

Political Mobilization for Rural Development and a Stable Nigerian Democratic Republic: An Indepth Examination of the Role of Local Governments

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ABSTRACT This paper, using theoretical and empirical analytical methods, examines the role of local government in politically mobilizing the citizenry for rural development and the attainment of a stable democratic Republic in Nigeria. Following the review of relevant literature on the concepts (rural development, political mobilization, and democracy) involved, and, the categorization of the local governments under reference into urban and rural areas, as well as the analysis of the data collected through our field work, the local governments were identified as the bedrock of political mobilization of the ruralities in our local government areas. Consequent on this, this paper concludes that the role of local government in all spheres of citizens lives cannot be taken for granted within the Nigerian body politics. This conclusion holds, regardless of the geopolitical location of the citizens within the local government areas under focus.

INTRODUCTION

Political mobilization, rural development and a stable Nigerian Democratic Republic represent an important conceptual tracheotomy that contemporaneously touches on the psyche of every Nigerian regardless of the geopolitical setting, political, ideological or philosophical persuasion.

The psychological permeation of the physiology of all well meaning Nigerians by this conceptual tracheotomy finds a deep-seated solace in the fact that Nigeria as a political entity has not been able to evolve a stable democratic Republic up till now despite her over three decades of independent existence.

Without any doubt whatsoever, political mobilization which – (as later lucidly shown) – deals with mass emotional motivation, psychosocio and political spurring of people towards the attainment of corporate and communal goals (Akindele, 1989: 1) – is a sine-qua-non to rural development and a stable Nigerian Democratic Republic which simply means Nigeria's fourth trial at democratic civil governance following the total collapse of the previous two republics and the one unsuccessfully put in place by the Babangida administration.

The foregoing notwithstanding, it is our contention that the potency and effectiveness of political mobilization in bringing about rural development and the stability of a democratic republic in Nigeria is indispensably anchored

on the efficacy of the local governments institution as one of the vertical organs of Nigerian federalism. Thus, the central thesis of this paper is that local government and a stable Nigeria democratic republic what basic tissue are to the human body. In other words, local governments are indispensably required and appropriate for politically mobilizing the citizenry for rural development and for imbibing the values and other requisite characteristics of a stable democracy.

This being the case, this paper deals with the theoretical and empirical analyses of the role of local governments in the political mobilization of Nigerians for rural development and inculcation of values conducive to a stable democratic republic. And in the pursuit of its objectives, this paper is broken into four sections the first of which is the introduction. The second is concerned with the theoretical analyses of the three – (political mobilization, rural development and local governments) – important concepts involved in the subject-matter of our analytical focus here. It also deals with the analyses of the theoretical and casual linkage between local governments and the other (political mobilization and rural development – concepts. Within this section, in spite of our contention that local governments are capable of politically mobilizing Nigerians for rural development and for imbibing the values of political tolerance and a stable democracy, we found it innocuous to analyse the concepts of political mobilization and

rural development as a prelude to that of local government without any prejudice to the latter being the wheeling force for the two. The third section – (based on our survey research and field work) – deals with the empirical analyses (using the imperatives of science) – of the linkage between local governments and political mobilization, rural development and their attendant internalization of values amenable to democratic stability in Nigeria. This is with a view to validating or otherwise our theoretical analyses and the hypotheses formulated for testing relative to the causal linkage between local governments, political mobilization and rural development which we have equationally explained thus: $RD = f(PM \text{ through } LG)$ meaning that rural development is a progeny of political mobilization through the efficacious existence and role of the local governments.

It should be noted however, that the analyses in this section are based on Ondo State experience being our case study for the generation of raw data for the hypotheses formulated inline with the theoretically established relationship between concepts in focus. The fourth section concludes the paper through the synopsis of its findings and relevant recommendation concerning the place of local governments within the Nigerian federalism relative to political mobilization, rural development and the enhancement of a stable democratic Republic.

From the chronology of the introductory section of this paper it is innocuous at this point to now turn to the second section dealing with the theoretical analyses of our conceptual tracheotomy – (political mobilization, rural development and local governments). This would, within the same section be followed by the linkage of local governments with the two on a theoretical plane.

THEORETICAL ANALYSES OF CONCEPTS

Within the social sciences, theory building (following the identification of researchable problems) – is always the catalyst for any analytical orientation or rigorous scientific expedition. It is also the level from which the movement to research level is expected. It is in line with this logic that this section now respectively as afore-indicated analyses the concepts of political mobilization, rural develop-

ment and local governments.

(i) Political mobilisation

Like other concepts of relevance within the social sciences, the idea of political mobilization is not a new. As stated in the report of the political bureau (1987: 202)

human history is dotted with examples of massive efforts to mobilize different human societies to achieve some set goals.

This being the case it is appropriate to ask the questions that what is political mobilization? What is it about? Why is it necessary? Political mobilization as a concept has been variously viewed within the academia in line with its almost infinite rate concerning human efforts in mobilizing themselves for the attainment of better conditions of existence.

