

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTONOMY AND GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT IN
NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF OFFA LOCAL GOVERNMENT, KWARA STATE**

BY

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work has been read and approved by the undersigned
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to almighty God. I also dedicate it to my parents, Mrs Lewis Iybode Muyinat and to my Husband Mr Adeshina Taoreed

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I am thankful to almighty God for his inspiration, knowledge, understanding, Strength and guidance given to me throughout the course of my studies. I also give thanks to my lovely parents, Mrs Lewis Iybode and Mr Lewis Agbolade (RIP) Muyinat and Mrs Ogunnorin Fatimoh Ashabi and my lovely husband Mr Adeshina Taoreed for their financial support and advise given to me throughout my studies.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
CERTIFICATION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
DEDICATION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
TABLE OF CONTENT	3
ABSTRACT.....	6
1.2 Statement of the Problem	12
1.3 Research Questions	14
1.4 Research Hypothesis	14
1.5 Aims and Objectives of the Study	15
1.7 Scope of the Study.....	16
1.8 Operational Definition of Key Terms	16
1.9 Plan / Organization of Work	17
CHAPTER TWO	18
REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	18
2.0 Preamble.....	18
2.1.1 Local Government.....	18
2.1.2 Autonomy	20
2.2 Local Government Autonomy.....	23
2.2.1 Imperatives of Local Government.....	23
2.2.2 Legal Framework for Local Government in Nigeria	24
2.3 Constitutional Framework for Democratic and Autonomous Local Government in Nigeria.....	25
2.4 The Bane of Local Government Development:	27
2.4.1 Critical Analysis of the 1999 Constitution as Amended	28
2.4.2 Autonomy Exist in Main Functions of Local Government.....	28
2.5 Local Governance	29
2.5.1 Local Government Autonomy and Decentralization	30
2.6 The Concept of Development	30
2.7 The Concept of Decentralization.....	31
2.7.1 Types of Decentralization	32
2.7.2 Political Decentralization	32
2.7.3 Administrative Decentralization	33
2.7.4 Market or Economic Decentralization	34

2.7.5 Fiscal Decentralization	34
2.7.6 African Perspective of Decentralization	35
2.7.7 Growing Trends towards Decentralization in Sub Saharan Africa	36
2.7.8 Necessity for Decentralization in Modern Governance	36
2.7.9 Arguments for and Against Decentralization.....	38
2.7.10 Potential Benefits of Decentralization	39
2.7.11 Improve Accountability	39
2.8 Theoretical Framework	39
2.2.1 The Principle of Citizen –Cantered Local Governance:	40
2.9 Emperical Review	41
2.10 Gap in Literature Review	44
CHAPTER THREE	46
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	46
3.0 Preamble.....	46
3.1 The Purpose and Nature of the Study	46
3.2 Research Design.....	47
3.3 Population of the study.....	47
3.4 Sources of Data	47
3.5 Type of Data.....	48
3.6 Sampling Procedure/Techniques.....	48
3.7 Sample Size	48
.....	48
3.8 Research Instrument.....	49
3.9 Method of Data Collection.....	50
3.9.1 Documentation	50
3.9.2 Questionnaires.....	50
3.10 Data Analysis	50
3.11 Justification of the Method.....	51
3.12 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument.....	51
3.13 Reliability of Research Instrument.....	52
3.14 Ethical Consideration	52
CHAPTER FOUR.....	53
RESULT, DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	53
4.0 Preamble.....	53
4.1 Table presentation	53

Table 2: Age distribution of respondents	54
4.3 Analysis of the Research Hypothesis/Assumptions	68
Substantive data Mean (X) = 5.2.....	69
4.4 Discussion of Findings	71
CHAPTER FIVE	73
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	73
5.0 Preamble.....	73
5.1 Summary	73
5.2 Conclusion.....	73
5.3 Recommendations	74
5.4 Limitation and future studies.....	75

ABSTRACT

Local government is government at the local level. So, before commencing the analysis, it is appropriate to examine what local government really stands for. This paper critically examines opportunities and problems confronting the Nigerian local government system. To assess why the practice of complete local government autonomy and governance is difficult in Offa Local Government and suggest measures that may help improve the collaboration between the federal, state, and local government authorities in Nigeria. Primary data sources in this case involved the use of questionnaire while the secondary data were collected from already existing literatures that are relevant to the study. The Taro and Yamane (1973) method was used to effectively determine the sample size and population of the study. The study further

utilized frequencies and percentages and pie chart in analyzing data collected and tables were used in the presentation of data. 188 questionnaires were administered to the staff of Offa Local Government Area in Kwara State. The study reaffirmed the important roles of Autonomy on Grassroots' Development in Nigeria, Offa Local Government to be precise, as autonomy and self-dependent helps to develop the workforce of the Local Government. The study also showed that without autonomy at the local level development cannot be attend because the local authorities are the most important tiers of government closer to the citizens compare to the state and federal government. The study recommended that state governors should not encroach on the lucrative responsibilities of local governments or misappropriate local government funds in any form similarly, local governments should creatively establish avenues for revenue generation to avoid depending heavily on the statutory allocations. Lastly The state joint local government account should be scrapped. This will reduce the problems of illegal deductions, extra-budgetary impositions, under-allocation, etc. it will then be easy to lay the blame for non-performance and financial mismanagements squarely at somebody's table.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Local government is government at the local level. So, before commencing the analysis, it is appropriate to examine what local government really stands for. A number of scholars amongst whom are Humes and Martin, Dilys, Hill, Robson, and Finer have attempted at different times to define local government. None of their definitions is absolutely satisfactory. As a result of the difficulty presented by the various definitions, scholars and practitioners are virtually agreed on what should be the basic elements of local government. These elements put together portray local government as that unit of administration with defined territory, powers and administrative authority with relative autonomy which administrative authority could be elected or appointed exclusively by the people. This means that when a local body that claim to represent the people is not chosen by them it can only be a local form of administration and local government. Local administration usually constitutes the administration of local communities by utilizing local agents appointed by and responsible to an external agent which could be a state, regional/provincial authority or national government. When local government also behave as if they are agents of and not distinct level of government they also unconsciously degenerate to local forms of administration.

Of the four approaches designed by nation states to promote development from below, the activities of Local Government fit into that of devolution. Expectedly, the next question is why do nation states decentralize by devolution? Decentralization by devolution is supported on the grounds that centralization inhibits the active participation of the citizens in the running of their own affairs and by extension could lead to despotism. It is not surprising then that most countries of the world decentralize their administration by devolution for a number of reasons. A synthesis of these reasons often advanced for decentralization by devolution narrow them down to four basic ones.

These are:

- i. To promote economic development from below. This includes infrastructural provision.
- ii. To promote political integration and nation-building.
- iii. To promote local freedom of action/autonomy; and

iv. To enhance grassroots democracy.

However, the protagonists of centralization have put forward a number of socio-economic reasons against decentralization by devolution. Most significant of these reasons is that it might be economically viable and operationally efficient in terms of staff and building to centralize the administration of a nation-state. Secondly, they argued that the citizens of a particular nation-state might clamour for uniform standard in relation to a particular service in a part of a country or clamour for even development all over the country for some political reasons. Thirdly, they submitted that for certain services, what should be the optimum area of operation is an issue of unresolved polemic.

Although these arguments are sufficiently daunting to the whole nation of decentralization by devolution, I want to posit that none of them is strong enough to either unilaterally or in conjunction with others displace the four basic reasons for establishing local government which have been enunciated above. Rather, over the years, there has been a pervading optimism among most political actors all over the world, that certain functions should be devolved to local government, which level of government should be elected, have a defined territory with a governing council and constitutionally allowed sufficient powers to execute its exclusively assigned functions for which, invariably, it is the most efficient provider compared to other agencies or government.

It should however, be noted that nation-states are not usually guided by a single reason in establishing their local government system, but rather by an amalgam of reasons emphasized in varying degrees. This is particularly true when one realizes that government policy decisions are the outcome of compromise between different pressure groups and interests. Most often, the difference between the reasons of various governments lies in the weight attached to these reasons or in the order of priority latently or patently given to the reasons. Consequently, some of these reasons conflict in certain reasons for others preferred by certain governments. The sacrifice can be a conscious or unconscious move on the part of the national government". Against this background, we next analyse the role of local government.

Local government is the closest level of government to the people. If the system of Local Government is truly local, it provides special opportunities for people to complain about the quality of services it renders and about the conduct of the council officials.

Moreover, since central government all over the world are becoming increasingly distant in both physical psychological and even social senses, decentralization by devolution tends to bridge these various distances between the local civil servants and the citizens.

Yet again, if local governments must be able to perform their assigned functions, they need to have some measure of autonomy. It must be noted that no one is advocating absolute freedom for local governments, that will equate them with the status of a state as there can be no state within a state, but should be given freedom of action that will enable them perform their constitutionally assigned functions.

However, many centralists have argued that against giving, local freedom of action to local governments on the grounds that they are prone to corruption, inefficiency and many unethical practices.

Autonomy of the local government is the natural consequence of their statutory status. Since the local governments are created by an Act of the Legislature or Parliament, that Act lays down their powers, functions and relationship with Central or State Government. It also lays down how the local governments are to be constituted, and their term of office etc. The Central or State Government can exercise only that much control over the local government as is envisaged in the statute. That means that the local governments are free or autonomous in exercising the powers and performing their functions as are envisaged in the statute. This autonomy cannot be curtailed unless and until the statute is amended by the legislature.

The historical backdrop of modern local government frameworks in developing nations, including Nigeria is stacked with experimentation. There have been purposeful endeavours to modernize, the system to respond to the hope and aspirations of the people at the local level for optimal development. In spite of this effort, the systems is still being confronted with many challenges. Some eminent problems confronting local government frameworks in developing nations with Nigeria not an exemption include, but rather are not restricted to, basic dysfunction ally, absence of acceptable and ideal structure, weak project implementation capacities and duties.

The Nigeria Local Government framework is weak when compared with different countries in West Africa because much of the work flows from the State and Federal government. Most decisions with respect to development projects and use of money are made at the state and the central, and the local governments are compelled to do the bidding of the state government (Gbarte, 2011). The 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

gives the President the exclusive authority to appoint country administrators and other local authorities (Article 54 Sec D). The Constitution additionally states in Article 56 (A) that every single of such authority appointed by the President holds office at the pleasure and will of that President. This obviously has been the pattern of administration in the nation since the 1979 Constitution came into existence. Authorities of government work at the will of the will of the President and are not responsible to the general population even at the local sub-units (Gbala, 2004).

The process of local government administration in Nigeria began as far back as the later phase of the nineteenth century. In 1880, G. W. Gibson outlined a plan by which full citizenship would extend to aboriginal in return for increased production of agricultural commodities. In any case, the coming of Lord Lugard to the administration of Nigeria in 1904 is by and large considered a defining moment in Nigerian politics, since it denoted the start of a deliberate, official strategy to build up a hinterland administration grounded on the British principle of indirect rule. Lugard formally established the principle of recognizing the pre-existing indigenous power structures (or rather, what “British Nigerians” took for indigenous power structures) and controlling through powerful families of local political groups. He imposed a uniform system of administration through a two-layered system of “Paramount Chiefs” and “Two Chiefs” on the hinterland (Gerdes, 2013).

In any case, the return to civilian democratic leadership in Nigeria was an initial step to bringing sustainable change. The first post-war government through an initiative of the President Olusegun Obasanjo (1979) introduced programs and decision-making processes geared toward empowering local citizens to take an interest in electing country officials, and managing local government. This process could be enhanced, and will engender adequate local participation in making decision at the local level (Nyei, 2011).

Alongside the draft Local Government Act of 2013, the decentralization process will concede political, fiscal, administrative and economic autonomy to the countries, this will induce sufficient participation in basic leadership at the local level, allowing local ownership of development activities.

In line with the current global trend of streamlining the role of the state, the governments of most developing countries including Nigeria have devolved power to grassroots institutions with a view to enhance development. Grassroots development is very

essential to the overall development of any country. It is intended to bring development closer to the people and enhance local participation in the governance process of any country.

However, this seems to be absent in Nigeria. Nigeria has been branded as under-developed after several decades of existence. The country remains inaccessible and impassable after more than a century and a half of existence. The administrative system of governance and development initiatives have been firmly situated in the capital and in the hands of a very few people with the president at the center of this hegemonic authority. There seems to be lack of basic structures at the local level which leads to government not to fully understand the concept of local government administration. Local government employees are seen as an extension of the government in the state capital; at such, they are reportable to their bosses in the capital in every respect.

Additionally, rural citizens lack control over resources and the opportunity to participate in decision making. They are not empowered to participate or engage their leaders in the development process. Development programs are planned by stakeholders at the state level.

