**LOCAL GOVERNMENT A PLATFORM FOR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

**Abstract**

This project work centers on Local Government:    A plat form for political participation.   (A CASE STUDY OF ANAMBRA EAST LOCAL GOVERNEMT AREA). The study aims at finding out the role and contributions of citizens in the Local Government level.  This research work therefore tries to explore foundational participatory role of Local government, their level of awareness and education. This work is divided into three chapters.  Chapter one deals with the introduction and background of this study, the research problems, research questions definition of terms and significance of the study. Chapter two presents the consulted literature while chapter three summaries the study and as well makes recommendations for further studies

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1Background of the study**

Beginning from the early 1950s, various models have been used in the government of Local Communities in our country.  Among the models which have at one time been adopted for all or some parts of the Country include:The Lugardian native authority system, the American Council manager model and divisional administrative system.  These various systems were however abolished following the 1976 nation-wide local government by General Murtala Mohammed (The then Head of State).  This reform for the first time introduced a Uniform, one tier, all purpose Local government system across the country.  It was meant to correct the well known defects of the previous system such as; Lack of autonomy, encroachment upon local government function by the state Governments, inadequate funding and lack of adequate qualified man power, how staffing morale and decreasing productivity. The local government institution is perhaps the oldest formal institution nearest to the ordinary Nigeria, especially since the official colonial imposition of 1900.  In historical discourse, local government connotes formal institution which performs primary public functions closest to the people.  It is therefore a primary channel through which the citizens participate in the governance of the society.  Essentially, the essence at political participation in Nigeria is therefore to give the broad mass of Nigerian people the opportunity to get involved in duties and privileges of the democratic process and thereby establishing a new political order capable of ensuring following:

A   Justice

B   Creates orientation awareness and political mobilization

C   Opportunity for the people to participate in the decision making process and

D   A new social and on equitable distribution of national resources and opportunities. All these require that people select and control their political authority created at the local community level to serve the needs and interests of the Local people.   It is designed to bring government nearer to the people government in the process of government, thus Oyediran view local government as “government in which popular participation, both in choice of decision makes and in the decision making process is conducted by local bodies which while recognizing the supremacy of the central government is able and willing to accept responsibility for its decision”. Local government posse’s characteristics which put it in an appropriate position to serve as a means for social mobilization. In the first, it is government that is nearest to the people and has face-to face relationship with the people, it possesses the first hand knowledge, and feels the most impact, of the people’s needs and aspirations.  Accordingly, the Political Bureau Report correctly observed that “a government operating at the local government’s level is more likely to be attuned to the needs of the people”

Secondly, since local Government is generally community based, there is a greater sense of we feeling among the people of the local area.  This sense of “we feeling fosters commitment to common cause that makes the mobilization of the people to participate in politics possible. Thirdly, since local government is based on small units of local needs, it engenders greater participation of local people in the management of their affairs.  This principle of mass participation is central in the objectives of the local Government reforms of 1976 which among its objectives are to our society and to mobiles of the members of the public in their development activities.  Fourthly, the local government, as a creative of the central (State) government, can be employed to achieve the ideological purpose of the state system at the grassroots level.  It was argued that since local government is located in areas of local isolation and traditionalism requiring a high level of political socialization, its role in social mobilization is considered to be crucial and pivotal.

**1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Statistically stated, it is an established fact that about 70 percent of the Nigeria population lives in the rural areas hence the grassroots.   Given the scope of this study, this percentage of our population has under a measure of neglect which today is a source of concern.  Over the years, tiers of government have be emerged as a consequence of the evolution of the political process in Nigeria.  This can be traced through the colonial, independence era and the post independence era.  The evolution of these tiers of government has engendered political participation with both positives and negative consequence.  Some scholars view political participation as an outgrowth of the evolution of local government in Nigeria, others view it as a consequence of government actions or policies on the trends of the political system.