It is on this premise that the political bureau in its report (1987: 202) implied a definition of (political) mobilization thus:

Simply stated, to mobilize a people is to increase their level of awareness of certain set objectives with a view to achieving those objectives.

Among other things, the report (1987: 209) went further to state that:

.....mobilization must be seen in terms of involving the people in taking part actually and freely in discussions and decisions affecting their general welfare..... It should aim at increasing people's level of awareness or cognition of political and other issues so that they can apply their energies positively and participate actively in the social and political life of the country.

Along this line, Nwosu and Chuku-umezurike (1989: 5) explained mobilization as a process that involves bringing people together and moving them to action, and also making them submit themselves strongly to the achievement of any social goal.

From the foregoing we can take political mobilization to mean the process of sensitizing the citizenry, increasing their cognition, political consciousness as well as the latter's efficacy. In other words, political mobilization could be taken to mean the determined process of emotionally bringing people together and making them to internalize communality of societal values, attitudes and orientation in achieving particularistically specified holistic objective. This explains

why Mannheim (in Eiesenstadt, 1977: 388) Argued that (political) mobilization suggests *an image of large numbers of people moving away from life of local isolation, traditionalism and political apathy and moving into different life, including potential and actual involvement in mass politics.*

On the same token, Mustapha's (1989: 6) definition of (political) mobilization becomes clearly discernible because according to him:

mobilization means the simultaneous engagement of large masses of people in activities that have a predominantly in activities that have a predominantly social or collectual objective.

For Deutsch (1961: 494) mobilization is: *the process in which major cluster of old social, economic and psychological commitments are eroded or broken and people become available for new patterns of socialization and behaviour.*

And, in what appears to be a near-symmetrical orientation Huntington (1968:33) opined that:

(political) mobilization means a change in the attitudes, values, and expectation of people from those associated with the traditional world..... it is a consequence of literacy, education, increased communication, mass media exposure and urbanization.

Mobilization (political) as per the MAMSER handbook (1987:10) is to:

raise our individual and collective national consciousness and enable us dream great dreams and attain lofty goals. to seek to attain what is noblest in human nature: to place the highest value and respect the dignity of human life, to rediscover the meaning of duty and to accept responsibility, to pursue honest endeavours and to take pride in personal advance only through dedication and hard work.... To return to those times not so many years ago when everyone accepted that the community and the nation's interest came first and personal interests last.

The import of the above is clearly discernible from the position of Imo State chapter of MAMSER. As shown in the handbook on MAMSER at one in Imo State (1988:11); mobilization is taken to mean:

a process of awakening the consciousness of people as to the resources at their disposal and also motivating them to utilize the resource collectively for an overall improvement of their

living condition.. it is a re-orientation and organization exercise which instill discipline, raise awareness and thereby unfold their creature, productive and innovative abilities to transform the available natural resources into goods and services.

The conceptual analysis of the subject-matter (political mobilization) herein at this juncture in focus has equally drawn the attention or elicited the inputs of scholars like Cameroun (1974:138) who sees political mobilization as the organizational penetration of human groupings of various proportions. Etzioni (1969:43) explains it as the process of synthesizing the internal contradictions of old and new human resources for the attainment of desired objectives through collective actions.

Put together, there is a universal catalyst for embarking on the mobilization of the citizenry of Nations all over the world at given times. The case of this catalyst which on its own has perceived-need for a multidimensional progressive change as its precursor is not alien to the Nigerian polity. This case according to Netti (1967:271-273) is deep seatedly couched in the following reasons:

- (1) to legitimate the social order or change it.
- (2) to articulate socially approved interest.
- (3) to prevent or check social stagnation and social decay.
- (4) to create a loyal, articulate and disciplined citizenry.
- (5) to enhance citizens participation in decision making process and to expand his horizon

The foregoing theoretical analysis of the concept of political mobilization shows that cannot be taken for granted in a multi-culturally pillarized polity like Nigeria. It is in this regard as later shown that the role of local governments in political mobilization for rural development and attainment of a stable democracy becomes indispensable looking at its unparalleled closeness to the "grassrooters" who as ruralites constitute the atoms of Nigerian federalism.

(ii) Rural Development

The concept of rural development like other concepts has on its own, elicited different theoretical explications depending on the paradigmatic influence, geopolitical location, ideological or philosophical persuasion of scholars involved in the explications. Adewuyi and

Ebigbola (Onajide et al., 1990:85) vividly summed up the situation thus:

Rural development is conceived differently at different times and places. Prior to the turn of the century development was equated with agricultural development.

This notwithstanding, it is the conviction of this author that the concept of rural development can hardly be reasonably explicated without paying deserved attention to the dichotomy between the concepts of ruralness and urbanism. It is this dichotomy that would actually pave way for the analytical consideration of rural development as a concept and, the need for it through the institutional mechanism of local governments and the motivational technicalities of political mobilization.

Our analytical conviction in this respect that is as stated in the two paragraphs above is based on the fact that the quest for rural development emanate from the need to shed the leaves of ruralness and its accompanying negativism. It is equally based on the fact that rural development could actually be properly conceptualised and guided to positive fruition following the potent conceptualisation of the polarity between urbanism and ruralness.

