

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SECURITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study is on local government and security challenges in Nigeria. This research is concerned with the need to improve security at local government areas of Nigeria. Data was obtained from relevant literature and documents. Efficiency theory was adopted as theoretical framework with the argument that the existence of the local government is predicated on its efficient services delivery to citizens at the grass root level which is seen as the underlying source of insecurity in Nigeria. In Nigeria, the identified security threats are poverty and unemployment, perceive inequity and unfairness, electoral violence and the proliferation of small and light weapons. Corruption, overbearing power of the states and poor revenue base are among plethora of factors confronting local government in addressing security challenges. Good governance, attending to broken widows and giving voice to the people at grass root level will not only improve the wellbeing of citizens but address the underlying sources of insecurity at local government areas.

Keywords: Local Government, Security, Challenges, Nigeria.

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INTRODUCTION

Man since creation has sought for means and strategies to protect lives and properties. Security concern is an integral aspect of all societies and major thrust of domestic and foreign policies objectives of nations. Security hovers round the emotional and psychological sense of belonging to a social group which impact on one's sense of safety. Security in contemporary times has been a disturbing issue to most local and state governments in Nigeria. Insecurity stem from failure of

security agencies of government to ensure adequate safety and protection of lives and properties in a country. The strengthening of security agencies of government at all levels through provision of security equipment and the passing out of useful security tips in the mass media has not played significant roles in ensuring safety of lives and property in Nigeria. This unprecedented level of insecurity has made national security threat a major issue of government and has prompted huge allocation of national budget to address the threat.

Ubong (2016) identified insecurity as a state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection. Insecurity is the outcome of absence or inadequate freedom from threat. The unacceptable level of insecurity and absence of necessary security apparatus of government to guarantee safety of lives and properties has necessitated the need to look at the role of local government in providing security particularly as security votes are allocated to the three tiers of government to ensure lives and properties are protected.

Local government is a smallest unit in the third tier of government in Nigeria. According to Adeyemo (2009), local government is the act of devolution or decentralization. Local government is an administrative mechanism through which authority and control revolves around the people at the periphery or grass root. Awa (1981) defines local government as an administrative authority set up by the state or nation as subordinate authority in order to decentralize political power. Decentralization lessens the burden of responsibility and function performed by the highest level of government in such a way that the needs of each locality within the federating units are given special attention.

Nigeria has 774 local government areas that cut across the 36 states and expected to perform wide range of functions that covers economic, social and security functions.

Security concern is at the heart of all nations be it at grassroots or national levels. Nigeria presently is ranked at a distant 148th position in the global Peace Index of sovereign states (GPI, 2019). The global peace index captures the present state of insecurity in Nigeria. Insecurity evolves from reoccurring crime and violence across the federation. The perpetrators of crime and violence in Nigeria, cut across age, gender and class position in the society. Crimes commonly committed in Nigeria include armed robbery, human trafficking, smuggling, internet scam, pipeline vandalization, oil theft and host of other illegal activities. The crime situation in Nigeria is further compounded by the feud existing between farmers and herdsmen across different parts of the country, insurgency in North East, militancy and agitation in Niger Delta and the agitation for self-determination in South Eastern Nigeria.

The usual federal government response towards issue of containing domestic threat has been the deployment of security personnel which has raised the all-important and crucial question if such approach has been effective over the years in tackling the challenges of insecurity in Nigeria. Military option as noted by Hough (2012) in containing internal security threat has been counterproductive and are largely unsuccessful. The use of military option in containing internal threat is known to radicalize the populace as it does not carry the heart and mind of the people (Smith, 2012). Resources ordinarily that would have been vital in addressing the social-economic development of the nation are diverted into security vote (Obi, 2015). The populace has a major role to play which can be accomplished through proper coordination at the grass root level by the local government. Security concern affects the society at large and requires a coordinated approach by all relevant stakeholders within the communities. It is on this premise that this paper intends examining local government and security challenges in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Local Government

A local government is a form of public administration which, in a majority of contexts, exists as the lowest tier of administration within a given state. Local government is defined as the people who have the authority to make decisions or pass laws in a small geographic area near to them. An example of local government is the town council. It is also the government of a specific local area constituting a subdivision of a major political unit (such as a nation or state).

