

People's Perceived Developmental Impacts of Creating States and Local Government Areas in Southwestern Nigeria

Lekan Sanni

Department of Urban & Regional Planning, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria
Telephone: +2348034287373 or +23422016481
E-mail: lekansanni@37.com or lekansanni@gmail.com

KEYWORDS Decentralization. Regional Development. State. Local Government Area. Nigeria

ABSTRACT The major rationale for this study was the belief that the empirical evaluation of peoples' perception of existing decentralisation efforts would help shed more lights on the degree to which decentralisation is perceived to have contributed to regional development, and pave ways for evolving better policies to enhance regional development. Southwestern Nigeria, where decentralisation has taken place over a period of more than four decades, was used as a case study. Pre-tested questionnaire were used to collect primary data used for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to select sixty interviewees from each of the five states covered by the study. The questionnaire involved each interviewee rating his/her perception of gains of decentralisation. Rating here ranged from 'Above average' (at least 60%), through 'Average' (50%-59%) to 'Below average' (less than 50%). The data collected were analysed using percentages. The study revealed that though states and LGAs were rated relatively high in terms of reducing 'marginalisation', more than 60% of the respondents rated the contributions of new states and LGAs to regional development (perceived in terms of employment opportunities, industrialization and access to basic facilities and amenities) to be 'below average'. The conclusion is that the states and LGAs were perceived more as engines of reducing marginalisation than engines of growth and regional development. The implications of the findings revolved around the need to substantially re-orientate governance at the state and local government levels to be more concerned with improving the quality of life of the citizens within their jurisdictions.

INTRODUCTION

In the literature, various definitions and diverse approaches have been advocated for 'development'. For this study, development will be taken as being synonymous with improving the quality of life of human beings living within the study area. This 'improvement' will be measured in terms of the perception of the respondents in relation to the changes in the quality of their access to facilities, amenities and other benefits accruable to them from devolution of political powers to the new states and/or local government areas in which they reside. The need for this approach emanated from the general belief in Nigeria that states and local government areas' creation can serve as an engine of growth by enhancing development within their jurisdiction.

These beliefs and agitations for decentralisation in the form of creating new states and local government council areas (LGAs) pre-dated the political independence of the nation in 1960. Despite these agitations, at independence, Nigeria had three major regions (Northern, Eastern and Western Regions) and a 'federal capital territory' of Lagos. Since independence, and especially during the military era, creating states

and LGAs has become enormously popular in the country as a means of "redressing the imbalance in socio-economic development among the component units of Nigeria" (Ikporukpo 1986; Okafor 1987); "achieving equal development among the nation's areal units" and "bringing government nearer to the people" (Abumere 1998a, 1998b). To date, the three regions at independence have been partitioned into thirty-six states and a 'federal capital territory', and seven hundred and seventy-four LGAs. Despite these, the tempo of clamours for new states and LGAs remained very high throughout the nation. At this point in the history of Nigeria, it is important to investigate the validity or otherwise of the believed ability of states' and LGAs' creation to help in the nation's drive to eliminate development gaps within its national boundaries. Southwestern Nigeria is used in this research as a case study for these investigations.

Impacts of decentralisation in the form of creating new states and LGAs have generated a lot of researches in the literature. For instance, Abumere (1998a, b) among others, focused on the impacts on inequalities and poverty; World Bank (1996), Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN (1995, 1996, 1997) and Uga and Aminu (2000) focused

on the resultant economic impacts; Suberu (1994a,b, 2001), Wunsch and Olowu (1990), and Vengroff (2001) focused on the political impacts; while Okafor (1987) and Gilson et al. (1994) studied the impact on health care delivery. The main thrust of all these researches revolved around drawing on the existing data to arrive at the various conclusions. No concrete effort was made to investigate the peoples' perception of the resultant gains of the decentralisation efforts on development. The present research is focused on filling this very important gap in the studies on decentralisation and development.

"Southwestern Nigeria", as used in this study, constitutes what was known between 1963 and 1966 as 'Western Region', and as 'Western State' between 1967 and 1976. It constitutes the bulk of what is now classified as the 'Southwestern geopolitical region' in Nigeria, now comprising five States of Ekiti, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo. The only State in the region, outside the scope of this study, is Lagos, which was only administered as an integral part of the Region between 1951 and 1954 (Adejuyigbe 1975). Until 1976, Southwestern Nigeria was administered as a single administrative unit with headquarters at Ibadan. The region was subdivided into five provinces of Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ijebu, Ondo and Oyo, with cities of Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ijebu Ode, Akure and Oyo serving as provincial headquarters. To bring development closer to the people at the grass-roots, the provinces were further subdivided into twenty-four Administrative Districts. The administrative districts and their headquarters are presented in table 1.