As observed by Wale (2009), there is gamut of extant literature local government administration. However, it seems that very few publications are available to validate the Nigeria case. The research will benefit scholars who intend to embark on similar project and add to the few literatures on Nigeria decentralization process. This research has provided the major stakeholders including but not limited to government actors and Civil Society the requisite knowledge on the process of decentralization.

As such, policy makers need to be guided to make decision from an informed position. Along with other studies in this area, the study will guide policy makers on priority areas that need to be addressed. This work will add to the existing, though few literatures on local government administration in Nigeria decentralization. The findings will provide stakeholders firsthand information on what is obtainable at the local level and unearth those challenges that exist which could also prompt further research as Nigeria earnestly strives to take grassroots development to the local level.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Local Government autonomy has been a subject of considerable debate and discussion in many regions, as it directly impacts the effectiveness of governance at the grassroots level. The problem at hand revolves around the challenges and implications associated with the lack

of autonomy for local governments, hindering their ability to cater to the diverse needs of their Communities. There are many development challenges, confronting the local government administration in Offa local government area of Kwara state. Even though the traditional functions of Local Government Administration is to build roads, provide pipe borne water. It has the stakeholders that the low development index in Offa Local Government is attributed to low autonomous from the state, while others attributes the low performances by the local government to corruption. This work examines Local Government autonomous and its implication for the development of the grassroots in Offa Local Government area of Kwara state. This problem is multi-faceted and can be outlined as follows:

1. **Limited Decision-Making Power:** Local governments often face constraints in decision-making due to centralized control from higher levels of government especially kwara State Government. This limitation prevents them from addressing local issues promptly and tailoring policies to suit the unique needs of their communities.
2. **Inadequate Resource Allocation:** The lack of financial autonomy restricts the ability of Offa Local Governments to allocate resources efficiently. Dependency on higher authorities for funds often results in delays and insufficient budgetary allocations for grassroots development projects.
3. **Impaired Service Delivery:** Autonomy is crucial for local governments to effectively deliver basic services such as healthcare, education, infrastructure, and sanitation. The absence of autonomy may lead to suboptimal service delivery, hindering overall community development.
4. **Limited Accountability and Transparency:** Centralized control may contribute to a lack of accountability and transparency at the local level. Local governments should be empowered to make decisions that are transparent, participatory, and accountable to their constituents.
5. **Underdeveloped Grassroots Participation:** The absence of local government autonomy may result in diminished community participation in decision-making processes.

Engaging citizens in local governance is pivotal for fostering a sense of ownership and ensuring that policies align with the actual needs of the community.

6. **Stifled Economic Growth:** Local economic development initiatives are often hindered by the lack of autonomy, as local governments may struggle to implement policies that stimulate economic growth and entrepreneurship within their jurisdictions.
7. **Inefficiencies in Implementation:** Centralized control can lead to bureaucratic red tape and delays in the implementation of development projects. Local governments require autonomy to streamline administrative processes and enhance efficiency in project execution.

Addressing these challenges is imperative for achieving meaningful grassroots development in Nigeria most especially the case study area used in this research work. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the issues surrounding local government autonomy and its impact on the grassroots level is essential for formulating effective policies and advocating for positive change.

1.3 Research Questions

- i. Does local government administration relevant to grassroots development in Offa Local Government Area of Kwara state?
- ii. Is there any nexus between local government autonomy and grassroots development in Offa Local Government?
- iii. Are there any development challenges confronting Offa Local Government Area of Kwara state?
- iv. Is there any ways of developing Offa Local Government by the local government administration?

1.4 Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between local government autonomy and grassroots development in Offa Local Government

H₀₂: There is significant relationship between local government autonomy and grassroots development in Offa Local Government

H0₃: There are no factors hindering Offa Local Government by the local government administration

1.5 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The main Objective of this research work is to examine the impact of local government autonomy in rural development in Offa Local Government area of Kwara state . While the specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. examine the relevance of local government to grassroots development in Offa Local Government Area of Kwara state;
- ii. discuss the nexus between local government autonomy and grassroots developing in Offa Local Government;
- iii. assess the development challenges confronting Offa Local Government; and
- iv. examine ways of developing Offa Local Government by the local government administration.

1.6 Significances of the Study:

The significance of the study can be viewed under four positions, its significance to the government of Kwara State Government, Offa Local Government Area, the Public and future researches. This study will provide deep insight into the problem facing Local Government in Kwara State and how the pattern has transformed overtime, the study will help the government understand better from an objective point of analysis the challenges faced Local Government in Kwara state and proffer some solutions that could be put in place to help promote Local Government Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Kwara state and Nigeria as a whole.

Therefore, this research will be of very much significance to Offa Local Government Area, the study will help analyse and point out areas where the challenges are coming from, what they are doing right or wrong and possible ways to improve Grassroots Development in Kwara state and in Nigeria through Local Government Autonomy.

This study especially the discussion of findings from the research will be of great wealth of knowledge and shaping discourse for anyone who might be doing research on the concept of

Local Government generally especially in respect to Local Government Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Nigeria

1.7 Scope of the Study

This research work will focus on Local Government Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Nigeria. An overview of Offa Local Government Area in Kwara State from 2015 to 2020. The time frame was considered because of the decentralization policy initiated by the President Muhammad Buhari led government in 2015 which sets to pave the way for local government autonomy through deconcentration and devolution. The study investigated the problems caused by centralization and how those problems have hindered development at the grassroots level. Explanations were sought from extant literature on the process of decentralization and its relevance to grassroots development in Nigeria. Local government autonomy was also examined as a vehicle through which the process of decentralization can be achieved.

1.8 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Grassroots development is new-era of neighbourhood activities, which are comprehended as soberer minded financial reactions to emergencies in business and social avoidance.

- i. **Local Government:** Government closest to a locale which carries out administrative and executive functions assigned to it by statute or law.
- ii. **Grassroots Development:** For this study grassroots development refers to initiatives aimed at spreading development evenly across the local level of government. For the purpose of this study grassroots developments will be used interchangeably with rural development.
- iii. **Autonomy:** Autonomy can be understood from the perspective of this study as the right to self-administration.

- iv. ***Local Government Autonomy:*** In this study local government is giving local communities the right to governed by initiating development activities and engaging in decision making. It will be used synonymously with Local Government in this study.

1.9 Plan / Organization of Work

The researcher organized the study into five interesting chapters. The first chapter is captioned introduction. Here the researcher discussed the background of the study, the statement of the research problem and the objectives of the study. These objectives were transformed into research questions. The significance of the study was explained followed by the scope of the study. Key terms and concepts were defined to suit the purpose of the study. The second chapter is the review of extant and related literatures on the area of study the theoretical framework of the study was also discussed in chapter two and gaps in literatures were proffered by the researcher. Chapter three discussed the methodology the study incorporated. Chapter four is where the researcher did data analysis and discussion of findings of the study. Chapter five concluded the study and provided recommendation from the researcher.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Preamble

The concept of local government Autonomy as it's relates to grassroots development needs to be understood in relation to its role in advancing National and kwara State Development. Therefore, the study reviews previous literatures as it relates to the research questions and research objectives. Literatures' examining the research variables such as Local Government, Autonomy, Development and its impact in the Nigeria national development has been reviewed. The section will also entail the explanation of theoretical framework of the research, brief history of The Offa the case study area in kwara State with gap and appraisal of literature reviewed.

2.1 Cconceptual Fframework

2.1.1 Local Government

Local government is geographically closed to those they represent. As such, it is expected that these local authorities will exert a positive influence on the democratic life of a country; seeking after particular plans fitting to the necessities and mores of their respective locales (Bailey and Elliot, 2009).

The term local government is loaded with a good number of definitions; however, these various definitions are usually contingent upon the point of view and experience of the person attempting to define it. Whatever point of view or orientation about its definition, local government is for the most part seen as the administration at the local level. For instance, Adeyemo (2005) sees local government as an element inside a country or state which is a constituent political unit with limited and constrained authority with the end goal of decentralizing political power. Moreover, Adeyemi (2005) sees local government as an element inside a country or state which is a decentralizing political power constituted by law to manage services and regulate functions by a locally elected body which is formally responsible to them. This supervision of central government; however, with, to a degree, certain financial, political and administrative freedoms to engage in local activities.

The federal Republic of Nigeria (1976) in 1976 local government Reform Handbook defined local government as “Government at the local level exercised through representative councils established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas. These powers should give council substantial control over local affairs as well as the staff and institutional and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of services and to determine and implement projects so as to complement the activities of the state and federal government in their areas, and to ensure, through devolution of functions to these councils and through the active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, that local initiatives and response to local needs and conditions are maximised”. The above definition is deeply rooted and has alliance with United Nations’ Office for Public Administration which explained local government as:

A political division of a nation (in federal system), state, which is constituted by law, and has substantial control of local affairs, including the powers to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected.

In Nigeria sees local government as widely acknowledged as a viable instrument for rural transformation and for the delivery of social services to people. Local Government may be seen as “a segment of a constituent state or region of a nation state”, established by law to provide public service and regulate public affairs within its area of its jurisdiction (Ikelegbe, 2005). The above presupposes that it is the closest level to the people with powers to perform functions and mandate over its finances and manpower. While acknowledging its territorial and functional boundaries, some level of autonomy exists in relation to its functions.

It is on the strength of the above that (Ikelegbe, 2005) says that “it is government under the responsibility of the local people and in the interest of the local population by local representative bodies”. As King (1988) observed, the local government is universally found in modern polities, although it goes by various appellations. Its legitimacy lies on its’ claim to represent the interests or wishes of the local inhabitants and to administer to their needs”. Founded on democratic ideals, it is required “that they be given an opportunity to control their affairs at this level, especially since this is the point at which their interests and welfare are most likely to be directly affected (King, 1988). Also, Ola (1984) identified three schools of thought in the functional conceptualization of the local government as a unit. The democratic-participatory school “holds that local government functions to bring about democracy and to

afford opportunities for political participation to the citizen as well as to socialize him politically” This bothers on training and injection of democratic tenets in the grassroots. From the stand point of the efficiency- services school, the appropriate functional focus of local government should be the provision of services, and its success or failure has to be judged by this yardstick.

The third perspective is the developmental school. This school essentially seeks to make the local government a tool for the promotion of national consciousness and national integration (Ola, 1984).

Its emphasis is on political development which modernization theorists see as the breaking down of primordial loyalties and the transfer of such loyalties to the central and national development. It can act as a means of dispersing and localizing political tension, and in that way neutralising its impacts (Abutudu, 2011). As Ola (1984) puts it, by allowing local government to emphasise local interests and argue sectionally for parochial needs, a means is created for political letting off steam. A build-up of strong local feelings and sentiments without such a safety valves this can mean an unwitting build-up of local tension which when it explodes, might hurt not only the local system but the national as well.

Despite of the dispersal of perspectives on the functions of local government espoused by these schools of thought, its unambiguity lies in the various angles of the responsibilities expected of local government whether in developed or developing democracies. This has fulfilment in the „good governance“ concept.

2.1.2 Autonomy

The word “autonomy” comes from the Greek roots auto meaning “self” and nomos meaning “custom” or “law”. This reflects the political sense of the word – a group’s right to self-government or self-rule (Autonomy). It is important to note that there is a time in Nigeria’s post-colonial political history that local governments operated independent of both the state and federal governments, which is the crux of local government autonomy (Akpan & Okonette, 2013). The search for this kind of local government system has been mirage. On his issue, three contending perspectives have emerged. The first perspective interprets local government autonomy as independence from the interference of state government in the activities of local government. The second perspective views local government autonomy as non-interference of the federal government in the activities of local governments. The third perspective maintains that local government autonomy means independence from both state and federal government’s

interference in the activities of local councils. This is the dilemma facing local government in Nigeria today (Akpan & Okonette, 2013).