The term is used to contrast with offices at state level, which are referred to as the central government, national government, or (where appropriate) federal government and also to supranational government which deals with governing institutions between states. Local governments generally act within powers delegated to them by legislation or directives of the higher level of government. In federal states, local government generally comprises the third (or sometimes fourth) tier of government, whereas in unitary states, local government usually occupies the second or third tier of government, often with greater powers than higher-level administrative divisions.

The local government is therefore saddled with responsibility of raising rural productivity and income, diversify the economy and enhance the wellbeing of rural folks which are underlying cause of insecurity in our society. Egwemi and Odo (2003) identified wide range of integrated activities that include agricultural programs, health delivery services, investment in rural non-farm activities, nutrition, education training electricity, water supply, rural credit facilities, road construction and maintenance if handled effectively and efficiently will improve the quality of life of populace in the rural areas.

Responsibilities in Local Government Councils

Nigeria has 774 local government areas (LGAs). Each local government area is administered by a Local Government Council consisting of a chairman who is the Chief Executive of the LGA, and other elected members who are referred to as Councillors. Each of the areas is further subdivided into wards with a minimum of ten and a maximum of fifteen for each area. However, responsibilities in councils are divided into two areas:

- reserved functions (for the elected council)
- executive functions (for the chief executive)

Policy decisions are made by majority resolutions passed by the elected councillors during council meetings. These are reserved for the elected council and are 'reserved functions'. Some of the reserved functions include, passing an annual budget, housing policy decisions and policies on environmental protection.

It is the duty of the chief executive along with the directors of services and other members of the local authority management team to advise and assist the elected council while carrying out 'executive functions'. The chief executive, assisted by a senior management team, manages a local authority on a day-to-day basis. Some of the chief executive's responsibilities include delivering on strategic objectives as set out in the corporate plan, administering schemes

and allocating grants. Policy areas under the responsibility of the chief executive include transport, social housing, economic development and local authority governance.

FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA

Local authorities are multi-purpose bodies responsible for delivering a broad range of services in relation to roads; traffic; planning; housing; economic and community development; environment, recreation and amenity services; fire services and maintaining the register of electors.

Maintenance of Law and Order

The maintenance of law and order is one of the most important duties of the Government as without peace and security the progress in society becomes difficult. and prevention of crime in general, and prevention and quelling of riots and some serious disturbances. Maintaining law and order implies firm dealing with occurrences of theft, violence, and disturbance of peace, and rapid enforcement of penalties imposed under criminal law. See also rule of law. We live in a society where we must maintain law and order. The police must enforce the laws to maintain order.

Provision of Motor Parks and Markets

Local government ensure the provision of motor park to accommodate and maintain proper vehicle and also open markets as to encourage small and medium scale business which will boost the local economy.

Collection of Rates Fees and Rents

Rates are a type of property tax system in the Nigeria, and in places with systems. These taxes are collected primarily by municipal governments on residential, industrial. People who rent property do not pay rates directly, but property owners will take account of the cost of rates when they set the rent.

Construction of Feeder Roads and Drainages

The newly constructed feeder road by local government help in ensuring easy movement of people and goods, such as to market, schools, hospital, farm, etc.

Provision of Recreational Facilities

The provision of recreational facilities, or the organization of recreational activities, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the persons for whom the facilities or activities are primarily intended. Local government taking part in recreational activities, especially outdoors, can greatly improve physical health. People who take part in park activities such as walking, hiking, or skiing, schedule fewer office visits, maintain lower body fat percentages, and have lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Health Care Provision

Health care provision refers to the way inputs such as money, staff, equipment and drugs are combined to deliver health interventions. In the provision of health care for a country, various equity issues have arisen. Community health centers provide care that improves health outcomes of their patients. The patients of these centers are also more likely to identify a usual source of care, and report having better relationships with their health care providers.

Provision of Educational Facilities

Provision of educational facilities by local government impact overall learning process as well as the mental and physical growth of the students. These also affect the academic performance of the student to some extent. So, local do consider school's facilities. include not only classrooms but also athletic facilities and playgrounds, and even libraries off school property. RAND studies have examined the role that educational facilities have on influencing education, academic achievement, and child health and well-being.