It must be stated at this point however that it has been difficult to differentiate between urbanism and ruralness, that is, categorize urbanism and ruralness particularly in Nigeria.

This difficulty derives its root from the fact that there are many criteria that could be used for determining or categorizing urbanism and ruralness in general within the academia and the practising world of administration. Thus, it is obvious that there are no "straight-jacket" criteria for the definition of ruralness and urbanism even-though some parameters for categorizing or determining such criteria must have been set within the academia. Even, such parameters have not been immuned from academic, ideological and other forms of disputations and analytical considerations in line with whoever is doing the categorization. Hence as Adegboye once claimed:

It is rather not easy to differentiate between urban and rural areas in Nigeria (Adegboye, 1987:15).

In spite of this however, determination of urbanism and ruralness is indispensable to effective planning; effective service delivery and unpolluted governance within many polities

because it is through such determination that imbalance between urban and rural areas most especially those that exist between the local governments could be removed. And, as Fadare (1987:2) once claimed such imbalance do not make for even economic growth.

Not only this, "urban centres are growing with all the attendant infrastructural facilities, and governmental recognition at the expense of or sometimes to the total neglect of the rural areas (ibid). And, strikingly the reconstitution of Nigeria into three hundred and one (301) local governments in 1976 and their further reconstitution into 450 local government areas in 1989 were in addition to other reasons strategies for speeding up rural development (ibid) which has not been really or actually realized in some local government areas due to their ruralness and lack of special deal (for them) vis-à-vis the urban ones that are more revenue generating and financially viable.

As earlier claimed or indicated, there seemed to be no universal consensus as to the existence of "straight-jacket" criteria or indices of urbanism vis-à-vis ruralness. Thus, as Mabogunje once said.

Various attempts have been made to find an attribute or attributes which can be used as an index (or indexes) of urbanization to distinguish between communities which are urbanized and those which are not (Mabogunje, 1968:40).

Arguing further, Professor mabogunje has equally claimed that many of the indices (or criteria) so far suggested can be criticised for not encompassing enough (ibid).

Some of the indices or attributes of urbanization include "invention or adoption of writing" (Childe, 1951:1), existence of a highly specialized non-agricultural group that has the necessary leisure to complex skills (Sjoberg, 1960:33), engagement in non-agricultural occupations and absence of an agricultural group within the city (Dickson, 1947:25).

These indices which equally include "rural or ethnic composition of the population as a test of heterogeneity and the level of impersonality of social relations (Wedgwood, 1938: 512-20) seemed to be supportive of Louis Wirth's definition of an urban centre as 'a relatively large, dense and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals (Wirth, 1938).

In his own contribution to the ascertainment or determination of urban and rural local govern-

ments, Ola (1980:3) has claimed that there are three major criteria that can be used:

first is the concept of number – the sheer number of the population of people who live in the area. There is next the concept of density of the population – its concentration in one or two major towns or a general spread over the whole area. A third factor ... is the concept of heterogeneity of the population in terms of ethnic and religious interest (ibid).

Taking these criteria into consideration, argued Ola, a number of growth (or urban) centres can be and have been identified in Nigeria. But then, he identified the concept of population 'as the most important and easily recognised criterion (Ola, 1979:2) in determining urban and rural areas.

Ola's position on the concept of population vis-à-vis the determination of rural and urban areas is probably a derivative of Nigeria's 1963 population census according to which 'places with population of 20,000 or more people are regarded as urban centres whilst other settlements (below this mark) are regarded as rural (N.Y.S.C.Lec. 1973:15) because he (Ola) has unequivocally subscribed to this (i.e., places that are 20,000 or more population) – determination of urbanization. But, we would contend that this position has been challenged by the ruralness of various or many highly populated areas in Nigeria due to the absence of important indices like high level of economic activities, industrialization, private and government academic and business establishments or institutions e.t.c.

In addition to those already explained industrialization has (equally) been identified as one of the most important indices of urbanization: (Mabogunje op. cit.: 34).

There is of course no doubt that industrialization has some relation with urbanisation; that as the level of industrial development in a country rises, so does the level of urbanization; that as these two related processes increase, so does the characteristic heterogeneity of the population (ibid).

Contributing to the issue of the classification of urban and rural local governments, Green (1969) using Western Nigeria as a unit of analysis identified areas with population (as at 1963) of 100,000 or above as urban' and those below this mark as rural.

Olowu (1979:83-85) has equally contributed

to this classificational efforts by identifying urban areas as:

those with a minimum population (1979 estimated population) of 300,000 and 100 persons/km² density and above or 100,000 population and 500 persons/km.

It is our contention that using population as the only criterion or indice of urbanization is scientifically misleading to say the least, taking into consideration organizations, banking industries, health institutions, telecommunications industries, etc., which may not be located in heavily populated areas thus negatively affecting the heterogeneity and the level of impersonality of social relations of such populations.

Not only this, identification of population as the sole criterion for determining urbanization and ruralness took for granted the dynamism required in the analysis of any given phenomenon within the social sciences of which political science is one.