During this period, the provincial and districts headquarters were highly favoured in terms of provision of development-inducing facilities, amenities and infrastructures, at the expense of their surrounding hinterlands. The perceived resultant spatial inequalities between the Provincial (and Districts) headquarters and their surrounding hinterlands led to agitations for creation of smaller administrative units in the region. It was generally believed that creating these smaller administrative units would help reduce inequalities in the region. Since 1976, three phases of jurisdictional partitioning have occurred in the region. The region is at present partitioned into five regions now tagged 'States'. The Districts have been scrapped. At present, the lowest level of administration in Nigeria is the 'local government council areas' (LGAs). Southwestern

Table 1: Administrative districts and administrative headquarters in western region of Nigeria.

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Administrative headquarters</i>
1	Northern Oyo	Shaki
2	Southern Oyo	Oyo
3	Southwest Oshun	Ogbomosho
4	Northeast Oshun	Ikirun
5	Oshun Central	Oshogbo
6	Southern Oshun	Iwo
7	Northern Ekiti	Ikole-Ekiti
8	Western Ekiti	Ijero Ekiti
9	Central Ekiti	Ado-Ekiti
10	Southern Ekiti	Ikere-Ekiti
11	Akoko	Ikare
12	Owo	Owo
13	Akure	Akure
14	Northern Ijesha	Ijebu-Ijesha
15	Southern Ijesha	Ilesha
16	Ife	Ife
17	Ibadan	Ibadan
18	Ibarapa	Eruwa
19	Egba	Abeokuta
20	Egbado	Ilaro
21	Remo	Shagamu
22	Ijebu	Ijebu-Ode
23	Ondo	Ondo
24	Okitipupa	Okitipupa

Source: Sanni 2005.

Nigeria is at present partitioned into one hundred and eighteen local government areas.

Despite breaking the region into five states and 118 LGAs, agitations for more states and more LGAs remain unabated in the region. Diverse studies have been conducted on the diverse developmental impacts of creating states and LGAs (see, for instance, Ikporukpo 1986; Okafor 1987; World Bank 1996; CBN 1995, 1996, 1997; Sanni 2005). It should be observed that adequate empirical studies have not been conducted on unraveling the peoples' perception of the developmental impacts of creating new states and LGAs. Probing peoples' perception of the 'gains' of these new states and LGAs might help shed more lights on the reasons for the observed persistent clamour for new jurisdictional spaces (in form of states and LGAs) in Nigeria (Fig. 1).

METHODOLOGY

Data for this study were obtained via a series of sixty interviews conducted in each of the five states covered by the study. In each of the five states, the LGAs were divided into 'urban' and 'rural' LGAs. Two LGAs were then chosen, at random, one representing 'urban' and the other representing 'rural' LGAs respectively, to provide