Security

Security means safety, as well as the measures taken to be safe or protected. ... A small child will sometimes latch on to a blanket or stuffed animal that gives him or her the feeling of security. Often this word is used in compounds such as a security measure, security check or security guard. Security is freedom from, or resilience against, potential harm caused by others. Beneficiaries of security may be of persons and social groups, objects and institutions, ecosystems or any other entity or phenomenon vulnerable to unwanted change.

Community Security is a people-centered approach to addressing insecurity that integrates human security, development and state building paradigms. The approach builds the capacity and willingness of communities, local authorities and security providers to address their own sources of insecurity.

THREATS TO SECURITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS IN NIGERIA

The security threat to any nation can be internal or external. External threats are those threats that emanate from outside the nation. The internal threats are mostly the outcome of systematic failure over the years. Ubong (2016) situate the immediate internal threat to security in Nigeria to include conflict of perception between the public and the government, ethno-religious conflicts, lack of institutional capacity resulting in government failure to address breakdown in infrastructure and deep rooted corruption, loss of socio-cultural and communal value system, material inequality, unfairness and inequity in the distribution of national resources, porous border, terrorism, the mass migration of unemployed youths to the urban centers and poverty.

Poverty and Unemployment

The twin problems of poverty and unemployment constitute threat to security in Nigeria. Nation Bureau of Statistics (2019) states that 40.1 percent of total population are poor. Poverty results in inadequate care and lack of provision of basic necessities of life. Poverty as an enduring social

calamity in Nigeria that is the underlying cause of crime and violence and other anti- social activities in the society.

The incidence of unemployment is alarming. National Bureau of Statistic (2019) states that unemployment in Nigeria increased to 23.10% in the third quarter of 2018 from 22.70% in the second quarter of 2018. Poverty and unemployment is a paradox in Nigeria considering that the nation is blessed with abundant natural and human resources which if exploited judiciously will enhance the wellbeing of Nigerians.

Perceive Material Inequality and Unfairness

The increasing awareness of disparity in life is major root cause of insecurity in Nigeria. There is general perception of inequity and unfairness which has resulted in grievances by a large number of people. This perception stems from the perception of marginalization by a section of the people. Government development, policies and political office has become a primary source of disaffection and resentment as large number of populace in most rural areas feel frustrated and have lost hope especially the youths and have now emerged to express their disillusion about the perceive state of inequality.

Environmental Threat

The environment is basically the external condition that surrounds an entity particularly the living organism, physical and chemical components of the earth crust (Boden et.al. 1990). The environment is made up of biophysical components and processes of natural environments. The environment is the natural habitat of man with its several components that includes water, air, land and all plants and animals that exist and their interrelation (Ogboru & Angi, 2015). The environment by implication is the sum total of all conditions that surround man at any particular point in time. Environmental problems emanate when there is change in the quantity and quality of the environment. Humans are primary responsible for most of the factors accountable for these changes which directly and indirectly have adverse impact on human lives.

Environmental security addresses issues that threaten national security. Environmental threat is due to environmental degradation. The unsustainable depletion of resources leads to deterioration of the environment. It marks the depletion of resources such as air, water, soil, destruction of eco-system and extinction of wild life due to economic and domestic activities.

Ukpong (1994) identified the under listed as factors accounting as factors accounting for environmental degradation.

- Improper resource management,
- Overgrazing and over cropping,
- Flood and wind erosion,
- Natural land slide,
- Mineral exploitation, and
- Deforestation.

Environmental degradation has devastating consequences to the environment and constitutes human and public security threat. In Niger Delta region of Nigeria degradation of the environment has given rise to massive violent protests by inhabitants of Niger Delta. Change

of climate has forced a north-south migratory movement of herdsmen due to drought, unavailability of forage and water for animals. The migratory movement has resulted in endless clashes between herdsmen and farmers in host communities. Environmental degradation resulting from mining has triggered violence and conflict. Ullman (1983) noted the possibility of inter-state war and conflict emanating from resource and environmental problems. These conflicts occur in low income resource dependent countries like Nigeria.

Religious Intolerance

Religious intolerance between Christians and Muslims constitute threat to security in Nigeria. Religious intolerance is linked to the notion of favoritism and competition for scarce resources among the adherents of the two major contending religion in Nigeria which is Christianity and Islam. The occurrence of religious conflict is a threat to Nigeria cooperative existence, inter-faith harmony and national integration (Usman,1987).

