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Efficient Primary Education Service Delivery in the Local Nigerian Government

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Walden University

College of Health Sciences and Public Policy

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Ebele Kezia Igwebueze

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2024

Abstract

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by

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MPhil, Walden University, 2020

MPA, Delta State University Abraka Delta State Nigeria, 2004

BA, Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma Edo State Nigeria, 1999

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The inefficient service delivery of local government in Nigeria in the provision and maintenance of primary education and educational facilities is problematic. There is the dearth of instructional, recreational, residential, and social facilities in the learning environment that enable teachers and learners to carry out their work and assimilate efficiently. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the determining factors that influence the culture of inefficiency in the primary education service delivery function across local government councils in Nigeria and investigate how the culture of efficiency can be recreated. Sutherland's differential association theory provided the theoretical foundation for the study and the purposive sampling technique was employed. Data were collected from 10 local council staff in a selected local government using semi structured interviews and open-ended questions in addition to reviewing other publicly available documents. The data garnered was subjected to an inductive coding procedure followed by thematic considerations. The analysis suggested that corruption is an umbrella stimulus for the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the primary education service delivery function of local government in Nigeria. This investigation will furnish policy makers with vital information to bolster positive social change through policies that will create school curriculum reforms that will promote anti-corruption education and project national unity and patriotism.

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Dedication

To Him who sits on the Throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Nigeria is Africa's most populous state, blessed with human and material resources. Much like the United States of America, it is a multicultural state typified by varied ethnic groups with their cultures including languages. There are more than 250 ethnic groups with dialectical differences in Nigeria (Adetuyi, 2017; Omotade & Oluwafemi, 2018). The Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba are however the dominant ethnic groups. Upon gaining independence from the British, there was the need for even development and political inclusiveness across the country. This was because prior to independence, the British had instituted indirect rule which met with stiff resistance especially in the eastern and western regions of the country (Bamidele, 2017). Overtime, concerns about marginalization and ethnic and regional differences grew (Agbiboa, 2020; Bako & Syed, 2018). The Igbos felt marginalized by the Hausas and the Yorubas because the presidency and political power has been held for longer by the other two (Nwangwu et al., 2020). Other minority ethnic groups opined that they are considered as mere attachments to the big three- the Hausa/Fulani in the North, the Yoruba in the West, and the Igbos in the East (Bamidele, 2017). The oil-rich Niger-Delta minority in the South-South produces crude oil and accounts for the bulk of the national resources (Umar & Othman 2017; Watt, 2004), also has concerns about marginalization. The Ogoni people are an example of a people in the Niger-Delta who feel disenchanting because their contribution (oil reserves, which amounted to millions of dollars for the federal government) was not adequately rewarded in the allocation and distribution of resources (Amadi et al., 2016; Makhubu, 2018). Local communities in Ogoniland lack clean water,

education, and access to health facilities. Across the country, ethnic mindfulness, geopolitical interests, overall allegiance to ethnic groups seems celebrated over competence and national interests. Ethnic formulation like the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), Arewa Consultation, Ijaw National Council and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) are reflections that many of the ethnic groups in Nigeria complain of marginalization (Abdulazeez, 2013; Agbiboa, 2020).

Presently, Nigeria operates a federal system of state that is divided into three tiers- federal, state, and local (Okudolo & Onah, 2019). The local level constitutes the third tier of the state under Nigeria's system of federalism. Federalism can be described as a deliberate stratagem to hold together varied ethnicities and cultures so evident in Nigeria (Ejobowah, 2001; Emmanuel & Olaniran, 2020). The whole idea is the stimulation of unity in diversity. States that operate a federal system have created local governments to ensure true representativeness, political equality, and a more efficient utilization of public resources to advance the common good (Okudolo & Onah, 2019). Currently, there are 774 local government council areas in Nigeria. The 1999 constitution of Nigeria defined the functions of the local government to include the provision of health care, primary education, infrastructure, and sanitation. (Okudolo & Onah, 2019). These functions can be encapsulated in all that sustainable development and livability provides. Only local councils can identify community values and appreciate community profiling in a federal state like Nigeria (Okudolo & Onah, 2019). According to Gibson (2012) and Jensen and Markussen (2021), direct democracy is impractical in anything but a small community. For example, there are over 21 million people living in Lagos State. Besides, education,

political orientation, and varied ethnicities may impede the development of local communities, if every adult's opinion was considered before decisions were reached. Eligible adults must be democratically elected to be local government officials to represent the interest of the ordinary Nigerian and ensure that basic amenities are provided at the grassroots (Okudolo & Onah, 2019). Local government administration was established to satisfy sustainability and livability challenges. As the most populous African country, it would be difficult for the federal or state government to address governance challenges across the 774 local councils with countless community needs. Local councils are therefore in the best position to implement and monitor development plans (Egbide et al., 2021).

The motives for establishing local government councils across Nigeria lack efficiency (Egugbo & Salami, 2021). Sustainability challenges have heightened, and affordability, accessibility and equity have become the exclusive for the few. There are still agitations by oil producing communities for resource control and resource allocation, because of many sustainability challenges still present in host communities (Umar & Othman 2017). In a similar vein, local councils in urban areas have been unable to address population challenge and urban sprawl. Across the country there is waste management challenge (Egbide et al., 2021). Most plans designed to upgrade local communities are rarely implemented and even when there seems to be some form of commencement, there is no platform to monitor progress. The local government in Nigeria has not been able to deliver the dividends it was created to provide. The shortage of qualified personnel with the requisite evaluative and technological skills, policy inconsistency and enforcement,

corruption, inadequate funds, autonomy challenges, and leadership styles are some of the factors responsible for these outcomes (Altaf et al., 2013; Egugbo & Salami, 2021).

Corruption has become commonplace in Nigeria (Sohn 2020). While corrupt leaders use legislative powers to institutionalize dishonesty, there is the general lack of integrity among the ordinary Nigerian (Arewa, 2019). Everybody seems to cheat and be cheated. It even extends to banks and financial houses, which are supposed to be custodians of financial honor. In recent times, local government council areas have been notoriously dubbed the most corrupt administrative tier in Nigeria (Sohn 2020). Corruption is presently a threat to Nigeria's nascent democracy, as there are fears that the clash among the elite may provide the military yet another excuse to take over government (Ugwuoke et al., 2020). There is a monumental wastage of public funds on personal aggrandizement, spanning from the legislature to the ghost workers in the local council, who collect salaries of nonexistent staff (Egbide et al., 2021).

The inefficiency of local government in Nigeria has also been blamed variously on bad leadership. Leaders are power holders, and what they do, who they are, and what they say have a great impact on the community they are privileged to be leading. Most local council leaderships across Nigeria are despotic and do not engage the people they are leading (Mohammed & Ayeni, 2018). This in turn may lead to no or low community responsiveness and participation. Other scholars take the blame off local council officials and place it on the inability of the public to demand for transparency and accountability of public funds (Egbide et al., 2021).

Ineffective implementation of policies is another attributable reason for inefficiency in the Nigerian local government administration. This is characterized by a lack of political will fueled by constant interruption of programs (Awe et al., 2021). Closely linked to this factor again is corruption and a dearth of requisite education and skills. While these reasons may appear credible, there are anticorruption agencies in Nigeria set up to punish corruption, but inefficiency in local councils still affect Nigerians (Albert & Okoli, 2016). Also, most local councils employ the best hands and heads (i.e., persons with requisite educational qualifications and skills), but substandard, or no service at all is what is handed down daily to the public. This development can be ascribed to inadequate funds, constrictions set by higher levels of government, and a dire need for human resource development (Egbide et al., 2021). In contemporary times, education evolves with technology. What this means is that there must be a blend of education with technology. Deepening further, efficient service delivery demands that local council officials must learn, unlearn, and relearn, and this demands regular training and development (Horii et al., 2021). For example, a local council officer may have studied geography in school but, with the current twist in global climate change issues like drought, pest infestation, and decline in soil conditions, especially as it affects Sub-Saharan Africa, what knowledge he has garnered hitherto will require periodic consideration (Adeyoyin, 2005; Sokoh, 2021). The inability of the local council due to financial constrains to send their officials for trainings and refresher courses, as well as expose them to current technological trends impedes efficient service delivery.

The purpose of this study was to identify the root causes of inefficiency in the delivery of services with a beam on quality primary education in the Nigerian local government system. Accordingly, one of the major factors that was examined was culture and the resulting value system in Nigeria. Culture is the collective goal distinctively expressed in any coordination or organization (Ishiyama et al., 2018). Granting culture is a concept that may be arduous to gauge and monitor, it can pose a barrier to change and improvement of any existing system (Putri et al., 2020). There seem to be therefore a need for local council workers and the general public to have a re-definition of value systems, and this may be achieved by a total overhaul of existing values achieved through a process of re-learning. The average Nigerian needs to imbibe a patriotic spirit as against the ‘it is not my father’s business’ syndrome (Adebisi & Gbegi, 2013; Solanke, 2017).

Once a sense of ownership and patriotism has been established, it will be difficult for the individual, for example, to just drop waste before she or he gets to a bin. In the same way, local council officers can be trained and retrained that monies disbursed serve a much higher purpose of public service delivery than personal enrichment (Salako & Ajibade, 2019). Re-learning culture will benefit the local council officials and the average Nigerian citizen if value systems are changed. Beaming the torchlight on the devastating state of educational facilities in Nigeria, the focus of this study was an attempt to address the foundational reasons for the inefficient delivery of primary education service across local government councils in Nigeria.

Background of the Problem

The 1976 local government reforms and the 1999 constitution as detailed in the

Fourth Schedule provided landmark achievements for local government administration in present day Nigeria (Salami, 2021). Specifically, it is the 1976 local government reform that integrated local governments as the third tier of government in Nigeria (Egugbo & Salami, 2021; Makinde et al., 2016). For the first time in Nigerian history, an even structure was developed that encompassed the entire country. This uniformity introduced structure and well-defined functions of the local councils (Akindiyo et al., 2015; Okudolo & Onah, 2019). In addition, the local government unit became a legal personality distinct from the state and federal governments. Furthermore, the 1976 reform provided the local councils the opportunity to get statutory grants from the federal and state coffers. The philosophy behind this reform was to bring government closer to the people at the grassroots, and to provide enhanced services to them (Egbide et al., 2021).

The 1999 constitution “guaranteed the existence of a democratically elected local government system” (Salami, 2021, p. 363). Even in contemporary times, regular elections at specified periods of time remained a feature of local government across Nigeria. The functions of local government as enshrined in the 1999 constitution section 7(1) includes the provision and maintenance of markets, schools, health facilities and courts, as well as collection of taxes and rates (Akindiyo et al., 2015; Okudolo & Onah, 2019). Today, all 774 local government areas are uniformly and democratically structured. Each local government area is administered by a local government council. The council comprises the chairman, who is the chief executive of the local government area, and other elected members referred to as councilors. The chairman is normally elected, but can, under special circumstances be appointed. The constitution empowers

the president to remove a chairman and dissolve the local government council if the president perceives that the interests of the community and the unity of the country is being jeopardized by the actions of the chairman (Egugbo & Salami, 2021). For example, if there are feuding ethnic groups within the local government area and the chairman seem to support violence from his ethnic group. And if not properly handled it may escalate and cause civil unrest in the country. An administrator can then be appointed pending the holding of fresh election to elect a new chairman (Adeyemo, 2005; Egugbo & Salami, 2021). The local government chairman supervises the activities of the local government and presides over all meetings of the council. All members are enjoined by law to meet, as far as practicable, the aspirations of the people who elected them. Committees, focusing on specific issues, play very important roles in the day- to-day business of the councils. For example, they assist in decision-making and are usually required to report their discussions to the councils. A local government council is the pivot of socioeconomic planning and development in its area of authority. Being also the tier of government closest to the people, it is considered the most important facilitator of economic and social development at the grassroots. Local government in Nigeria is a service delivery channel and has become both a start off for democracy and a place for coaching bureaucrats (Egbide et al., 2021).