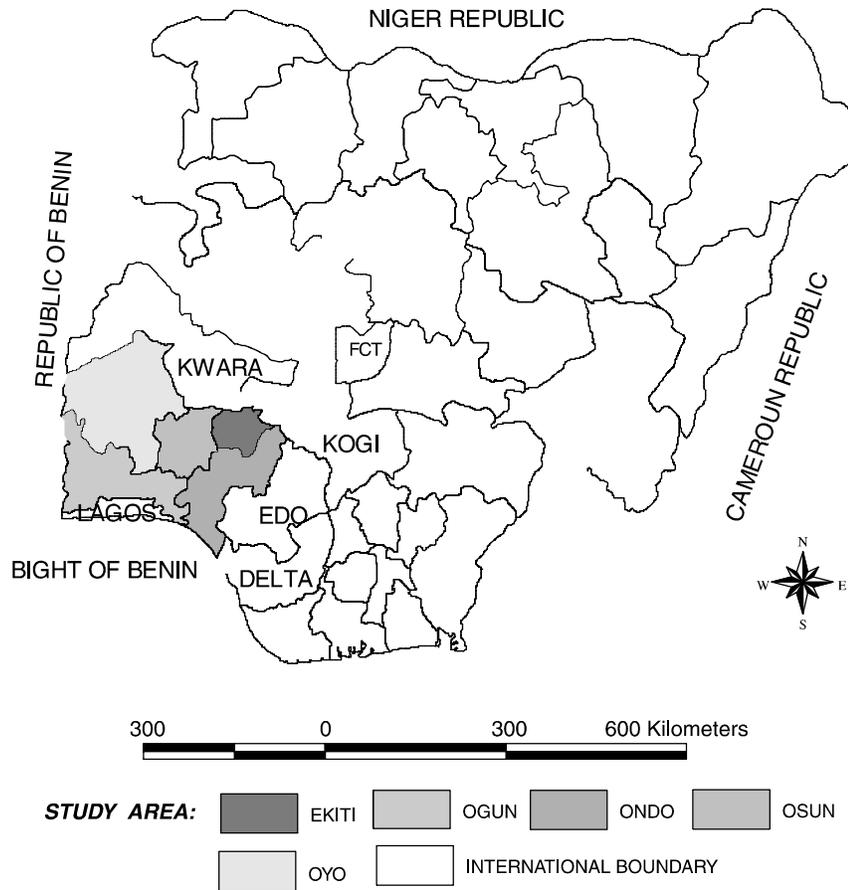


Fig.1. Regional setting of Southwestern Nigeria

a clearer picture of the peoples’ perception of the gains of states in the study area. In each of the selected LGA, stratified random sampling method was used to sample 30 persons. A common set of questionnaires was used throughout. This was written in English language but was translated into Yoruba where the interviewee could not communicate effectively in English language. In all 300 respondents were interviewed at the rate of 60 per state.

Before preparing the questionnaire administered, a pilot survey was conducted. The pilot survey was done to familiarize the researcher with the study area. The results of this pilot survey together with information from the literature served as a guide in preparing and administering the final set of questionnaires.

From the pilot surveys and review of existing literatures that preceded questionnaire survey in the study area, it was discovered that peoples’ anticipated benefits of jurisdictional partitioning in the study area were perceived in terms of the followings: (i) freedom from domination/marginalisation; (ii) freedom to obtain adequate share of the ‘national cake’; (iii) freedom to have adequate representation at ‘the centre’ in terms of appointments, promotions, and contracts; (iv) freedom to have a better say in their local affairs; and (v) freedom to generate rapid development in terms of increased revenue, increased government expenditures, improved employment opportunities, increased productivity, improved access to educational facilities, improved health-care facilities, industrialization, improved road

networks, improved postal and telecommunications services, improved water supply, improved housing quality, improved environmental sanitation, and improved security. These were incorporated into the set of questionnaires prepared and administered.

In the questionnaires, an interviewee was required to fill two similar tables in which he/she was expected to rate his/her perception of the gains of creating states and LGAs in terms of the 'Benefits' listed. Rating here ranged from 'Above average' (at least 60%) through 'Average' (50%-59%) to 'Below average' (less than 50%). For this study, the state served as a unit of data collection and analysis. Though primary data were collected in some selected LGAs, these were aggregated and taken to represent the state's values in the indices measured.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Since the primary reason for clamouring for new states in the study area was to 'bring development' to the new state, investigations were conducted to investigate the extent to which this goal is perceived to have been achieved in the study area. The results of the investigations are presented in table 2.

From the table, it is seen that rural/urban variations exist in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in the study area. For instance, in the case of perceived gains in terms of freedom from domination/marginalisation, while 4.0 percent of rural respondents rated this gains as being 'above average', only 2.7 percent of urban respondents accorded similar ratings to this anticipated gain. In the same vein, 40.0 percent of rural respondents rated this gain as being 'average' and 56.0 percent rated the gains as being 'below average', corresponding ratings of urban respondents are 20 percent for 'average' and as high as 77.3 percent for 'below average'. It could also be observed from the ratings recorded here that significant majority of the rural dwellers rated their perception of gains derived in terms of this anticipated gain better than their urban counterparts, The relative smaller size of rural communities might be very significant in reducing the degree of marginalisation being perceived by rural dwellers than their urban counterparts.

In the case of perceived gains in terms of having adequate share of the national cake, great disparities exist in the ratings of urban and rural

respondents. For instance, while as high as 66.7 percent of urban respondents rated their perceived gains of this variable as 'average', only 13.3 percent of their counterparts in rural areas gave similar ratings. In the same vein, only 33.3 percent of respondents in urban areas rated this gain as 'below average' while as high as 86.7 percent of their rural counterparts gave similar ratings. From the glaring variations in their ratings of the gains of having adequate share of the national cake, it is apparent that urban areas might be unduly favoured in the distribution of this gain.

The case of the peoples' perception of the gains in terms of adequate representation at the center appears to be more favourable to urban areas than their rural counterparts. For instance, in terms of appointments, as high as 74.7 percent of respondents in rural areas rated this gains as 'below average' while 60.7 percent of their counterparts in urban areas rated gains here as 'average', with 12.7 percent rating it as 'above average'. The ratings of gains in terms of promotions present similar trends of apparent urban bias: 8.0 percent of respondents from urban areas rated gains here as 'above average', 53.3 percent rated it as being 'average' while 38.7 percent rated the gains here as being 'below average'. Corresponding figures for rural areas are: 2.0 percent for 'above average', 10.7 percent for 'average' and the rest, (87.3 percent) for 'below average'. Rating of the perceived gains in terms of contracts is more similar to that of appointment in that while as high as 70.6 percent of respondents from rural areas rated this as 'below average', 58.0 percent of respondents from urban areas rated gains in terms of this variable at least 'average' out of which 14.0 percent is rated 'above average'.