Even, many scholars (see Mabogunje and Ola op. cit.) have (while recognizing the importance of population vis-à-vis the classification of urbanism and ruralness) avoided the temptation of identifying or embracing the concept of populations as the sole criterion in their pursuits of non-spurious scientific findings.

The fact that many heavily populated areas may not be industrially developed in manner conducive to socio-economic activities and revenue generation, in addition to the lack of honesty and fair play regarding the compilation of population figures in Nigeria makes it academically or scientifically dangerous to identify population as the only indices for classifying urban and rural areas anywhere within the Nigerian polity.

This being the case, we would argue that many indices or variables could be used for determining the urbanism or ruralness of any area. Such indices include the location of educational institutions (most especially post-secondary ones like universities, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, Schools of Basic Studies, School of Agriculture, Nursing Schools etc.), media organizations (e.g. Television and Radio Stations, and Newspapers Houses etc), post offices, State Hospitals, manufacturing industries, banking industries, police stations, high courts, telecommunications organisations (NITEL); prisons etc.

Deriving from this, the need for rural

development becomes obvious considering the gulf between the urban and rural areas in all ramifications of their existence. And, it is as a result of bridging this gulf that local government has been made the inalienable third tier of the Nigerian Federal polity and many polities within the international political community. Thus, what constitutes rural development in terms of a conceptual focus or framework becomes mandatory for discussion this point.

Intellectual unanimity among experts of development studies vis-à-vis the universal conceptualisation of rural development seemed not to be elusive despite the volatility and ideological sectarianism which have long permeated the physiological syndromes of the social sciences. But then, conflicts of opinion and intellectual leanings can hardly be taken for granted.

In spite of such conflicts, the drive for rural development is idealistically conceptualised as an orientational programme aimed at improving human self-sufficiency, welfarism, standard of living and insulation of the rural inhabitants against dehydrated psycho-socio-geo-political and economic amenities as well as against irredeemable addiction to the characteristics of yokels or barbarism.

Therefore, the objective of rural development is to improve economically politically, psychologically, emotionally and socially to mention a few the living conditions of the down-trodden residents of the rural areas. Thus, according to Bamidele (in Onajide et al., 1990:3):

Rural development... consists of deliberate efforts mobilized to eradicate or reduce to the barest minimum social and economic ills that persists in diminishing the quality of life in the communities.

Arguing further, Bamidele (Ibid:4) eloquently asserts that:

It (i.e., rural development) means the improvement of the social and economic conditions in rural places, creating better job opportunities, increased family incomes and providing the stage for increased mobility required by the unemployed and under employed for labour.

Deriving from the above, rural development could be arguably taken to mean a multidimensional improvement in the existential characteristics of the ruralities in ways conducive or amenable to their integration within the parameters of improved national life and, their ability

to contribute to the positive building of the later.

On the same plane, in his analysis of the concept of rural development, Bello-Imam (1989: 2-3) used the wider concept of development as a unit of analysis and, based on this he claimed that:

rural development is a spatially sectional but determined and conscious attempt to focus on the general upliftment of the living conditions of men in the rural areas. Using the same analytical phyllome, Bello-Imam (ibid:3) went further to stress that: rural development involve a strategy aimed at improving economic and social life of inhabitants of rural areas with the catchment of this policy/strategy being always the rural poor.

It is implicit in the foregoing expositions that rural development connotes a determined, a deliberately planned change in nearly all aspects of rural community with a view to attaining desired improvement in all facets of life of the ruralities. Hence, the catalyst for rural development is the security of bearable, conducive and decent standards of living in the rural areas for the inhabitants. This view point has been eloquently supported by Mustapha (1989:1) when he stated that:

rural development is concerned with the improvement of the living standards of the low income population living in rural areas on a self-sustaining basis through-transforming the socio-political-economic structures of their productive activities... (it) implies a broad-based reorganization and mobilization of the rural masses so as to enhance their capacity to cope effectively with the daily tasks of their lives and with changes consequent upon this.

Using the same paradigmatic framework or unit of analysis he further claimed that:

Rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of those who live in the rural areas and, for development agencies the target is the rural poor (ibid:12).

The conceptual or theoretical analysis of rural development up to this point, reaffirms the non-elusiveness of intellectual or ideological unanimity among experts on the subject-matter of the concept. This is clearly identifiable in all the works of scholars here-in reviewed vis-à-vis the concept of rural development.

Having stated this at the nib of our mind, and having theoretically analysed the concepts of political mobilization and rural development

using the technique of rural-urban dichotomy as a prelude, and, in line with the chronology set for this paper, it is appropriate at this point to reecho the central thesis of our argument in this paper that local governments are indispensable catalyst for political mobilization and rural development. That is, local governments play unquestionable and indispensable role in the political mobilization of the Nigerian citizenry for rural development and attainment of political stability. In other words, rural inhabitants could be politically mobilized for inalienable development and graduation out of ruralness through the mechanism of local government as a vertical arm of the Nigerian federal political arrangement.