Zero-service delivery describes local governments all over Nigeria (Adanri & Singh 2016; Ewuim et al., 2016; Okudolo & Onah 2019). There is the undue interference of the federal and state government in the local councils' affairs. The federal government makes provision for statutory allocation via the state governments to the local councils. It

is not uncommon to see powers that be from the federal government use the local councils to settle political scores or victimize councils controlled by opposition parties, by delaying the approval of budgets (Ikeanyibe, 2016; Mohammed & Ayeni, 2018). What this means is that, where there is political rivalry between the president and the state governor due to party differences, the federal government can withhold the allocation to the local council. The instance between the Federal government of Nigeria and the Lagos State government on the indiscriminate creation of additional local government councils (Wilson, 2013) and the rife between the presidency and the Rivers state governor that defected to the opposition party (Mohammed & Ayeni, 2018) provide good examples. The local councils are left with little or nothing to run the communities. For their part, states indiscriminately withhold from the federal allocations some percentage, and oftentimes compel the local councils to embark on unreasonable projects that do not in any way add value to the local community, in the guise of ensuring evenness in progress made across the state (Abati, 2020; Asaju, 2010). In addition, states continue to encroach upon what should be the exclusive preserve of the local government (Egbide et al., 2021). Cases abound where state governors unconstitutionally disband the total elected local councils' officers, shunning appropriate route and due process. In the not-too-distant past, Governor Lalong of Plateau State dissolved the 17 local government councils in the state. His reason was that it was in line with his party's decision to do away with corruption. Also, the past governor of Delta State replaced local councils' chief executives with caretaker committee chairmen (Obisanya & Hassan, 2022).

Other factors besides interference from higher levels of governments include bad leadership, misplaced priority, and corruption (Mohammed & Ayeni, 2018). A look at the factors suggests that culture maybe the root cause for this malady. The choice of program to execute in a local government, for example, may just be rooted in the fact that the chairman's brother needs a contract, not necessarily because of the community's dire need (Obisanya & Hassan, 2022). Sustainability and livability become illusion because once monthly allocations come into the local government's coffers, it is shared among the local council officials. Consequently, there are no projects being run, no jobs are created, infrastructure is absent, and close at hand is the shortfall of trust and public participation (Abati, 2020).

Problem Statement

Local government administration (LGA) is the third tier of government that provides a solid foundation for the central or national government to sustain development. In Nigeria, local government was set up to bring about economic growth and development that effect positive social change through the provision of primary education, health care, transportation, housing needs, and the provision of basic amenities such as clean drinking water, good roads, and electricity (Makinde et al., 2016). Put together, the provision of social and economic amenities addresses the challenges of sustainability at the grassroots.

Primary education is officially free and compulsory in Nigeria (Osarenren-Osaghae & Irabor, 2018). As a fundamental human right, education is human capital development necessary for sustainable economic and social advancement (Ganapathi,

2018). Primary literacy is the springboard for the development of critical reading and learning skills and competencies necessary for future academic successes as well as to cultivate citizenship and basic values which are enhancers to economic development (Akello & Timmerman, 2018). Local government in Nigeria is charged with the responsibility of building, equipping and maintaining public primary schools in order to give children the opportunity of primary school education. Be that as it may, inefficient service delivery in the provision of primary education and maintenance of educational facilities best describes this function of local government administration in Nigeria. There is the dearth of infrastructure in primary schools, so much so that children sit on the grass in the heat to take lessons (Nnebedum, & Akinfolarin 2018). Instructional, recreational, residential, and social facilities in the learning environment that enable teachers and instructors to carry out their work efficiently and enable learners to assimilate effectively is almost nonexistent (Enighe & Afangideh 2018). The provision and maintenance of educational facilities are imperative as this assist in effective and efficient teaching and learning process (Lee et al., 2019) A review of relevant literature suggests that corruption, the lack of local government autonomy, and inadequate funding may be reasons adduced for this malady (Makinde et al., 2016; Okudolo & Onah, 2019). Although financial viability is crucial to the success of local government in Nigeria (Ademuyiwa et al., 2017), there are still many households that struggle with food security. The average Nigerian is said to be living below one dollar (Chukwuemeka, 2009). Poverty is still a major challenge in Nigeria (Chukwu, 2019). More than half of the population lives in severe poverty. Suffice it to say that the claim of inadequate funds

is directly linked to the misappropriation of funds, which is a corruption challenge (Salako & Ajibade, 2019).

The root cause of inefficient primary education service delivery in Nigeria seems to transcend poverty, inadequate funding, and corruption. It is hypothesized that culture may be the main reason for inefficient service delivery at the local level (Hope, 2018). This is because culture is the way a society does things. It is the underlying factor that affects an individual's or group behavior (Martínez et al., 2021). There is the “it’s not my business” attitude to work in Nigeria, because of the country’s colonial heritage. This was largely because colonialism had created a legacy that enabled a minority to rule over a majority (Mamdani, 2001; Zarrinjooee & Khatar 2016). Upon amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates, British officials remained at the top of the executive, legislature, and judiciary, while native chiefs and prominent members of the local society were at the lower end of the power structure. Consequently, this had attitudinal implications in postcolonial Nigeria. Leaders showed preferential treatment to persons from their ethnicities and approved only plans and programs that benefitted the part of the country they hail from (Bribena, 2019). This not only stifled integration and intergroup relations, it did not douse ethnic suspicion, such that there was a general lack of attachment and patriotism to public work. It is therefore not uncommon to find people approach work with a mindset that is inimical to sustainable development (Chukwuogor & Ndu 2018; Fatile, 2012). So, from year to year, inefficiency in primary education delivery seems to be the norm and bane culture accepted by Nigerians.

As the researcher, I sought to gain an understanding of the feasibility of re-

learning culture such that the challenges of effective and sustainable practices in local government councils primary education service delivery function can be better handled. Most often, culture is acquired (Hofstede et al., 2010; Hope, 2018). In other words, the cultural underpinnings of governance needed to be examined and addressed. In turn, this would provide the best approach to addressing the challenges of ineffective governance in local government administration.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the determining factors that shape the culture of inefficiency in the primary education service delivery function across local government councils in Nigeria, consider its impact on sustainable development in Nigeria. and investigate how the culture of efficiency can be relearned. Culture is the values or beliefs people hold dear., and the way it affects how they do things (Ishiyama et al., 2021). It includes the practices, beliefs, and values that help create how it functions. Nigeria is a very diverse nation made up of over 250 ethnic groups (Omotade & Oluwafemi, 2018). Most ethnic groups celebrate what individuals have amounted to, and not collective good. This is why it is easy to steal public funds for personal aggrandizement, and the same suffering community will celebrate the thief (Hope, 2018). It is therefore important to develop a re-learning culture if Nigeria is to develop.

Re-learning involves an obligation to continue learning, constructive postulations on the subject of human disposition, prospective positioning and inclination, and a responsibility to variety in groups (Dutta, 2019; Schein, 2010). A learning culture may open the leader to a proactive disposition and a willingness to involve followers in

decision making. Also, a learning culture attempts to make persons from various ethnicities to develop trust for the unbiased leader and for one another. Once trust is built, then public and political participation can be enjoined (Ezenwaji et al., 2019; Kamaduuka & Mande, 2014). Culture may change because of learning. Issues that border on sustainable development at the grass roots can be better appreciated when a re-learning takes place, and a new culture-oriented people emerge. What this means is that the more an official subject himself or herself to learning and relearning, the more patriotic and less individualistic they are likely to become (Islam, 2021).

Research Questions

The examination of the following questions attempted to provide a better understanding of the idea of re-learning culture, and its effects on efficient service delivery across local government councils in Nigeria.

RQ1: What factors influence the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the service delivery of quality primary education in a Nigerian local government council?

RQ2: In what way does inefficient provision and maintenance of primary educational facilities challenge achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria?

RQ3: How can training foster and institutionalize a relearning culture?

Theoretical Framework

I used Sutherland's differential association theory as the framework for my study. Differential association theory suggests that criminal behavior is learned much the same way that other behaviors are learned (Lokanan, 2018; Moon et al., 2008). The theory presupposes that individuals often learn values and behaviors when they interact with

others especially peers, friends, and family. This differential learning includes the specific direction of motives, drives, rationalizations, and attitudes- whether towards viewing legal codes as rules to be observed or broken (Matsueda, 1982). The differential association theory insinuates that the absolute basis of delinquency and corruption is culture (Akers, 1996). On the premise that culture is learnt and evolves (Hatch & Zilber, 2012), the differential association theory provides the theoretical framework that can offer guidance on the feasibility of re-learning a culture that promotes sustainability and livability. This theory served as the lens through which I sought to understand how prevalent culture affects individual and group action and how group action can both influence and change public policy.

The Nature of the Study

For this study, the qualitative research method was employed. Qualitative research methods seek to explore and understand human and social phenomena and at the same time is committed to being naturalistic and interpretive (Creswell, 2014; Kalman, 2019). It focuses on a detailed narrative from a subjective angle where unclear issues can be recognized and analyzed. Qualitative analysis presents a holistic account reporting multiple perspectives, identifying the many factors involved in a situation (Creswell, 2014; Schlegel et al., 2021). The qualitative research method aids in developing ideas used to uncover trends in thoughts and opinions as well as to understand the meaning of a social challenge from an individual's perspective. I chose to use the qualitative study design in this study, because the qualitative design provides viewpoints that investigate or explain trends employing an assortment of data springs (Baxter & Jack 2008;

Dodgson, 2017; Kolachi, 2013). Case studies provide the ambience for any scholar to scrutinize the experience being investigated (Alpi & Evans, 2019). Furthermore, it is predominantly suitable to use when there is a need to garner deep understanding and unearth complex issues of public concern, or penchant as in the Nigerian local government experience of inefficient public service delivery and corruption (Osarenren-Osaghae & Irabor, 2018; Suryani, 2013). In this study, I collected data by interviewing research participants which are staff of the selected local government (see Creswell, 2014; Leech & Onwuegbuzie 2007). To explore root cause factors of inefficient primary education service delivery in the Nigerian local government administration, data was collected by way of interviews and analysis of relevant documents from staff of the selected local council area office that understands and are fluent in English language. The data collected was analyzed and elucidations derived from emerging themes and patterns (see Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). Various data sources enhance data credibility and may lead to more valid, reliable, and diverse construction of realities (Luscomb et al., 2022). Data sources included documentation, archival records, interviews, and physical artifacts. This study's analysis and findings were subjected to colleagues' critique, as a way of helping to establish reliability and viability. The complete scope of methodology is discussed in Chapter 3 of this study.

Definition of Terms

Culture: Culture is the way things are done in a group. It is pliable and can be learnt (Cole & Martins, 2018; Schein, 2010).

Education service delivery: Education service delivery refers to the equitable

provision of essential learning skills and amenities to individuals in a community. It is the outcome of both the plans and resolutions of the government as well as people engaged to translate the policies to action (Ehiane et al., 2019).

Local government administration: Refers to the tier of government constituted by law that assists to bridge the continual disparity in governance by making the dividends of governance available to the people in the grassroots (Okudolo & Onah, 2019).

Primary Education: This refers to the first level of methodical schooling and education that meets basic learning needs which includes proficiency, skill, general knowledge, and all way of critical thinking necessary to subsist and cultivate dignity and responsibility (Ayodele & Oyinloye, 2019).

Public Policy: A preferred course of action expressed in the body of laws, regulations, decisions and actions pursued by government that can change with an administration (Ghodoosi, 2016).

Relearning: To remain viable and profitable, change is inevitable. Relearning is that iterative process that “involves creating space for experimentation, then testing out new behaviors and applying new information” (Nguyen, 2019).

Sustainable development/sustainability: Ability to groom tomorrow’s society and culture today (Oghenekohwo & Frank-Oputu 2017).

Assumptions

Assumptions in research refers to that which is taken for granted or accepted as true without proof (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). For this study, my foremost assumption was that research participants will be honest and open in all their responses. I

assumed that research participants were willing volunteers. Participants were assured anonymity and confidentiality and could withdraw at any time without any consequences. Secondly, I assumed that the research participants had full knowledge of the local council's role in the provision and maintenance of primary education and therefore had a sincere interest in participating in the study and did not have any other motive. I also assumed that the sample size was representative of the population of the local council area where the study aspires to make inferences to. I also assumed that the qualitative case study was the most suitable research approach for addressing the research questions.

Delimitation

Delimitations proffer a detailed account of reasoning which enlightens the scope of the study's core interest as it relates to the research design and the underpinning philosophical framework (Coker, 2022; Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). This means that delimitations are intentional limitations consciously set by the researcher. It is in essence delineating a study's span and boundaries. I sought to explore the factors that influence the prevailing culture of inefficiency and corruption in the delivery of services in the Nigerian local government councils and the feasibility of relearning and institutionalizing the culture that both promote and celebrate efficiency. I did not intend to cover all the areas of inefficient service delivery in local government administration in Nigeria but targeted inefficient primary education service delivery. This investigation was delimited to the one of the local council areas of the 774 local government areas in Nigeria. The qualitative case study design was employed as it cruxes on firsthand comprehension of a specified instance and closely connected to the social, political influences (Suryani,

2013). Based on this, the research participants were local council workers in the chosen local council office who have working experience of at least 10 years in the Nigerian local government system.