Local Government autonomy is the freedom for the Local Governments to exercise authority within the confines of the law or constitution. This is to enable them to discharge legally or constitutionally assigned responsibilities satisfactorily, but without undue interference or restraint from within or higher authority. “Local Government autonomy is perceived as local self-government or grassroots democracy”. This grassroots democracy is primarily aimed at giving the vast majority of the people the fullest opportunity to participate in determining their own destiny. But it is obvious that we cannot have complete autonomous they would be sovereign states (Adeyemo, 2005). Nwabueze (1983 as cited in Nwabueze and Adeyemi (2005) defines the autonomy under a federal system to mean that “each government enjoys a separate existence and independence from the control of the other governments”. It is an autonomy which requires not just the legal and physical existence of an apparatus of government like a legislative assembly, governor, court etc. But that each government must exist not as an appendage of another government but as an autonomous entity in the sense of being able to exercise its own will in the conduct of its affairs and free from the control of another government. According to Nwabueze, autonomy would only be meaningful in a situation whereby each level of government is not constitutionally bound to accept dictation or directive from another. In the view of the defunct centre for Democratic Studies (cited in Adeyemo (2005), local government autonomy refers to “the relative discretion which local government are free from the control of state and Federal Government encroachment in the management of local affairs. In the same vein, (Davey et al., 2013) contend that local autonomy is primarily concerned with the question of responsibilities, resources and discretion conferred on the local authorities. As such, discretion and responsibility are at the core of local government”. It presumes that local governments must possess the power to take decisions that are independent of external control within the limits laid down by the law. They must garner efficient resources particularly finance to meet their responsibilities, put differently, local autonomy is the freedom or independence in clearly defined issue, areas, as well as separate legal identity from other levels of government. Clark (1984) identifies four types of local autonomy:

- ❖ Type 1 Initiative and immunity
- ❖ Type 2 Initiative and no immunity
- ❖ Type 3 No initiative and immunity

❖ Type 4 NO initiative and no immunity

Type 1 autonomy could be characterized as complete or total autonomy. Type 2 autonomy allows local governments complete authority to regulate and legislate in their own interest, but makes every decision subject to review, modification, or outright negation by higher tiers. Type 3 autonomy provides no power of local initiative, implying that whatever local government do, their agendas, regulations, or even actions are set by higher tiers of the state. Type 4 autonomy could be characterized as absolutely no local autonomy. These typologies are lucidly described by Clark (1984) by paying attention to how each can be justified and what its relationships are to more general normative conception. A type 1 locality, characterized by both the power of initiative and immunity from higher tiers of the state, could be defining the arena of local autonomy and as watchdogs over the legitimacy of local actions. Local officials have discretions in how they act. The limits to action are imposed not by other institutions but by the local population. Hence, legitimacy derives from local citizens who have significant power.

The ideal type 2 can be described as decentralized liberalism. Local governments in this model decide their own agendas, functions and actions. They are democratic, although this is not required for the model to function. All that is required is that initiatives rests with the local government, but discretion is not complete. Lack of immunity means that local actions are closely scrutinized and reviewed. Autonomy therefore is limited, but in a way different from the representative autonomy model. Legitimacy resides with the local government; its actions can only be constrained, and in this manner legitimacy flows from “bottom-up”.

The ideal type 3, that is immunity but no initiative, is related to the bureaucratic apparatus model of local autonomy. With no power of initiative, this model must respond to centrally defined functions and orders. Local residents cannot mandate specific tasks to be carried out by the local governments. Although it cannot choose what to do, once given a specific task, it can implement it in any way that is thought to be consistent with its tasks. Local constituents have power to affect the implementation practices of local and there may be significant differences among localities in how they implement tasks assigned by a higher order. The local state is representative of higher-tier interests and is responsive to local concern regarding appropriate forms of implementation. Legitimacy in this type of system is predominantly “top-down”; that is, higher tiers have ultimate responsibility for the actions of local governments. In type 4 model, the local state with no initiative and no immunity must be described as having no autonomy. Its agenda, actions and responses are set by higher tiers, and its compliance with

instructions is continually monitored. Such local governments are essentially administrative arms or apparatuses of the higher tiers of the state. Such a local state will have no discretion; could not initiate legislation and would act according to received instructions. Both authority and responsibility for local actions are centralized. In this respect, legitimacy devolves from higher tiers to lower tiers, and depends on the extent to which lower tiers of the state faithfully carried out their instructions. The fact that local citizenry have no direct say in the affair of the local state does not necessarily mean that such system is undemocratic, it may simply be that political discourse is conducted at the higher tiers. The local state in such a system is simply a convenient vehicle for carrying out instructions.

2.2 Local Government Autonomy

Local Government Autonomy is a term that is much of the time utilized in both scholastic and popular discussions of local government; however, it is rarely conceptualized in a careful way or been operationalized and subjected to empirical consequence (Wolman, 2008).

According to Chapman (2003) local government autonomy is the capacity to advance, explore, and create policies by local units. For this to be done, Bailey and Elliot (2009) posit that local authorities must have adequate power, freedom, and resources to administer in a way which is unique, meeting the specific needs of their citizenry and their prospects and acting as a stabilizer to the central administration. Secondly, the nature of local democratic system must be, such as to empower the involvement of individuals, allow the receptiveness of local institutions and expel perceived or actual interference from the central government.

2.2.1 Imperatives of Local Government

Local government sets the platform for candid participation of the general population at the grassroots level in the affairs of government. People get to be distinctly dynamic citizens by associating with government and don't entertain parochial citizenship within the state. being nearest to those they represent, easier to access and local individuals can genuinely anticipate making a positive impact or exerting a positive influence to a greater degree (Sikander, 2015).

Watt (2006) concisely gives what could be viewed as a support for the creation of smaller units of local through the process of decentralization. He opines that;

“Small local governments are likely to be better at solving the problem that the right local public goods are produced and go to the right people. In addition, the accuracy with which

local authorities are able to match their residents' preferences for local public goods is likely to be enhanced" (pp. 9 – 10).

Sikander (2015) gives four distinct reasons for the establishment of Local Government. They are:

1. A local body is more open and faster in response to local needs. Local services and projects can be more effectively adjusted to a particular local need.
2. Resource allocation is more efficient when the duty is duly designated to each unit or tier of government which is the closest to those that are direct beneficiaries.
3. Local development helps reduce cost. In the event that local people feel that the money is theirs, local individuals will probably be vigilant over the use of expenditure effectively. Also, it gives greater opportunity for public commitments to supplement a local project.
4. Development programs embarked upon with participation from the public allows for adjustment to the particular needs of local people. Individuals are prepared to contribute meaningfully even by donating cash if they are given the chance to take control and actively participate in the decision making process if they know that the particular project directly benefits them. Improvement of local people builds feeling of possession and obligation regarding the program.

From the aforementioned, the fundamental basis for the establishment of local government is development. To this end, Alao et al (2015) posit that local government presence is predicated on the precept that it increments and advances participatory democracy and serve as training ground for would-be leaders and provide network of self-government and political education at grass root levels. This as Tony (2011) cited in Ugwuanyi, Ndubuisi, and Onuoha, (2014) observes, the role of local units is intended to enhance democratic developmental oriented. They all, in fact, are focused at enhancing the socio-economic conditions of the grassroots individuals.

2.2.2 Legal Framework for Local Government in Nigeria

For decentralization to be effective, local government should be given the requisite authority and independence. To this end, the 2013 Draft Local Government Act could serve as the legal framework that will allow the effective implementation of the National Decentralization Policy of Nigeria. This Act seems to be the paramount legal document drafted in Nigeria to facilitate complete devolution of administrative, fiscal and political capacities to local sub-national units. Similarly, as the policy, the Act came into existence after a

consultative, nation-wide process promulgated by the Local Government Service Commission with support from the Ministry of Interior of Nigeria, the Law Reform Commission and other development partners. This made the process more authentic as citizens and their elected representatives actively engaged in dialogues and workshops (Draft Local Government Act, 2013).

A fascinating development is that those line ministries and agencies that might directly relinquish their power to local units were also engaged with the process of drafting the Act. Among several provisions, the Act allows a system of inclusive governance with women affirmative action, prioritization of minority groups including the physically challenged are at the apex. While critics have expressed their opinion that the Act is overly ambitious and could further lead Nigeria to a federation, the Act itself is explicit about the affirmation of the key constitutional principles that Nigeria remains a federation state. It additionally articulates that decentralization in Nigeria should not be considered as leaning towards a federal state. The Act reaffirmed that some key functions, particularly those relating to security, judiciary foreign affairs, and regulatory frameworks among others remain at the disposition of the central government (Draft Local Government Act, 2013).

2.3 Constitutional Framework for Democratic and Autonomous Local Government in Nigeria

The 1976 Guidelines for Local Government Reforms was designed to end extensive experimentation with different theories and patterns of local government by various state governments (Gboyega, 2001). Ogunna (1996:146) underscores some of the significances of the reforms as follows:

- i. It is the first time in the political history of Nigeria when the federal government initiated local government reform for all the state government in Nigeria;
- ii. A uniform system was introduced for all the states of the federation;
- iii. Local governments started to be recognized as a third tier of government, with its attendant implications;
- iv. The articulation and institutionalization of the nature of local government expected, including local democracy, number, names, functions, funding etc;
- v. Institutionalization of statutory allocations to local governments.

Okoli (1998) describes the 1976 reform guidelines as the first bold attempt at realizing the national objective of unity and integration as envisaged by the Federal Government, which also

hoped by so doing to protect the system from the states' stifling controls. The provisions of 1976 reforms were transcribed into the 1976 Constitution used by the military to midwife the Second Democratic Republic (1979 to 1983) and thereafter retained in subsequent editions of 1989 and 1999. Some key provisions concerning the local government system as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution include;

- i. Establishment of democratically elected Local Government Councils (LGCs) in chapter one, Part II, Section 7);
- ii. Provision of a complex procedure for creating new local governments by both the State House of Assembly and the National Assembly (section 83; 5; 6);
- iii. Provision of names of states and their local government (Part I and II of the First Schedule) making it difficult to create local governments without constitutional amendments;
- iv. Provision of basic functions for the local governments in the Fourth Schedule;
- v. Provision that Statutory Allocation from the Federation Account shall be made to the local government and details of how this should be made by the National Assembly through the State Joint Local Government Account (162:3, 5, 6);
- vi. Provision that each state shall pay to LGCs in its area of jurisdiction such proportions of its total revenue on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly (162:7);
- vii. Provision that amount standing to the credit of LGCs of a State shall be distributed among the LGCs on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of the State (162:8).

From the above, it can be observed that constitutional democratically elected LGCs and relative financial and administrative autonomy are provided for the local government and protected in such a way that their existence, names, type of government to be established (democracy), funding and so on derive from the Constitution, rather than another level of government as Watt, (1996) stipulates that parties to a federal arrangement should. Nonetheless, the implication has been some kind of ambivalence in the control of local government that manifests the underlying centripetal and centrifugal tensions between the federal and state forces in Nigerian federalism. For instance, while the constitution provides for the existence of "democratically elected local government", the onus of realizing this lies with the state legislation since it provides that "the government of every state shall ensure their existence under a law" (Sect. 7).

Similarly, though states are empowered to create new local governments (Sect. 8, 3), the National Assembly has to “make consequential provisions with respect to the names and headquarters of State or Local government areas as provided in section 3 of this Constitution and in parts I and II of the First Schedule to this Constitution” (sect. 8, 5). Thus, in the case of creating new Local Governments by any state, the returns of such new local government should be made to the National Assembly and will necessarily lead to modification of the constitution. Invariably, the constitutional provisions on local government clearly remove the local government system in Nigeria from being creations of the state governments. But this ploy has not led to the desired autonomy and local democracy. Therefore, why has the problem of abuse and disregard of such provisions by many state governments over the years been persistent in Nigeria despite opportunities to either modify or strengthen the provisions in subsequent revisions of the Nigerian Constitution? Why has the fate of local government as third tier, freestanding democratically constituted level of government been uncertain for 30 years since the 1976 reforms that introduced it, in spite of consistent retention in subsequent Constitutions of the country?

2.4 The Bane of Local Government Development:

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended in Section 7 guarantees the creation and the autonomy on Local Government. Section 7 (2): The person authorized by law to prescribe the area over which a Local Government Council may exercise authority shall:

- a. Define such area as clearly as practicable; and
- b. Ensure, to the extent to which it may be reasonably justifiable, that in defining such area regard is paid to;
 1. The common interest of the community in the area
 2. Traditional association of the community, and
 3. Administrative convenience.

Section 7(3): It shall be the duty of Local Government Council within the state to participate in economic planning and development of the area referred to in subsection (2) of this section and to this end an economic planning board shall be established by a law enacted by the House of Assembly of the State. Section 7(4): The Government of a state shall ensure that every person who is entitled to vote or be voted for at an election to a House of Assembly shall have the right to vote or to vote for at an election to a Local Government Council. Section 7(5): The functions to be conferred by law upon Local Government Councils shall include those set out

in the Fourth Schedule to this Constitution. Section 7(6): Subject to the provisions of this Constitution:

- a. The National Assembly shall made provisions for statutory allocation of public revenue to local government councils in the Federation; and
- b. The House of Assembly of a state shall make provisions for statutory allocation of public revenue to Local Government Councils within the state.