Others view political participation as an outgrowth of military involvement and civil life.  These over the nature of local government with regards to the character of political participation.  The impact of the local government on grassroots’ democracy has not been facilitated and given greater emphasis; the local government according to John Stuart Mill is justified as an integral part of democracy. This paper is therefore, an attempt to access the roles played by local government in the democratization process aimed at re-adjusting the organizational structure and institutions and then making the ordinary man at local governments to participation more in political processes.   It is also an attempt to access the collective role expected of the people at the local government in the democratic government as a means of achieving this adjustment. For a more critical analysis of these research problems since research questions shall be deduced so as to keep out though abreast with the topic.    This research problem therefore, necessitated the following research questions:

a. To what extent do the activities of local government affect the peoples’   
      political participation?

b. How has the role played by local government in integrating the rural   
    population into the political process engendered political participation?

c. What possible alternatives exist to ensuring political participation in the political system ?

d. To what extent has the application of local government democracy?

    Influenced peoples’ participation in democratic process?

e. To what extent has the application of grassroots democracy influenced p  
     people participation in democratic process?

**1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The major objectives of the study are:

1. To ascertain whether grassroots democracy refers to the active involvement and participation of the rural dwellers or the common folks in the determination and implementation of public politics
2. To ascertain whether participation in politics by voting during election reflect as public politics
3. To ascertain whether there is efficient representation and popular participation in politics in local government
4. To ascertain whether local government politics encourage democratic freedom

**1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

For the successful completion of the study, the following research hypotheses were formulated by the researcher;

**H0:** there is no efficient representation and popular participation in politics in local government.

**H1:** there is efficient representation and popular participation in politics in local government

**H02:**  local government politics does not encourage democratic freedom

**H2:** local government politics encourage democratic freedom

**1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

With the world contending towards democratic process, if therefore becomes very imperative to give greater concern to local government in Nigeria as a mere pragmatic means achieving a viable political order.     Following from this premise, the research study is designed to serve as an exposure to the mass of Nigeria on the imperative of local government democracy.  It is expected that this study will go a big way in making local government participation in politics heritage of the rural common folk.  The research work is going to be a compendium of useful information to both students and any person who might have a need for it. Ultimately, it is my cherished desire to contribute to the growth of intellectual and material deposit of this schools library considering its peculiar nature.

**1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

In spite of the fact that the scope of this research study embraces the entity called Nigeria local government, the limitation of this study which has to do with the period of time to be covered on  the process is from 1776 to 1993, that is to say that it begins with General Murtala Mohammed’s’ administration. The researcher encounters some constrain which limited the scope of the study;

**a) AVAILABILITY OF RESEARCH MATERIAL:** The research material available to the researcher is insufficient, thereby limiting the study

**b) TIME:** The time frame allocated to the study does not enhance wider coverage as the researcher has to combine other academic activities and examinations with the study.

**c) Organizational privacy**: Limited Access to the selected auditing firm makes it difficult to get all the necessary and required information concerning the activities.

**1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

In an attempt to avoid any form of ambiguity in the course of this writing, it therefore becomes very important to define some of the salient concept used in the research study

**Local Government:**

By local Government is generally meant a system of territorial Units with defined boundaries a legal identity and institutional structure, power and duties laid down in general and special status and a degree of financial and others autonomy.

**DEMOCRACY**:

In spite of the fact that the concept of democracy on its own is ambiguous in any or most political discussions leading to a conglomeration of definitions. Functional definition thus:  It could be defined or seen as a concept concerned with the national political system based on Citizens participation majority rule, constitution and discussion.

**GRASSROOTS**:

Clearly speaking, the word used to capture two meanings at the same one is that, it represents the Nigeria Masses or common folk, especially those living in the rural areas.  Two is that, it represents the lowest rung of government in the Country, which is local government.

**LOCAL GOVERNEMT DEMOCRACY:**

This refers to the popular democratic participation in major decisions at the broadest forms of political associations.  It therefore encourages democracy in its largest sense as a state of affairs in which most citizens especially at the village and town level participation.

**PARTICIPATION:**

Participation is the ability and opportunity of a group of people to be involved in governance.  Participation can be defined as an act of involvement.  I  can also be defined as an act of membership or belonging and taking part in the act of leaderships.  The need exists for the citizenry to participate in governance, contribute to the essence of governance that is to help in the regulation of individuals conducts in the society and provide for security and his good thing of life for the people. The participation is the people are therefore a sinequa non-for the pursuit of good government.  By an act of participation, one tries to seek and influence or support government and politics.   The participation can either be direct or indirect by observing and making contributions to the act of governance.  It is through this participation method that government can hope to realize its objectives of being responsive to the wishes of the people.