Limitations

Limitations in research can be defined as potential weaknesses that are usually out of the researcher's control, and are closely associated with the chosen research design, funding constraints, or other factors (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). This investigation was carried out in one local government council area out of the 774 local government areas in Nigeria. Although the structure of local councils across Nigeria is the same, the study was limited to the experiences and responses of the selected local council officers. What this means is that findings can be transferred to other local councils, but they may not be generalizable. The preferred methodology for this study is another probable limitation. The qualitative case study to a large extent is dependent on subjective data. This means that data may show a discrepancy based on participant's interpretation, judgment and outlook (Suryani, 2013) as against the objective nature of quantitative research approach. Again, although the qualitative case study approach provides the environment for a social science researcher to be open to new thought patterns and in-depth considerations, holding a steady balance between the assortment and dependability of responses, so they can interpret the results and be sure of their transferability is another limitation.

Significance of the Study

Part of the reasons why Nigerians have gone through difficult times is because past generations did not consider it necessary to put institutions in place to enable future generations to meet their needs. A self-centered mentality will hopefully begin to give way to community mentality, a much necessary ingredient for sustainable primary education delivery. Re-learning culture will both benefit the local council officials and the average Nigerian citizen. Once value systems are changed, local council workers may most likely provide services to the people and the people will not need to get through the backdoor with a bribe before efficient primary education service can be provided and enjoyed by their communities.

Public policy issues like the dearth of instructional, recreational, residential, and social facilities in the primary schools that enable teachers to carry out their work efficiently and enable learners to assimilate effectively can be better tackled. Subsequently, the serious public trust challenges may become a thing of the past, and its consequences may be reduced, especially in Lagos, and there can be even development across the country. Consequent upon the fact that there has been public outcry against the inefficiency of local government to effectively provide basic education needs over the years, there has been little public participation Nigeria's nascent democracy (Abati, 2020). The after-effect of relearning culture will help integrate Nigerians fully into the patriotic federalism spirit that boosts participatory democracy and national unity.

I intended to provide data that will inform the thinking of public policy decision makers and administrators when strategizing and implementing educational policies vis-

a-vis the primary education delivery function of local government. It is at the primary level of education that an individual develops a sense of cooperation and team spirit.

Access to quality primary education and literacy development may assist to bridge the economic gap and reduce cries of marginalization (Mohammed & Ayeni, 2018).

Sustainable development can become subjects and courses taken in primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions across Nigeria, such that the re-learning process starts early in grooming tomorrow's future today.

Another goal was to add to the existing body of knowledge necessary for comprehending the importance of re-learning culture as it directly affects efficiency of local governance in Nigeria and in its applicability in other developing countries in the Sub-Saharan region. This study should promote social change not only at the grassroots, but in other tiers of government in Nigerian federal and state governments.

Summary

In Chapter 1, the motivation and parameter of the study was set. The general plan was laid out and some key issues that underpin the entire research were also introduced. This includes the introduction, the statement of the problem, and the purpose of the study, the research questions around which the study is centered, the theoretical framework, the nature of the study and the background of the problem. The background of the problem was discussed to provide some insight into the factors that militate against efficiency in the Nigerian local government primary education delivery function. Thereafter, the assumptions and limitations of the study, as well as the significance of the study not only to Lagos state and Nigeria, but to other developing nations in Africa were highlighted.

Chapter 2 of this study presents a review of relevant literature on the history of local government administration, the factors that had hitherto hindered its effectiveness, as well as the conceptual framework on which the study was grounded. In addition, I identify the gaps in the literature. Also, I highlight the importance of relearning culture, and its role in effective primary education service delivery of local councils in Nigeria.

In Chapter 3, I describe in detail the research methodology employed in the study. The sampling strategy and population size, data collection, management, and analysis methods are also highlighted. In addition, quality issues and the researcher's role are addressed in the chapter. Chapter 4 delves into how the study was carried out, its findings and analysis and Chapter 5 encompasses the interpretation and discussion of my findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications for social change, and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this study, I explored relearning culture as a consideration that may influence efficient primary education delivery in the Nigerian local government administration. The factors that influence inefficiency in the Nigerian local government were highlighted, and culture as a root cause was explored. Furthermore, I investigated the feasibility of unlearning and relearning a culture that could then sustainably foster efficient primary education delivery function of Nigerian local government.

In Nigeria, democracy is the recognized and generally accepted form of government (Omamuyovwi, 2021). This may well be due to its ability to accommodate social diversities and differences all so evident in the Nigerian society and candidly described as one typified by multiplicity of language, belief, traditions, and customs (Beetham, 2009). Power is shared in Nigeria between the federal government, and its component units, the state and local governments (Okudolo & Onah, 2019).

Local government was established to equitably deliver basic services, douse ethnic sentiments, and promote representativeness, responsiveness, transparency, accountability, and sustainable development (Adewoyin et al., 2020; Obisanya et al., 2021; Salawu & Hassan, 2011). What this means is that local governments are indispensable municipalities of government that champion progress and advancement with the maximum support of the constitution (Petrukha, 2021). As amalgamating units, local government is fundamental to the survival of Nigeria's federalism. (Adeyemi et al., 2012; Idike, 2016). In addition, local government ensures that the heritage and civic consciousness of the people are preserved (Eyitayo & Alani, 2019).

Local governments in Nigeria have acquired notoriety for corruption, fiscal indiscipline and overall irresponsibility (Adeyemi et al., 2012; Ikeanyibe & Ibieta, 2018). For example, major features of the primary school system include dilapidated school infrastructure and unprepared, uncommitted teachers. Libraries, laboratories, sanitary amenities, health care centers, recreational rooms are decrepit or nonexistent (Nnebedum, & Akinfolarin 2018). Local government is required among other functions to build modern-day primary education facilities, equip them, and effectively carry out periodic sanitary inspection to take care of environmental health (Azu, 2017). The fundamental human right in education which includes advocating for the comprehensive entitlements as articulated in the convention (Willems & Vernimmen 2018), is not upheld as the child is tortured in the schooling process. When children sit on the grass because all the chairs are broken as is so evident across Nigeria, their fundamental human right in education is violated.

The problems within the learning environment are exacerbated by the many man-hours lost to traffic daily because the public transportation is inadequate on one hand and roads across Nigeria are in disrepair (Abati, 2020; Oyedepo, 2012). Roads are indispensable for commuting in daily life and in the geographic distribution of economic growth out of isolation and poverty and improve the quality of life. This shortfall of valued man-hours on the roads leads to teacher and learner absenteeism, learning gaps, and poor educational outcomes (Tao, 2014).

As though these short falls are not enough, there are scores of reasons adduced for this glaring inefficiency in the Nigerian local government. They include corruption,

inadequate funding, problem of policy implementation, leadership, dearth of relevant technical skills, struggles between political holders and career officials, illiteracy, oversight functions of state and federal government and the often-disliked union of northern and southern Nigeria (Ibietan & Ndukwe, 2014; Madubueze et al., 2015). Others include the lackadaisical attitude of local council officers and lack of human resource development and upgrading (Boris, 2015).

The chapter is divided into several parts. The first part is an overview of the travails of local government administration in Nigeria. Next, the literature sources are identified. This is followed by the literature key search terms employed. Finally, the chapter reviews the literature on various aspects of local government administration. The purpose is to situate this study into the corpus of the scholarly literature.

Literature Sources

The literature review will be garnered from multiple sources (including Walden Library and Google Scholar) using all available databases for peer reviewed and scholarly journals, articles and dissertations related to the subject.

Literature Key Search Terms Used

Keywords used include *benefits and disadvantages of local government, factors militating against local government efficiency, Universal basic education efficiency, the concept of public policy, citizen participation, the culture of corruption, culture and globalization, learning, unlearning and relearning culture, human resource development, ethnicity, and efficiency in Nigeria.*

The Literature Search Process

Keywords created were typed into the relevant database and sources. Thereafter from the citation information, relevant reads (preference was given to peer-reviewed articles) were selected, reviewed, and summarized noting the key points. Additionally, alerts for the keywords were also set up in Google Scholar. Via email, these alerts bring me up to date on newly published articles.

Theoretical Foundation

This study examined relearning culture vis-à-vis inefficiency and corruption through the lens of the differential association theory.

Differential Association Theory

The differential association theory was expounded by Sutherland. The theory suggests that when people interact with friends, family, and society they learn the tenets and mindsets, the justifications, and motivations as well as the modus operandi for criminal behavior (Church et al., 2012). Bearing in mind that individuals have unique brain structures that permit definite learned behaviors to be constantly conveyed (Berke, 2003), the result effect is that individuals grow easily into a life of crime socially accepted. That is, it grows socially easier for individuals to commit a crime. Criminal behavior therefore is a creation of ordinary day to day learning through collective reciprocal action. Irrespective of race, income, or family, criminal behavior is acquired through the process of learning. The differential association theory maintains that an individual can break the law simply because she is beguiled by her fraternity and social connections (Lokanan, 2018). Sutherland's principle of differential association holds that

deviant behavior should be expected when definitions conducive to law violation outweigh definitions conducive to obeying the law. (Piquero et al., 2005). The attitudes and meanings that a person attaches to behavior are called definitions. An individual learns two types of definitions, prosocial and procriminal. Some definitions are procriminal because they neutralize guilt or conventional morality while others rationalize the illegal behavior (Akers, 1996). The theory suggests that it is within specific organizations that one learns definitions that are either favorable or unfavorable (Gray et al., 2015). Furthermore, the place of the older or more significant person in a group affects the younger one's learning and ingrained values (Lokanan, 2018). While criminal behavior is an expression of general needs and values, it is not explained by those needs and values, since noncriminal behavior is an expression of the same needs and values. Criminal behavior is evident across all social classes. The differential association theory explains deviance in terms of an individual's social relationships. This theory indicates that deviance may vary in frequency, duration, priority, and intensity. Criminal behavior can be learnt, much the same way patriotic and acceptable behavior can be learnt (Gray et al., 2015). This theory is a valuable investigative tool for elucidating the culture of corruption across local councils in Nigeria (Arewa, 2019; Hope, 2018). This theory provided a guide to this investigation and informs data analysis as well as proposes explanations of causes or influences of inefficiency and it may assist to unravel the connection between culture of corruption and efficiency.

Literature Review

Local government and Primary Education Service Delivery in Nigeria

Education must be deliberate for developing countries to come out of the doldrums of poverty and slow economic development (Akmal & Pritchett 2021). As a process, education involves cultivating learning and developing potential through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs, and habits. As an outcome, education is the instrument for national development (Sun & Lee 2020). In alliance with Article 26 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that everyone has the right to education and that education shall be free and compulsory at least in the elementary and fundamental stages, the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 1999 launched the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program (Nnebedum & Akinfolarin 2018). The goal of this initiative is principally to provide free, universal, and compulsory basic or primary education for every Nigerian child (Akanbi & Jekayinfa 2019). In Nigeria, the period for the elementary education is nine years (Ogunode 2020). The third tier of government (i.e., the local governments) was charged by the constitution to see to it that every Nigerian child has equitable access to basic education. Local government in Nigeria do this through the provision and maintenance of educational facilities, the constant audit of school facilities as well as the provision of fund for day-to-day administration of primary schools (Azu, 2017).

The quality of primary education services provided by the local government in Nigeria remains a major concern (Ama et al., 2020). About 10.5 million children in Nigeria are not in school (Opanuga et al., 2019) even though primary education is

officially free and compulsory. Primary schools seem to be characteristically run down structures with uneven floors in the schoolroom and not a few broken chairs and desks outside the classrooms, and shortages of relevant facilities (Nnebedum & Akinfolarin 2018). There is a dearth of spacious and well-ventilated classrooms as well as construction methods that ensure the safety of children in school. In addition, there is inadequate sanitary facilities let alone separate sanitary facilities for boys and girls and for staff and in contemporary times, epileptic electricity, and internet connectivity (Abe et al., 2019). The health implications of inadequate toilets and sanitation are very serious (Abe et al., 2019). Girls are pushed out of school if facilities are inadequate. To assess the quality and equity of basic education in Nigeria, Ama et al. (2020) carried out a study across two local government council areas comprising several communities of Abia State in Nigeria to ascertain why quality basic education cannot be evenhandedly assessed. Employing the mixed method design, their findings indicate that access to quality primary education was anything but adequate largely due to lack of collaboration of parents, teachers, communities, and the government who are major stakeholders. While the study indicated that inspection and monitoring of educational facilities was absent, they posited that the poor and inadequate school facilities were an outcome of the lack of collaboration and coordination of stakeholders. Opanuga et al. (2019) insisted that the primary school delivery is epileptic because of a chronicle of insufficient backing from government. Inadequate funding has facilitated crowded classrooms and lopsided teacher-student ratios. Buttressing further the dismal state of primary education in

Nigeria, Enikanolaye and Akanmu (2020) insisted that poor school infrastructure is a major contributory factor that impacts academic performance negatively.