There appears to be general consensus among the respondents, irrespective of their place of abode, that creating new states have provided perceived benefits in terms of having a better say in local affairs. Despite this, respondents from urban areas appear to benefit more than their rural counterparts. For instance, only 2.0 percent of urban respondents rated their perceived gains in terms of this variable to be 'below average' while 31.3 percent of their rural counterparts accorded similar ratings. In the case of benefits in terms of increased revenue for the states, though none of the respondents rated this gain as being 'above average'; urban locations are rated better than the rural areas. For instance, while as high as 68.7 percent and 31.3 percent, of urban respondents

Table 2: Peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in S.W. Nigeria

S.No.	Perceived 'actual' gains	Rating of achievement (%) (No urban = 150; No rural = 150)					
		Above average (<i>e</i> > 60%)		Average (50%-59%)		Below average (< 50%)	
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
1	Freedom from domination/marginalization	2.7	4.0	20.0	40.0	77.3	56.0
2	Adequate share of the national cake	0.0	0.0	66.7	13.3	33.3	86.7
3	Adequate representation at the 'centre' in terms of:						
	(a) appointments	12.7	4.0	60.0	21.3	27.3	74.7
	(b) promotions	8.0	2.0	53.3	10.7	38.7	87.3
	(c) contracts	14.0	2.7	44.0	26.7	42.0	70.6
4	Having a better say in local affairs	15.3	11.4	82.7	57.3	2.0	31.3
5	Freedom to generate rapid development in terms of:						
	(a) increased revenue	0.0	0.0	68.7	43.3	31.3	56.7
	(b) increased govt. expenditure	0.0	0.0	26.7	36.7	73.3	63.3
	(c) improved employment opportunities	0.0	0.0	48.0	30.0	52.0	70.0
	(d) increased productivity	4.7	7.3	64.7	72.7	30.6	20.0
	(e) improved access to educational facilities	0.0	0.0	50.0	3.3	50.0	96.7
	(f) improved health facilities	0.0	0.0	33.3	6.7	66.7	93.3
	(g) industrialization	0.0	0.0	20.7	4.0	79.3	96.0
	(h) improved road networks	0.0	0.0	52.0	56.0	48.0	44.0
	(i) improved postal and telecom	0.0	0.0	52.0	61.3	48.0	38.7
	(j) improved water supply	0.0	0.0	12.7	0.7	87.3	99.3
	(k) improved housing quality	0.0	0.0	12.7	0.0	87.3	100.0
	(l) improved environmental sanitation	0.0	0.0	10.7	7.3	89.3	92.7
	(m) improved security	0.0	0.0	5.3	13.3	94.7	86.7

Source: Sanni 2003, Field surveys.

rated gains in terms of this benefit as 'average' and 'below average' respectively, corresponding ratings for rural areas are 43.3 percent and 56.7 percent.

Ratings of the gains in terms of improved government expenditures are also generally poorly rated by the respondents irrespective of their place of abode. Despite these general trends, there appears to exist rural/urban variations in their ratings, with the rural areas being relatively better off. For instance, while 26.7 percent of urban respondents rated gains in terms of this variable 'average', similar ratings were accorded by 36.7 percent of rural respondents. The relative higher ratings accorded gains in terms of this variable in the rural areas might be an indication that, with the creation of new states, more government expenditures are being expended in the rural areas than in the pre-new state era.

There appears to be glaring urban rural dichotomy in the respondents' ratings of their perception of the gains of states' creation in terms of increasing employment opportunities. For instance, while nearly half (48.0 percent) of the respondents in the urban areas rated their perceived gains here as 'average', corresponding figure for rural respondents was only 30.0 percent.

The prevailing high incidence of rural/urban migration involving mostly youths, whose actions, in most cases, turn 'rural unemployment' to 'urban unemployment', might be very significant in explaining the observation here.

Although there appears to be general consensus among the respondents that creating new states have enhanced productivity in both the urban and rural parts of the states, more respondents in the rural areas accorded positive scores to gains here than their urban counterparts. For instance, 7.3 percent of rural respondents rated gains here as 'above average' while only 4.7 percent of their urban counterparts do same. Also, while as high as 72.7 percent of rural respondents rated gains here as being 'average' and the rest (20.0 percent) rated them as 'below average', corresponding figures for urban respondents are 64.7 percent and 30.6 percent respectively. The prevailing high incidence of rural/urban migration involving mostly youths might be very significant for the observation here.

