.
- (iii) **Tax assessment and collection:** Traditional rulers assist in tax assessment and collection within their respective areas. They also assist in the compilation of nominal roll for community tax.
- (iv) **Settlement of disputes:** Traditional rulers settle minor civil cases arising within their respective communities. They also arbitrate in inter-village disputes.
- (v) **Custodian of culture:** Traditional rulers are the fathers of their communities and custodian of community tradition and culture. They are expected to advise the local government on all matters of tradition and culture. They determine customary laws and practices through the traditional Council where such Council exists. They are expected to give full support for arts and culture, and control traditional titles and offices.
- (vi) **Communication:** They serve as a viable communication link between the government and their people. Certain government policies and information are communicated to the people through the traditional rulers. The traditional rulers use the traditional means of communication to reach the people. The people sometimes communicate with the government about their needs and problems through their traditional rulers.
- (vii) **Community mobilization:** Traditional rulers assist in community mobilization. They help to accelerate the task of mass mobilization and participation of the people in community development.
- (viii) **Right to be consulted:** Under the Dasuki Committee Recommendation the traditional rulers possess the right to be given the Draft Annual Estimates, copies of draft by-laws, draft development programmes and copies of minutes of the Local Government Council meetings for their scrutiny and subsequent advice to the Local Government on their observations.
- (ix) **Conclusion:** It must be clearly said that the role of the traditional rulers in the present Local Government system is purely *advisory*.

KEY POINTS

1. The native administration

It is a system of local administration in which traditional rulers were employed by the British to rule their people with their existing traditional political institutions. The British through Resident and District Officers exercised ultimate power of control, direction and guidance. This was the form of Local Government in Nigeria between 1900 and 1950.

2. Modern local government system (1950–1966)

- (a) *In Eastern Nigeria:* There was a three-tier system — County, District, and Local councils, which later was reduced to two-tiers of County and Local Councils. The councils were democratically elected.
- (b) *In Western Nigeria:* There was a three-tier system — Divisional, District and Local Councils. These were democratically elected.
- (c) *In Northern Nigeria:* There was a Native Authority system in which the traditional rulers played dominant role. There were Chief-in-Council, Chief-and-Council, Council, and Care-taker forms of Native Authority.

3. Local government during military rule of 1966–1976

Characteristic features:

- (i) The Local Government systems were undemocratic
- (ii) There was proliferation of local government units
- (iii) There was a unified staff system.
- (iv) The systems were “administration-oriented”.
- (v) There was poor financing.

4. Local government reform of 1976

Characteristic features:

- (i) The system was uniform throughout the federation.
- (ii) There was a uniform structure. It was a single-tier, multi-purpose council. The size of each local government area ranges between 150,000 and 800,000 inhabitants.
- (iii) For the first time ever, The Reform made Local Government the third tier of government in the Federation.
- (iv) There was democratization of Local Government Councils.
- (v) The Reform created a full-time Chairman and Supervisory Councillors.
- (vi) The reform gave extensive functions to the Local Governments.
- (vii) There was improved funding. There was for the first time statutory allocations of 10% of the Federation Accounts and 10% of the total state revenue to Local Governments, in addition to their independent or internal sources of revenue.

5. Local government during the second republic

The system was essentially the same with that of the 1976 Local Government Reform. The 1979 Constitution gave constitutional backing to some of the measures of the 1976 Local

Government Reform – the structure, creation, functions and financing, democratization of local governments, were embodied in the Constitution. However there was a proliferation of local governments, and care-taker councils.

6. The local government from 1983 to the present

The system was essentially the same with the Local Government Reform of 1976. The major reforms introduced during this period include the following:

- (i) Executive Chairmanship of Local Government was introduced.
- (ii) The total number of Local Governments in Nigeria was increased from 301 to 453 Local Government Areas.
- (iii) The tenure of a Local Government Council is 3 years.
- (iv) A System of “recall” was introduced in the Council.
- (v) The Ministries of Local Government in all States of the Federation were abolished to ensure Local Government autonomy.
- (vi) There are Constitutional provisions for Local Government as a third-tier of Government.

7. Problems of local government in Nigeria

There are problems of inadequate finance, inappropriate structure, poor staffing, corruption and misappropriation of funds, inadequate autonomy, inadequate representation and negative party politics.

8. Relationship between local government, and state and federal governments

There are various patterns of relationships

- (i) Relationship with the state government includes legislative, functional, financial, executive, judicial, departmental and staffing.
- (ii) Relationship with the Federal Government which started in 1976 includes reforms of Local Governments, financial, functional, legislative and staffing.

9. The place of traditional rulers

- (i) Their role is advisory.
- (ii) They are members of Traditional Councils, where such exist
- (iii) They assist in tax assessment and collection
- (iv) They settle minor disputes
- (v) They serve as communication link between the government and the people.
- (vi) They assist in community mobilization
- (vii) They have the right to be consulted by the Local Government on issues of by-laws, draft annual estimates and development programmes.

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

Essay Questions

1. To what extent have the various traditional political systems of the people of Nigeria influenced the development of Local Government system in Nigeria?
2. What are the main features of the 1976 Local Government Reform?
3. What are the problems of Local Governments in Nigeria?
4. Discuss the relationship between the Local and State governments
5. Discuss the place of traditional rulers in the modern Local Government System in Nigeria.

Objective Questions

1. The most important feature of Native Administration is
 - A. Democratization of Native Authority
 - B. The despotism of the chiefs
 - C. Wide majority local Council
 - D. Multi-tier system of local government
 - E. Autonomy of the Native Authority
2. The Local Government was first declared the third tier of Governments of the Federation during
 - A. Native Administration
 - B. County Council System
 - C. Local Government Reform of 1976
 - D. Divisional Administration System
 - E. Second Military Rule under Buhari
3. The Executive Chairmanship form of Local Government was first introduced in Nigeria in
 - A. 1950
 - B. 1976
 - C. 1986
 - D. 1987
 - E. 1979
4. The traditional ruler had the powers to veto the majority decision of the Council in
 - A. Chief-in-council form
 - B. Chief-and-council form
 - C. Council form

- D.** Divisional Administration form
 - E.** Executive Chairmanship form
- 5. The first nation-wide Local Government elections conducted by the National Electoral Commission was held in
 - A.** 1950
 - B.** 1960
 - C.** 1979
 - D.** 1976
 - E.** 1987

Answers

- 1. B
- 2. C
- 3. D
- 4. A
- 5. E