Culture of Corruption and Inefficient Primary Education Service Delivery

Culture can be described in terms of actual behavior unique to every community and arising from group interactions (Vega-Zamora et al, 2020). Corruption appears to be a norm expressed in the meter of discipline in the government as well as the day-to-day business of ordinary Nigerians (Aluko, 2002; Nwali et al., 2019). The prevailing culture of corruption in Nigeria is tangibly expressed in the value for power and status (Akanji, 2017; Salmon & Serra, 2017). It appears wealth is directly proportional to the influence and prestige an individual can wield within and outside any community (Akinola, 2019). What this means is that wealth and status is celebrated and applauded in most communities in Nigeria. In fact, it can attract coveted chieftaincy titles and respect for one's family and lineage (Kendhammer 2013; Lateju & Oladosu, 2012). Culture can be explained using five platforms.

- Power distance
- Individualism vs. Collectivism
- Masculinity vs. Femininity
- Uncertainty Avoidance
- Long-term orientation vs. Short-term orientation (Hofstede et al., 2010).

In the light of Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimension's theory, Nigeria can be described as a highly masculine society that pays attention to status, rankings, titles, and people who have these are revered (Fawole, 2018; Nwaekwe & Steinberg, 2016). Power

is concentrated within the elite and individual rights are subordinated (Akinola, 2019). What this translates into is that more Nigerians aspire to be in the ruling class. Status is an issue and there is the dire push for material acquisition. It is as though the criterion for selection into any position (e.g., market leader is based on how wealthy the individual is). Additionally, Nigeria is a collectivist society that celebrates strong relationships (Fawole, 2018). Sometimes excellent and performance in workplace disregarded in exchange for personal relationships and unquestioned loyalty (Chinwokwu & Michael, 2019).

Crude oil is the mainstay of the Nigerian economy (Iheukwumere et al., 2020; Ugboaja, 2017). Oil has for the past two decades provided approximately 90% of foreign exchange earnings and 80% of federal revenue in Nigeria (Iheukwumere et al., 2020; Ugochukwu & Ertel, 2008). Crude oil theft, sabotage, and illegal refining brings so much wealth that one becomes a celebrity overnight with so much cash as their disposal (Austin et al., 2020). Interestingly, because of the spoils from oil export, Nigerians have a blind devotion to power without any sociopolitical obligation to effective governance and the common good (Idowu & Mimiko 2020; Ishiyama et al., 2018). Holding indiscriminately unto power is fanned by the human desire for authority and prestige. There are several oil-producing or oil-servicing multinationals like Shell, Chevron, Mobile, and Nalco that are actively involved in the oil business in Nigeria. They all partner with the country's own Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) on a percentage basis. NNPC is the most lucrative organization as opposed to Shell, Chevron, and their counterparts because one can loot and be retired at worst in NNPC (Adegbami & Uche, 2016). What this infers therefore is that the NNPC is modelled with an unrivalled sublimeness of

sleaze i.e., with appalling and brazen corruption (Osuala, 2013). In any case, it is only a fraction of the population that can be employed to work in NNPC. The fascination of having to travel abroad at least for summer with one's family is enough prompt for lobbying with anything and everything including violence to get into public office and scoop as much as possible from the federal coffers (Esoimeme, 2019; Koni, 2016). Public office, especially local government seems the most viable with the least lens for accountability and a once in a lifetime opportunity to partake of the national cake (Mohammed, 2013; Nwosu & Ugwuera, 2015). As it stands presently, corruption has totally infiltrated the structure, management, and administration of local councils across Nigeria (Adeyemi et al., 2012; Albert & Okoli, 2016).

On its part, local government has been saddled with the responsibility to provide tuition free and compulsory primary education so that the Nigerian child can have access to basic education and uphold the rule of law that is against using a child for exploitative labor (Chukwudeh et al., 2021) and provide constant inspection of teachers and audit school facilities. The overture of the UBE agenda seems to have led to a pupil enrolment explosion as well as multiplicity of educational programs, which therefore appears to make the provision of primary education more capital intensive (Nnebedum & Akinfolarin, 2018). Despite huge allocations disbursed from the Federal coffers, there seems to be an underperformance of local government in its primary education service delivery function (Makinde et al., 2016). Aside the glaring infrastructural deficits, primary school teachers are owed salaries forcing them to seek alternative sources of income (Kontagora et al., 2018). This may be result in school age children roaming the

streets and employed as child labor. Uslaner (2010) captures this scenario howbeit perfectly when he describes Nigerians as the main victims and at the same time the loudest critics (Uslaner, 2010). Adopting a survey research design technique, Fatile et al., (2017) opined that the abysmal failure of the local government to deliver maximally its primary education function can be traced to culture of corruption flaunted in the middleman role the State government plays by hijacking percentages from the federal allotments to the local government. As earlier mentioned, primary education demands a huge capital outlay and the lack of local government fiscal autonomy exacerbated by the State's debilitating actions may further worsen the primary education service delivery function of the local government (Adetiba & Adedokun, 2021). Fatile et al., (2017) advocate that fiscal accountability and answerability of the Federal and State tiers of government will directly affect local government primary education service delivery. Fueled by Federal and State government interferences, the effect of the hydra-headed culture of corruption on local government administration vis-a-vis its primary education service delivery function in Nigeria seem to also manifest as the lack of electoral democracy, God-Fatherism and party politics (Akani, 2017). The elected Chairman may need to show allegiance by being a 'yes' man or woman to the whims, caprices and dictates of the godfather. Whatever is left of monies disbursed from the center may not be sufficient to cater for basic education delivery demands (Egberi & Madumelu, 2014: Nwofia, 2017). It may be innocuous to surmise that the transparency challenge of Federal and State government actors in funding the compulsory basic education in Nigeria has morphed to a lack of local government financial autonomy (Ben-Caleb et al., 2021).

Employing a mixed method approach in his study on advocating for a fourth tier of government, Abati (2020) surmises that the creation of new Local Council Development Areas (LCDA) different from the already existing local government structure may limit the clutch and financial constraints of the Federal government, curb public funds being used to enrich certain individuals, and increase electoral participation in governance. Abati (2020) further insinuates that this stance is necessary because statutory allocations from the center to the local government could be used as a weapon to punish political opponents. Although this viewpoint has enjoyed some measure of approval (Nosiri & Nwachukwu, 2016), the clamor for a fourth tier of government may be regarded as not only unconstitutional but unsustainable as well. The case of the Federal government withholding Lagos state constitutional allocated funds in 2004 during the President Olusegun Obasanjo administration is a faultless example (Krishnan & Ajagbe, 2018). Lagos state maintained its stance that it has constitutional powers to establish new LCDAs to carry on major infrastructural endeavors. The Federal government barred statutory support to Lagos State insisting the state had refabricated its legal number of local councils so it was no longer obliged to fulfill this commitment (Krishnan & Ajagbe, 2018). Siding with a mixed method approach to assemble exhaustive data, Mbah & Obiagu (2019) maintained that the fourth tier of government undermines development as it adds to the burden of local government by begging the question of where the funding will come from, and it can be hijacked by the autocratic lingering of the elite for purposes other than noble.

In another vein, the culture of corruption and inability of local councils to carry out its primary education service delivery function may be the consequence of behavior learned from the colonization and oppression of Nigerians (Fawole, 2018; Madumo, 2016). In his review study of 'Distinction, exclusivity and whiteness', Maxwell (2020) opines that local government officials loot to pursue the British-style education for their children because it is a channel for acquiring and breeding an entitled social stratum (Maxwell, 2020) just the same way the British colonial masters took advantage of the common people via annexation and carnage (Hall, 2020). It is any wonder that attention is not given to infrastructural deficits and the inefficient primary education service delivery by the government because "British Whiteness" which favored certain ethnicities may provide brighter prospects. Maxwell's finding is significant because prior to the advent of the British the good name of a family not their wealth was celebrated. 'Ubuntu', the African value of consideration of others was upheld (Baker & Greif, 2020). On its part, colonialism birthed civil servants, factory workers all referred to as white collar jobs as opposed to farming or fishing directly tied to seasons. What this means is that money came consistently once a month as opposed to waiting patiently until after the harvest. The rumination here appears to hover around the fact that since culture is a communal trend that is not inherited but learned and shared, perhaps oppression and inefficient primary service delivery was learned as Nigerians watched the British impose its indirect rule and warrant chiefs system against the will of the people (Hofstede et al., 2010; Wahab et al., 2012; Zembylas, 2019). However, beyond detractors of the consequences of colonialism, Hall, (2020) opines that ensnaring colonial chronicles as a

vindication for inefficient primary education service delivery in Nigeria is an outmoded and flunked reasoning (Hall, 2020). For example, Botswana has had more than five decades of uninterrupted civilian leadership, progressive social and educational policies, and significant capital investment making it one of the most stable economies in Africa (Mwale & Lintonbon, 2020).

Furthering, the culture of corruption and inefficiency in local government to deliver its primary education service delivery function may be an unequivocal outcome of more than two decades of military dictatorship in Nigeria which was characterized by violent repression, blatant disregard for dialogue, and the veneration of leaders (Onuoha, 2014; Ugwuoke et al., 2020). To assess the impact of non-state actors on basic education in Nigeria, Kolade (2019), opines that to settle the discrepancies associated with military rectitude, free primary education flaunted by the military galvanized into mass enrolment of children in public schools with zero manpower or infrastructural projections being put in place (Kolade, 2019). Drawing data from semi structured interviews from 15 proprietors and heads from an array of public schools, private and faith based owned schools, the author echoes that the heritage of military rule has produced despotic democrats such that “falling standards, failed education policies and inadequate funding characterize the universal basic education in Nigeria” (Kolade, 2019, p.184). The study findings suggest that faith based and privately owned primary schools are not only making giant strides in the right direction but are also churning out better disciplined and academically sound pupils (Kolade, 2019). Although this finding is significant, it fails to

address the accessibility and affordability challenge that the universal basic education was established to address.

The culture of corruption bubbles to the fore almost always as a major factor that influence the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the service delivery of quality primary education in the Nigerian local government council manifesting chiefly in failed educational policies, local government fiscal autonomy, or the effects of colonialism and military dictatorship (Julius et al., 2018).

Primary Education and Achieving Sustainable Development goals in Nigeria

In recent times, sustainable development has become priority issue for governments all over the world (Obisanya et al., 2021). The Sustainable Development Goals are a global call to end poverty, protect the earth's environment and climate, and ensure that people everywhere can enjoy peace and prosperity today and, in the future, (Bagur-Femenías et al., 2020; Rieckmann, 2018). As a three-legged stool that addresses the interplay of people, the planet and profit, sustainable development caters for the needs of the present while ensuring that there remains a capacity for continuance (Bekteshi & Khaferi 2020). Quality education is one of the sustainable development goals that place the emphasis not only on education that is accessible, easily reached, all-encompassing, impartial, inclusive, but also that which supports prospects of learning throughout an individual's life span (Lewin 2019). Sustainable development trajectories enhance the intellectual, communal and responsive dimensions of learning (Jegade et al., 2019). What this translates to on the one hand for the Nigerian child is that he/she should be empowered with the requisite orientations, knowhow, and proficiencies to make and

take well-versed decisions with corresponding actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a society that respects the rights and liberties of its members for the common good. On the other hand, seeing primary education is human capital investment strategic and a key enabler for all other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be realized, it is expedient that sustainable primary education systems be founded on sustainable education policies (Ojike et al., 2021).

Policy compels or prohibits behavior. It is the grand scheme to attaining stipulated aims and objectives of any group (Gberevbie et al., 2015; Tietje, 2018). It is what government does or does not do about a problem that comes before them for consideration and possible action (Ferretti et al., 2019). When deciding public policy, politicians need to have their constituent's best interest at heart (Sahin & Taspinar, 2017). Policy making is an iterative process which includes agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making, implementation and evaluation. Although education policymakers in Nigeria are increasingly focusing on improving access to education, not much attention has been beamed on implementation and evaluation in the policy process (Adejumo et al., 2021). Bearing in mind that primary education is a public policy issue in Nigeria, the Universal Basic education (UBE) policy was created to guarantee and safeguard nine unbroken years of formal education by providing free, compulsory education for every child of school-going age (Bolaji et al., 2017). Be that as it may, primary school service delivery appears inadequate as more children are being enrolled but no facilities to accommodate learning (Odukoya et al., 2018). Undertaking a study on the perils of bureaucratic complexity, Bolaji et al., (2017), posited that the root cause reason for

inadequate infrastructural facilities may be traced to the complex implementation process of the UBE policy in Nigeria. Using a qualitative research approach, the authors collected data from two rural areas through document analysis and interviews. The interrogate uncovered in what manner the policy's staunch stances and prospects were publicized, construed and carried out (Bolaji et al., 2017). Aside irregularities in the implementation process, conclusions from the investigation suggest policy implementers seem distracted by the unstable political environment and competing allegiances that impede full commitment to the UBE program goals and implementation process (Bolaji et al., 2017). Authoring on "policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria: the bane of underdevelopment" Dialoke and Veronica (2017) surmised that the public policy challenge in Nigeria is that of a broadening fissure between the purposes and intentions of policy vis-a-vis policy outcomes (Dialoke & Veronica, 2017). The investigation suggests that policy outcome is negatively impacted by intricacies owing to the lack of continuity of the policy implementation and political will. Strongly supporting this stance, Akanbi and Jekanyinfa's (2019) qualitative historical research describes it as a distressing development of a culture of recurrent policy flips (Akanbi & Jekanyinfa, 2019). The authors stress that policy outcomes do not objectify policy goals principally due to a lack of stability and continuity of succeeding governments. It is as though Nigerian politicians are not interested in enforcing feasible and viable policies that drive long term growth once elected or re-elected. It is worrisome that successive governments leave educational infrastructure in pitiable conditions forgetting that effective learning outcomes support national economic vibrancy. This lack of amity and cohesion among

elected officials seem to place a cog in the wheel of sustainable education systems for the present and future Nigeria. Akanbi and Jekanyinfa (2019) advocate among others that provision of requisite infrastructure from primary school level will nurture and develop needed skills to groom Nigeria's future politicians and policy makers today.