The gains in terms of accessibility to improved educational facilities, though generally poorly rated in the study area, still portray rural/urban variation apparently in favour of the urban areas. While 50 percent of urban respondents rated

gains here as 'average', and the same proportion rated the gains as 'below average', as high as 96.7 percent of rural respondents rated gains here as being 'below average' while only 3.3 percent accorded 'average' to the gains here. The general trends of qualified personnel, including graduate/trained teachers, being reluctant to live and work in rural areas might be significant in explaining the observed response here.

Perceptions of the gains of states' creation in terms of accessibility to improved healthcare facilities also appear to be more in favour of urban respondents, 33.3 percent of who rated gains here as 'average' while the rest (66.7 percent) rated it as being 'below average'. Corresponding figures for their rural counterparts are 6.7 percent (for 'average') and 93.3 percent (for 'below average') respectively. The reasons adduced for poor rating of educational facilities could be applicable for health's.

Perceptions of gains in terms of industrialization follow similar trends: 20.7 percent of urban respondents rated them as 'average' and the rest (79.3 percent) rated them as 'below average'. Corresponding figures for rural respondents are 4.0 percent 'average' and 96.0 percent 'below average'. This might be a reflection of the polarization tendencies of the urban areas.

Rural respondents appear to rate benefits of states' creation in terms of improved road network better than their urban counterparts. For instance, while 56.0 percent and 44.0 percent of rural respondents rated gains here as 'average' and 'below average' respectively, corresponding figures for urban respondents are 52.0 percent and 48.0 percent. Observations here might be explained in terms of the previous near total deprivation of rural areas in terms of access to roads and transportation networks which is now being ameliorated in the new states. Ratings in terms of improved access to postal and telecommunication services follow similar pattern: More rural respondents (61.3 percent) rated gains here as 'average' than their urban counterparts (52.0 percent of who gave similar ratings). Observations here might be explained in terms of previous nearly total deprivation in terms of this facility, that was the lot of rural areas, and the desire to make the presence of the government felt in the new states by providing such facility. The emphasis of the present civilian government on improving communication networks, especially both the postal and global system of

mobile telecommunication (GSM), throughout the country, might also be significant in explaining the observed trends.

The ratings of the perceived gains of states' creation in terms of water supply, housing quality and sanitation, though generally very poor, are all apparently more favourable to urban respondents than their rural counterparts. For instance, while 99.3 percent of rural respondents rated benefits in terms of water supply 'below average', 87.3 percent of their urban counterparts awarded similar ratings for same. In the case of gains in terms of improved housing quality, all respondents (100 percent) from rural areas awarded 'below average' while 'only' 12.7 percent of their urban counterparts awarded 'average' score for same. The case of gains in terms of improved environmental sanitation follows similar trends: 92.7 percent and 89.3 percent of rural and urban respondents respectively awarded 'below average' here.

In the case of perceived gains of states' creation in terms of improved security, rural areas appear to be better rated than urban areas. Here 13.3 percent and 86.7 percent of rural respondents rated gains here as 'average' and 'below average' respectively, while their urban counterparts' ratings for same are 5.3 percent and 94.7 percent respectively. This might not be unconnected with relatively higher rate of urban crimes in the study area.

Investigations were also conducted on rural/urban variations in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new local government council areas. The results of the findings are presented in table 3.

From the table 3, it is noticed that urban rural variations appear to exist in peoples' perceptions of the gains of creating new local government council areas in the study area. For instance, in perceived gains in terms of freedom from domination/marginalisation, 91.4 percent of rural respondent rated gains here at least 'average', with as high as 30.7 percent being 'above average'. Only 8.6 percent of rural respondents rated gains here as being 'below average'. In the case of urban respondents on the other hand, as high as 31.3 percent of the respondents rated gains here as being 'below average', 41.3 percent as 'average' and 27.3 percent as 'above average'. It is thus apparent from the table that rural dwellers rated gains in terms of this variable higher than their urban counterparts. It is also apparent that

rural respondents rated their perceived gains of new local government council areas in terms of having adequate share of the national cake higher than their urban counterparts. For instance, while 15.3 percent, 64.7 percent and 20.0 percent of rural respondents rated gains here as 'above average', 'average' and 'below average' respectively, corresponding ratings by their urban counterparts are 8.7 percent ('above average'), 52.7 percent ('average') and 38.7 percent ('below average') respectively.

In the case of perceived gains of creation of new local government council areas in terms of adequate representation in the center in terms of appointments, though gains here are generally poorly rated, urban respondents still appear to be more favoured than their rural counterparts: 37.3 percent of them, against 8.0 percent of their rural counterparts, rated gains here as at least 'average'. Ratings of the gains in terms of promotions and contracts are also similar: 35.3 percent of urban respondents rated gains in each of these as being at least 'average' while 22.7 percent and 18.7 percent of their rural counterparts accorded similar ratings to benefits in terms of promotions and contracts respectively.