**POLITICS:**

This could be referred to as science or act of government.   Different scholars have made various attempts at defining politics.  They have conceptualize such  scholars include Hugo Hedo, Charles Hynemen, Claude Ake, Okwudiba Nnoli, David Easton, Harlod Lasswell, etc.

From their submissions, their views and meaning of politics could be summed up as follows:

A Politics as a pursuit of public interest

B Politics as the operation of state Craft

C Politics as the authoritative allocation of values.

D Politics as the implementation and execution of public policy.

E Politics as who gets what, when and how?

   Major exponent of this view is Harold Lasswell.  Politics is at work when a group of people in trying to score an advantage over their opponent tries to outwit or out serve or scheme out or outsmart one group to the advantage of the other.

**1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This research work is organized in five chapters, for easy understanding, as follows

Chapter one is concern with the introduction, which consist of the (overview, of the study), historical background, statement of problem, objectives of the study, research hypotheses, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, definition of terms and historical background of the study. Chapter two highlights the theoretical framework on which the study is based, thus the review of related literature. Chapter three deals on the research design and methodology adopted in the study. Chapter four concentrate on the data collection and analysis and presentation of finding. Chapter five gives summary, conclusion, and recommendations made of the study

**CHAPTER TWO**

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**2.1 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIA**

Political participation is the involvement of the citizens in the political system. Eakin cited in Adelekan (2010) described political participation as the process through which the individual plays a role in the political life of his society and has the opportunity to take part in deciding what common goals of the society are and the best way of achieving these goals. According to Akamare (2003) political participation is an aspect of political behaviour and it focuses on the way in which individuals take part in politics. It is a voluntary activity and one may participate directly or indirectly. The various ways by which the people can be involved in the political system include selection or election of political leaders, formulation of policies, community activities and other civic engagements. According to Awolowo and Aluko (2010), the essence of political participation in any society, either civilized or primitive, is to seek control of power, acquisition of power and to influence decision making. Political participation is a means of contributing ones quota to the political system and overall development of the nation. Political participation is one of the fundamental requirements of democratic governance. This is the reason why Adelekan (2010) emphasized that ideally, democracy means individual participation in the decisions that involves one’s life. In a democratic system, there is the necessity for the citizenry to be fully involved in the democratic procedures of the choice of rulers and effective communication of the public policies and attitudes. Any claim to democratic regime or state must essentially embrace a high degree of competitive choice, openness, and enjoyment of civic and political liberties and political participation that involves all groups of the society (Arowolo and Aluko, 2010). The extents to which people participate in the political system differ from person to person. Falade (2008) identified six types of political participants. These are: The inactive: These are the people that take no part in any .political activity Voting specialists: These are the people that get eagerly engaged only in voting. Besides voting, they are not concerned about other political activities. Parochial participants: These people participate in politics occasionally. They vote or get involved in any other political activity only when it affects their personal interest. The communalist: These are those who get engaged in voting regularly, they also get involved in community affairs but they are not involved in political campaign activities The campaigners: They are actively involved in political campaign but inactive in other community affairs. Complete activists: They are highly involved in all political activities. They actively participate in voting, political campaign, community activities and make contact with public officials. Some of the factors that determine political participation are: cultural, economic, political, religious and educational backgrounds of individuals. Also, the level of political awareness as well as the measure of confidence in the political process determines the extent to which the citizens participate in the political system. In Nigeria, politics is influenced by money, ethnic and religious factors. Since independence in 1960, religious and ethnic politics characterize electioneering process in Nigeria. This is the reason why Albert Legogie, former deputy Senate President, pointed out that it was clear from the trend of the election that there was a big gulf, a dichotomy between the north and the south and between Christians and Muslims (Adeyemo, 2011). For instance, during the post-presidential election violence in the Muslim dominated northern part of Nigeria, southerners and Christians were attacked and killed while many churches were burnt. Falade, (2007) expressed that politics in Nigeria is regarded as a dirty game and it is practiced with bitterness, hatred, rancor and other associated evils. The outcome of this is that Nigeria is in vicious cycle of political crises and instability. Deceit and unfulfilled promises by political leaders discouraged a number of Nigerians from participating in election and other political activities. Falade (2008) argued that politicians make series of promises during election campaign. Most of these promises are not fulfilled after they had been voted in to power. As a result of this, some voters loose interest in election. One of the respondents interviewed during the 2011 election expressed that “I have come to the sun to suffer even though I am not benefiting anything from the government…I don’t even have confidence in them because they have been failing us generally” (Adelakun, 2011). There is low level of political participation among the Nigerian citizens. Many Nigerians are indifferent in political matters. The INEC noted that Nigerians’ participation during the last general election in the 2011 was low. Only 35% of the 70 million registered voters took part in the election. The Friedrich Elbert Stiffing Foundation conducted a research on the 2011 election and identified lack of transparent elections, election violence and politicians’ noncommittal to their campaign promises as major reasons for voters’ apathy in the country (Odebode, 2011). The political apathy in Nigeria is based on the twin problems of ignorance and deliberate deception by some politicians. The consequence of this is the inability of the masses to have a link between their state of underdevelopment and their non participation in the electoral process (Fabiyi, 2010). In the light of this Falade (2007) concluded that the Nigerian political culture has not given room for the entrenchment and sustenance of true democracy. Awolowo and Aluko(2010) expressed that the low level of political participation of the Nigerian women is becoming alarming and disturbing. Since the emergence of political independence in 1960, the Nigerian women have remained invisible in the political process. The 1985 Beijing declaration to which Nigeria is a signatory provides that 30% of all positions in government should be given to women. This policy is yet to be implemented in Nigeria because there is a continuing trend of male domination of political and other public positions (Oloyede, 2004; Adelekan, 2010).The marginal involvement of African women in the political process results from the lingering inhibitive cultural and patriarchal forces against women’s engagement in politics that characterized African traditional societies (Chuku, 2009).