Broadening, it appears that faulty policy not policy implementation is the chief factor that cripples local government from delivering its primary education service function (Adegbite et al., 2022). In a literature review by Osarenren-Osaghae and Irabor (2018), shortsightedness of policy makers seen in the overestimation of available resources, underestimation of cost of implementing the UBE and inaccurate statistical data has translated in the long run to inability of local councils to provide basic education service to Nigerians (Osarenren-Osaghae & Irabor, 2018). Educational policy intentions are basically geared to developing technical competencies in children from a young age which would in turn contribute to Nigeria's sustainable development (Akinrotimi & Olowe, 2016; Osarenren-Osaghae & Irabor, 2018). What this implies is that policy intentions may translate to intended outcomes if qualified teachers, workshops, laboratories, studios and other learning facilities for effective teaching and learning can be provided (Odukoya et al., 2018). Analyzing the interplay of the forces that affect sustainable primary education in Nigeria, Ojike et al. (2021) noted that provision and maintenance of infrastructural facilities require a huge capital outlay and the Nigerian government need to increase budgetary allocations to the educational sector as human capital development directly impacts economic growth and other sustainable development goals as well. The authors reiterated that legislative reins on budget

allocations for sustainable primary education outcomes should be tightened and increased every 5 years while keeping a watchful eye on the inflation rate. Rather unfortunately, an over reliance on proceeds from crude oil and oil price fluctuations seem to have fatal consequences as allocation from the federal government in recent times have been insufficient and unstable (Abdullahi, 2018).

Furthering, educational policies in Nigeria is tailored after British and American standards that demand constant electricity to run workshops and laboratories (Akanbi & Jekayinfa, 2019; Oyedeji, 2015). Adopting a structural functionalism framework in a qualitative analysis on the existing educational policies in Nigeria, Egugbo and Salami (2021) surmised that education policy makers should put in perspective dynamics that can make the policy to be successful before framing them in the first place (Egugbo & Salami, 2021). The authors cited epileptic power supply as one of the major factors that stifle positive education policy outcomes in Nigeria. Although the UBE is in place, the epileptic power conditions with no mitigations or back-up plan seem to reveal the inadequacies of the policy from its rudimentary propositions (Gwaivangmin, 2021; Oyedeji, 2015).

From the foregoing, the assortment of policy formulation or implementation challenge and weak regulatory oversight and accountability of local government culminates to distrust hampering public participation and inclusion in primary education sustainable goals.

Strengthening sustainable primary education goals: The place of Public

Participation

Public or citizen participation is a double-edged sword in the public policy making process. It involves purposeful activities in which citizens take part in government related activities which also prevents the abuse or misuse of administrative authority and political power (Ferretti et al., 2019). It champions information processing from individual elements or small communities to the highest conceptual level with a characterized absence of higher-level direction and it additionally fosters the development overtime of citizens competence and proficiencies (Ferretti et al., 2019; Hoa & Garcia-Zamor, 2017). On its part, local government proffer solutions to problems of basic education development peculiar to their locality within the resources available to them since local primary schools educate future employees, business owners, and community leaders (Mitreva et al., 2017) Participation in educational policies is more than being present in where matters that concern primary education is discussed. Public participation better described as the enthusiasm of stakeholders (parents, teachers, politicians, learners, community leaders and inspectors of schools), provides the most significant feedback on needs and challenges facing the primary education service delivery function of local government in Nigeria on which new policies can be made or existing ones modified (Ezenwaji et al., 2019; Melugbo & Onwuka, 2020). In stakeholders lie the resources, information, opportunities and wisdom to support the goals of basic education in Nigeria. However, the show of indifference and apathy towards how educational policies are formulated and implemented in Nigeria is anything but

worrisome (Ekine & Olaniyan, 2019). Using a mixed methods research approach (a blend of quantitative and qualitative analysis), Ama et al. (2020) carried out a study to investigate the non-involvement of stakeholders in as it concerns access to quality and equity in basic education in Nigeria. The study relied on assessments of a stratified sample of 432 stakeholders in the quantitative study and 72 participants of six focus group discussions from carefully chosen rural communities in a selected state in Nigeria. The result of the investigation indicates that “access to quality and equity in basic education in Nigeria is significantly inadequate resulting majorly from very little involvement by the local government education authority in maintaining the schools, as well as little or no stakeholders’ involvement in the schools’ affairs” (Ama et al., 2020, p. 454). A major contributory factor for this lack luster maybe that stakeholders lack the requisite education and information to engage profitably (Mediyanose, 2018).

Countering this stance in his study on the affiliation of law, politics and society in Nigeria, Bribena (2019) opines that the Nigerian elite who may possess the requisite skill and exposure, has also manipulated the loopholes caused by a heritage of colonialism in the law and politics prevalent in Nigeria to influence educational policies for select affiliations as against public good. Employing secondary data where resulting facts were content analyzed by the use of theme, the study suggests that the symbiotic relationship between policies and sustainable primary education is directly proportionate to the political aspirations of the *crème de la crème* at the corridors of power who are not only unpatriotic but also do not see themselves as stakeholders but would rather send their children and wards abroad to study or enroll them in schools that are far from affordable

and accessible to the average Nigerian. Investigating the relationship between inequality and education for sustainable development, Knutsson (2020) affirms that “public stratification and the widening gap between rich and poor populations narrows entrée to opportunities and emasculates the buoyancy of people” (Knutsson, 2020, p. 650). The study seems to strappingly suggest that this inequality has become effectively put on a normal footing standardized and cemented in Nigeria.

Also, to consider is the argument that the commitment of local government authorities to the virtues of good governance, clearness, precision, and accountability can influence public trust and participation in sustainable primary education policies (Dorasamy, 2017). Correlating this standpoint, Salako and Ajibade (2019) in their analysis on the relationship between accountability and transparency in local government administration in Nigeria, reports that answerability and clarity especially in policy and administration is the right of citizens in democratic societies (Salako & Ajibade 2019). Although Nigeria runs a democratic system of government, the democratic values of public accountability and transparency, good conscience, fiscal discipline and due process are almost non-existent but rather intimidation and repression hold sway (Salako & Ajibade 2019). While public participation in the formulation and implementation of educational policies is extolled, some believe that it can be a laborious undertaking that can lead to protests litigation, criticisms and delay in primary education service delivery to the people it is intended to serve (Mattei et al., 2022).

Salako and Ajibade (2019) suggest that the combats to accountability and transparency challenge starts and end with leadership and in this case the office of the

local government Chairman. They suggest that in carrying out its oversight functions which can include disciplinary measures where necessary, local councils can once again activate trust crucial for public participation ((Salako & Ajibade 2019). What this seem to suggest is that to enjoy sustainable and long-term success, the onus is on leaders and the values they foster (van Vooren et al., 2020).

Local Government in Nigeria- What is the use?

There have been in recent times activisms to thrust aside local government in Nigeria not just because of its inefficiency and incompetency but also for its lack of steer towards achieving the primary education sustainable development goals (Obisanya et al., 2021). Sights of dilapidation and total lack of infrastructure continue to remain common sites across primary schools in Nigeria a pointer to the dismal performance of local councils to carry out its required function, regulation and superintending role in primary education service delivery (Bolaji et al., 2017). Nonetheless, advocating for local government in Nigeria, Okudolo and Onah (2019) conducted a study on the place of efficient local government vis-a-vis the stability of federalism in Nigeria. Employing the descriptive historical method and field survey approaches, the authors opine that local government is the stool on which federalism sits. Federalism is that system of government where political power is shared between the central government and other component units (Emmanuel & Olaniran, 2020). It is suited for a multi-ethnic formation like Nigeria as it increases citizen participation, provides fiscal autonomy and ensures the separation of powers to prevent tyranny (Defere & Alemayehu, 2019). Subsequently, Okudolo and Onah (2019) opine that the grassroots function of local government

provides the buffer for the state and federal tiers of government to focus on highly sensitive duties such as the security of lives and properties. The study also emphasized that once the grassroots functions of local government is well carried out, it was almost impossible to have disgruntled Nigerians over federal government lapses. The authors recommend that local government may most likely perform optimally if it is conceded its statutory constitutional and operative autonomy.

Considering the perceptions of stakeholders on the interconnection between fiscal independence and local government efficiency, Ben-Caleb et al., (2021) also recommend the abrogation of the state joint account to allow for local government autonomy and excellent primary education service delivery. In a somewhat similar but divergent vein, bringing to focus the bond between language and culture, there is the belief that a return to regionalism may better project and strengthen the need for local governments continued existence in Nigeria (Basiru et al., 2020). Regionalism is a political ideology that focuses on the interests of a particular region as a weapon to positively foster liberty and equality, financially viable economies, structural development, patriotism and deep integration (Baldi, 2020). Regions in Nigeria are formed along the lines of ethno linguistic groups. Querying the supposed benefits of federalism, Adebani, (2018) argues that although regionalism promotes ethnic loyalties, it had in the past brought development to regions through competition as against the failed integration attempts federalism projected. He opines that local councils had the attention of the state as opposed to the almost flagrant disregard for its autonomy and constituted rights.

Proponents of federalism and regionalism advocate for fiscal autonomy for local governments while faulting the British colonial masters for promoting ethnic supremacy and the resultant inefficiency in the Nigerian local government system to carry out its primary education service delivery function. Be that as it may, it is imperative to notice that most colonies merged by the colonists were a union of incompatible peoples (Abiodun & Azuka, 2017). New Industrialized Countries like Malaysia, India, New Zealand, Indonesia and Brazil are not only multi-ethnic and multi-cultural, but they were once European colonies that are presently forging on and catching up with the developed countries in economic advancement and social development (De Villiers & Phiri, 2021). It appears that assuaging ethnic cleavage concerns for unity in diversity, is directly proportional to handling the menace of corruption and mismanagement of funds all too evident in local councils and in Nigeria as a whole. Perhaps extolling the virtues of accountability and transparency will promote much needed behavior that promotes a culture of patriotism, cohesiveness, and integration.

Again, is the instruct of thought that argue that local government should be scrapped because of a dearth of good leadership (Sakyi, 2017). A quantitative investigation was carried out by Adanri and Singh (2016) to determine if the feted transformational leadership style will translate into efficiency in local government administration to fully deliver dividends in primary education. While the study applauds the transformational leadership style especially regarding the leader as a role model influencing followership and stalling in no small measure incidences of corruption, the conclusion of the study indicates that efficiency of local councils across Nigeria is not

directly influenced by transformational leadership approach (Adanri & Singh, 2016).

While this stance is laudable, there are lingering questions on whether behavior can be quantitatively measured and studied (Alissa et al., 2018). Behavior is a complex construct that includes expressive language and may provide elaborate account of human perception considering the prevailing culture, situation and people before employing any leadership style.