2.4.1 Critical Analysis of the 1999 Constitution as Amended

A critical analysis of the 1999 Constitution reveals the following:

Autonomy exists in some areas such as:

1. Section 3 (6) provides that there shall be seven hundred and sixty-eight (768) and six (6) area councils totaling seven hundred and seventy-four (774) local government areas in Nigeria.
2. Section 7 (1) guarantees that there should be separate existence of the local government councils as an autonomous tier of government.
3. Section 7 (6) Mandates both the Federal and State Government to make separate provisions out of the Federation account and State income respectively available to the local councils.

2.4.2 Autonomy Exist in Main Functions of Local Government

Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999), in 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended in its fourth schedule, section 7 sub sections 1 and 2 clearly spelt out the functions of local government as follows:

1. The consideration and the making of recommendations to a State Commission on economic planning or any similar body on
 - i. The economic development of the State, particularly in so far as the areas of authority of the council of the State are affected, and
 - ii. Proposals made by the said commission or body;
 - a. Collection of rates, radio and television licenses;
 - b. Establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for the destitute or infirm;
 - c. Licensing of bicycles, trucks (other than mechanically propelled trucks), canoes, wheel barrows and carts;

- d. Establishment, maintenance and regulation of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs, markets, motor parks and public conveniences;
 - e. Construction and maintenance of roads, street lightings, drains and other public highways, parks dens, open spaces, or such public facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the House of Assembly of a State;
 - f. Naming of roads and streets and numbering of houses;
 - g. Provision of maintenance of public convenience, sewage and refuse disposal;
 - h. Registration of all births, deaths and marriages;
 - i. Assessment of privately owned houses or tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of a State; and
 - j. Control and regulation of – Out-door advertising and hoarding, Movement and keeping of pets of all description, shops and kiosks, Restaurants, bakeries and other places for sale of food to the public, laundries, and Licensing, regulation and control of the sale of liquor.
2. Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 also states that: The functions of a local government council shall include participation of such council in the Government of a State as respects the following matters:
- i. The provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocational education;
 - ii. The development of agriculture and natural resources, other than the exploitation materials;
 - iii. The provision and maintenance of health services, and
 - iv. Such other functions as may be conferred on a local government council by the House of Assembly of the State.

2.5 Local Governance

Local governance is considered as the delineation of geo-political locales and administrative environments into smaller that are seen to be closer to local communities. The two essential parts of a local government framework include:

Discretion: Permits the local government to engage in significant functions that gives them the authorization to represent the proclivities of the citizens in the decision (World-Bank, 2004). The main focus of development planning in any given society is to enhance the livelihood and improve the overall-well-being of the citizens in a suitable way. In this manner, to successfully

play out its role, local communities need to exercise government of inclusion. Local governance takes into account the provision of regulatory socio-economic institutions, underscores locality, and accountability to local individuals (Olowu, 1989). Participation of local citizens is germane as far as leading and directing community affairs in local governance is concerned. It promotes democracy by;

- i. Building the capacity of locals politically
- ii. Producing and developing leaders at the local level and
- iii. Providing a kind of check and balance vertically and horizontally to ensure accountability and transparency (Olowu, 1989).

There is a high premium placed on local governance by donor agencies because of its perceived to some extent demonstrated importance to poverty eradication and development; obviously gravitating toward the achievement of the Millennial Development Goals (MDGs) (World Bank, 2004).

2.5.1 Local Government Autonomy and Decentralization

Local government autonomy involves sets of institutions, systems and procedures through which citizens explain their interests and needs, reconcile their disparities, and exercise their rights and duties at the local level. The building blocks of good local administration are numerous; citizens' participation, partnership among key actors at the local level, capacity of local across all sectors, multiple flows of information, institutions of accountability, and a pro-poor orientation (UNDP, 2004). At the point when viable decentralization and local government progress simultaneously, local governments and the groups they represent, gain the authority, assets, and skills to take responsive decisions and to follow up on them successfully and accountably. Advancing the capacity of local government to act adequately and accountably requires promoting a responsive civil society, organizations and individuals to assume the responsibility for their communities, participate in local need setting, aid the execution of those decision, and then monitor their viability (USAID, 2010).

2.6 The Concept of Development

Development is a concept that poses some difficulties as far as providing a holistic meaning. It is extremely elusive and hard to conceptualize because it is associated with an extensive interpretation (Oyugi, 2000) as cited in (Hussein, 2004). Substantiating this statement, Hussein (2004) advance that most Nigerian economists define development in terms of various indicators-increase in the Gross National Product or per capita income of a country.

For welfare economist, development encapsulates organizational and structural changes and associate development with meeting up with public welfare and the achievement of objectives like rising net salary, poverty reduction, unemployment and social disparity.

In another unique circumstance, Venter (2001) as referred to by Edom and Jahed (2009) posit that development is related to modernization, which include the attainment of services, including clean and safe water, health, education, good roads, and the level of citizen interest embraces a more extensive perspective of development that go beyond economic growth and material changes and incorporate human attitude with respect to a spirit of enhanced human capacity development, and mass citizen participation in the decision-making process. Development from this viewpoint is seen as a process of mass social action in which local citizens organize, plan and take progressive action in collaboration with central government to enhance the political and socio-economic conditions of their respective locality (Sharma, 2000).

Whereas traditional development strategies have relied on national framework and on the abilities of central government authorities, the success of development at the local level depends, to an large degree, on the subsistence of suitable local institutional frameworks and on the accessibility of the essential systems and skill-levels at all government levels. Without a well-functioning decentralized local authority, grassroots development is not achievable (Olsen, 2007). Along these lines, the focus of development is generally concerned with ensuring that the social well-being of individuals is paramount and should be reflected in the life of the individual rather than quantitative economic growth or the state of the economy.

2.7 The Concept of Decentralization

As Fagyet (2011) observes decentralization stands out amongst the most imperative reforms of the past era, both as the quantity of nations influenced and the possibly profound ramifications for the nature and quality of governance. As decentralization has advanced, the political science writing on its outcomes has developed quickly and a reasonable split has turned out to be clear. The adherents of decentralization draw from local government or fiscal federalism theories. They contend that decentralization lead to more elevated amounts of political interest. Responsibility, and administrative and fiscal effectiveness (Falleti, 2004). This, in any case, does not demonstrate that decentralization is a panacea for administrative viability. Contending despite what might be expected. Rodden and Wibbels in 2002 argued that decentralization promotes constant bail-out from central government due to budget

shortfalls of local units, an unstable economy and over-extensions of bureaucratic processes. In spite of the fact that there is no agreement on the positives or negatives of decentralization; however, an explanatory examination of the aftereffects of decentralization across nations uncovers that, regardless of the execution of clearly comparable changes, their effect on the dispersal of power among levels of government varies significantly generally from one country to the next (Falleti, 2004).

The term decentralization is broad to the point that it will be hard to concoct only one basic definition. The term includes diverse thoughts and ideas that are assembled. Decentralization for the most part alludes to either the condition of being decentralized or the way toward turning out to be so (Treisman, 2002). Decentralization, practically speaking, is complex to the point that it has a few measurements and elucidations at various levels and by various scholars. However, there is a common theme resonating with all the definitions-the giving or redistribution of some power.

As per an UNDP working paper (1999), decentralization indicates the rearrangement or predisposition of power so that there is a system of collaboration between the various tiers of government.

Kauzya (2005) viewed decentralization as an approach of high need that gives the stage to empowerment, sustainable democratization, and the mobilization of resources for economic advancement. It is an extremely helpful instrument that can accommodate and coordinate individuals socio-economically and a vehicle that advances political, civic and administrative good governance.

2.7.1 Types of Decentralization

There is an overall pattern toward the expansion and transmission of power, resources and obligations to the lower levels of governments. Both federal and unitary countries, irrespective of it being developed or in the process of developing, are gravitating toward more decentralization (Sharma, 2005). As per Fleuke (2004) position, the effect of decentralization varies depending on design, which will rely upon the political structure and regulatory issues of the nation. He has distinguished the kinds of decentralization to be political, administrative, fiscal, and market/economic decentralization.

2.7.2 Political Decentralization

Political decentralization or devolution entails the complete transfer of political power, authority and resources to a lawfully authorized and independent lower tier of government with

attending administrative and fiscal dimensions. Political decentralization is expected to give more power to locals through their locally elected representative in public decision making at the local level (World Bank, 2014). Furthermore, Political Decentralization occurs when power and authority are devolved to authorities that are accountable and representative of those at the local level. Political Decentralization means to build open investment in local leadership (Ribot, 2002). School as who advanced political decentralization believe that when citizens collaboratively engaged in decision making, there is a high level of cooperation among distinct interest groups than those that are made singularly by national political authorities (Rondinelli, 1999).

However, a successful political decentralization is accompanied by constitutional reforms, improvement of multi-dimensional, wholesome functioning political parties, reinforcement of governing bodies, formation of local political sub units, and providing the enabling environment for robust and vibrant interest groups (NPD LG, 2011).

2.7.3 Administrative Decentralization

In administrative decentralization, policies are instituted to transfer local government processes and capacities from the central government to a local administration (Awortwi, 2010). Elucidating further Fatile and Ejalonibu (2015), see administrative decentralization as a process that concedes some functions particularly from the executive branch of government of a state to local authorities; however, the intention is not for those local authorities to decide autonomously on major issues. Legally, local authorities remain under the full control of the state and are seen as political sub-units.

This is the type of decentralization more visible in Nigeria. The principle administrative unit of local government for the purpose of effecting administrative decentralization is the country. Decentralization as devolution is in this manner a prime political change as it is projected to bring power nearer to where the greater part of individuals dwell with the goal that they are better ready to take an interest in active participation and decision making, which is the identifying mark of any democratic system of administration (USAID, 2012).

Rondinelli (1999) identified three distinct types of administrative decentralization to include: deconcentration, delegation and devolution.

Deconcentration is a type of decentralization that considers the redistribution of national regulatory duties through field administrative units far from the capital (Yajah, 2014).

Generally, as Khumalo (2015) declares, the functions of central government authorities are moved toward sub-level of government including states and regions. Generally, the administration is supervised by a central government authority.

Delegation includes transfer of basic leadership and administration to management and organization, which are not necessarily under direct control of a national office. Under delegation, central government capacities are transferred to public corporation, regional planning areas or local development authorities (Yajah, 2014).

Devolution alludes to the establishment of independent units of government to which the central government surrender certain functions. These units of government exercise some freedom and practice self-sufficiency inside their scope of operation (Khumalo, 2015). White in 2011 contended that devolution is the purest type of decentralization as government units have well-defined boundaries limits as far as law and geographic areas are concerned. Central government transferred authority for basic leadership and authoritative administration to semi-independent or quasi-autonomous units of Local Government. In devolution, there are beneficial and organize connections between the local and central government.

2.7.4 Market or Economic Decentralization

Market Decentralization is a core part of reform projects geared toward limiting the role of the state and expanding the market. “Institutional projects coordinated by the World Bank ascended from 469 in the 1980sto 3,235 in the 2000s” (Erk, 2015). Indeed, even after the 2008 economic meltdown and its attending monetary downturn, market decentralization reforms have proceeded on an upward trajectory. New development projects since the 2008 economic downturn have incorporated some form of institutional reforms (Andrews, 2014).

2.7.5 Fiscal Decentralization

Fiscal decentralization occurs when there are sets of policies configurations to expand the revenue or fiscal independence of local sub-units of governments. Fiscal decentralization adopts diverse institutional structures such that there is an incremental transfer from the central government, the enforcement of new sub-national taxes, or the designation of tax authorities that was previously national (Falleti, 2005).

According to Pru’Homme (2003), fiscal decentralization includes four approaches to increase fiscal independence of local government.

- i. Consumption task plainly depicting the central governments and local government obligations regarding giving and paying to particular administrations to nationals;
- ii. Income task outlining assessable income sources and expense raising forces between the central governments and local governments and perhaps making another sub-national duty to reinforce the fiscal capacities of LGs and give them authority to choose how to spend their income;
- iii. Inter-governmental strategy empowering a central government to transfer financial resources as grants to local governments; and
- iv. Regulatory policies to screen and set cutoff points on local governments.

2.7.6 African Perspective of Decentralization

Decentralization in Africa is not a new reform program. Its application dates as far back as the foundation of the African continent. Both English speaking and French speaking African countries experienced various forms of decentralization before and after independence (Ahwoi, 2000). Disappointing advancement in achieving national objectives through an archaic centralized process compelled many developing countries to get involve in development activities that consider a ‘top-down’ approach that had never been experienced before. Urgent socio-economic, political and technological transformation has fueled the pattern to depend all the more intensely on lower tiers of government for public sector development (Kiwanuka, 2012).

