



**STATE-LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND GRASSROOTS
GOVERNANCE IN AN ERA OF E-GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Local and State governments interaction is intergovernmental at the grassroots and upper level. Intergovernmental associations has been necessitated in Nigeria because of heterogeneous nature of the country. The administrative structure of state-local government monetary interaction is a matter of serious concern in Nigeria. It is elucidated with dismay that very few state governments honoured the constitutional requirement of disbursement of 10 percent of statutory revenue to their local governments. The study hence, examined the effect of monetary relationship between local & state governments and the effect of political interaction between state & local governments on grassroots governance leveraging on ICT in Yewa South Local Government. The study employed descriptive survey research design and used questionnaire to gather data from 25 respondents drawn with the aid of census sampling technique. The study reveals that Nigeria is dearth of true federalism hence, the relationship that exists between state & local governments in Nigeria is that of master and servant rather than that of partners in governance. The study therefore recommends that intergovernmental Partnership Model where they cooperatively perform governmental functions for the purpose of grassroots development should be adopted in Nigeria using ICT.

Keywords: *Governance, Grassroots, Relations, Fiscal, Political, Intergovernmental*

Background to the Study

Dealings within the levels of governance are key in global administration of countries, especially where adopted style of governance is federal system (Ali, 2019). These interaction and relationship between and among the various federating units has been termed intergovernmental interaction. The idea of interaction between various levels of government is now very important in Federal Republic of Nigerian due to the adoption of federal governmental system as a result of heterogeneous nature of the citizens of the country.

It has been argued that the objectives of government in any country like Nigeria cannot be met easily without a relationship among the various levels of government (Ali, 2019). According to Ali (2019), intergovernmental relations are more of issues in Federal systems. Intergovernmental relations offer, more opportunities, and permit various governmental levels (Component units and Central government) in supporting the efforts of one another in the administration of the affairs of the nation towards development.

Different authors have given different dimensions of intergovernmental relations. Adamolekun (2002) identified Six (6) patterns of relationship in intergovernmental relations that are evident in federal system similar to this country. It includes: Central-Region Relations, Central-Local-State Relation, Federal-Local Relation, State-State (Inter-state) Relation, State-Local Relations and Local-Local (Inter-Local) Relations.

State-Local government interactions has been described as the engagement and interaction which exist between the government of the grassroots and the state government. Intergovernmental relations goal according to Ali (2019) is to sponsor harmony and peace among the layers of government as well as hastening a self-reliant economy, boost socio economic integration and reduce intergovernmental conflict among the various tiers of government.

Governance generally is regarded as a contested concept which has been used in diverse means by different scholars. Despite the multiple meanings, there is agreement that it is different from government and that it encompasses various Actors such as the government, non-state and non-profits agencies. Governance is commonly used to describe the way the affairs of an entity or state are managed. Used in this context, local governance means the manners in which the affairs of sub-national level are managed.

However, the era of Information and Communication Technology provided both the apparatus of the state and the citizens with various opportunities such as improvement of

public services, information accessibility, citizens' participation & engagement, transparency & accountability and responsiveness (Dhaoui, 2019). These opportunities present themselves through various dimensions of electronic interaction which includes; G2C (communication between government and citizens), G2G (communication between government and government), G2B (communication between government and Businesses), G2E (communication between government and Employees), C2C (communication among the citizens) within a country. This relationship improves the advent of collaboration rather than competitive federation so as to speed up efficient and effective use of human and material resources among the layers of government which is believed to help diminish the problems and challenges of rural-urban migrations together with rural poverty (Dhaoui, 2019).

1.2 Statement of Problem

The interaction amongst state and grassroots governments and the effectiveness of grassroots governance is a critical area of concern in contemporary governance systems. The complex interplay between these entities poses challenges to the efficient provision of public services, effective policy implementation, and citizen engagement at the local level. In spite the prevalent backing for grassroots administration as a workable solution capable of stimulating the general public at large to involve in governance, there has never been a true third-tier of government in Nigeria (Ilo, et.al, 2023). The essence of sharing the constitutional or political powers between the various layers of government in federal system is to hinder any tier of government from grabbing the power of the other but this has not been the case in Nigeria.