It is as though to motivate and inspire local council officials to embrace sustainable primary education ideals will require transformational leadership style but to urge the same people to carry out stipulated functions, will require the transactional leadership approach (Ghani et al., 2018). Clearing out a major road encroached by the popular Oshodi market in Lagos State provides a good example in the blend of leadership styles that may push for the common good in Nigeria. Stalls, hawkers and 'Area Boys' had almost taken over the major road causing gridlock and encouraging theft and harassment of motorists by hoodlums. The local council in conjunction with the then governor Fashola led administration of Lagos State had through dialogue engaged locals over time on the importance of clearing the road and enforcing orderliness. Defiance on the part of the locals made leadership to bring in the military and that was the language the people understood. It is not only surprising to visitors that Oshodi can be sane again, but the traffic has lessened, and crime has reduced in no small measure. This may imply that efficient administration demands that leadership acknowledge that managing human conduct is complicated (Muhlenbach, 2020). There is however a twist to the menace caused by bad leadership and that is followership. Village, friends and family members of

the local council Chairman for example, puts so much pressure on him/her to direct funds to their own community (there are many communities, villages and clans that make up one local government area) and encourage the leader to steal. He/she is hailed for this misdemeanor and can be given honorary titles and accolades. What this means is that the challenge of corruption plaguing local government in administering its primary education challenge in Nigeria, is not inborn in the individual official but is situated in corruption as a standard (Arewa, 2019; Hope, 2018). This pressure on officials of the local councils influences in no small measure, the judicious execution of local government functions efficiently (Enofe et al., 2015).

In any case, it may seem that the onus lies squarely on the shoulders of leaders as they double as coaches and teachers of values that influence what is said and done in the long run (Adatsi et al., 2020). A good example can be seen with the 'Toyota Culture' that advances continuous improvement and has become a true model of a group where leadership and followership never stop learning (El Masri & Matkó, 2022). Simply put, the Toyota Way is best described as continuous learning that is directly proportional to improving business operations and outcomes vis-à-vis forming a long-term vision that combines taking responsibility and building mutual trust (El Masri & Matkó, 2022). The key word here it is being consistently constant a situation where leaders lead by example and group's ideals are passed on improved from one generation to another. This may well address the waste of funds, corruption and inefficiency challenge being currently experienced in the Nigerian local government (Egbide et al., 2021). There are however schools of thought that fault the continuous improvement Toyota culture. Apart from the

fact that the Toyota culture does not praise individuals something that is celebrated within the Nigerian national culture, there is the belief that the Toyota way impedes ingenuity and improvement but instead encourages robotic adherence to rules and regulations (Kurakina, 2018). It may be safe to say that although the Nigerian culture has in recent times been largely influenced by the American culture, it may cause no harm if the Toyota Way were attempted across the Nigerian local councils at least to eliminate wasteful spending and ensure sustainable development (Ehiorobo, 2018). Continuous improvement along these lines may bring the much-needed sustainable development across Nigerian local government councils (Chukwuogor & Ndu 2018). Relearning culture is continuous improvement through training and development, and it begins with leadership accepting that efficient governance is meant to provide an enviable future for generations of unborn Nigerians (Adatsi et al., 2020). Progressing, a relearning culture may advance quality service delivery where both the leader and the led have an opportunity to grow from within the system and at the same time instill strong, loyal and patriotic sentiments that will propel the desire to develop sustainable institutions and structures for example a formidable ICT capacity for local government administration (Ariely, 2009; Obisanya et al., 2021).

Worthy of mention at this junction is that there are groups and organizations within Nigeria that are blazing the trail in primary education service delivery strengthening the stance that local government should be scrapped. Leadership in Nigeria provided by Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) like Churches believe that training and development not only forms a man but promotes community good and this cannot be

achieved without education (Adekoya, 2018). Most churches in Nigeria provide efficient and affordable basic education and this is carried out with utmost dedication to duty (Adekoya, 2018). Consequently, Nigerians resort to these schools where excellence is the watchword and the ills like strikes associated with poorly run local and state schools are avoided (Ajayi, 2018). The reason adduced for this success maybe the fear of the supreme deity as is superstitious among Nigerians (Noge et al., 2020). Subsequently, the position of the Pastor or Imam is associated with the divine and venerated resulting in the blend of theocratic, authoritarian and charismatic leadership styles (Balla, 2020). This leadership combo negates all the principles and tenets of democracy and may instill instead a culture of silence and compliance (Omamuyovwi, 2021). It is therefore any wonder that ethnic tensions with religious undertones inimical to sustainable development can hold sway across Nigeria. Be that as it may, Kroesbergen (2020) contend that it is almost impracticable to dissociate leadership from religion in Africa as sustainable development can be achieved only if people build on their own resources which are intellectual, social and spiritual.

Training and development: Panacea to Relearning Culture? Exploring the linkages

Culture is what we do and say, the way we behave and the way we treat each other, and it is best developed through learning (Zembylas, 2019; Vega-Zamora et al, 2020). Learning is the acquisition of knowledge or skills through experience, study or teaching which may alter prevailing capabilities and can impact innovation, improve performance and efficiency (Rupcic, 2019). In current actuality, learning is an important process that profiles actions and it is best described in three phases: learning, unlearning

and relearning (Rupcic, 2019). While group and individual learning is co-dependent on the other, it is pertinent to emphasize that there is no union, association, group, or system of government that cannot learn (Rupcic, 2019). Learning and unlearning sometimes go hand in hand. When we learn something, we most likely unlearn what we had learned (Islam, 2021). Unlearning is the underlying rationalization for challenges with abandoning archaic ways. However, unlearning is much more than discarding the ideals of yesteryears; it is an intentional, deliberate, and dynamic stab at rethinking by individuals and groups often resisted because overtime obsolete experience or expertise has become part of the culture prevalent in the group or organization so any spur to create new ideals, routines or knowledge will be stiffly repelled (Ewuim et al., 2016). Relearning exertions primarily converge on the acquisition of innovative and novel realizations (Dutta, 2019). Using the systematic literature review methodology, Sharma & Lenka (2019) argue that the learning cycle is a dynamic process that does not necessarily need to follow a sequence. What this means is that relearning does not necessarily need to take place only after unlearning in present-day society or organization (Dutta, 2019). Assenting to the contentions around the learning sequence, Rupcic (2019) opines that learning starts when individual, groups or organizations embrace the discomfort of change with the deliberate obliteration from memory such that behavior at any time is no longer influenced by old knowledge (Rupcic, 2019). The impression from the foregoing is that effective relearning requires a learning culture that encourages continuous learning and innovative thinking being developed by leaders, followers and stakeholders within any group (Rupcic, 2019; Sharma & Lenka, 2019). In essence, the

learning culture is an active participative process that includes idea sharing to stimulate and develop best practice as well as developing successful habits that encourage continuous learning and efficiency mainly achieved through training and development (Horii et al., 2021).

To decipher the impact of training and development on group culture vis-a-vis employee behavior, Onyishi et al. (2020) argue that “groups or organizations with strong learning culture excel at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and also tend to modify behaviors of their employees to be in line with the acquired knowledge and insight” (Onyishi et al., 2020, p. 171). The authors are certain that competence and performance increases through knowledge chiefly activated by training and development. Intensifying the import of training and development, Nasrullah and Sankaran, (2021) opine that it is directly proportional to any group or organization’s efficiency. Placing emphasis on schooling as a pivotal part of training for efficient service delivery, the authors maintain that designs and approaches of education bear on worker’s productivity (Nasrullah & Sankaran, 2021).

Using a descriptive analysis and synthesis of scientific literature, Sokoh (2021) claims that training is a sine qua non to accomplish efficiency in the Nigerian local government administration. This is because it opens knowledge and awareness, fostering buoyant resilience and competence to engineer desirable outcomes (Horii et al., 2021). Furthering, Sokoh maintains that the benefits of training local council officials go beyond excellent execution and efficiency at the present job but also for taking up greater accountabilities and resolving multidimensional confronts in future (Sokoh, 2021).

According to Sokoh, primary school service delivery function of local councils in Nigeria is an administrative function and in present times administrative practicalities have not only evolved, but it keeps evolving and have also become more complex. What this presupposes is that aside the apparent need for expertise in a unique field, proficiencies on data mining, problem solving skills, integrity, critical thinking in an ever-changing environment and accountability require a combo of knowledge, skill and values (Briggs et al., 2019). In a similar vein, Enyinna and Chituo (2021) emphasized coaching, on the job training and mentoring as key focus areas in training and development. In their investigation on the relationship that may exist between training and employee competency in a selected local government in Nigeria, Enyinna and Chituo (2021) noted that training furthers a liking or better put expedites contentment on the job and this boosts the motivation level of employees and increases the belief and pride in the organization's ideals. The authors emphasize that this provides value and at the same time minimizes waste of resources. Speaking of resources, the typical chain of command and pyramid-like hierarchies evident across local government councils in Nigeria stifles accountability and transparency strengthening the gulf with the public local government was created to serve and invariably asphyxiates primary education delivery evidenced in poor infrastructural development (Salako & Ajibade, 2019). Training and development may be needed to build a mindset that would pave way for a more flat, flexible team-oriented structure that challenges the old wisdom and thinking like the 'oga' at the top that cannot give account for monies disbursed to address challenges facing primary education delivery function of local councils (Horii et al., 2021).

Kura et al. (2019) however argue that whilst training and development is most coveted, it does not necessarily translate into intended work outcomes. The authors opine that there is the element of counter productive work behavior which is ingrained in some employees causing voluntary deviant conduct (Kura et al., 2019). On one hand, there may be a loss of interest which may result in much of the information received at trainings not retained because theory and applicability is not reached and on the other, council officers may appear to enjoy the archaic work culture for fear of losing their pensionable jobs to more skilled persons and as it allows more than enough opportunity to loot and defraud (Kura et al., 2019). Kura et al. (2019) recommend employee engagement and openings for self-development with a show of care to make certain that the staff have good understanding of the organization's focus so they can stay involved and motivated.

The economic recession in Nigeria and inadequate funding of local government councils appears to have a negative impact on the training and development of local council staff (Oyedele & Aluko, 2018). Although training and development is of the essence in generating competencies, confidence and effective service delivery, there is the concern is how such trainings will be sponsored with the already overstretched budget of the local councils (Onoja et al., 2022). Whether the training is in-house or outsourced, the cost of training and man-hours lost to training is a huge concern (Osarenren-Osaghae & Irabor, 2018). Closely worrisome is the exit cost incurred when the trained staff decides to move on to another organization.

Investigating local government's performance in Kogi state Nigeria, Orugun et al. (2020) insists that delay in the payment local council's staff salaries appear to relegate training and development needs. It is not uncommon for local council staff in Kogi to be owed their salaries by the government. Employing survey approach conducted on conveniency basis, the authors suggest that prompt payment of salaries and promotion may be directly proportional to efficient primary education service delivery (Orugun et al., 2020). The authors opine that this has cascading effect on the performance of council staff as life becomes extremely precarious for the worker and members of his/her family. This means they may be driven to turn to other private means of earning a living to survive thereby hampering performance (Orugun et al., 2020). The cascading effect of this malady is manifest in the use of obsolete and antiquated methods such as files and hard copy documents to monitor the process and impact of information technology through audits for compliance and accountability on contemporary primary education engagement methods (Gwaivangmin, 2021). This is particularly disturbing because it poses a challenge on local council supervisory position vis-a-vis primary schools' accountability to public expectation in today's world where primary education teaching materials and methods have evolved with tools available to transform learning from an academic exercise to an engaging experience, gamification and collaborative learning (Abdullahi & Adebayo, 2019; Azevedo et al., 2020). Furthering, the trickling effect of inadequate funding and late salary payment of local council staff may mean looking away where large number of children are in a class and the workload does not provide the opportunity to deliver efficient primary education expectations (Oko & Uwatt, 2015).

While it may sound irrational to invest in training and development without financial resources, local council administration may mitigate cost by putting into practice understandings that assist individual development that zero in on personal capability and skill drive to progress efficient service delivery across local government areas (Macpherson et al., 2020). Overall, training and development is inclined to instill a sense of self-worth and dignity as well as assist in no small measure to develop the technical and institutional competencies that parallel efficiency (Azevedo et al., 2020).

Summary

This chapter attempted to examine and integrate relevant literature regarding relearning the culture of efficiency in the primary education delivery function of local government in Nigeria. The focus was to ascertain whether the norms, values and ideals that presently define local council service delivery culture can be relearnt. The chapter began with a brief discourse of the functions of local government and thereafter highlighted some major challenges that seem to hamper efficient primary education service delivery with focus on the prevailing culture of corruption in Nigeria. Corruption is an all-encompassing vice. It may not be out of place to suggest that leadership flaws, state and federal government oversight and inadequate funding, are a fall-out of corruption. The challenge of the culture of corruption has produced inefficient processes and systems and confusion so evident in the Nigerian local government administration. Aside the culture of corruption pervading local council inability to efficiently deliver its primary education function in Nigeria, the feasibility of sustainable education at primary level in Nigeria was also considered in this chapter. While acknowledging the importance

of key concepts such as sustainable development, public policy and citizen participation, the ideas of the differential association model provide a theoretical base and support in relation to relearning behavior in this research. This model provides an enhanced understanding of culture in Nigeria because, values held is fundamental to the success of any organization whether public or private (Suresh & Rakesh 2019). The chapter concludes by insinuating that training and development may facilitate relearning the culture that enhances patriotism and sustainable primary education efficient delivery. Chapter 3 will consider the research methodology, strategies of inquiry and pragmatic sequence for generating the data for the study. In addition, the chapter will also discuss the design appropriateness and justification of the chosen research method, the sample, sampling methods, procedures and the target population, data management and data analysis as well as the ethical issues envisaged.