Since our claim here finds solace in the conceptual framework, historical development and reformations of the governmental mechanism of local government in Nigeria prior to and since the commencement of her nationhood, the analytical consideration of the concept of local government as an institution and political mobilizer for rural development and the attainment of political stability in Nigeria is now the subject of discussion at this point.

(iii) The Concept of Local Government

The concept of local government has continued to generate excitements within the academia. These excitements have not been unconnected with the increasing importance of local government as one of the paraphernalia of federalism. Thus, various definitions of it have been given.

These definitions (which need no repetition here) have concretely identified the indispensability of local government to grassroots democracy vis-à-vis its provision of governmental opportunity, two-way channels of communications, opportunity for self development and self-imposed resource mobilization to the "grassrooters"

In general, nearly all the existing works on local government have shown this level of government's increasing propensity for the enhancement of home life syndrome. It is in this respect we can understand the position of Humes and Harloff (1969) who defined local government as:

an instrument of national or state government which unites people of a defined area whose

functions are complementary to those of the central government and works in the interests of the local residents for the satisfaction of their needs.

On the same analytical premise Akpan (1972) sees local government as:

the breaking down of a country into small units or localities for the purpose of administration on which the inhabitants of the different units or localities concerned play a direct and full part through their elected representatives who exercise power or undertake functions under the general authority of the national government.

Put together, the relevance of local governments to political mobilization and rural development as per these definitions and other ones is identifiable from their now acclaimed four important goals of

1. enhancement of effective and responsive service delivery
2. exercise of democratic self government
3. effective utilization of human resources and provision of two-way channels of communications between the rulers and the ruled.

These goals show that the local government institution is a mechanism for mobilizationally integrating the grassroots into the fold of democratic governance in Nigeria in ways amenable to stability within the political community. The role and indispensability of the local government institution in this respect are particularly relevant to the ethno-culturally pillarized Nigerian polity which needs effective human resources, relevant inputs and commitment of the grassroots at the local government areas due to the fertility of the later 'or same.

For the above, it is our contention that the purpose – (involvement of local citizenry in the management and governance of local affairs; satisfaction of the needs of the local people through effective service delivery and, efficient and effective mobilization of the local human and material resources)- of local governments is vital to the cornerstone of democratic system of government, political mobilization of people for rural development and, to the attainment of stable Democratic Republic in Nigeria.

In other words, local government exists to bring about democracy; serve as base for political participation and education. It equally exists to provide services and serve as a vehicle for rural development (Ola op.cit.: 10-14). Hence local

governments are to political mobilization, rural development and political stability what basic tissues are to human body. And, without them government would have no vitality (Blair op. cit.: 4) to the lives of the rural inhabitants.

Consequent on the foregoing, it is our view that the goals of local governments vis-à-vis rural development are the enhancement of political participation, resource mobilization and efficient service delivery (Adamolekun, 1983: 7). Similarly, participatory democracy, administrative efficiency and political autonomy have been typified as the three societal values which every local government had long been trying and still trying to promote relative to political mobilization, rural development and attainment of stable democratic republic (Mass, 1959:25 and Oladosu, 1981).

These goals have shown that local government is an important part of the governmental structure which the officials (practitioners), government and citizens alike should and, must not take for granted particularly when it comes to rural affairs. The subsequent entrenchment of the core of the goals and other aspects of the Nigerian local government structure in the 1979 Federal Republic of Nigeria's Presidential Constitution and their improved total reincarnation in the 1989 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are supportive of this view (1979, 1989 constitutions).

These constitutions vividly demonstrated the transparent commitment of Nigeria's Federal Government to the actual survival of local governments as the real third-tier of Nigeria's Federal structure and promoter of rural development, through political mobilization of the ruralities.

A whole schedule (Schedule 4 of 1979 Constitution and Schedule 4 part 1 of the 1989 constitution) contained the functions of local government within the Nigerian polity. These functions which could be trichotomised into mandatory functions, state and local government joint responsibilities (functions) and general functions (Aghayere, 1987:5-6) are aimed at fruitfully enhancing through political mobilization for rural development, the positive holistic existence of Nigerians within the anatomy of Nigerian federalism.

The chronology of the analysis in this paper up to this point shows that the existence of local government within Nigerian federalism is

positively related to political mobilization, enhancement of rural development and, attainment of a stable Third Republic if the internal contradiction and the raging culture of settlement foisted on the people by the disgraced Babangida administration could allow it to come into existence. And, it is the view of Okeem (1989:2) that the role of local governments in these respects can lead to:

the reorientation and reawakening of Nigerians so that they would, armed with rekindled vision and renewed faith, face the challenge of making Nigeria one of the envies of the world.

Aziegbe (1989:1) pitched his tent with Okeem's optimism when he asserted that:

for a genuine development to be achieved in the rural area a deliberately planned programme must be evolved via the local government being the most disposed level of government to rural development.

It is our contention that Okeem and Aziegbe's optimism is not misplaced relative to the relevance of local governments to political mobilization, rural development and inculcation of the values of democratic stability because, local governments and their inhabitants are better placed for the realization of the goals inherent in rural development and political mobilization.