Food Insecurity

Food security is not only the availability but access to food. A household is considered secured when they don't live in hunger and fear of starvation (FAO, 2001). World Bank (2001) states that food security is in three folds which are: availability, access and affordability. Food security therefore implies that individuals within a nation have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food that meet their preference and need for a healthy and active life. Nigeria is far from being secured in food which is a basic necessity for human existence. Food insecurity is rising and it is commonly associated with conflicts and violence in different parts of Nigeria and underlying source of ethnic and religious tensions.

Political /Electoral Violence.

Gambo (2006) acknowledged that election is one of the critical civic engagements that characterize any liberal and competitive political system. Election therefore reinforces the stability and legitimacy of political community, serves as forum to facilitate the expression of public opinion and confirm the worth and dignity of individual citizen of a country. Nigeria elections have not been a pleasant one ever since it was introduced into the country by the colonial masters. An electoral violence of which ballot box snatching is an integral aspect as the outcome of structural and altitudinal imbalance in Nigeria society. The political system in Nigeria support zero sum politics as the winning parties consider the losers as stiff opponents that has nothing to offer. The weak political institutions, weak electoral management coupled with bias nature of security agencies are among factors that account for electoral violence in Nigeria.

Electoral malpractices in Nigeria are perpetrated by youths who do the bidding of politicians and their political godfathers. The youth carries out their nefarious activities with impunity with the collusion of security agencies. Politics in Nigeria is akin to the Machiavellian principle that the end justifies the means. As noted by Claude Ake (1996) politicians in Nigeria are like mafia struggling for lucrative turf. Violence that accompanies ballot box snatching will exacerbate already existing political, religious and ethnic tension in Nigeria society. The present high level of robbery, political assassination, ritual, murder, youth restiveness, desecrations of

the value system and threat to the corporate existence of Nigerians are manifestation of failed political process in which ballot box snatching is an integral aspect (Ikpe, 2001; Gambo, 2006).

Proliferation of Small and Light Weapons

The availability of small arms and light weapons through illegal trafficking and the willingness to use force has contributed to the use of violence to accomplish goals. Warlords, rebels, terrorist groups and criminals and other non-state actors find it attractive in pursuing their goals. This has resulted to disregard for the rule of law as well as violation of human rights and humanitarian laws. The illicit transfer of weapons to conflict zones has destabilized several regions and currently escalates the rise of extremist groups and terrorist that threatens global peace.

It is evident that if not for the availability of small and light weapon through illegal trafficking there won't have been conflict and by implication internally displaced persons which have come to the fore in recent years not only in Nigeria but globally. Over 1.6million Nigeria are internally displaced and 1.6million are refugee seeking safe in neighboring countries of Chad, Cameroon and Niger (International Coalition for Responsibility to Protect, 2017). Displacement in Niger Delta communities include Prembiri, Amabulou, Olugboiri, Ogbolombiri, Gbaramatoruu in Balyesa and Ogoni ,Ogbogoro, Ogbakiri, Emuoh, Rumeke, Rumuolumeni and Ahuda in River state. Internally displacements have resulted in pressing humanitarian crisis, human right abuse, political, social and security challenges in Niger Delta (Wosu, 2015). The displaced persons tend to lose their legal, cultural, social and economic ties with associated physical and psychological hardship. Internally displaced person suffer hardship trying to re-establish in their temporal abode as traditional means of livelihood coupled with economic hardship makes reintegration relatively difficult.

Anikpo (1986) asserted that displacement result in the destruction of the social organization of displaced groups. Family groups are separated or disrupted and women forced to undertake nontraditional roles. Women are at risk of exposure to violence, sexual abuse and sexually transmitted diseases. Children are at risk of exposure to malnutrition, abuse, diseases, and disruption of education, abduction and sexual exploitation. Impoverishment, landlessness, economic marginalization, increased morbidity, food insecurity and loss of access to common property are all threat to human security which manifest with physical displacement emanating from avoidable conflict that result from illegal arms proliferation.