**2.2 DEMOCRACY AS A CONCEPT**

The term democracy is derived from two Greek words: demos which mean people and kratos which means rule. Literarily, democracy means ‘rule by the people’ Appadorai (2004) described democracy as a system of government under which the people exercise the governing power either directly or through representatives periodically elected by them. In the ancient states, direct democracy was possible because all adult members of the community could easily take part in decision making. Population growth and expansion in political boundaries have made direct democracy impracticable in the modern political system. This is the reason why representative democracy has replaced direct democracy in different parts of the world. Representative democracy is an indirect democracy where sovereignty is held by the people’s representatives. Watter Lanqueur cited in Idowu (1998) pointed out that although the conditions of modern state make direct participation of all the people in government of the state impossible, the concept of democracy still emphasizes the rule of the people. That is, the sovereign power is indirectly exercised by the people through a system of representation. Consequently, political participation, particularly in the electoral process, is a fundamental requirement of representative democracy. This is the reason why Appadorai (2004) argued that where, on account of an atmosphere of fear and coercion, people do not feel free to discuss or vote, democracy cannot be said to exist, even though the other political rights are enjoyed by the people. Sovereignty (2010) identified some of the requirements of democratic rule as: at least two party system to give room for freedom of choice; periodic election that is based on universal adult suffrage; free and fair election to allow the political party that has the support of the majority to control the machinery of government and civil liberties such as freedom of association, religion, speech and freedom from arbitrary arrest. Representative democracy rests on the assumptions that the citizens possess and demonstrate some civic capacities. These civic capacities involve three qualities: intelligence, self-control and conscience. The citizens must be able to understand the interest of the community, to subordinate his own will to the general will and must feel his responsibility to the community and be prepared to serve it by voting (A ppadorai, 2004). In the contrary, indolence, indifference and political apathy have hindered the entrenchment and sustenance of representative democracy in Nigeria. Falade and Orungbemi (2010) argued that true democratic governance is absent in Nigeria and many parts of Africa. The political culture in Nigeria is characterized by intolerance, intimidation, thuggery, assassination, bitterness, apathy, indolence, money and ethnic politics. As a result of this, the ingredients of democracy have not been able to thrive after many years of political independence in Nigeria.