The foregoing sequence of arguments or analyses in this paper notwithstanding, we are convinced beyond doubt that the role of local governments in political mobilization for rural development and a stable Nigerian Democratic Republic poses empirical questions that need attention and unobtrusive scientific analysis. Thus, as stated in our introduction the next section of this paper analyse, our data based on the field work we carried out on the subject-matter of our focus relative to the empirical questions they raise concerning the institutional role of local governments in facilitating them.

EMPERICAL ANALYSIS OF FIELDWORK

This section scientifically analyses and put into vogue the core of our theoretical analyses on the role of local governments in political mobilization, rural development and the attainment of a stable Democratic Republic in Nigeria. To facilitate our efforts the hypotheses

stated below are formulated for scientific testing:

A. Research Hypotheses

1. The existence of local governments institution in Nigeria is positively related to the political mobilization of her citizenry in ways conducive to rural development and evolution of a stable Democratic Republic.
2. Due to its (i.e. local government institution) indispensability to political mobilization, and conferment of home life syndromes on the citizenry creation of more local government areas will further enhance rural development and the existence of a stable Democratic Republic.

As later shown these hypotheses are first subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using the measure of central tendency and variability (mean, median, mode and variance) based on the raw data we collected through the likert scale questionnaire we administered on the subjects.

B. Null Hypotheses

Table 1: The variables/indices and the scoring techniques used for our determination of urbanism and ruralness of local governments in ondo state, Nigeria.

S.No.	Variables/Indices	Points Awarded
1.	Population: 20,000* and above*	6
2.	Post-Secondary Institutions: University Polytechnic College of Education School of Basic Studies/Arts and Social Sciences Nursing School School of Agriculture	5 points for each where more than one exist
3.	Manufacturing Industry	3 points each
4.	Media Organisation (Radio, Television and Newspaper)	2 points each
5.	Police Station	2 points each
6.	High Court	2
7.	Prisons	2
8.	Post Office	2
9.	State Hospital	2 points for each
10.	Telecommunication (NITEL)	2
11.	Banking Industries	2 for each where more than one are located

Note: See Table 2 for how the local governments in Ondo State have been scored using this technique.

*We used this figure as the base considering the 1963 population census stipulation of this figure as representing urbanism.

The above hypotheses were further subjected to null-testing on the basis of rural-urban dichotomy as earlier discussed in the section of this paper dealing with rural development. We did this by rehypothessizing thus: There is no significant difference between the urban and rural local governments residents as to whether:

1. The existence of local governments institution is positively related to the political mobilization of her citizenry in ways conducive to rural development and evolution of a stable Democratic Republic.
2. Due to its (i.e. local government institution) indispensability to political mobilization, and conferment of homelife syndromes on the citizenry (i.e. the ruralites or grassroots), creation of more local government areas will further enhance rural development and the existence of a stable Democratic Republic.

The level of significance of the one-tailed student t-test is 0.05%. And to facilitate our efforts, we categorized the local government areas in Ondo State (being our case study for this exercise) into rural and urban ones based on our field work on the indices of urbanization which we identified in addition to population in this study*. Table I below shows our scoring of the indices in order of importance. And, based on this scoring, the facts on Table 2 to 4 emerged and we were able to administer our questionnaire as detailed on Table 5.

C. Administration of Questionnaire

Based on the resultant rural-urban categorization of the local government areas in Ondo State from our field work, we administered a total of one thousand questionnaires to our sampled subjects in the sampled urban and rural local governments in the proportions of sampled subjects in the sampled urban and rural local governments in the of 100 proportion subjects per each of the sampled local governments*. This could be properly discerned from Table 5 below which contained the list of the most urban and most rural local government areas as per our scientific categorization:

DATA ANALYSIS

The data generated through the methodology

Table 2: Indices of urbanization in Ondo state used for the determination of rural and urban local Government areas in Ondo state, Nigeria*