Chapter 3: Research Design

A well-established local government system is the bedrock for national unity, integration, and sustainable development (Ben-Caleb et al., 2021; Kasim & Agbola, 2017). Be that as it may, the fundamental obligation of local government to proficiently deliver public amenities to all its citizens in Nigeria is anything but efficient (Ehiane et al., 2019). The problem with the primary education service-delivery has made the larger portion of the public overtime to be pained, unsympathetic, and wary of local government administration in Nigeria (Abati, 2020). The learning environment of primary schools across Nigeria is characterized by dilapidated infrastructure, lack and unavailability of qualified teachers largely due to poor management, diversion, and embezzlement of funds (Enighe & Afangideh, 2018). Local government in Nigeria seems to place premium in recent years only on payment of taxes ignoring education which is the springboard to sustainable national development (Makinde et al., 2016). This inefficiency has been blamed on several reasons which include colonialism, God-Fatherism, inadequate funding, and corruption (Egugbo, 2020). Despite many noble attempts, corruption remains a problem. (Nwali et al., 2019). Corruption has become a norm and transparency an illusion across the Nigerian local government administration irrespective of several seminars and punitive measures that have been put in place (Salako & Ajibade, 2019).

Tenets of democracy which includes responsiveness, answerability, participation, and human development seem to be ignored (Akanji, 2017). Earlier considerations have concentrated on some of the aforementioned factors but with little success. Since service delivery is directly proportional to service quality and service quality is ingrained in

maintained values, the purpose of this investigation therefore was to explore the determining factors that shape the culture of inefficiency in the primary education service delivery function across local government councils in Nigeria, and how culture can be recreated.

This chapter consists of several parts. The research design as well as the rationale is discussed. Furthering, the research questions are restated and my role as the researcher explained. I also discuss the methodology that guided the study as well as data collection and data analysis techniques. Issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations were also not glossed over.

Research Tradition and Rationale

This study was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What factors influence the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the service delivery of quality primary education in the Nigerian local government council?

RQ2: In what way does inefficient provision and maintenance of primary educational facilities challenge achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria?

RQ3: How can training foster and institutionalize a learning culture?

The intent of this study was to explore the feasibility of relearning culture as a decisive factor for redressing inefficiency in the Nigerian local government administration. The qualitative research tradition is most preferred of the three main research design options open to researchers in the social sciences (i.e., the qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches) to address this study. Researchers who use the qualitative research design seek to tackle the complexity of human behavior. They

attempt to enlighten, identify with, and comprehend the meaning of a social challenge from an individual's perspective (Alase, 2017). Quite unlike the quantitative research design that is tailored to be objective and scientific as it explores the relationship between two variables and demands that data be collected and converted into numerical form so that statistical calculations and analysis can be made and conclusions drawn (Grech, 2019; Savela, 2018), the qualitative research method is used to understand the meaning of a social challenge from an individual's perspective as it has a flexible structure and uses an inductive style (Kalman, 2019).

Advocates of the quantitative research approach suggest that qualitative designs not only lack rationality and arduous intensity, the validity, and reliability of research findings may appear skewed and distorted by the personal idiosyncrasies and bias of the researcher (Rahman, 2017). Be that as it may, proponents of the qualitative research design contend that the virtue of rigor and quality in qualitative studies are measured in terms of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Houghton et al., 2013; Ramani & Mann, 2016). On its own, mixed methods approach is employed to augment the strong points and at the same time surmount the drawbacks of the qualitative and quantitative designs (Taheri et al., 2019). Besides the extra time and research resources needed for this method; the researcher must be well versed in mixed methods design to employ it.

Culture is an abstraction, and it is difficult to analyze numerically because of its underlying nature (Majid et al., 2018). Considering the purpose and research questions of this investigation and the nature of culture making it almost difficult to be conveyed by a

straightforward yes or no, the qualitative research approach which presents a holistic account reporting multiple perspectives as well as identifying the many factors involved in a situation (Creswell, 2014; Kalman, 2019) was preferred. Furthering, the guiding qualitative methodology employed is the case study.

Qualitative case study can be described as a practical survey that examines a present-day experience (the case) in depth and within its real-world context through defining the area of study to a single or to a small number of units (Yin, 2018). The focus of the case study approach is grounded in its adeptness to succinctly encapsulate the convoluted nature of real-life situations so that an event or fact can be investigated in greater levels of depth (Dodgson, 2017). Employing the qualitative case study strategy implied that data was fundamentally supplied via in-depth interviews alongside documents and archival records which enrich and validate study outcomes (Alpi & Evans, 2019). The case study approach was particularly useful to employ in my attempt to obtain an in-depth appreciation of the determining factors that shape the culture of inefficiency in the primary education service delivery function across local government councils in Nigeria, and how the culture of efficiency can be recreated. The qualitative case study research method process permitted information sharing between me (the researcher) and research participant, affording an opportunity to share and learn (Kalman, 2019). The complexity of data garnered due to differing perspectives and interactions hopefully led to more accurate conclusions (Osarenren-Osaghae & Irabor, 2018). To do case study effectively, the researcher must gain the trust of research participants.

Role of the Researcher

Although Yoruba is the local language spoken across Lagos State, English and its variant (Pidgin English) are well understood and spoken in the selected local council government office. This investigation was carried out without an interpreter. I was the human instrument as well as the interviewer relying on my skill and competence garnered from critical thinking and writing skills in Walden University. Bearing in mind that social change is directly proportional to an objective mindset and mutual respect in the research process, I carried out my role as a researcher with curiosity rather than having a preset opinion (see Abramovich, 2020). This simply connotes that my role as the researcher was colored by integrity with no falsehood to gain the trust of research participants and garner quality information (Azungah, 2019).

Materials used included pen, paper, audio tape and my laptop. There was no need for GPS as it was within my vicinity and no cameras and videos because it would illicit negative reactions and cause participants to stop the interview. This study was conducted in Nigeria, precisely in Lagos State, the economic hub of the nation. I shared no personal or professional relationship with participants in this study as I have never worked in any civil or public service organization in Nigeria. Triangulation was used to check the quality of information, as it improves the quality of data and the accuracy of findings and it captures different dimensions of the same phenomenon (see Farquhar et al., 2020). In addition, triangulation is important because most people present an idealized image of themselves.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

The purposive sampling strategy, also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling was employed in this study. It is a type of non-probability sampling method that permits the researcher to rely on her own judgment to engage representatives from the department in charge of education within the selected local government in Lagos so that the varied standpoints on the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the primary education service delivery and the feasibility of relearning a culture of sustainable efficiency can be adequately mirrored. Purposive sampling zooms into the unique features of a population which will best facilitate answers to the research questions (Acharya et al., 2013; Andrade, 2021). Often, qualitative researchers employ this strategy both to detect and decide on the participant with the requisite information that resonates strongly with the intent of the study vis-à-vis the best use of available resources (Etikan et al., 2016). Furthering, Creswell posits that small numbers are typical of qualitative research (Creswell, 2014). Although proponents of quantitative research strategy see small sample size employed by qualitative researchers as an apparent debility, a small sample size is a basic feature of qualitative techniques given that the data are meant to supply profound and ample exploration rather than broad surveys of phenomena (Tutelman & Webster, 2020). In the light of this, the sample size for this investigation was 10. There are 774 local government councils in Nigeria, and 20 local government council areas in Lagos state. Of the 20, the selected local government in Lagos and its department for education is singled because sample sizes involving one single case can be highly informative and

meaningful (Boddy, 2016). However, the guiding principle that affects sample size in the data collection process is saturation. Saturation can best be described as the point where the process of data gathering does not generate any new and pertinent information (Boddy, 2016; Low, 2019). Saturation is a function of the researcher's judgment based on her confidence that the research questions have been adequately addressed (Blaikie, 2018). The selection criteria of research participants for this study include:

1. The level of education. Research participants who have at least a first degree were selected because they are considered better exposed and positioned to appreciate contemporary economic, social and environmental issues having developed intellectual and rational competences through advanced vocation intensities (Vedder, 2018).
2. Research participants selected were officers whose workplace and premise of operation is in the study site indicative that local council officers are acquainted with the research area.
3. Research participants were able to read, write, and speak the English language very well. What this means is that each participant is smooth and confident, with no requisite need to translate into the local Yoruba language the purpose of the study and research questions.
4. While the lockdown due to the Covid 19 pandemic are eased in Lagos as also in most countries, research participants were selected based on accessibility to email address and other location as may be deemed necessary just in case there was need for further elucidation and follow-up questions (Ivbijaro et al., 2020).

Furthering, in depth interviews with open ended questions was employed. This was both to gain group trust and at the same time get access to information that will foster an understanding of experiences and perceptions of participants.

Data Collection

Prior to study participants being engaged and data collected, necessary IRB approval was gotten (08-30-22-0423360). A formal letter of introduction of the proposed study was drafted and submitted to the office of the local government Chairman detailing the intent of the investigation, request for participants as well as the anticipated time commitment of participants. Information for this investigation was mainly from interviews and documents and observational field notes to garner mindsets, stances, preferences and concerns (Creswell, 2014). An interview is a procedure designed to obtain information from a person through oral responses to oral inquiries. Interviews are one way to gather data for research. Also, interviews are usually used to explore a topic or topics in considerable depth with a few people. In qualitative research, interviewing is an interactional, thematic, topic-centered, exchange of dialogue between researcher and participants, in a fluid structure that allows for unexpected issues to emerge (Edwards & Holland, 2020). Interviews are most effective for qualitative research as they facilitate better understanding, and explore research participant's opinions, experiences, preferences and behavior. For this study, interviews were face-to-face and telephone. Although mail and online interviews are less expensive, it was not suited for this study. On the one hand there is the internet connectivity challenges so evident across Nigeria (Ukwueze, 2018) and on the other graphic clues and expressive gestures between

researchers and research participants are picked up majorly in face-to-face interview contacts (Edwards & Holland, 2020). The data collection instrument for this investigation was semi-structured interviews with open ended questions focused on understanding the root cause of inefficiency in the Nigerian local government. Attached is the interview protocol in Appendix. This guide was necessary to build a boundary so that the issues that need to be explored are focused on.

Data Analysis

Thematic data analysis strategy was used for this study. Data collected was sorted into codes and thereafter emerging themes (categories) were organized into electronic files and named for easy identification. What this means is that the exact words and a detailed commentary of research participants was captured and cataloged into themes to guide the data analysis and interpretation keeping a keen eye for key ideas and surfacing themes. I had intended to use the Nvivo (QDA-Qualitative Data Analysis) software for data management but it is expensive, and requires some extra time to understand and to learn (Dollah et al., 2017). For this study, the Dedoose QDA software was employed. The Dedoose software is easier to learn and use, it is affordable (charges only for months used) and can be accessed anytime anywhere using any internet connected device and this addresses the data availability challenge in Nigeria.

Data was properly documented and a track of the source of information kept maintaining data integrity. Once data was complete a copy of all the data was made as back-up in case there is a mishap. Transcription procedures were documented as transcripts to assist the researcher to encapsulate original nuanced responses from

research participants. Analysis is an iterative and ongoing process. Codes, categories and their interpretation demand critical reading and thinking skills to regurgitate, fine tune and analyze data. What this means is that although the Qualitative Data Analysis Software (QDA) offers tools that assist with qualitative research such as transcription analysis, coding and text interpretation, improved validity and auditability- data analysis is a non-delegable task, requiring the constant proximity of the researcher (Dollah et al., 2017).

Issues of Trustworthiness

The steer for trustworthiness addresses the researcher's attempt to establish the rigor, integrity and fidelity of study findings. Simply put, it is the degree to which the outcomes are an accurate portrait of the individual experiences under examination (Curtin & Fossey 2007). Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are the considerations expended in the qualitative tradition to define research quality (Amankwaa, 2016; Hadi & Closs, 2016; Houghton et al., 2013). These considerations fully explored in this investigation in no small measure eventually contribute to practice and policy (Loh, 2013). Study findings are credible if truth and accuracy can be authenticated. In this study, triangulation and data saturation are employed to establish credibility. Transferability is expressed to the degree of the study's applicability to other contexts circumstances and situations. Suffice it to say that a study cannot be transferable if it is not credible. I used thick, rich and elaborate descriptions to buttress transferability. A study is deemed dependable and confirmable based on the degree of neutrality and auditability as well as repeatability and consistency. What this means is that every step

taken in the data collection process was both documented and reviewed in order to provide a rationale for the study findings and conclusions. Letters of informed consent were provided to research participants to ensure data confidentiality and participant privacy.