**2.3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Local government concept depends on the political arrangement of every nation (unitary or federal system). Adeyeye (2000) define local government as the management of services and regulation of functions by local elected council which is officially accountable to them, under the supervision of central executive and legislature, with enough financial independence of local initiative and policy making. Also, Montague Harris cited in Adeyeye, (2000) states that local government is the local bodies freely elected to the supremacy of the national or state government, endowed with power, discretion and responsibility to exercise without control over their decision by the higher authority. Erero (2000), states that local government is exercised through local representatives established by law to exercise specific power within defined areas. Adeyemo (2005) describe local government as the bedrock for national politics in line with the objectives of the system. Ezeani (2003) asserts that local government is a veritable tool for people within and outside government circles to transform rural areas, and promote rural development. Local government is a small unit of governance for convenient administration through elected or appointed representatives to exercise powers conferred on them within a defined area (Awotokun, 2004).

**2.4 EVOLUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

The modern local governments are the creation of western and traditional cultures. Among the western patterns, the English pattern has been a source of inspiration for most of the English speaking countries and others that have come under their influence like South Asia, Africa etc. To understand contemporary local government, it is essential to grasp the basis of its historical development and evolution. Local government was not evolved to provide a coordinate system of administration for the logically defined range of services; it emerged, piecemeal in answer to a succession of separate needs and demands. The very origin of modern local government was part of the libertarian trends in the first half of the 19th century. Liberty for the local communities to develop according to their own preferences was a powerful ideological element in the introduction of local government system in most European countries. Local self-government was perceived to be an expression of freedom of society. The creation of local self-government in the first half of the last century in Scandinavian as well as other countries was a deliberate attempt to limit the intrusion of central government in the affairs of local communities. The modern local government system evolved in response to the pressures produced by urbanization and industrialization. Due to Industrial Revolution and the factory system, urbanization took place and the most obvious political consequence of urbanization has been expansion of municipal functions. The cities require services, which are not, needed in rural areas e.g. sewage disposal, street cleaning and traffic regulation. Higher standard of urban population created a demand for such services as public health measures and recreation activities, which the rural population is not so likely to demand from its local government. The rise of local government is closely tied to the process of industrialization which gathered momentum in Britain form the middle of the 18th century. Until the beginning of the 19th century the system of local government by corporation in the boroughs and justices of the peace in the countries had worked reasonably satisfactorily because the needs of communities were deemed to be small, their tasks were primarily judicial and administrative. The mid 19th century saw the culmination of the first great phase of urbanization in English history caused by the development of machinery and the factory system of production and the comparative reduction of dependence on agriculture production. The movement of population from rural to urban areas was accompanied by severe problems of overcrowding, law and order and ill-health.15 The existing system proved inadequate to meet the needs of the new urban areas. The immediate response to this was the creation of a series of adhoc, single purpose bodies which included poor law boards, turnpike trusts and boards of improvement commissioners. The improvement commissioners were responsible for paving, cleaning, the lighting of streets and provision of watchmen. These adhoc bodies were effectively controlled by Tory Squires and traditional land-owning interests. The prosperous entrepreneur who dominated the expanding cities and towns resented their lack of control over the full range of civic affairs. Under these pressures the 1835 Act created elected municipal councils and gave to them a range of powers and property. In USA, local government institutions grew in response to a combination of citizen demand, interest group pressure and state government acquiescence. There were only half a dozen cities in 1790 and not until 1820 was there a single city of over a hundred thousand populations. By 1940, however, there were a total of 3,464 incorporated urban places in US, 2,042 of which had a population of over 5,000, whereas the urban population constituted 3% of total in 1790 and 26% in 1880, the figure had risen to over 56% by 1940.18 The reasons for the growth of urban areas had been various. The primary factor has been the Industrial Revolution and the factory system, necessitating the concentration of workers in close proximity to the factories and related economic enterprises. Another reason for urban growth had been increased knowledge of medicine and public health, enabled many people to live in close quarters. Advancement in means of transportation has made it possible for dense populations to live together, too. Another significant reason has been the psychological lure of city life, the great potentialities for adventure, excitement, experimentation, education, economic advancement and cultural development to be found in the cities. Another reason was the extension of the franchise on a progressive basis led to the demand for participation and representation in local affairs, which had previously been denied to a large proportion of the newly enfranchised classes. In the developing countries many of the policy makers are convinced now that to keep the policy decision making centralized at federal or provincial capital means dangerous concentration of powers at the national level far from those on whom these vital decisions have an impact.