The wanton failure resulting from decades of centralized planning fueled the financial, economic and political crises in the 1980s. This brought about the decline of state resources which thusly increase the demand for institutional, political and socio-economic inclusion and reforms. Nations like Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Namibia decided on a decentralization policy as a move intended for abrogating systems of racial isolation and segregation in the conveyance of the ‘national cake’ (Devas, 2004). While there was no direct evidence that decentralization would be successful, there was adequate information demonstrating that decades of centralized planning had been unsuccessful. The theoretical justification for tilting towards decentralization is that exchange of some central government authorities, resources, obligations, and responsibility to sub-national governments enables local institutions and associations to embrace more powerful self-administration and advancement fitting to local conditions (Awotwi, 2010).

2.7.7 Growing Trends towards Decentralization in Sub Saharan Africa

From the colonial period many African nations embraced and adopted a more centralized systems of governance that created numerous social incompatibilities. Recently, however, a number of endeavours have been made by many African nations to restructure the state through decentralization.

In recent years, the increasing pattern towards decentralization in sub-Saharan African has been unequivocally supported by many African nations as one method for tending to the social disparity and the unevenness in power relations that have turned out to be normal in many parts of the continent (Kauzya, 2007). As a major aspect of effort to structure or better still rebuild governments to advance inclusive and viable public administrative systems, responsibility, and regulatory framework, decentralization is progressively being adopted and applied in many sub-Saharan African nations including. Liberia, Ghana and Sierra Leone (Awortwi 2010). This is as a result of World Bank and International Monetary Fund structural adjustment policies which now identify the important and meaningful role local government or sub national units play in development effort (World Bank, 2000). In the meantime, scholars have advanced decentralization as a response to the disappointments of ‘over-centralized’ states following the financial emergency of the 1970s. The initiation and subsequent implementation of structural adjustments reforms in the 1980s and 1990s of the state which was generally seen to have failed or collapsed (Wunsch and Olowu, 1995). Decentralization is expected to promote greater government accountability and citizens’ participation in public affairs by expanding the political space thereby strengthening the legitimacy of the state (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006).

2.7.8 Necessity for Decentralization in Modern Governance

There is global tendency toward increasing transfer of power, resources and responsibilities to the lower levels of government. Both federal and unitary nations, regardless of whether industrialized or in the process of doing so are moving toward more decentralization, decentralization may take the form of more local self-governance to sub-levels with respect to the central control or could suggest a move from appointment to election of sub-national government authorities subsequently handling to these levels the functions of administration in the form of (Sharma, 2014).

A number of countries around the globe have adopted some type of decentralization. A significant number of these nations are decentralizing in light of the fact that they trust it can

help enhance financial development or decrease poverty in rural areas particularly since most centralized governments, for quite a while, were unable to render efficient service and expedite economic development. A survey conducted in the early 2000's in over 75 developing and transitional countries with estimated population of not less than five million found that as low as only 12 had not taken on some form of decentralization (Awortwi, 2010). Decentralization mandates politicians to compete, prompting a more grounded local democracy, political accountability, and accordingly, citizen's control over resources (Dreher and Fischer, 2010).

As Schneider (2003) puts it, Decentralization essentially alters the governance structure by moving the local functions from central government to local constituents, and furthermore by changing the geographic locale of political contestation and by modifying the relative power of different actors and by changing the area of government interaction with society.

Furthermore, Frey and Luechinger (2004) contend that to a vast degree, decentralized nations are more stable politically and administrative than more centralized states, have more proficient markets and give less significant typical focuses acts of terrorists.

Contentions for decentralization are centered on the presumption that greater cooperation in decision making can enhance effectiveness, parity, and development and also significantly increase accountability and resource management in the public sector. Essentially, decentralization is viewed as a reasonable process for transforming political governance with the end result of allowing everybody to participate equally in matters concerning them. Ribot (2004) posits that decentralization is a system of administration that encourages exchanges of power nearer to the individuals most influenced by the application of power. Additionally, Tendler (2000) believes that decentralization can enhance service delivery on grounds that other institutions can supplement central government's inefficiencies with respect to the aforementioned. It is likewise assumed that if the whole course of action is based on trust and organized well; decentralization with its attending inclusive approach could enhance processes and appropriation equally (Hadenius, 2003).

Regardless of the considerable number of contentions and counter contentions for and against decentralization, policy articulators appear to be willing to advance it in many nations (Smoke, 2003). Dumbuya (2005), (as referred to in Yajah, 2014) affirms that civil society gets to be distinctly empowered with a viable decentralization program. Opportunities for grassroots development are upgraded with a strong local government capacity which is realistic when decentralization is enforced.

2.7.9 Arguments for and Against Decentralization

Decentralization is often depicted as an appreciated administrative reform expected to enhance effectiveness and equity of resources allocation and to advance participation and empowerment of local individuals. The success of decentralization depends, however, on the circumstances in a country, the design of the decentralization process and the institutional courses of action regarding its implementation (Cabral, 2011).

The viciousness of the contentions for and against decentralization highlights the political nature of the decision. What is most likely more intriguing than the arguments for and against decentralization is building up a comprehension of the issues that it is attempting to solve. In many countries, this is about how a range of service can be available to local populace-effectively cooperating to meet the needs of local population (Bremner, 2011). Smoke (2003) contends that decentralization is not characteristically positive or negative and suggest that any talk about decentralization begins from an unbiased point of view. Moreover, White (2011) contends that in spite of the fact that decentralization has been commended as a key reform that drives development and improvement, it additionally is a mind boggling process with a number of vulnerabilities.

Incidentally, it appears that the key contentions of enhancing efficiency and reinforcing democracy are utilized by both sides of the debates. Achieving allocative efficiency is cited as a reason to remain centralized with a specific end goal to take into consideration the appropriation of resources across a national population as indicated by need. Nonetheless, it is likewise frequently contended that decentralization, which would bring the planning and prioritization of services to a lower level, allow for a more sensitive local mechanism to target population with the most prominent needs (Bremner, 2011). Another contentious argument is that decentralization increased the fiscal capacity of local units; however, it is often accompanied by fiscal incongruities.

There is sufficient reliance that significant political or administrative decentralization can build-up fiscal capacities as well as fiscal differences between administrative units and local government. Local governments vary enormously in their capacity to generate income; subsequently, dependence on local sources will without regulated central government transfers raise disparities (Hofman and Kaiser, 2002). There should be a level of balance wherein some local units won't become extremely strong, making it to opt for secession or another unit

becoming too destitute to operate as an autonomous unit, thereby defeating the genuine expectation of decentralization.

2.7.10 Potential Benefits of Decentralization

Manor (2003) points out that although political arguments for decentralization have been advanced for a reasonable period, the accentuation as of late has been on economic arguments. Developing agencies, among others, have tended to concentrate on the advantages of decentralization for service delivery. Decentralization is at the top of a range of reforms geared toward improving service delivery by increasing the level of accountability. Under a centralized administration, citizen's needs to advance their interest regularly to central authority for better delivery of services which in some cases prompt a reaction from the authorities involved. Decentralization makes it less demanding by bringing those involved with making policy closer to the public. This gives locals the platform to express their demands for services to the central authority, and also make them better able to keenly monitor the performance of those bureaucrats and politicians responsible to them. Additionally, those engaged in policy making can more readily supervise those under their authority especially at the frontlines of providing services (World Bank, 2004).

There are several examples and experiences wherein decentralization reforms have played a pivotal role in promoting basic service delivery including the doubling of students' enrollment and improvement in gaining access to basic sanitation in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil; the 16 municipalities in Columbia where the provision of education, good water and road infrastructure were improved (Pranab, 2002).

2.7.11 Improve Accountability

As Campos and Hellman (2005) observed, accountability is expected to advance in tandem with decentralization because it promotes high level of political competition and the public ability to checkmate their elected officials also enhance performance and dwarfed corruption. However, these beneficial outcomes can be hampered by some of the risks accompanying decentralization wherein some powerful local elites could use the opportunity to solidify their grip on power prompting more or less an inevitable siege of the state.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

There are various theoretical and conceptual frame works on local government depending on the areas a writer or an author is viewing it from. Gboyega in Agagu (2012) is of the opinion that there exist two basic classes of theories of Local Government.

First Theory: **Democratic Theory** – This theory justified the existence and reason why local government would help democratic process in areas of administration which would bring responsiveness, accountability, control and good governance in local domain.

Second Theory: **Non – Democratic Theory** – This theory stressed that local government institutions are not democratic in their internal operations; and they have no responsiveness, accountability, control and good governance in their local domain. This system contradicts the purpose of a democratic regime.

Democracy: Chief Obafemi Awolowo (W. H. A. 1952) opined that Local Government is “a system of government where local councils make and accept responsibility for, and implement their own decisions subject only such control as may be exercised by the people through their own regional government”.

2.2.1 The Principle of Citizen –Cantered Local Governance: Theory

What supposed to be the functions of local government? Why did it come into existence? Theoretically, what are its objectives? Scholars do not have a consensus on this (Ola & Tonwe, 2004:175; Aransi and Adeyemi, 2012:6). Has explicitly stated thus:

There is no theory of local government. There is no normative general theory from which we can deduce what local government ought to be; there is no positive general theory from which we can derive testable hypothesis about what it is.

Despite this, several theories have been put forward to provide strong rationale for decentralized decision making and a strong role for local governments on the grounds of efficiency, accountability, manageability, and autonomy (Shah, 2006:3).

In formulating a theory on Local Government, Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Nigeria. Therefore, this study is conducted within the context of citizen-centered local governance principle (theory).

According to Shah (2006:15-16), reforming the institution of local governance requires agreement on basic principles. Three principles are advanced to initiate such a discussion:

(a) Responsive governance. This principle aims at governments to do the right things- that is, to deliver services consistent with citizen preferences.

(b) Responsible governance. The government should also do it right – that is, manage its fiscal resources prudently. It should earn the trust of residents by working better and costing less and by managing fiscal and social risks for the community. It should strive to improve the quality

and quantity of access to public services. To do so, it needs to benchmark its performance with the best-performing local government.

(c) Accountable governance. A local government should be accountable to its electorate. It should adhere to appropriate safeguards to ensure that it serves the public interest with integrity. Legal and institutional reforms may be needed to enable local governments to deal with accountability between elections- reforms such as a citizen's charter and a provision for recall of public officials.

A framework of local government that embodies these principles according to Shah (2006:15-16) is called citizen- centered governance. The distinguishing features of citizen-centered governance are the following:

- Citizen empowerment through a rights-based approach (direct democracy provisions, citizens' charter)
- Bottom-up accountability for results
- Evaluation of government performance as the facilitator of a network of providers by citizens as governors, taxpayers, and consumers of public services. The framework emphasizes reforms that strengthen the role of citizens as the principals and create incentives for government agents to comply with their mandates.

The commitment problem may be mitigated by creating citizen-centered local governance – by having direct democracy provisions, introducing governing for results in government operations, and reforming the structure of governance, thus shifting decision making closer to the people. Direct democracy provisions require referenda on major issues and large projects and citizens having the right to veto any legislation or government program. A governing for results framework requires government accountability to citizens for service delivery performance. Hence, citizens have a charter defining their basic rights as well as rights of access to specific standards of public services. Output-based intergovernmental transfers strengthen compliance with such standards and strengthen accountability and citizen empowerment (Shah, 2006:16).

2.9 Empirical Review

Anayochukwu & Ani (2021) conducted a study on Local Government Autonomy in Nigeria: Its Problems and Prospects. The study adopted a quantitative research approach to discover and explain the existence of constitutional ambiguities or inconsistency that tends to provide

the drive for the unethical state of officials to nurse the inordinate desire for hedging in the local government left, right and center. However, the findings revealed that the area of jurisdictional rivalry between the state and local governments are mainly the beneficial ones, like rate collection, distribution of fertilizers, and other farm inputs like pesticides. The study concluded that legal and constitutional requirements, no matter how full proof they may be, cannot guarantee true autonomy for the local government as a tier, unless the political will exists on the part of a statesman to streamline and stabilize this very critical level of government. The study recommended that local Government autonomy is fastened on an improved revenue base, adherence to constitutional provisions, political stability, accountability, and transparency in governance. And that to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the local government system, there is an urgent need to review the constitution and delimit areas of inter-governmental frictions especially in electoral matters, creation of local governments, tenure of councils, and finance. The council elections should be conducted as and when due, to avoid a democratic vacuum that is dangerous to the local government system.

Felix & Okonette (2013) conducted a study on; the politics of local government Autonomy in Nigeria reloaded. The study adopted a qualitative research approach and thematic analysis to discover and explain that in Nigeria, the federal and state governments mostly transfer the kind of autonomy shaped by ethnic considerations to the LG. Also, that the blockage and blockage of local government autonomy is further evident at the fiscal and management employment stages than in any other areas of intergovernmental dealings. The study concludes that local government is a distinctive political arrangement and the degree of autonomy it enjoys from federal or regional or state government corresponds with the politics of the state. The study recommended that the federal and state governments should take charge of roles suitable for them and entrust other roles to the local government with sufficient fiscal aid.