Local Govt.	Local Govt. Capitals	Population (1976 Projection) Of Each Local Govt.	Post-secondary Institution	Media Organiza Tion	Police Station	Manuf. Ind.	High Courts	Prisons	Post-office	Points	State HOP	Points	Telecom	Banking	Total Points	% Of Urbanism	State of Lgusurban or Rural			
Ado-ekiti	Ado-ekiti	360,431	6	2	10	-	4	12	1	2	1	2	1	2	6	12	52	45.61	Urban	
Akoko North	Ikare	211,834	6	1	5	-	3	9	1	2	1	2	1	2	9	18	62	54.38	Urban	
Akoko South	Oka	182,704	6	-	-	-	2	6	1	2	1	2	-	-	2	4	28	24.56	Rural	
Akure	Akure	182,704	6	3	15	3	9	17	1	2	1	2	1	2	16	32	114	100	Urban	
Ekiti East	Omoo	161,590	6	-	-	-	5	10	-	1	2	-	-	3	6	24	21.05	Rural		
Ekiti South	Ilawe	176,610	6	-	-	-	3	6	-	3	6	-	-	2	4	22	19.29	Rural		
Ekiti West																				
Ekiti West/ Idanre	Aramoko	236,200	6	-	-	-	3	6	-	3	6	1	2	-	4	8	26	22.80	Rural	
Ifedore	Owena	237,213	6	-	-	-	5	10	-	4	8	1	2	-	4	8	34	29.82	Rural	
Ido-osi	Ido	305,859	6	-	-	-	2	4	-	4	8	1	2	-	3	6	26	22.80	Rural	
Ifesowapo	Ore	151,181	6	-	-	-	4	8	2	6	1	2	-	-	4	8	36	31.57	Rural	
Ijero	Ijero	184,702	6	-	-	-	3	6	1	3	1	2	-	-	3	6	29	25.43	Rural	
Ikare	Okitipupa	247,189	6	-	-	-	6	12	5	15	1	2	1	2	4	8	59	51.75	Urban	
Ikere	Ikere	303,371	6	1	5	-	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	4	31	24.56	Rural	
Ikole	Ikole	259,036	6	-	-	-	3	6	1	3	1	2	1	2	2	4	28	27.19	Rural	
Ilaje/Eseodo	Igbokoda	128,595	6	-	-	-	7	14	1	3	-	1	2	-	4	8	32	38.07	Rural	
Irepodun/ Ifelodun	Igede Ekiti	-	6	-	-	-	2	4	-	3	6	1	2	-	3	6	24	21.05	Rural	
Isokan	Ise-ekiti	-	6	-	-	-	2	4	1	3	-	2	4	-	2	4	21	18.42	Rural	
Moba	Otunekiti	-	6	-	-	-	2	4	-	2	4	-	-	-	1	2	16	14.03	Rural	
Ondo	Ondo	205,168	6	2	10	-	4	8	5	15	1	2	1	2	4	16	75	65.78	Urban	
Ose	Ifon	-	6	-	-	-	2	4	2	6	-	2	4	-	1	2	20	17.54	Rural	
Owo	Owo	260,729	6	1	5	-	3	6	-	1	2	1	2	1	2	6	12	44	38.58	Rural
Oye	Oye-ekiti	-	6	-	-	-	3	6	2	6	-	2	4	-	3	6	26	22.80	Rural	

*Ondo State was broken into two states (Ondo and Ekiti) on October 1st, 1996 following the creation of six states by the Lat General Sani Abacha's Military Regime.

Source: Field Work February, 1991.

*Ondo State was broken into two states (Ondo and Ekiti) on October 1st, 1996 following the creation of six states by the Lat General Sani Abacha's Military Regime.

Table 3: Urban local government areas in ondo state in order of urbanism

S.No.	Local Government Areas
1.	Akure
2.	Ondo
3.	Akoko North
4.	Ikale (Renamed Okitipupa)
5.	Ado-Ekiti

Source: Table 2 and Field work (February, 1991)

Table 4: Rural local government areas in ondo state in order of ruralness

S.No.	Local government areas
1.	Moba
2.	Irepodun/Ifelodun
3.	Ose
4.	Isokan (renamed Emure/Ise/Orun)
5.	Ekiti South West
6.	Ekiti East
7.	Oye
8.	Ekiti East
9.	Ido/Osi
10.	Akoko South
11.	Ikere
12.	Ijero
13.	Ikole
14.	Ilaje/Ese Odo
15.	Idanre/Ifedore (Local Govts)
16.	Ifesowapo (broken into Odigbo and Ile-Igbo Local Govet.)
17.	Owo

Source: Table 2 and Field work, February, 1991.

Note: The following local governments: Ifedore, Akoko North West, Irele and Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo carved out of old Idanre/Ifedore. Akoko-North, old Ikale and Ifesowapo Local Governments remain largely rural. Their creation has no effect on the outcome of our analysis. Most of these local governments have been further broken into additional local governments in both Ondo State and Ekiti State following the state creation exercise of 1996, October.

adopted and which we have described so far are analysed in Table 5.

1. Descriptive Analysis

This section of our paper analyses the cumulative responses of our sampled one thousand (1000) subjects to the five-point continuum likert scale close-ended questionnaire which we administered as detailed in table 5 above. The means and standard deviations of the cumulative responses of our sampled subjects to the questionnaire tied to our hypotheses are contained on table 6.

Table 5: Adminisration of questionnaire on local government basis

S/N	Local Government	Status	Subject	Response Rate
1.	Ado-Ekiti	Urban	100	100%
2.	Akoko North	Urban	100	100%
3.	Akure	Urban	100	100%
4.	Ekiti East	Rural	100	100%
5.	Ikale	Urban	100	100%
6.	Irepodun/Ifelodun	Rural	100	100%
7.	Isokan	Rural	100	100%
8.	Moba	Rural	100	100%
9.	Ondo	Urban	100	100%
10	Ose	Rural	100	100%
Total Urban		5	100%	
		Rural	5	1000
			10	

Table 6: Cumulative responses to our hypotheses

Hypotheses	Mean	Responses: Standard Deviation
H1	4.46	0.72
H2	4.22	0.89
(N100)		

Source: Computerized result of raw data collected from the administered questionnaires.