**2.5 POLITICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Participation is itself a form of political education. It teaches the mass of the population about the role of political debate, the selection of representatives and the nature of policies, plans and budgets in a democracy, Local elections are especially important. Even non-voters are likely to have their political awareness and governmental knowledge increased through the heightened media attention given to local issues and candidates during the campaign period, Councilors and candidates through their election addresses and manifestos, have to defend their actions op propose alternative policies. For its most active and involved participants local government provides not just education, but a training and apprenticeship for a professional political career “local bodies provide an excellent school of training for the wider affairs of central government.” Laski says that the institution of local government is educative in perhaps a higher degree than any other part of government. It provides an outlet for competent and public spirited persons of the locality to render social service to the community. Form these experienced persons emerge leaders who can take up responsibilities for state and national levels.

**2.7 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA**

The independence was greeted with high expectations from Nigerians, particularly the desire for participatory democracy at the local government level. Unfortunately, the First Republic inherited the colonial local government structure and witnessed a setback in their administrative structure, finances, and democratic activities. The set back in the democratic governance of the local government during the period were noted through two regional instruments as follows: Firstly, Obi (2010:37) holds that local governments in Nigeria during this era were regionalized, and operated with different structure at different regions. The establishment of Provincial Administrative Law of 1962 by the Northern region crippled the powers of the local government in the region, as the Native Authority re-emerged with the traditional rulers doubling as the traditional rulers and regional political actors. In the Western region, Igbuzor (2009:5) states that the local government (amendment ) Law of 1960 abolished most powers of the local government councils, and reduced their functions, with the Local Government Service Board as a supervising agent of the region. The Western region crisis of 1962-65, which resulted to anarchy and collapse of the administrative structure in the region, worsened the matter. The Eastern regions was not left out of the net, as the ministry of local government was used as a regional organ to regulate the activities of local government councils, and reduce the council to mere appendage of the region. Secondly, the emergence of regional party politics and over politicization of the party in the local governments weakened the local government councils in Nigeria. The local government service board and ministry of local government as obtainable in different regions were serving as regional agents to regulate local government activities. These bodies were controlled by different political parties in power at the region – Action Group (AG) in the West, Northern People Congress (NPC) in the North, and National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC) in the East. Obi (2010:38) opines that in most cases even when members of the councils were elected as in the Eastern and Western regions, and appointed in the Northern region, the members of the council were answerable to the political party in power in the region and not the local people. In the Western region, elected local government councils were dissolved by the ruling party - Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP) in 1965 led by Samuel Ladoke Akintola due to the Councils support for AG led by Obafemi Awolowo during the crisis of 1962-65, and replaced with care-taker committees made up of the supporters of the ruling party - NNDP ( Meredith, 2005:195). Similarly, Nwosu (1992:287) opines that in the Eastern region where the political actors were not members of the party in power at the regional level, such local governments were deprived of their statutory functions, as the issue of NCNC government at the regional level led by Dr. Okpara against Dr. Okezie’s Republican Party at Umuahia Ibekwu Local Government Area in the region was a good example. In the Northern region, Onor (2005:71) adds that as an attempt to destabilize democracy in the local government councils, the councils were used to manipulate the electoral process in favour of the ruling party – NPC. Indeed, it is important to state that over politisation of the regional political parties and regionalization of the local governments weakened the democratic governance of the local governments within the period under review. Thus, leading to the argument that there was no functional local government council in Nigeria within this period, rather what was in operation was local administration

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

* 1. **Research design**

The researcher used descriptive research survey design in building up this project work the choice of this research design was considered appropriate because of its advantages of identifying attributes of a large population from a group of individuals. The design was suitable for the study as the study sought to local government: a platform for political participation

* 1. **Sources of data collection**

Data were collected from two main sources namely:

(i)Primary source and

(ii)Secondary source

**Primary source:**

These are materials of statistical investigation which were collected by the research for a particular purpose. They can be obtained through a survey, observation questionnaire or as experiment; the researcher has adopted the questionnaire method for this study.