Gains in terms of having a better say in local affairs appear to be better rated by rural respondents than their urban counterparts. 79.3 percent of them rated it as being at least 'average' while only 59.3 percent of their urban counterparts accorded similar ratings to same. The relative smaller size of rural communities might be significant in explaining the observed response here.

In the case of ability to generate development in terms of increased revenue, ratings of the perceptions here reflect urban/rural variations, apparently more in favour of rural areas. For instance, perceived gains are rated at least 'average' by 54.0 percent of rural respondents while 32.0 percent of their urban counterparts accorded similar ratings to same. Increasing activities in lumbering and other extractive activities taking place mostly in the rural areas might be significant here.

The ability of new local government council areas to generate development in terms of increased government expenditures is rated differently by urban and rural respondents. While 28.7 percent, 40.7 percent and 30.6 percent of rural respondents rated gains here as 'above average',

Table 3: Rural/urban variations in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new local government council areas

S.No.	Perceived 'actual' gains	Rating of achievement (%) (No urban = 150; No rural = 150)					
		Above average ($\geq 60\%$)		Average (50%-59%)		Below average ($< 50\%$)	
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
1	Freedom from domination/marginalization	27.3	30.7	41.3	60.7	31.3	8.6
2	Adequate share of the national cake	8.7	15.3	52.7	64.7	38.7	20.0
3	Adequate representation at the 'centre' in terms of:						
	(a) appointments	3.3	0.7	34.0	7.3	62.7	92.0
	(b) promotions	0.0	0.0	35.3	22.7	64.7	77.3
	I contracts	1.3	0.0	34.0	18.7	64.7	81.3
4.	Having a better say in local affairs	16.0	20.0	43.3	59.3	40.7	20.7
5	Freedom to generate rapid development in terms of:						
	(a) increased revenue	0.7	3.3	31.3	50.7	68.0	46.0
	(b) increased govt. expenditure	18.0	28.7	55.3	40.7	26.7	30.6
	I improved employment opportunities	2.0	0.0	64.0	16.0	34.0	84.0
	(d) increased productivity	12.7	5.3	62.0	54.0	25.3	40.7
	(e) improved access to educational facilities	0.0	0.0	36.7	0.0	63.3	100.0
	(f) improved health facilities	0.0	0.0	18.0	0.0	82.0	100.0
	(g) industrialization	0.0	0.0	34.0	2.7	66.0	97.3
	(h) improved road networks	2.0	8.0	11.3	28.0	86.7	64.0
	(i) improved postal and telecom	2.7	12.0	44.7	80.7	52.6	7.3
	(j) improved water supply	0.0	0.0	10.7	0.7	89.3	99.3
	(k) improved housing quality	0.0	0.0	7.3	1.3	92.7	98.7
	(l) improved environmental sanitation	0.0	0.0	4.0	9.3	96.0	90.7
	(m) improved security	0.0	0.0	12.7	23.3	87.3	76.7

Source: Sanni 2003, Field surveys.

'average' and 'below average' respectively, corresponding ratings by urban respondents are 18.0 percent ('above average'), 55.3 percent ('average') and 26.7 percent ('below average').

The distribution of respondents based on their perception of the gains in terms of improved employment opportunities is more apparently in favour of urban areas. Here, 64.0 percent of urban respondents rated their perception of gains as 'average' while as high as 84.0 percent of rural respondents rated perceived gains here as being 'below average'. Urban respondents more favourably rate gains of new local government council areas in terms of improved productivity than their rural counterparts. For instance, while 5.3 percent, 54.0 percent and 40.7 percent of rural respondents rated perceived gains here 'above average', 'average' and 'below average' respectively, corresponding ratings by their urban counterparts are 12.7 percent ('above average'), 62.0 percent ('average') and 25.3 percent ('below average'). The primacy nature of the few urban areas in each of the local government council areas might be significant here.

Ratings of the perceived gains in terms of access to improved educational and healthcare facilities follow similar trends: 100.0 percent of rural respondents rated gains in terms of these two indices of development 'below average' while corresponding figures for their urban counterparts are 63.3 percent for educational and 82.0 percent for healthcare facilities respectively. Reasons earlier adduced for the general poor ratings accorded these facilities in the study area could still hold here.

In the case of gains in terms of industrialisation, as high as 97.3 percent of rural respondents rated gains here as 'below average' while 66.0 percent of their urban counterparts awarded similar ratings to same. This might be an indication that industrialization in the local government areas is rather urban-biased.

Rural respondents better rate contributions of local government council areas to improved road networks than their urban counterparts. Here, as high as 86.7 percent of urban respondents rated the perceived gains as 'below average' while only 64.0 percent of their rural counterparts accorded similar ratings for same. The previous near total neglect of the rural areas in terms of roads construction and rehabilitation might be responsible for the ratings recorded here.