Farmers /Herders Clashes

Clashes between farmers and herders are now a defining feature of inter-group relation among community in Niger Delta state and the nation at large. Among the plethora of factors that have threatened the corporate existence of Nigeria in contemporary times is the clash between farmers and herdsman in virtually all parts of the country. There is report of clashes in the North East, North West, North Central, South East, South west and South South. These clashes disrupt food production for the populace and raw materials that is needed to drive the manufacturing sector. The clash account for the high rate of poverty, starvation and social disorganization for affected communities. International Crisis Group Report (2017) further indicates and express fear of the far reaching implication that could result from these clashes. The Fulani's herders could draw into Nigeria their brethren from beyond Nigeria to support in the clash. They can mobilize support from West Africa and Central Africa which will worsen security situation in Nigeria.

Kidnapping

Kidnapping is the seizing and taking away of person by use of force for the purpose of collecting ransom. In fact, kidnapping in Nigeria is a national security threat with unquantifiable damage to property and loss of lives that affect economic development adversely.

CHALLENGES TO SECURITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

Corruption

Corruption in Nigeria is a cankerworm that have eaten deep into the fabrics of Nigeria society and constitute bane to development. Corruption which is a hydra headed monster has become difficult to tame and tend to hinder service delivery and democratic participation. Even when funds are released to local government to carry out their statutory functions, they are diverted to private pockets which hinder development at grassroots level. Corruption in local government manifest as outright falsification of financial transaction, inflated contract, existence of ghost workers and connivance with the state apparatus that are supposed to perform oversight function. Corruption breeds inefficiency and raises transaction cost in Nigeria. Corruption is an impediment to effective service delivery in Nigeria which undermine the ability of government to take care of the overall welfare of its citizen at both local and national levels (Aina,2007.; Kyense, 2013).

The incidence of corruption undermines public trust and impairs effective law enforcement. This ugly trend has forced most Nigerians to look at alternative sources of protecting their lives and properties. Many Nigerians prefers keeping information vital to crime prevention to themselves while others resolve their crime problem through jungle justice. Akanbi (2004) in Aina (2007) argues that systematic corruption leads to poor governance, undermines institution and hinder development which is central to the existence of the local government.

Overbearing Power of the States

The overbearing power of the state government renders the autonomy of the system relatively paralyzed making it difficult for most local government to perform optimally. The overbearing attitude is common mostly in democratic dispensation. In fact, most states find the resources accruing to the local government too attractive to ignore. States hiding under section 7(1) and 6 of the 1999 constitution have systematically came up with cynical means to rub the local government of funds that will benefit the inhabitants of local government in protecting lives and property.

Over Politization of Development Programs

In Nigeria, there is over concentration of development projects in some particular communities at the expense of others which account for animosity that will not augur well for peace and order within the society. What is obtainable is that leaders with political clout over concentrate projects in their communities while other communities are ignored. Party politics at the local level tend to promote parochial rather than broad community interest. It divides instead of uniting the diverse communities in the local government areas. Instead of political parties making positive contribution to grassroots development through aggregating the demand and interest of the

people, they have acted in the negative. The excessive politicking at the grass root level has made local government ineffective and inefficient in grass root development (Odu, 2014). Often times most qualified politicians don't vie for political positions hence unqualified persons are elected as chairmen and councilors. As Ganduje (2008) rightly pointed out it is not uncommon to find in most local government areas school dropouts as chairmen, councilor and supervisory councilors. These caliber of people cannot conceive, formulate development programs that will improve quality of life for inhabitant of the local government.

Lack of Autonomy

Local government autonomy means independence or grassroots democracy (Adeyemo, 2005). The idea is for enormous majority of people to participate in deciding their own destiny at grassroots level which is lacking in Nigeria. In Nigeria, even in democratic dispensation the tenure of most local government councils is unconstitutionally and unceremoniously brought to an end base on the dictate of states governor for care taker committees compose of unelected and selected individuals. The caretaker committees once created are accountable to the governor and not the people thereby negating the basis of local government creation. The lack of autonomy by the career, elected and appointed officials will hinder effective and efficient delivery of services to the populace.

Poor Revenue Base

The lack of dependable revenue base has been identified as one of the critical factors affecting the local government in achieving grass root development. As Odu (2014) vividly capture that even though local government areas as stipulated by the 1976 local government reform are to be established on the basis of viability, most local government areas in Nigeria are not financially viable. Most local government areas are solely dependent on the federal government statutory allocation which unfortunately fluctuates due to overreliance on crude oil which is subject to the vagaries of international market. The overreliance of local government on statutory allocation constitute major challenge in their meeting statutorily functions. Most local government cannot function without statutory allocation. Most local governments areas, particularly those in rural settings have not explored fully other legitimate means they can access additional fund for developmental purposes. The funds that is presently accruable cannot be considered adequate when we consider the plethora of functions they are expected to accomplish.