**Secondary source:**

These are data from textbook Journal handset etc. they arise as byproducts of the same other purposes. Example administration, various other unpublished works and write ups were also used.

* 1. **Population of the study**

Population of a study is a group of persons or aggregate items, things the researcher is interested in getting information on local government: a platform for political participation. 200 staff of Anambra East local government of Anambra State was selected randomly by the researcher as the population of the study.

* 1. **Sample and sampling procedure**

Sample is the set people or items which constitute part of a given population sampling. Due to large size of the target population, the researcher used the Taro Yamani formula to arrive at the sample population of the study.

n= N

1+N (e) 2

n= 200

1+200(0.05)2

= 200

1+200(0.0025)

= 200 200

1+0.5 = 1.5 = 133.

**3.5 Instrument for data collection**

The major research instrument used is the questionnaires. This was appropriately moderated. The secretaries were administered with the questionnaires to complete, with or without disclosing their identities. The questionnaire was designed to obtain sufficient and relevant information from the respondents. The primary data contained information extracted from the questionnaires in which the respondents were required to give specific answer to a question by ticking in front of an appropriate answer and administered the same on staff of the two organizations: The questionnaires contained structured questions which were divided into sections A and B.

* 1. **Validation of the research instrument**

The questionnaire used as the research instrument was subjected to face its validation. This research instrument (questionnaire) adopted was adequately checked and validated by the supervisor his contributions and corrections were included into the final draft of the research instrument used.

* 1. **Method of data analysis**

The data collected was not an end in itself but it served as a means to an end. The end being the use of the required data to understand the various situations it is with a view to making valuable recommendations and contributions. To this end, the data collected has to be analysis for any meaningful interpretation to come out with some results. It is for this reason that the following methods were adopted in the research project for the analysis of the data collected. For a comprehensive analysis of data collected, emphasis was laid on the use of absolute numbers frequencies of responses and percentages. Answers to the research questions were provided through the comparison of the percentage of workers response to each statement in the questionnaire related to any specified question being considered.

Frequency in this study refers to the arrangement of responses in order of magnitude or occurrence while percentage refers to the arrangements of the responses in order of their proportion. The simple percentage method is believed to be straight forward easy to interpret and understand method.

The researcher therefore chooses the simple percentage as the method to use.

The formula for percentage is shown as.

% = f/N x 100/1

Where f = frequency of respondents response

N = Total Number of response of the sample

100 = Consistency in the percentage of respondents for each item

Contained in questions

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**PRESENTATION ANALYSIS INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

**4.1 Introduction**

Efforts will be made at this stage to present, analyze and interpret the data collected during the field survey. This presentation will be based on the responses from the completed questionnaires. The result of this exercise will be summarized in tabular forms for easy references and analysis. It will also show answers to questions relating to the research questions for this research study. The researcher employed simple percentage in the analysis.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

The data collected from the respondents were analyzed in tabular form with simple percentage for easy understanding.

A total of 133(one hundred and thirty three) questionnaires were distributed and 133 questionnaires were returned.

Question 1

Gender distribution of the respondents.

TABLE I

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gender distribution of the respondents** | | | | | |
| Response | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Male | 77 | 57.9 | 57.9 | 57.9 |
| Female | 56 | 42.1 | 42.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 133 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

From the above table it shows that 57.9% of the respondents were male while 42.1% of the respondents were female.