In the case of gains in terms of postal and

telecommunications, contributions here are rated more highly by rural respondents than their urban counterparts. For instance, as high as 92.7 percent of the rural respondents rated their perceived gains here at least 'average' while 52.6 percent of their urban counterparts rated same as 'below average'. The incidence of high ratings of gains here, especially by the rural respondents, could owe much to the Global System of Mobile telecommunication (G.S.M.) that is opening up many rural areas and directly linking them, for the very first time, with the outside world. The concerted efforts of the present civilian administration on overhauling the postal systems within the nation might also be significant.

Ratings of the perceived contributions of local government council areas in terms of improved water supply, though generally poor, still portray some urban/rural variations. For instance, 99.3 percent of rural respondents rated gains here, as 'below average' while corresponding figure for their urban respondents is 89.3 percent. Ratings of other factors follow similar patterns. Of the rural respondents, 98.7 percent, 90.7 percent and 76.7 percent rated gains in terms of improved housing quality, improved environmental sanitation and improved security respectively, 'below average'. Corresponding figures for their urban respondents are 92.7 percent, 96.0 percent and 87.3 percent.

To investigate further whether there was significant rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states or not, Chi-square (χ^2) tests were conducted on the results obtained from the households in table 1 (see the Appendix). Since the values of the computed χ^2 for every activity investigated was greater than the table values, the study shows that there are significant rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states and local government council areas in the study area (Table 4).

CONCLUSION

This paper has investigated the peoples' perceptions of the actual gains of creating new states and local government council areas in the study area. In summarizing our findings, we can say that the investigations revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that creating new states and local government council areas have, to some extent, provided some perceived gains, especially

Table 4: Summary of the results of the Chi-(χ^2) square tests

S. No.	'Gain' of decentralization	Degree of freedom	χ^2 (Chi-square)		Inference
			Computed	Tabulated	
1	Freedom from domination	1	22.63	0.0039	Accept H1
2	Adequate national cake	1	48.67	0.0039	Accept H1
3	Appointments at 'centre'	1	33.67	0.0039	Accept H1
4	Promotions at the 'centre'	1	46.75	0.0039	Accept H1
5	Contracts at the 'centre'	1	12.12	0.0039	Accept H1
6	Better 'say' in local affairs	1	100.11	0.0039	Accept H1
7	Increased revenue	1	11.79	0.0039	Accept H1
8	Increased govt. exp.	1	21.67	0.0039	Accept H1
9	Improved employment	1	12.12	0.0039	Accept H1
10	Increased productivity	1	37.03	0.0039	Accept H1
11	Improved education	1	0.33	0.0039	Accept H1
12	Improved health care	1	64.67	0.0039	Accept H1
13	Industrialisation	1	89.29	0.0039	Accept H1
14	Improved road networks	1	1.20	0.0039	Accept H1
15	Improved post and telecom	1	4.07	0.0039	Accept H1
16	Improved water supply	1	114.83	0.0039	Accept H1
17	Improved housing quality	1	41.81	0.0039	Accept H1
18	Improved environment	1	101.03	0.0039	Accept H1
19	Improved security	1	100.09	0.0039	Accept H1

Source: Computations from Table 3 by the Author.

in terms of improved share of the 'national cake'; having a better say in local affairs; increased revenue; increased productivity; improved road networks; and, improved post and telecommunication services. It is also revealed that the resultant development in the study area is more apparently urban biased. It could, however, be observed in the passing that the apparent failure of the gains of decentralization to fully meet the aspirations of the people in the study area, might be an indication that the gains of decentralization might not be realized as speedily as anticipated. This observation might be a subtle confirmation of Vengroff's (2000) observation that "there seems to be an unrealistic and unjustified assumption Among policy makers, the donor community, and even some scholars that decentralization provides instant benefits and immediately contributes to sound democratic governance [since] decentralized government agencies are somehow expected to make up for major central government deficiencies".

In his opinion, decentralization is an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary process, a process for which the advantages and disadvantages should be assessed over time and in a particular context. Rather than being looked at as a one time administrative intervention, decentralization may be more accurately described as an iterative political process, a process that can produce both positive and negative outcomes in

relationship to governance general belief that decentralization should bring speedy development (Vengroff 2000).

RECOMMENDATIONS

To achieve the anticipated goal of using decentralization in form of creating states and local government areas as engines of growth in Nigeria, the following recommendations are proposed:

- i. Conscious efforts should be made to ensure that each local government area is constituted into a planning region and comprehensive development plans are prepared to guide its development in its entire ramifications. The comprehensive plan should spell out target goals of each indices of development identified, with realistic strategies of accomplishing them.
- ii. Preparing and implementing the comprehensive plans should encourage peoples' participation at every stage as this will enhance its smooth implementation.
- iii. Focus should be more on empowering the people through ample provision of gainful employment opportunities. This can be achieved through focusing more on creating and empowering small and medium-scale cottage industries that use local raw materials as major inputs, which, with the resultant

backward linkages, will have multiplier effects on the internal economy of the local government areas in particular, and the national economy in general.