Both Local and State Government in the country considered unequal parties in their relationships. They are considered to be master and servant to each other in their respective relationship and this has affected and equally impeded the Local Government from performing their statutory roles. The dominating relationship exhibited by the State government has now aggravated to the extent that they perform the functions of the Local

Government while abandoning their constitutional roles of moderating and mediating. The relationship has swayed the Local Government from the primary aim of taking governance close to the rural dwellers (Ahmad, Abubakar & Ahmad, 2013). The Local government, in its structure and management is a matter of serious concern. It is disgust to note that very few state governments comply with the constitutional requirements of release a minute percentage of 10 of their revenue to third tier of government in their respective regions.

The prying of the state governments in the administration of the local government and its constitutional function affects them from performing their function of serving the grassroots. Some states interfere to the extent of executing contracts directly with funds belonging to the State and Local Government Joint Account for the local governments' projects. This happens even if it does not have any positive impact on the local government populace (Fatile, et.al 2017). They do this on the pretext of complying with section 7(3) of the constitution which offers regulation that the House of Assembly is empowered by the constitution to set-up an economic planning board for the state. The local government administration which is supposed to be an avenue where the people in the grassroots will be trained for future bigger responsibilities has been turned to extended political segment of the states. The caretaker committee being used to administer the local government negates the above mentioned original intention behind the establishment of the local government.

It is glaring from the discussion so far that the present situation of local-regional government interaction is not promoting rural prosperity in Nigeria therefore, this study aim to examine the effect of State and Local governments financial rapport on grassroots governance in an era of e-governance in Yewa South Local Government and to ascertain the effect of Local and State governments political interaction on grassroots governance in an era of e-governance in Yewa South Local Government.

1.3 Research Hypotheses

The research Hypotheses of this study includes:

- i. Monetary rapport between the Local and State government has no effect on grassroots governance in an era of e-governance in Yewa South Local Government.
- ii. Political interaction between State and Local governments does not affect grassroots Governance in an era of e-governance in Yewa South Local Government.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Structural functionalist theory propounded by Gabriel Almond, James Coleman and Bingham Powell is applied in this study. It is a system analysis that considers the political systems as a consolidated unit impacting on the environments which consequentially influence it. In political systems, there are interactions among roles assumed by individuals, rather than between individual themselves, forming the fundamental unit of structural functionalist. The theory hinges on certain concepts and the more germane is that of duties and structures. Almond claims that every system performs two different sets of fundamental roles. One is input while the other is output. He maintains that the political system comprises of structures, roles subsystems. The scope of this study is intertwined with the stated theory for knowledge and explanation on interaction between the state and the local government. Fatile, et al (2017) analysed that the advantage of the structural functionalist theory to the interaction of state and local government is that it explains power relation between governmental power and power distributed among governmental levels that are necessary for the achievement of good governance at the local level of governance.

3.0 Methodology

The setting of this research is Yewa South Local Government Area in Ogun State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted using percentage and inferential statistical models. The population of this study targeted 25 key stakeholders who are deeply involved in governance of Yewa South Local Government as tabulated bellow. Census sampling techniques was used to determine the sample size since the size of the entire population can be covered hence, the sample size for the study is 25 respondents. Structured questionnaires were administered to gather data for the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two major sections. Section A obtained the demographic information of the respondents, while section B comprised 9 items questions to be answered in Likert scale format ranging from Strongly Agreed (SA)=4, Agreed (A)=3, Disagreed (D)=2 to Strongly Disagreed (SD)=1. Data gathered from the respondents were analyzed with the aid of SPSS package version 23.0.

Table 3.1: Population Distribution

Stakeholder	Breakdown	Population
Political Functionaries	Executive Chairman	1
	Vice Chairman	1
	Secretary to LG	1
	Supervisory Councilors	4
Professional Cadre	Head of Local Govt.	1
	Director Gen. Services	1
	Director, Works & Services	1
	Treasurer	1
	Director, Health	1
	Director, Information	1
Union (NULGE)	Chairman	1
	Secretary	1
	Treasurer	1
Traditional Council	Paramount Ruler	1
	Oba of Owode Yewa	1
	Oba of Iwoye	1
	Oba of Oke-Odan	1
	Traditional Council official	1
Community Development Committee	Selected CDC Members	4
Total		25

Source: author computation, 2025

4.0 Data Analysis

To analyze the result, this portion was separated in various sections. Descriptive analysis and discussion of the findings are all included. 20 out of 26 research instrument administered were properly filled, retrieved, recorded, coded and analyzed using SPSS version 23.0.