Lack of Community Participation in Development Process

Development is all about people making it pertinent to be an active process and not a passive one. Beneficiary of development programs must therefore be active participants (Odu,2014). Many development programs that ordinarily address the quality of life in local government fails because of non- involvement of local communities in the conception, design and implementation of such programs. Participation of local government people in decision making and administration in local government is what gives the local government the character of self-government and grass root democracy. The moment the locals don't participate in the affairs of the local government, they become alienated and will not consider the program as theirs thereby undermining the utility of such program. A fallout of lack of involvement in decision making

process of affairs affecting the local is the misplacement of priorities. Most programs executed by the local government don't reflect the basic needs of the people. Projects that are mostly executed are done to the criminal neglect of the need of the people (Odu, 2014).

THE WAY FORWARD

The response to crime and insecurity in Nigeria is through tough legal and justice system, increasing enforcement capacity and stiff penalties. Presently in Nigeria, expenditure on law enforcement continue to increase, criminal sentence has become extremely tougher and the number of offender that are arrested, prosecuted and incarcerated has increased dramatically. Private security, community vigilante groups has multiplied across all local government as communities intensify effort to fortify and beef up their own security arrangement. Despite the measures, crime and insecurity still persist in Nigeria. It has resulted in loss of confidence on the criminal justice system and resultant public agitation and concern for improve security. There is therefore an urgent need for a robust, balanced and pragmatic approach to address insecurity in Nigeria that will give the populace a sense of safety in their respective communities in the local government. The realization presently is that crime prevention and insecurity is not the responsibility of the police alone but that of the national, state and local government (Bureau of Justice assistance,2001). All stakeholders must intervene by identifying and addressing the risk factors responsible for crime and insecurity in their domain. Local government must therefore come up with long and short term goals, assign personnel to monitor and evaluate plans and actions that target all facet of life at the local levels. Research evidence have shown that interventions programs that are effective and efficient are usually those that target deprive areas and families that are at risk (Sherman et. al,1997). Intervention should however focus on improving quality of life of all citizen residing in the local government area.

Effective intelligence

In today rapidly changing and dynamic world where communities are diverse and fragmented, government are concerned with identifying and managing risk which requires more lasting solution. The scenario requires data sharing across numbers of intelligence agencies rather than relying on arrest, conviction and punishment. Alemike (2012) defined intelligence as refined information aimed at evaluating the impact of specific policies or for the identification, evaluation and mitigation of specific threats. Intelligence as defined by Fola-Arthur Worrey (2013) is actionable information acquired or communicated by various means. The information can be acquired by human or electronic, especially secret information that is used in law enforcement or national security situations.

The Principal mission of intelligence is to prioritize and furnish government and its security apparatus with timely and accurately analysed actionable information for decision making in pursuit to tactical operations and strategic planning or policy decision. Effective intelligence and intelligence gathering mechanism will help in containing internal threat than reactive military option by government. The local government have much to do in is regard.

Good Governance

Gemyi (2013) identified good governance as anti-dote for peace and order. Good government is built on good leadership, respect of rule of law, accountability of political leadership to the

electorate, as well as transparency in operation of government. This very understanding of good government is totally at variance with the widely held notion that good governance entails the ability of government to provide basic amenities to the people such as good roads, electricity, water and other basic amenities to the populace. These facilities make for good governance but good governance does not rest solely on infrastructural development. Good government should be participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective, efficient, equitable, inclusive and follow the rule of law. With these elements in place, there will be enduring peace and order in local government.

Voice to the People

Local governance should represent voice to the people. Voice to the people remains a core role local government should fulfill to ensure peace and security prevail. Local government ordinarily is structured to ensure effective representation. Democratic government is accountable to the people and as such the citizens have right to be informed, consulted and involved in decision that have implications in their lives. Strengthening people's voice in government though time consuming, costly and complicated, should however be encouraged as it accounts for democratic legitimacy that will allow peace and order to prevail (Cornwall, 2011).