Question 2

The positions held by respondents

TABLE II

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **The positions held by respondents** | | | | | |
| Response | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| **Valid** | Heads of department | 37 | 27.8 | 27.8 | 27.8 |
| Counselors | 50 | 37.6 | 37.6 | 65.4 |
| Senior staff | 23 | 17.3 | 17.3 | 82.7 |
| Junior staff | 23 | 17.3 | 17.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 133 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

The above tables shown that 37 respondents which represents27.8% of the respondents are heads of department respondents which represents 37.6 % are counselors 23 respondents which represents 17.3% of the respondents are senior staff, while 23 respondents which represent 17.3% of the respondents are junior staff

**TEST OF HYPOTHESES**

There is no efficient representation and popular participation in politics in local government

**Table III**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **there is no efficient representation and popular participation in politics in local government .** | | | |
| Response | Observed N | Expected N | Residual |
| Agreed | 40 | 33.3 | 6.8 |
| strongly agreed | 50 | 33.3 | 16.8 |
| Disagreed | 26 | 33.3 | -7.3 |
| strongly disagreed | 17 | 33.3 | -16.3 |
| Total | 133 |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Test Statistics** | |
|  | there is no efficient representation and popular participation in politics in local government . |
| Chi-Square | 19.331a |
| Df | 3 |
| Asymp. Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 33.3. | |

Decision rule:

There researcher therefore reject the null hypothesis that there is no efficient representation and popular participation in politics in local government as the calculated value of 19.331 is greater than the critical value of 7.82

Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted that there is efficient representation and popular participation in politics in local government

**TEST OF HYPOTHESIS TWO**

Local government politics does not encourage democratic freedom

Table V

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **local government politics does not encourage democratic freedom** | | | |
| Response | Observed N | Expected N | Residual |
| Yes | 73 | 44.3 | 28.7 |
| No | 33 | 44.3 | -11.3 |
| Undecided | 27 | 44.3 | -17.3 |
| Total | 133 |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Test Statistics** | |
|  | local government politics does not encourage democratic freedom |
| Chi-Square | 28.211a |
| Df | 2 |
| Asymp. Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 44.3. | |

Decision rule:

There researcher therefore reject the null hypothesis that state local government politics does not encourage democratic freedom as the calculated value of 28.211 is greater than the critical value of 5.99

Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted that state local government politics encourage democratic freedom

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

**5.1 Introduction**

It is important to ascertain that the objective of this study was to ascertain local government: a platform for political participation

In the preceding chapter, the relevant data collected for this study were presented, critically analyzed and appropriate interpretation given. In this chapter, certain recommendations made which in the opinion of the researcher will be of benefits in addressing the challenges of local government participation in politics

* 1. **Summary**

This study was on local government: a platform for political participation. Four objectives were raised which included: To ascertain whether grassroots democracy refers to the active involvement and participation of the rural dwellers or the common folks in the determination and implementation of public politics,  to ascertain whether participation in politics by voting during election reflect as public politics**,** to ascertain whether there is efficient representation and popular participation in politics in local government**,** to ascertain whether local government politics encourage democratic freedom . In line with these objectives, two research hypotheses were formulated and two null hypotheses were posited. The total population for the study is 200 staff of Anambra East local government of Anambra State. The researcher used questionnaires as the instrument for the data collection. Descriptive Survey research design was adopted for this study. A total of 133 respondents made up heads of department, counselors, senior staff and junior staff was used for the study. The data collected were presented in tables and analyzed using simple percentages and frequencies

**Conclusion**

There is low level of political participation in Nigeria. Many Nigerians are not committed to the electoral process and other political engagements. This study revealed that the Nigerian political system and act of governance do not encourage mass participation. This is because of the political culture of violence, intimidation, manipulation, sentiments, money politics, ignorance, corruption, deception and apathy that characterize the political system. There is marginal involvement of the Nigerian women in the political process. Cultural issues, domestic responsibilities, financial constraints and political indifference are some of the factors preventing women participation in politics. This study also showed that Nigerians do not have trust and confidence in their political leaders. Most political leaders were found to be selfish and not responsive to the needs of the citizens. Political leaders made promises that were never fulfilled after gaining political power. Democratic and responsible governance have not been entrenched into the Nigerian political system.

**Recommendation**

On the basis of the findings of this study it is recommended that there is urgent need for political education in Nigeria. Political education should not be limited to the school system. Both formal and informal approaches should be adopted to orientate the citizens on the need for active participation in the political system. There is the need for mass political enlightenment through the media, adult education programme and civil associations. The citizens should be conscious of the danger of their political apathy

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