Table 4.1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach Alpha	No. of Items
0.739	9

Source: field survey March, 2025

Cronbach Alpha value is 73% which means the instrument engaged is highly reliable.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
GRG	6.1000	1.83246	20
FR	5.4500	1.53811	20
PI	9.600	2.60364	20

Source: field survey March, 2025

Table 4.3: Correlation

		GRG	FR	PI
Pearson Correlation	GRG	1.000	.525	.538
	FR	.525	1.000	.428
	PI	.538	.428	1.000
	GRG	-	.009	.007
	FR	.009	-	.03
	PI	.007	.030	-
	GRG	20	20	20
	FR	20	20	20
	PI	20	20	20

Source: field survey March, 2025

Table 4.3 reveals that there is a moderate positive correlation between Fiscal Relationship between state & Local governments and Grassroots Governance at .525 and .538 respectively.

Table 4.4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Change static R Square	F-change	Dff.	Df ²
1	.629 ^a	.396	.325	1.50592	.396	5.567	2	17

Source: field survey March, 2025

(a) Predictors: (Constant) FR, PI

(b) Dependent variable GRG

The model summary reveals an r^2 value of .396 which implies that about 40% of the total variation in the dependent variable is explained by the predictor or independent variables proxied by Fiscal relationship and Political Interaction.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

HO₁: Local and state government monetary interaction has no effect on grassroots governance in an era of e-governance in Yewa South Local Government.

HO₂: Political interaction between State and Local governments does not affect grassroots Governance in an era of e-governance in Yewa South Local Government.

Table 4.5 ANOVA^a

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	25.248	3	12.624	5.567	.014 ^b
Residual	38.552	17	2.268		
Total	63.800	20			

Source: field survey March, 2025

(a) Dependent variable: GRG

Table 4.5 reveals the joint significant of the predictor. The P value of F-statistics which is less than 5% implies that the null hypotheses is rejected at 95% confidence interval and the alternative hypotheses is accepted. Therefore, State-Local government Relations has significant effect on grassroots governance in an era of e-governance in Yewa South Local Government.

Table 4.6 Regression Analysis Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized β	Coefficient Std Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(constant)	1.167	1.516		.769	.452
	FR	.429	.249	.360	1.726	.024
	PI	.270	.149	.384	1.840	.033

Source: field survey March, 2025

(a) Dependent variable GRG

The coefficient table above reveals a P-value that is less than 5% for both independent variables (i.e. local and state government monetary interaction P-value=.024 and political

interaction among local and state government $P\text{-value}=0.033$). This implies that the null hypotheses for these variables are rejected while alternate hypotheses are accepted. Therefore, fiscal association between state and local government has significant effect on grassroots governance in Yewa South Local Government. Also, Political interaction between government of the grassroots and regional government significantly affect grassroots governance in yewa south local government.

Discussion of Findings

The study reveals that Local governments in Nigeria are established as a third tier of government for the purpose of bringing governance closer to the rural dwellers and for the purpose of advancement. Conversely, poor finance has incapacitates the strength of local governments to realize the objectives for which it was established. There has not been true federalism whereby the local government autonomy is perfectly assured in Nigeria. The study revealed that the fiscal relationship between the states and local governments in Nigeria is characterized by “master-servant relationship” rather than partner in governance. This principal/agent model of intergovernmental relations that prevail between state and local government in Nigeria has been detrimental to grassroots governance.

7.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The discoveries of this research suggested that Principal/Agent model of intergovernmental relations prevail between State and Local governments in Nigeria and this model has been detrimental to grassroots governance.

Therefore, the study recommends that partnership model of intergovernmental relations that preached an in-built cooperation and understanding among the various tiers of government where they cooperatively perform governmental functions and deliver public services to the citizens for the purpose of grassroots advancement should be adopted in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the State joint local government account should be managed by council of executive chairmen of local governments. Equally, the involvement of Local Government Service Commission in recruitment, posting/transfer, promotion and discipline of local government staff should be discouraged so as to allow the local government authority to take charge of the affairs of its personnel. Finally, the electoral process that usher in political functionaries into local government affair should be taken charged by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

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