The Table 6 above shows that our first hypothesis that “the existence of local government institution in Nigeria is positively related to political mobilization, political participation, of her citizenry in ways conducive to rural development and evolution of stable Democratic Republic has the highest mean score of 4.46 from the respondents. The standard deviation of 0.72 is also low enough to explain that the responses cluster around the mean. The spread could be interpreted by the relation $4.46 + 0.72$ which gives the range of responses as between 4.46-0.72 and $4.46 + 0.72$. that is, between 3.74 and 5.00 (maximum). It hence appears that all our one thousand (1000) sampled respondents made positive responses within Nigerian federalism that local government institution enhances political mobilization and rural development in ways conducive to the evolution of a stable Democratic Republic. This goes a long way to show that Nigerian citizens urban and rural ones alike attach a great importance to the institutional mechanism of local governments as one which can politically mobilize them for rural development (i.e. self-

initiated development) and attainment of a stable Democratic Republic in Nigeria.

Responses to our second hypothesis had a respondent mean of 4.22 and standard deviation of 0.89 implying a range of 4.22 – 0.89 to 4.22 + 0.89. All our responses between 3.33 and 5.00 (maximum). That is, a dispersion in the range of respondents here appear to be decided. On the average, the question to this hypothesis was answered with positive views. These responses go to show that the majority of Nigerian citizens believed that their local governments would continue to confer on them home life syndromes and at the same time mobilize them politically for rural development. And, as such more of them (local governments) should be created in Nigeria.

2. Test of Significance for the Null Hypotheses

We proceeded to further present the two hypotheses descriptively analysed above in form of null hypotheses so that they could be subjected to more statistical analyses. All the (2) hypotheses were tested for significance at $P < 0.05$ and, the student t-test for significance was effectively. Urban and rural dichotomy was used for each of the hypotheses.

HO_1 : there is no significant difference between the urban and rural local governments' residents as to whether the existence of local government institution in Nigeria is positively related to the political mobilization of her citizenry in ways conducive to rural development and evolution of a stable Democratic Republic.

This hypothesis was tested for significance using 't' test. The table below gives the summary analysis.

The 'cal (0.06) is less than table (1.65) (see Darlington R.B.: 1975: 310. The null hypothesis as formulated above is not rejected. There appears to be a perfect agreement as the mean responses for the rural and urban is exactly the same (4.60). These respectively high means of 4.60 perfectly corroborate the findings of our

earlier descriptive analysis. This goes to show that a whole generality of Nigerians agree that the existence of local government provides a fertile avenue for political mobilization, rural development and a friction-free-attainment of a stable Democratic Republic in Nigeria.

HO_2 : There is no significant difference between urban and rural local government areas residents as to whether due to its (i.e. local government institution) indispensability to political mobilization, and conferment of homelife syndromes on the citizenry (i.e. the ruralites or grassroots), creation of more local governments will further enhance rural development and the existence of a stable Democratic Republic.

The t-cal 0.67 is less than the t-table 1.65. This hypothesis is not rejected at $P < 0.05$, because $0.67 < 1.65$ which implies t-cal < t-table and hence HO_2 is not rejected. This means that, the urban and rural areas residents in Nigeria share the same views about the indispensability of local government and their further creation to political mobilization, rural development and the attainment of a stable Democratic Republic.

Our analysis up to this point shows that the two null hypotheses using rural-urban dichotomy were accepted using 0.05 level of significance as could be seen at a glance from Table IX below.

The acceptance of these hypotheses show that within the Nigerian federalism, the rural and urban residents felt equally about the variables involved and the positive linkage of local governments with political mobilization and rural development and, the attainment of a stable Nigerian Democratic Republic.

CONCLUSION

This paper has analysed the institutional mechanism of local government and its role and functions vis-à-vis political mobilization for rural development and a stable Nigerian Democratic third Republic. It has in the process, theoretically and empirically identified local governments as

Table 7: t-test analysis for HO_1

Variable	Sample size	Mean	S.D.	t-cal	t-table
Urban responses	500	4.60	0.70	0.60	1.65
Rural responses	500	4.60	0.75		

df = 998 (pooled variance estimate)
p < 0.05

Table 8: t-test analysis for HO₂

Variable	Sample size	Mean	S.D.	t-cal	t-table
Urban responses	500	4.43	0.70		
Rural responses	500	4.46	0.78	0.67	1.65

df = 998 (poled variance estimate)

p < 0.05

Table 9: t-test analysis for our rural-urban variables

Variables	Hypotheses	'Cal	'Table	Decision at p < 0.05
Rural -Urban	HO1	0.60	1.65	Accepted
Dichotomy	HO2	0.67	1.65	Accepted

P < 0.05 df = 998

Source: Tables 7 and 8

the bedrock of political mobilization (in all ramifications) of the rural areas' residents. This is attested to by the purposeful and meaningful involvement of the local governments in all spheres of Nigerians' life. Thus, we have argued that the role of local governments in the subject-matter of our focus here can and must not be taken for granted for the sake of needed multidimensional integration within the physiology of Nigerian federalism.

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