Effective Decentralization and Devolution

Effective decentralization and devolution of political power will allow local government to not only deliver services but serve as a forum for people to engage in dialogue with each other and negotiate local needs. When there is intense local level competition between groups, local government will allow for effective power sharing that will account for peace and order. This scenario will ensure that godfathers, warlord fiefdoms, crude protection racketeers meting out vigilante justice and communal enclaves that advance the interest of one group against the other don't emerge.

Management of Resources

The management of resources effectively and efficiently will go along in ensuring peace and security is sustained in local governments. In local government administration, the most visible role of local government is the delivery of basic services like health, education, water, sanitation justice and security to the populace. The effective management of these services at the local levels can therefore contribute to sustaining peace and order. It is a known fact that people at the local level are best positioned to describe their own needs and aspiration than national authority or non-governmental organization. Local government in principle are better positioned to respond to people's needs, address local level inequalities and leverage existing capacities for service delivery (Bureau of Justice Association, 2001). Services provided by local government in a fair, equitable and reliable manner increases the visibility, credibility and legitimacy of the local government. Effective local government delivery will increase citizen trust and belief of local government administration which will enhance security.

A careful analysis of local problems which is called safety audit or security diagnoses is an essential element of community safety that will guarantee peace and order in the society. The analysis involves careful analysis of possible factors that exposes citizen to risk and effective

intervention programs that will address identified risks. Safety audit involves collation of detail information on crime, community violence, herdsman and farmer's clashes, victimization, disorder and fear of crime. To be effective at local government levels, the analysis must link wide range of problems that addresses the needs of the locals such as housing, unemployment, drug abuse, child abuse, school dropout rate, parenting style and host of other problems at the local level (Bureau of Justice Association, 2001).

The local government therefore needs human and material resources to effectively and efficiently execute his functions and responsibilities which are intended to facilitate grass root development. The human resource is the most potent as is needed to plan organize and direct resources towards the realization of objectives of local government. Local government should be manned by competent career staff and elected personnel. It will be totally unwise to leave the local government to incompetent personnel as is presently obtainable in Nigeria.

Elimination of Corruption and Entrenchment of Social Justice

Corruption is seen as cog in the wheel of progress and development in Nigeria. It is a bane to economic growth and development at all levels of government. Corruption is the underlying cause of inequality and inequitable distribution of the nation's wealth among its citizen and source of dissatisfaction in the society. The elimination of corrupt practices will bring an egalitarian society where fairness, social justice, equal right and state of order will prevail and reign supreme for all citizens.

Attending to Broken Windows

Research studies have shown that changing the environment and structure that encourages crime and insecurity are effective strategy in ensuring public safety. The cleaning up of run down streets, changing the design of buildings in public space, improve lighting and surveillance all go a long way in reducing crime, disorder and violence in the local government.

John Wilson and George Kelly in 1982 used the concept Broken Window as Metaphor in explaining the problem of public disorder and crime in neighborhoods. Wilson and Kelling (1982) observed that if misbehavior and crime are generally ignored, it signals that no one cares about crime which will lead to more serious crime. Disorder breeds fear among residents and if the police are to deal with minor infraction to reduce reoccurrence they have to rely on the citizen in the local government for assistance. The failure to address minor crimes will gradually increase discomfort and fear which will force residents to retreat and develop sense of neglect. The fact that broken window exist is an indication of lack of informal social controls. Broken window symbolizes community defenselessness, vulnerability to threat and lack of cohesiveness in dealing with problem of crime and public disorder. By fixing broken windows, the community and the local government will assert social responsibility on themselves.

CONCLUSION

Local government area is entrusted with large area of functions and tasks that target the upliftment of the welfare of the entire citizenry. Good governance is the panacea for peace and order at any level of government with the people as the underlying focus and objectives. Social-economic development that benefit the people is therefore key for ensuring enduring peace and order in the local government. The local government unfortunately in Nigeria due to a legion of

attitudinal and institutional constrain are finding it difficult to meet their statutory responsibility that target improving the quality of life of locals. Local government are not addressing the security threats that are clearly visible to all. Local government must adopt an institutional approach rather than rely on episodic and reactive response to security threats in their domain. Local government as a matter of necessity must come up with a template for good government to strive.

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