- iv. To prevent unnecessary duplication of some facilities, especially those that cannot be easily provided by individual local government areas, the state government should prepare a comprehensive development plan for the whole state, encompassing and coordinating the comprehensive plans of the local government areas.
- v. Each state government should also monitor development programmes of the local government areas within its jurisdiction to help minimize possibility of abuse of office on the part of council officials.

REFERENCES

- Abumere SI 1998a. Distributional inequality and the problem of national integration: *Inaugural Lecture*, University of Ibadan, 1998.
- Abumere SI 1998b. Jurisdictional partitioning and the poverty gap in Nigeria. *Working Paper 15* Development Policy Centre, Ibadan.
- Adejuyigbe O 1975. Reorganization of States in Nigeria. *Memorandum to the Committee on Creation of States in Nigeria*.
- Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) 1995, 1996, 1997. *Annual Report and Statement of Accounts* Lagos and Abuja.
- Gilson L, Kilama F, Tanner M 1994. Local government decentralization and the health sector in Tanzania. *Public Administration and Development*, 14(5): 451-477.
- Ikporkpo CO 1986. Politics and regional policies: the issue of State creation in Nigeria. *Political Geography Quarterly* 5(2): 127-139.
- Okafor SI 1987. Jurisdictional partitioning, distribution policies and the spatial structure of health-care provision in Nigeria. *Political Geography Quarterly*. 6(4): 335-346.
- Sanni L 2005. *Jurisdictional Partitioning and Regional Development in Southwestern Nigeria*. Ph.D. Thesis, Unpublished. Ibadan: University of Ibadan.
- Suberu TR 1994a. The politics of State creation, In: S. Adejumo, A. Momoh (Eds): *The Political Economy of Nigeria Under Military Rule, 1984-1993*. Harare: Sapes Books.
- Suberu TR 1994b. Recent demands for new States in Nigeria. *The Journal of Federation*, 1(2): 67-82.
- Suberu TR 2001. The national question, State-Creation and the Reform of Nigerian Federalism, In: *The Management of Nationality Question in Nigeria* EO Osaghae, E Onwudiwe (Eds.).
- Uga EO, Aminu A 2000: 'The political economy of State creation and Nigerian development under fiscal unitarism' *Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies*, 42(3): 313-351.
- Vengroff, R 2000. Decentralisation, democratisation and development in Senegal. *A paper delivered at the Yale Colloquium on decentralization and development*, in Yale, January 21, 2000.
- World Bank 1996. *Nigeria: Poverty in the Midst of Plenty: The Challenge of Growth with Inclusion* Western Africa Department, Africa Region.
- Wunsch J, Olowu D (Eds.) 1990. *The Failure of Centralized State: Institutions and Self-Governance in Africa*. San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies.

APPENDIX

Chi-Square Tests on Rural/Urban Dichotomy of Peoples' Perception of Gains of Creating New States

In carrying out the chi-square (χ^2) test, the following hypotheses were proposed:

1. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'freedom from domination/marginalization'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'freedom from domination/marginalization'.
2. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'having adequate share of the national cake'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'having adequate share of the national cake'.
3. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved appointment at the centre'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved appointments at the centre'.
4. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved promotion at the centre'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved promotion at the centre'.
5. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved contracts at the centre'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved contracts at the centre'.
6. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'having better say in local affairs'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'having better say in local affairs'.
7. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'increased revenue'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'increased revenue'.
8. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'increased government expenditure'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'increased government expenditure'.
9. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved employment opportunities'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved employment opportunities'.
10. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'increased productivity'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'increased productivity'.
11. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved educational facilities'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved educational facilities'.
12. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved health facilities'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved health facilities'.
13. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'industrialisation'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'industrialisation'.
14. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved road network'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved road network'.
15. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved postal & telecom services'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved postal & telecom services'.
16. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved water supply'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved water supply'.
17. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved housing quality'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved housing quality'.
18. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved environmental sanitation'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved environmental sanitation'.
19. H0: There is no rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved security'.
H1: There is rural/urban dichotomy in peoples' perception of the gains of creating new states in terms of 'improved security'.

Decision Rule

In each of the nineteen cases, accept H0 if computed χ^2 is less than the table value or reject H0 if computed χ^2 is greater than the table value.

The results of the required computations at 5% level of confidence are presented in table 4.

Since the computed value of χ^2 is greater than the table value in all the cases investigated, Reject H0.