Doho & Ahmed & Umar (2018) researched on; Local Government Autonomy in Nigeria: Struggles and Challenges. The study adopted a qualitative research approach to discover and explain that the LG as the third tier system of government in Nigeria is confronted with constitutional hitches. They concluded that the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria generated major flaws, practices and uncertainty often subjugated to devastate the LG and afterward made them adjuncts to the State Governments, and consequent upon this, the LG in some states function as meager extensions of the State Ministry. The study recommended that section 7 (1) of the 1999 constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended should be erased and that structure, finance, establishment, composition and function of the LG councils should not be vested in the constitution rather than State house of Assembly.

Imhanlanhi & Ikeanyibe (2009) conducted a study on; Local Government Autonomy and Development of Localities in Nigeria: Issues, Problems and Suggestions. The study adopted a qualitative research approach to discover and explain that insufficient treatment of practically all the issues concerning autonomy which include; LG representation, its revenue and personnel has posed some challenges for LGs' developmental exertions in the local areas. The study concluded that local areas are disparagingly in need of developmental ventures and improved existence such as construction of roads, provision of health facilities, and pipe borne water from the Local Government and also established that LG only contribute marginally in the localities. The study recommended that LGs should intensify efforts towards ensuring its autonomy through an improved internal revenue generation and clear development influence in the localities, so as to ensure proper democratic consolidation and reduced corruption

Samson & Stanley (2015) carried out a research on; State Governors as Albatross to Democracy and Local Self-Government in Nigeria" the study adopted historical and content analysis method to discover that since the year 1999 and emergence of the fourth republic, not less than seven state governors have dismissed or dissolved LG councils in the country. The

study further revealed that despite dismissal of elected local government officials, state governors deny local government access to statutory allocations or deny them of their full responsibilities. The study recommends a full autonomy to LGs disregarding the meddling of state governors and that the people at the grassroots should be empowered to sack their representatives either through recall or by denying them the opportunity for another term of office through the ballot.

Osakede, Ijimakinwa & Adesanya (2016) researched on; an empirical analysis on the local government financial autonomy in Nigeria. The study revealed that local government lack fiscal autonomy in Nigeria and that it thwarts effective and efficient service delivery at the grassroots. The study discovered that excessive interference of state government in their local affairs, corruption among local government officials, unfavourably affected the delivery of effective services to the rural dwellers. The study recommended that full financial autonomy should be granted to local councils on matter statutorily assigned to LGs, the state/local government joint account should be rescinded and transparent officials should be put at the helm of affairs of the local councils. From empirical evidence in extant literature, the rationale behind the declaration of local government as the third tier government as included in the 1979 constitution, principally, was to bring government closer to the people and effective service delivery to the rural areas.

2.10 Gap in Literature Review

Most of the literature reviewed did not link political, administrative or bureaucratic and fiscal indices of autonomy to LG system in Nigeria, the nature of LG autonomy, its implications and instabilities to LG in Nigeria nor did they discuss the domineering relationship between the state and local government as it concerns its constitutional role. The study is of the view that it is obvious in Nigeria that the state governors have commandeered democracy at the grass root level and by extension local self-government. The gap particularly exists in most of the

literature on LG autonomy and its implication to the development of the local authorities. Gap in Literature Review Most of the literature reviewed did not link political, administrative or bureaucratic and fiscal indices of autonomy to LG system in Nigeria, the nature of LG autonomy, its implications and instabilities to LG in Nigeria nor did they discuss the domineering relationship between the state and local government as it concerns its constitutional role.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preamble

The goal of this chapter is to clearly discuss and provide justification for the research methods adopted to answer and examine the research questions and objectives raised in this study and point out on the limitation of the methods adopted. The research assessed Local Government Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Nigeria (A Case Study of Offa Local Government, Kwara State). This part of the research discussed extensively some vital parts of the methodology which was adopted for this research / study; such as research method, the study designed, population of the study, sample size determination, research sample frame, data collection methods, research instrument, data reliability and validity, and ethical issues and so on

3.1 The Purpose and Nature of the Study

The purpose of this study is an examination to the impact of assessed Local Government Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Nigeria (A Case Study of Offa Local Government, Kwara State). The study also intended to identify the challenges hindering Local Government Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Offa Local Government and to proffer probable recommendation on the challenges affecting Local Government Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Offa Local Government. In addition, the research aimed at filling the gaps identified in the literatures and also to serve as a bedrock for further researcher on impact of teamwork on organizational productivity in Nigeria.

Due to the purpose and nature of this study, the nature of the respondent shaped the methodology adopted in this study. The respondent that is the staffs of Offa Local Government, Kwara State are the main focus in data gathering and that can offer clear cut answer on the questions raised in this study.

3.2 Research Design

The study is a descriptive study of survey type. The study used descriptive research in order to assess the thought, feelings, and opinion of participants through structured questionnaires. The study will therefore adopt the use of a well-structured questionnaire to measure the impact of Local Government Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Offa Local Government and the challenges hindering Local Government Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Offa Local Government in Offa Local Government area in Kwara State. The structured questionnaires were used to guide the respondent not to lose focus of the topic. A well-structured closed ended questionnaire was developed and distributed to the targeted respondents within the proposed sample frame of the selected staffs, comprises of the Six (6) Department, both senior and junior staff in Offa Local Government.

3.3 Population of the study

The population for this study covered the staff in Offa Local government with total population of three hundred and fifty-five staffs (335) across seven (7) Department in Offa Local Government area in Kwara State. The selected staff consisted of all the staff (Senior, Junior and Casual staff) in Offa Local Government area in Kwara State. It was revealed that the followings are the population of the staff in Offa Local government. As disclosed by the Offa Local government information office (2025).

3.4 Sources of Data

The study will adopt the use of primary and secondary source of data collection. Data were collected through primary sources using a well-structured questionnaire. While secondary data were from relevant textbooks, journals, newspaper, and recorded materials from data were sourced from the Department of Statistic and Information, Offa Local Government, Kwara State.

3.5 Type of Data

The study will adopt a combination of qualitative and quantitative data derived from the two sources mentioned above earlier. Quantitative data are data collected with questionnaires and that of the qualitative data were collected via interview and secondary sources such as textbooks journals newspaper and among others.

The two methodological efforts will be discussed alongside personal observation. The above methodological approach will be used to help validate information gotten from both ends.

3.6 Sampling Procedure/Techniques

The study used multistage random sampling to select the junior and senior staff of the Local government. While purposive technique will be used to select the respondents for the study.

3.7 Sample Size

Based on the scope of the study, both the junior, senior and casual staff in Offa Local government, kwara State were used for the study. In choosing the sampling size and securing representative responses, the sample size determination formula of Raskesh (2013) ``table of sample were adopted'' with the help of Taro Yamane's formula.

Required Sample Size [†]								
Population Size	Confidence = 95%				Confidence = 99%			
	Margin of Error				Margin of Error			
	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	1.0%	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	1.0%
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
20	19	20	20	20	19	20	20	20
30	28	29	29	30	29	29	30	30
50	44	47	48	50	47	48	49	50
75	63	69	72	74	67	71	73	75
100	80	89	94	99	87	93	96	99
150	108	126	137	148	122	135	142	149
200	132	160	177	196	154	174	186	198
250	152	190	215	244	182	211	229	246
300	169	217	251	291	207	246	270	295
400	196	265	318	384	250	309	348	391
500	217	306	377	475	285	365	421	485
600	234	340	432	565	315	416	490	579
700	248	370	481	653	341	462	554	672
800	260	396	526	739	363	503	615	763

A sample of three hundred and fifty-five staffs (335) were selected for this study. Going by the Raskesh table is given that the population fall between 300-to-400, going by this assertion

the study population is 355 and fall in between 300 and 400, it should not be more than 188 sample size.

The 188 copies of questionnaires will be distributed to the proposed selected staffs in the Local Government.

Due to the purpose and nature of this study Yamane's formula, was also employed. The Yamane's formula is denoted by

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + (e)^2}$$

Where N= sample size

n= population

e= significant level (5%)

$$n = \frac{355}{1 + 355(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{355}{1 + 355(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{355}{1 + 0.8875}$$

$$n = \frac{355}{1.8875}$$

$$n = 188.07$$

Sample size is 188 in Approximation.

3.8 Research Instrument

A closed ended questionnaire was administered to the selected respondents of the institution.

The researcher used ordinal level of measurement. Therefore, the study used a five-point Likert scale to measure variables since it supports such relationship. Which ranges from (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Undecided (4) Disagree, (5) Strongly Disagree

3.9 Method of Data Collection

Primary data was used for this study and data were collected through questionnaire. Primary data were employed to ensure active participation of the respondents involved and to get accurate information needed. For the purpose of this study, questionnaire method of collecting primary data was employed.

However, documentations, and relevant interactive were used as support and basis to prepare questionnaires, and in turn, questionnaire was used to test documentation.

3.9.1 Documentation

Firstly, documentation was selected in form of books, articles, journal, websites, and previous studies concerning Local Government Autonomy and how it has influenced Grassroots Development. On the other hand, the researcher used an overview of the selected Local Government to get preliminary knowledge to design questionnaire for respondents.

3.9.2 Questionnaires

The study used questionnaires to collect primary data for quantitative analysis. The questionnaires were designed to form a close-ended question. The questions consist of section A to E. A is borders on personal data and B to E focus on the main thrust of the study, considering the research questions, research objectives, research assumption, and the recommendations of the respondents' views has been measured on basis of five-point Likert scale, which ranges from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

3.10 Data Analysis

The result of this study was analyzed using frequent distribution table in displaying the percentage of the demographic data and to show the level of agreement and disagreement to the research statement in the closed ended questionnaire with the help of Statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) version 24.

Also qualitative secondary data source from relevant scholarly work will be analyzed using thematic analysis, while qualitative primary data source from data producing organisation, like

the polytechnic Ibadan newspaper will be analyzed along thematic analysis and further used to complement findings from quantitative primary data in this study.

The research will also adopt the use of correlation and regression analysis in other to arrive at a constructive answer particularly to the research questions and assumption raised in this study.

3.11 Justification of the Method

The chi-square statistic is applied to test the Null hypotheses. According to Creighton, the chi-square is used as follows

1. Where there two or more variable from the independent from samples, each of which is categorized into Strong Disagree, Disagree, Undecided, Agree, Strong Agree.
2. Regression analysis will be adopted to test the nature of impact of independent variable on the dependent variable. If the calculation value is greater than the table value, then the research assumption (Null) is accepted, and the alternate assumption rejected
3. Correlation analysis is adopted to examine the relationship between teamwork and organizational productivity
4. Simple percentage distribution and pie chart are used in other to assess the number of responses from the bio-data and other research objective question raised in the questionnaire while ranking is used to also assess how much of challenge some factor to each other.

3.12 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

Validity referred here is the degree or extent to which an instrument actually measures what is intended to measure. An instrument is valid to the extent that is tailored to achieve the research objectives. The researcher constructed the questionnaire for the study and submitted to the project supervisor who used his intellectual knowledge to critically, analytically and logically examine the instruments relevance of the contents and statements and then made the instrument valid for the study.

3.13 Reliability of Research Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using the internal consistency method. The internal consistency method of reliability looks at the consistency of the score of individual items on an instrument, the researcher used Cronbach's alpha correlation to test the reliability of the instrument.

3.14 Ethical Consideration

The study was approved by the Project supervisor of the Department. Informed consent was obtained from all study participants before they were enrolled in the study. Permission was sought from the relevant authorities to carry out the study. Date to visit the place of study for questionnaire distribution was put in place in advance

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULT, DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Preamble

This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of various data collected in the course of carrying out this study. It includes response rate, data presentation of research question, data analysis, and test of hypothesis and discussion of findings. This study was carried out in order to find out the impact of Local Government Autonomy on Grassroots Development in Nigeria (A Case Study of Offa Local Government, Kwara State). A total of one hundred and eighty-eight (188) semi-structured and tested questionnaires were issued out to the different departments in Offa Local Government, Kwara State, and the whole one hundred and eighty-eight (188) were returned as shown in the table below. Data collected on the questionnaires were entered into Excel and then transferred to SPSS version 25 for analysis

4.1 Table presentation

Demographic Composition

This section presents the result of the field study; it shows the descriptive information of the respondents.

Table 4.1 Gender

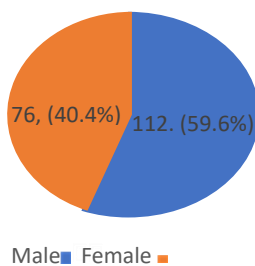


Figure 1. Personal Data / Gender (Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025))

Sex

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	112	59.6	59.6	59.6
	Female	76	40.4	40.4	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From Figure 1 above, 112 (59.6%) respondents are male, while 76 (40.4%) are female. The figure shows that there are more males than females among the respondents from the various departments in the local government

Table 2: Age distribution of respondents

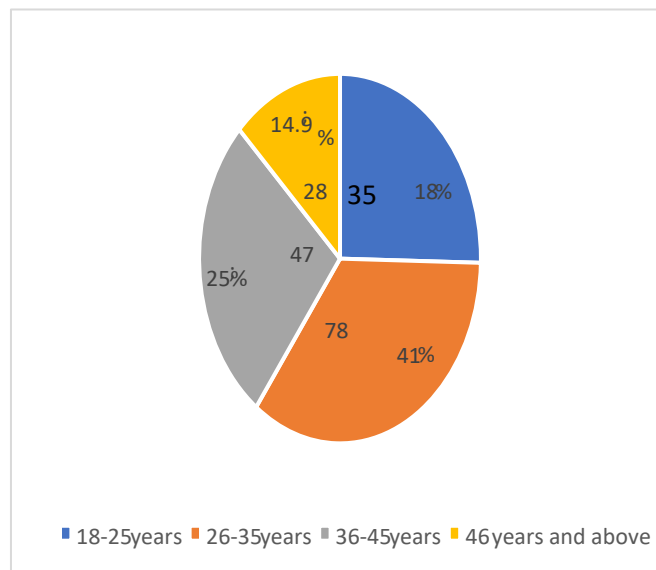


Figure 2. Age distribution of respondents Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025))

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	28	14.9	14.9
	26-35	47	25.0	39.9
	36-45	78	41.5	81.4
	46 & Above	35	18.6	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Figure 2 depicts that 28 (14.9%) of the respondents fell within the age limit of 18-25 years, 47 (25%) were within the age range of 26-40, 78 (41.5%) fell within the age of 36-55, while 35 (18.6%) are those respondents whose ages fell within the age range 46 years and above.

Table 4.3: Marital Status of the Respondents

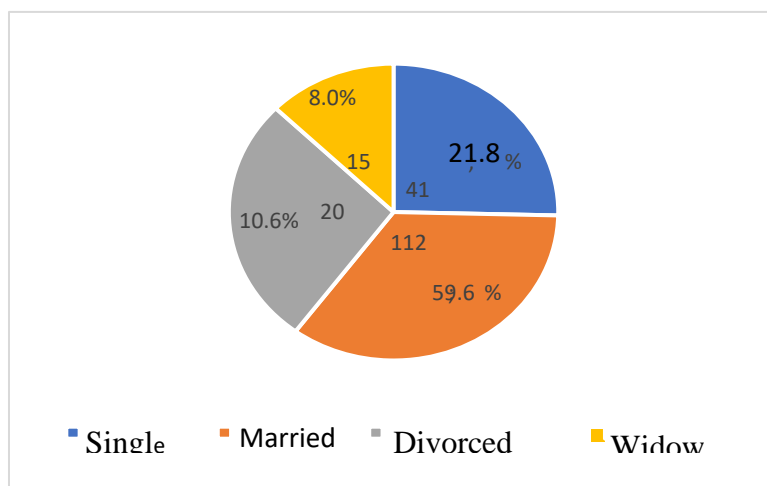


Figure 3. Marital status: Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Marital Status

		Frequenc y	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	41	21.8	21.8
	Married	112	59.6	81.4
	Divorced	20	10.6	92.0
	Widow	15	8.0	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

The above Figure 3 shows that 122 (44%) respondents are married, 41 (21.8%) are single, 20 (10.6%) respondents are divorced, while 15 (8.0%) are widowed. This figure shows that majority of the respondents are Married.

Table 4.4: Academic Qualification of the Respondents

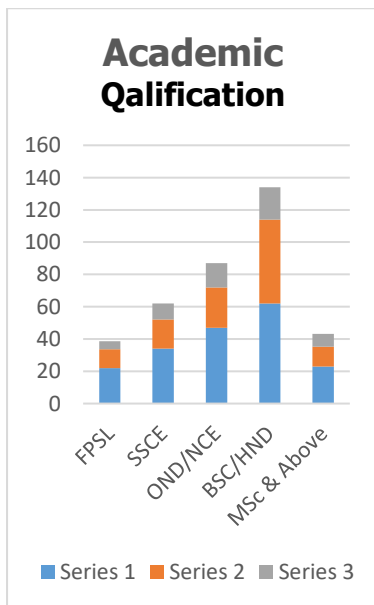


Figure 4. Academic Qualification: Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Academic Qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FPSL	22	11.7	11.7
	SSCE	34	18.1	29.8
	OND/NCE	47	25.0	54.8
	HND/BSC	62	33.0	87.8
	M.sc & Above	23	12.2	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From the Figure 4 above, 22 (11.7%) of the respondents had the first school leaving certificate, 34 of (18.1%) respondents were those with SSCE or GCE, 47 (25%) were holders of the OND/Equivalent/NCE/Equivalent, Those having Bachelor's degrees were 62 or (33.0%) while 23 (12.2%) were those respondents with the Master's Degree and Above. From this figure, we discovered that those with B.Sc/HND had the highest despondence of 62 or 33.0 %.

Table 4.5: Staff Grade of the Respondents

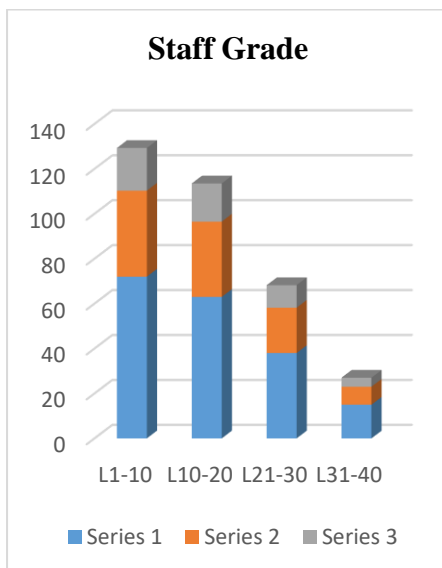


Figure 5. Personal Data / Staff Grade of the respondents (Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025))

Staff Grade

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	01-07	72	38.3	38.3
	08-10	63	33.5	71.8
	11-14	38	20.2	92.0
	15 & Above	15	8.0	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

In figure 5, 72 or (38.3%) of the respondents were in salary grade levels 01-07, followed by 63 or 33.5% of the respondent in grade levels 08-10, followed by 38 or 20.2% were in grade levels 11-14 while those in grade level 15 and above were 15 in number representing 8.0%

Table 4.6: Working Experience of the respondents

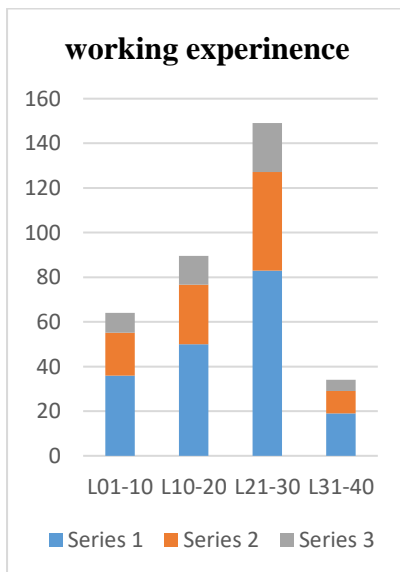


Figure 6. Personal Data / Working Experience/ length of service in years of the respondents
(Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)).

Working Experience

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 10yrs	36	19.1	19.1
	11-20	50	26.6	45.7
	21-30	83	44.1	89.9
	31-40	19	10.1	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Figure 6 above depicts that length of service distribution of respondents 36 or 19.1% was respondents that fell within the length of service 01-10, 50 or 26.6 % were those respondents that fell within the length of service 11-20, followed by 83 or 44.1% were those respondents that fell within the length of service 21-30, while 19 or 10.1% were those that fell within the length of service years 31-40 years

SECTION B: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTONOMY

Table 4.7: Do you agree that there was no autonomy of local government in Nigeria?

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	16	8.5	8.5
	D	12	6.4	14.9
	U	4	2.1	17.0
	A	73	38.8	55.9
	SA	83	44.1	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From the analysis made in Table 4.7 above, 83 respondents strongly agreed and 73 agreed that there was no autonomy of local government in Nigeria. 4 respondents were undecided, 12 disagreed and 16 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 72.9% as opposed to 27.1% of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point.

Table 4.8: Is it true that Local Government Autonomy will increase financial allocations and enhance Grassroots Development in Offa Local Government

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	24	12.8	12.8
	D	18	9.6	22.3
	U	13	6.9	29.3
	A	60	31.9	61.2
	SA	73	38.8	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From the analysis made in table 4.7 above, 73 respondents strongly agreed and 60 agreed that if Autonomy is given at the Local Government level it increase financial allocations and also enhance Grassroots Development in Offa Local Government. 13 respondents were undecided, 18 disagreed and 24 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 80.7% as opposed to 19.3 % of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point.

Table4.9: Do you agree that Local Government autonomy will reduced political interference and dependency on higher authorities for funds in Offa Local Government.

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	20	10.6	10.6
	D	15	8.0	18.6
	U	8	4.3	22.9
	A	74	39.4	62.2
	SA	71	37.8	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2023)

From the analysis made in Table 2 above, 71 respondents strongly agreed and 74 agreed that Local Government autonomy will reduced political interference and dependency on higher authorities for funds in Offa Local Government. 8 respondents were undecided, 15 disagreed and 20 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported

this view was 77.2 % as opposed to 22.8 % of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on these points.

Table 4.10: Local government autonomy will strengthen administrative capacity and promote transparency and accountability in Offa Local Government

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	8	4.3	4.3
	D	5	2.7	6.9
	U	6	3.2	10.1
	A	81	43.1	53.2
	SA	88	46.8	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From the analysis made in table 4.10 above, 88 respondents strongly agreed and 81 agreed that Local government autonomy will strengthen administrative capacity and promote transparency and accountability in Offa Local Government. 6 respondents were undecided, 5 disagreed and 8 respondents strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 89.9% as opposed to 10.1% of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point. in Nigeria accounts for its lack of autonomy.

Table 4.11: Question 5: Do you agree that the poor management of local government might not guarantee autonomy and grassroot development in Offa Local Government

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	15	8.0	8.0
	D	11	5.9	13.8
	U	7	3.7	17.6
	A	90	47.9	65.4
	SA	65	34.6	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From the analysis made in table above, 65 respondents strongly agreed and 90 agreed that the poor management of Offa Local Government could not guarantee its autonomy. 7 respondents were undecided, 1 disagreed and 15 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 82.5% as opposed to 17.5 % of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point.

SECTION C: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTONOMY AND GRASSROOTS DEVELOPING

Table 4.12: Is there any significant relationship between Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Offa Local Government Area of Kwara State

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	12	6.4	6.4
	D	15	8.0	14.4
	U	8	4.3	18.6
	A	65	34.6	53.2
	SA	88	46.8	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From the analysis on table 4.12 above, 88 respondents strongly agreed and 65 agreed that there is significant relationship between Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Offa Local Government Area of Kwara State. 8 respondents were undecided, 15 disagreed and 12 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 81.4% as opposed to 18.6 % of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point.

Table 4.13: In your opinion is local government autonomy is important for grassroots development?

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	21	11.2	11.2
	D	15	8.0	19.1
	U	7	3.7	22.9
	A	60	31.9	54.8

	SA	85	45.2	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From the analysis made in Table above, 85 respondents strongly agreed and 60 agreed that local government autonomy is important for grassroots development. 7 respondents were undecided, 15 disagreed and 21 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 77.1 % as opposed to 22.9 % of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on these points. so we accept that local government autonomy is important for grassroots development.

Table4.14: Do you believe local government autonomy has a direct impact on grassroots development in Offa

		Frequen cy	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	6	3.2	3.2
	D	7	3.7	6.9
	U	4	2.1	9.0
	A	73	38.8	47.9
	SA	98	52.1	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From the analysis made in table above, 98 respondents strongly agreed and 73 agreed that believe local government autonomy has a direct impact on grassroots development in Offa 4 respondents were undecided, 7 disagreed and 6 respondents strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 91%% as opposed to 9% of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point. This indicate that the respondents strongly believed local government autonomy has a direct impact on grassroots development in Offa.

Table 4.15: Does the politicization of local government bureaucracy in Nigeria account for its lack of Autonomy?

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	16	8.5	8.5
	D	11	5.9	14.4
	U	14	7.4	21.8
	A	77	41.0	62.8
	SA	70	37.2	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From the analysis made in table 4 above, 70 respondents strongly agreed and 77 agreed that politicization of local government bureaucracy in Nigeria accounts for its lack of autonomy 14 respondents were undecided, 11 disagreed and 16 respondents strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 78.2% as opposed to 21.8% of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point. This shows that respondents accept that the politicization of local government bureaucracy in Nigeria accounts for its lack of autonomy.

Table 4.16: Is Political Instability One of the Problems faced grassroots development in Offa Local Government?

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	9	4.8	4.8
	D	6	3.2	8.0
	U	9	4.8	12.8
	A	98	52.1	64.9
	SA	66	35.1	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Table 4.16 indicates that 66 respondents strongly agreed and 98 agreed that Is Political Instability One of the Problems faced grassroots development in Offa Local Government. 9 respondents were undecided, 6 disagreed while 9 strongly disagreed with this view. The

percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 87.2% as opposed to 12.8% of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point. Therefore, it has shown that Political Instability One of the Problems faced grassroots development in Offa Local Government.

Table 4.17: Do inadequate financial resources and a reasonable degree of discretion a constraint to local government autonomy and governance

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	16	8.5	8.5
	D	14	7.4	16.0
	U	2	1.1	17.0
	A	78	41.5	58.5
	SA	78	41.5	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

From the analysis made in table above, 78 respondents strongly agreed and 78 agreed that inadequate financial resources and a reasonable degree of discretion are a constraint to local government autonomy and governance. 2 respondents were undecided, 14 disagreed and 16 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 83.0 % as opposed to 17.0% of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on these points.

Table 4.18: Does corruption at the grass-root level account for the lack of local government autonomy and governance in Nigeria?

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	17	9.0	9.0
	D	14	7.4	16.5
	U	5	2.7	19.1
	A	81	43.1	62.2
	SA	71	37.8	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Table 4.18 indicates that 71 respondents strongly agreed and 81 agreed that corruption at the grass-root level accounts for a lack of local government autonomy and governance. 5 respondents were undecided, 14 disagreed while 17 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 80.9% as opposed to 19.1 % of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point. This show the extent to which both the local government authority and the higher authority need to work hand in hand to enumerate and tackle corruption at the grass-root level

Table 4.19: In your own opinion does state interference in local affairs contribute to a lack of local government autonomy and governance?

		Frequen cy	Percen t	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Val id	SD	12	6.4	6.4	6.4
	D	4	2.1	2.1	8.5
	U	11	5.9	5.9	14.4
	A	93	49.5	49.5	63.8
	SA	68	36.2	36.2	100.0
	Tot al	188	100.0	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Table above indicates that 68 respondents strongly agreed and 93 agreed that state interference in local affairs contributes to a lack of local government autonomy and governance. 11 respondents were undecided, 4 disagreed while 12 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 84.7 % as opposed to 15.3 % of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point.

Table 20: Do you agree that good management of local government could guarantee its autonomy and grassroots development

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	12	6.4	6.4
	D	10	5.3	11.7
	U	9	4.8	16.5

	A	86	45.7	62.2
	SA	71	37.8	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Table above indicates that 68 respondents strongly agreed and 93 agreed that state interference in local affairs contributes to a lack of local government autonomy and governance. 11 respondents were undecided, 4 disagreed while 12 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 84.7 % as opposed to 15.3 % of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point.

Table 21: Is it true that without state interference local government can performed better on their own

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	23	12.2	12.2
	D	23	12.2	24.5
	U	17	9.0	33.5
	A	60	31.9	65.4
	SA	65	34.6	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Table above indicates that 65 respondents strongly agreed and 60 agreed that without state interference local government can performed better on their own. 17 respondents were undecided, 23 disagreed while 23 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 66.5% as opposed to 33.5% of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point. This shows that without state interference local government can performed better on their own.

Table 4.22: With locally generated revenue local government can finance it yearly budget

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	23	12.2	12.2
	D	23	12.2	24.5
	U	17	9.0	33.5

	A	60	31.9	65.4
	SA	65	34.6	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Table above indicates that 65 respondents strongly agreed and 60 agreed that with locally generated revenue local government can finance it yearly budget. 17 respondents were undecided, 23 disagreed while 23 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 67.7 % as opposed to 32.7 % of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point.

Table 4.23 Will regular training programs for local government official will improve their skill and knowledge

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SD	5	2.7	2.7
	D	7	3.7	6.4
	U	9	4.8	11.2
	A	73	38.8	50.0
	SA	94	50.0	100.0
	Total	188	100.0	

Source: Compiled from author's computation (2025)

Table above indicates that 94 respondents strongly agreed and 73 agreed that Will regular training programs for local government official will improve their skill and knowledge. 9 respondents were undecided, 7 disagreed while 5 strongly disagreed with this view. The percentage of the respondents who supported this view was 84.7 % as opposed to 15.3 % of those who disagreed and those who were undecided on this point.

4.3 Analysis of the Research Hypothesis/Assumptions

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between local government autonomy and grassroots development in Offa Local Government

H0₂: there are no factors hindering Offa Local Government by the local government administration

First Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between local government autonomy and grassroots development in Offa Local Government

The hypothesis is examined along with some of the answers provided by the respondents to the research questions. This means that the position of the respondents will be used to test the validity of the research hypothesis.

Test of Hypothesis 1

Table 4.23 Correlation between Local government autonomy and grassroots development in Offa Local Government.

A five-point Likert scale was used for making analysis. The mean scores and percentage were calculated. The decision rule was to accept the item that has a mean score of 3.50 or above. The formula used for calculating mean scores is found below

$$\text{Mean (X)} = \frac{\sum FX}{\sum X}$$

Where F is the five-point Likert scale score ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

Table 4.3.1

Option	F	X	%	FX
Strongly agree	5	83	44.1	415
Agree	4	73	38.8	292
Undecided	3	4	2.1	12
Disagree	2	12	6.4	24
Strongly disagree	1	16	8.5	16
Total	15	188	100.0	984

Substantive data Mean (X) = 5.2

Conclusion: The decision rule is to accept where the mean score is 3.50 and above and to reject where the mean score is less than 3.50. The mean score is 5.2. So, we accept that therefore conclude that There is significant relationship between local government autonomy and grassroots development in Offa Local Government.

Second Research Hypothesis

H0₂: There are no factors hindering Offa Local Government by the local government administration

The hypothesis is examined along with some of the answers provided by the respondents to the research questions. This means that the position of the respondents will be used to test the validity of the research hypothesis.

Test of Hypothesis 2

Table 4.23: There are no factors hindering Offa Local Government by the local government administration

A five-point Likert scale was used for making analysis. The mean scores and percentage were calculated. The decision rule was to accept the item that has a mean score of 3.50 or above. The formula used for calculating mean scores is found below

$$\text{Mean (X)} = \frac{\sum FX}{\sum X}$$

Where F is the five-point Likert scale score ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

Table 4.3.2: there are no factors hindering Offa Local Government by the local government administration

Option	F	X	%	FX
Strongly agree	5	71	37.8	355
Agree	4	81	43.1	324
Undecided	3	5	2.7	15
Disagree	2	14	7.4	28
Strongly disagree	1	17	9.0	17
Total	15	188	100.0	739

Substantive data Mean (X) = 3.93

Conclusion: The decision rule is to accept where the mean score is 3.50 and above and to reject where the mean score is less than 3.50. The mean score is 3.93. So, we accept that therefore

conclude that There are factors hindering Offa Local Government by the local government administration

4.4 Discussion of Findings

That from the data analysis, starting from data gathering which entails the distribution and collection of the questionnaires and the analysis of the questionnaire there have been various empirical and theoretical findings from the study. The research has raised some certain theoretical and empirical findings of the research which are based on the results of the data analyzed and in this respect there are important findings that have been identified from the research that need to further discussed in this section in other to provide better analysis to them.

The response of the respondent on the question raised make up the findings discovered in this study. The findings will be discussed along the research question and objective set for the study. One of the major findings of this study is to assess local government autonomy and grassroots development in Offa Local Government, Discussion from table shows that finance is a major problem confronting local governments especially in developing countries like Nigeria. There is no doubt that the ability of the local governments to perform their constitutionally assigned functions depends on the funds available to them. It is evidence that that interference in local affairs contributes to a lack of local government autonomy and governance.

Aside those findings, from the response an institution claims to be autonomous where it can hire and fire its personnel. the respondent strongly agreed that in the case of the local government, it is the state government that sets up the local government service commission and appoints its members.

Findings from the response of the respondent shows that corruption at the grass-root level accounts for a lack of local government autonomy and governance This show the extent to which both the local government authority, stakeholders and the higher authority need to work hand in hand to enumerate and tackle corruption at the grass-root level.

Therefore, the crucial position of the findings includes;

1. That local government autonomy significant in grassroots development in Offa local government.
2. That for local government autonomy and governance to be appreciated, state encroachment should be reduced or completely erased so that the grass root development which forms the principal objectives for the creation of local government can be achieved.
3. That there should be regular training programs for local government officials to improve their skill and knowledge.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Preamble

This study was carried out in order to find out the impact of Local Government Autonomy and Grassroots Development in Nigeria (A Case Study of Offa Local Government, Kwara State). The chapter in particular contains the summary of research finding, conclusion and recommendations.

5.1 Summary

The research has been based on objective identification of facts in order to be systematic in answering the research questions and objective. Chapter One introduced the concept of local government, autonomy, grassroots development including the statement of the problem and framework of how the research will be conducted. Chapter Two encompassed the review of literatures in line with getting views of scholars on the concept of autonomy, local government, and development of scholars like (Oyugi, 2000 & Hussein, 2004, Olowu 1989, Adeyemi 2005, & Ikelegbe, 2005) and among others were reviewed. Chapter Three entailed the discussion of the research methodology, due to the nature and purpose of the study, a total number of One hundred and eighty-eight (188) questionnaire were administered to the respondents and the whole One hundred and eighty-eight (188), were fully filled and returned and method of data analysis. Chapter Four introduced the data analysis and interpretation, as the questionnaires administered were being examined in respect to answering the research questions and testing of the hypotheses using Simple percentage, Chi-square respectively and Correlation for testing the research Hypothesis.

5.2 Conclusion

On analyzing the research objective, it was evident that local governments autonomy had an effect on grassroots development. The autonomy of local governments in Offa has had a significant and generally positive impact on grassroots development. It has facilitated improved

service delivery, enhanced accountability, economic growth, and greater community participation. However, for local government autonomy to reach its full potential, it is essential to address the challenges of funding, political interference, and capacity building. Strengthening these areas will ensure that local governments can fully leverage their autonomy to drive sustainable development and improve the quality of life for their constituents. The findings from Offa Local Government can serve as a valuable model for other regions aiming to enhance grassroots development through local government autonomy"

Also based on the findings, local governments lack autonomy because of inadequate finance. The increases in local revenues as a result of the allocation from the federal account and the value-added tax (VAT) look significant. However, if we consider the demand on the financial resources of the local governments, they still do not have adequate revenue. Their financial stability has been weakened by frequent increases in number through fragmentation

5.3 Recommendations

In the light of the challenges examined above, the following recommendations are proposed:

To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the local government system, there is an urgent need to review the constitution and delineate areas of inter-governmental frictions especially in electoral matters, creation of local governments, tenure of councils, and finance. The council elections should be conducted as and when due, to avoid a democratic vacuum that is dangerous to the local government system. The political party leaders should insist on the performance of local councils rather than demanding patronage of the council leadership.

Given the weak revenue base of the local government as a third-tier government, state government unconstitutional responsibilities not backed up financially, the state governors should not encroach on the lucrative responsibilities of local governments or misappropriate local government funds in any form similarly, local governments should creatively establish avenues for revenue generation to avoid depending heavily on the statutory allocations.

The state joint local government account should be scrapped. This will reduce the problems of illegal deductions, extra-budgetary impositions, under-allocation, etc. it will then be easy to lay the blame for non-performance and financial mismanagements squarely at somebody's table.

Because of the above and to understand and appreciate the issue of local government autonomy and governance, it is believing that if the above recommendations are strictly adhered to, then Offa local government which is the study area of this work will benefit and perform its functions more efficiently and so justify its status as the third tier of government in a federal system.

5.4 Limitation and future studies

Based on the findings of the study, the use of only the Offa local government area for the study may have limited the generalization of the findings. This is because other local governments could have provided more valid information on the opportunities and problems, which confront the Nigerian local government system.

Based on the limitations of the present study, we suggest that further research studies in this area should be undertaken with more local governments included in the study and hence, larger sample size to enable greater confidence in the generalization of results.

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