Ethical Procedures

Prior to data collection process for this investigation, mandatory IRB approval was sought and gotten. Thereafter, I proceeded to make calls and visit the office of the local government to invite research participants. Interviews were arranged in line with research questions and not tied to personal suppositions. In addition, participant privacy, informed consent and data confidentiality were duly communicated to study participants. It was also reiterated that research participation is strictly voluntary with no incentives attached. All participants were assured that their interest and contribution in the study will not be used against them. No identifying information about participants is revealed as names and responses of participants are strictly confidential. Research participants were informed that they are free to withdraw if they were not comfortable at any time.

Summary

The intent of this study is to investigate the feasibility of relearning culture in a bid to address the root cause of inefficient primary education service delivery across local councils in Nigeria. In this chapter, why the qualitative tradition is the appropriate and preferred methodology to employ for the investigation was discussed. Also, described in this chapter are the approaches used for data collection and data analysis as well as

concerns for trustworthiness and ethical procedures. In depth look into how the study was conducted, its findings and analysis are discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Findings

In this chapter, I present the findings of my study following my engagement with 10 local government officials of a selected local government in Lagos State Nigeria. The intent of this study was to investigate the root cause factors that have marred efficient primary education service delivery in Nigeria and explore the feasibility of relearning culture such that the emerging culture becomes that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own. My goal was to garner data and the resulting analysis that policymakers may benefit from in bolstering current national policies on primary education in Nigeria.

The focal research questions this study attempted to answer include:

RQ1: What factors influence the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the service delivery of quality primary education in a Nigerian local government council?

RQ2: In what way does inefficient provision and maintenance of primary educational facilities challenge achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria?

RQ3: How can training foster and institutionalize a relearning culture?

Also, I asked research participants appropriate questions to acquire substantial information that would facilitate ample comprehension of the observable facts. They included participants' general opinions about local government efficiency vis-à-vis what the Fourth Schedule of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria stipulates and if there are contemplations that this tier of government should be changed or removed. Adjunct queries also include the effectiveness of the various measures taken by the Nigerian government to address the corruption challenge; the extent of local government authority

that affects primary education in its domain without interference by the state or federal government, and the frequency of staff trainings. Research participants were also asked to offer policy recommendations as well as proposal to local council chairmen on what can be done differently to promote efficient primary education service delivery.

Placing in the fore my research questions, the problem statement and the purpose of the study, the qualitative research method was my preferred research approach. The qualitative research method is used to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Kalman, 2019). What this means is that this research methods assists in examining convoluted actualities by postulating mechanisms for studying, investigating and ascertaining the numerous causal dynamics to a phenomenon (Bhangu et al., 2023). My considerations for the qualitative case study design hover around gaining in-depth understanding of the different aspects, characteristics, meaning and implications of the phenomena within its real-life framework (Yin, 2018). In this chapter, the system and technique detailing how data was generated, assembled, and analyzed is presented as well as the developing discoveries from the research questions.

Setting

The study was in Lagos State the economic hub of Nigeria. Located on the South-Western part of Nigeria, Lagos is the smallest state in Nigeria, but it has the highest urban population (Olajide, & Lawanson, 2022; Rosenzweig & Wilson 2023). The state has 20 local governments, and the research location was in one of the local government offices situated in a densely crowded street within the Lagos metropolis. After the Walden

University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) endorsement of this study (08-30-22-0423360), I had several connect sessions with research participants via phone calls and physical visits. An administrative map of Nigeria highlighting Lagos with the local government areas is presented in Figure 1

Figure 1

Map of Nigeria Showing 36 States and highlighting Lagos



Demographics

This qualitative case study investigation involved 10 participants drawn from the education department within the selected local government in Lagos State Nigeria. The interview questions steered by this study's research questions and posed to research participants did not include key demographic data. Aside from protecting the confidentiality of participants in line with the requisites of the formal letter of consent, the quantifiable data impact of research participants was not central to the purpose of the investigation. Notwithstanding the fact that demographic data may not be considered obligatory in qualitative research, there are submissions that they present some level of conjecture that can be beneficial in the research (Antwi & Al Jaber, 2022; Yildiz, 2020). My face-to-face interviews of the 10 research participants revealed two were females and eight were males. Illustration below enumerates gender information of research participants.

Table 1

Gender Statistics of Participants

Name of Participant	Female	Male
LGRP_01	-	1
LGRP_02	-	1
LGRP_03	1	-
LGRP_04	-	1
LGRP_05	-	1
LGRP_06	-	1
LGRP_07	-	1
LGRP_08	1	-
LGRP_09	-	1
LGRP_10	-	1
Total	2	8

Note. The ratio of male participants to female participants was 8:2 or 80% to 20%

In addition, all participants in the research were adult Nigerians available to me through phone calls and personal visits and had worked in the local council for upwards of 10 years. They could communicate and understand English language so there was no need for an interpreter.

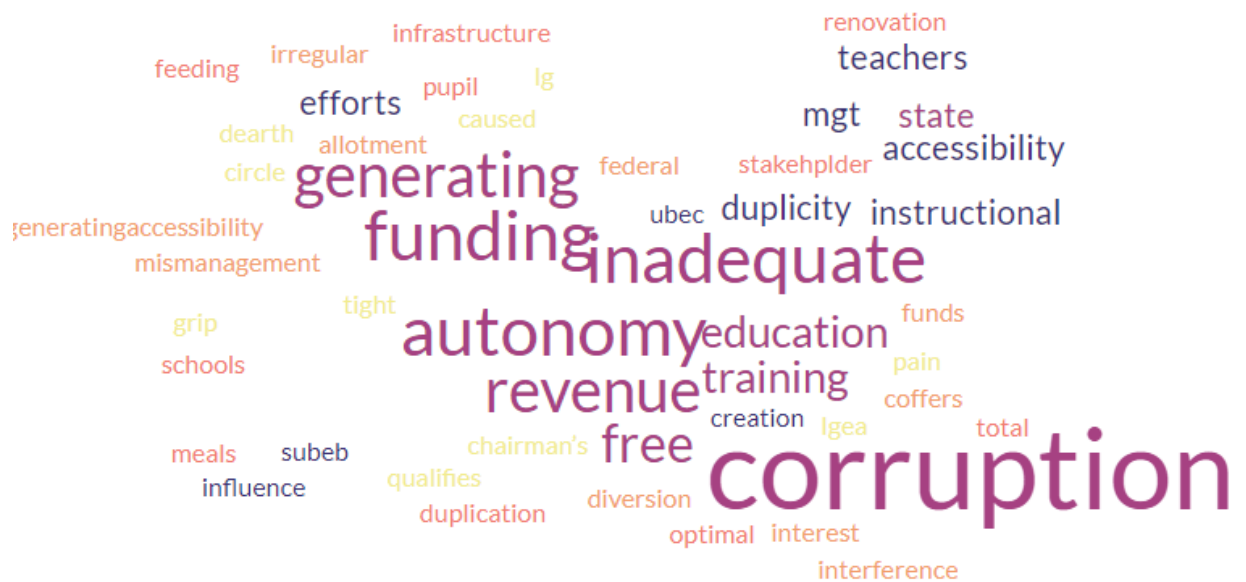
Data Collection

On guidance from the office of the chairman, calls and visits were made to the head of education (HoD) of the selected local government who provided right of entry to prospective research participants within the local council. Data from interviews were collected from 10 purposefully selected local council officers, whose offices were located within the research setting for accessibility. Also, the interviewees were those who had served in the local government for at least 10 years, being conversant with the challenges plaguing primary education service delivery at the third tier of government. Also, other requirements for selecting the participants included the ability to read, write, and converse fluently in English. As soon as research participants consented to the interviews, appointments were made and conducted at the rooms provided by the selected local council. Afterwards, they were asked to sign the informed consent forms which embodied the confidentiality clauses of the study. Research participants were guaranteed that their identities (herein identified as LGRP_01- LGRP_10) as well as all data recorded for the interviews will be protected and put in safekeeping and thereafter destroyed after 5 years. Other supports explored for the intents of collecting information included the

Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999 as amended) and the Bye Laws of local government in Nigeria.

Data Analysis

The data for this qualitative case study were analyzed using thematic analysis. As an essential part of qualitative research, it involves reading through the data collected, and looking for patterns in the meaning of the data to find themes (Morgan, 2022). To achieve this, data must be fragmented through coding. Worthy of note is that this is not a once and for all activity it is iterative and cyclical (Williams & Moser, 2019). Firstly, I had to read and reread the information provided by research participants noting perceptions to intimately comprehend the data. Then I assigned labels to the three main research questions for the study. Labels are phrases that best describes significant information vis-a-vis addressing the research question. These labels were the parent codes created. Thereafter transcripts were routed into the Dedoose QDA software to decipher first-hand the rate of recurrence of the words used by research participants. I utilized the words pinpointed as the preliminary child codes under the labels in the first consideration of the interviews. The rate of recurrence of words was an advantage as it provided me the opportunity to get some insight on the drift of the study and likely outcomes in the subsequent phases of my investigation. Figure 2 reflects the frequencies of words in the data that provide an indication of related concepts for research participants.

Figure 2*Word Frequency*

Subsequent on the preliminary coding, I carried out the thematic analysis of the interviews to ascertain archetypical concepts, propositions and insights from the responses of research participants. What this means is that I studied the interviews severally to crystallize the codes relevant to the research question of my study. As earlier

highlighted, coding is an iterative and lengthy and rigorous process (Williams & Moser, 2019). Codes were created, dropped, and recreated until data was redundant and there was a cessation of perceptions. From these codes, identical viewpoints were classified and arranged together. Amidst the recurrent appraisal of data from research participants, codes were then developed into categories which were hereafter conceptualized into themes that address the research question.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Advocates of quantitative research approaches contend that experience, attitudes, and perceptions that typify qualitative methods are short of the scientific benchmarks of validity, reliability, and objectivity which bequeath research its quality and credibility. However, it is the same facets that are deemed basic, high priced, and indispensable, as they consistently augment scales and inclines to deepen the entirety of outcomes. To address this, proof of reliability and validity in qualitative research methods is required (Amankwaa, 2016; Cian, 2021). As chronicled in Chapter 3, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are the significances utilized in the qualitative tradition to define research quality (see Amankwaa, 2016; Hadi & Closs, 2016; Houghton et al., 2013).

Credibility

Credibility in qualitative studies is to establish confidence that the results (from the perspective of the research participants) are true, credible and believable (Forero et al., 2018). The credibility of this study was ascertained by carrying out member checking with the 10 research participants who were asked to examine and revise transcripts as

well as the elucidations from the data comments if they were accurate. Furthermore, I confirmed the credibility of my study by conforming to the Walden University's IRB research standards and as a result, this study was approved by the Walden University's IRB with the approval number # is 08-30-22-0423360. I also made use of multiple data sources such as interviews, analysis of documents and reflection field notes which fostered triangulation and facilitated the establishment of internal credibility and consistency. There was no major alteration to the credibility plans drawn in chapter three.

Transferability

Equivalent to external validity in quantitative research, transferability provides the evidence that research findings can be applicable to similar situations, setting, context, and group or individuals (Amankwaa, 2016). Detailed description of the context in which the research was performed and how this shaped the findings is a sure way to recognize transferability in qualitative research (Younas et al., 2023). Worthy of mention at this junction is that a researcher cannot provide evidence that research findings are applicable rather her responsibility is to demonstrate that it might be applicable. I ensured therefore that the data collected for my study were detailed descriptions of the entire investigative process.

Dependability

To assure rigor and trustworthiness in qualitative research, dependability speaks to the quality of replication given similar conditions. It establishes that study findings are consistent and repeatable (Janis, 2022). Dependability ensures that adequate information is made available such that a different researcher can chart the same procedural steps,

even though separate assumptions may be attained. For this study, I requested that research participants substantiate the explanations of themes I had detailed as sprouting from their interviews. This afforded them the chance to weigh in the clarifications of their standpoint as well as build their trust in my study.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the qualitative researcher's comparable concern to objectivity (Stahl & King, 2020). It ensures as far as possible that the study outcomes are the result of the experiences and concepts of the research participants as opposed to the preferences or bias of the researcher. It is accomplished through an audit trail of the research clearly detailing the link or relationship between the research data and findings. I achieved confirmability for this study majorly through member checking and re-checking the data during the entire data collection process.

Results

Research Question 1

The first research question asked was "What factors influence the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the service delivery of quality primary education in a Nigerian local government council?" From the analysis of the interviews, 70% reported that the major contributory factor for inefficient primary school education service delivery is the destructive force of corruption. Research participants opined that other key factors were interference by the state government, inadequate funding, several agencies doing same functions, over dependence on federal government allocation, the level of education, mindset and the focus of the local government chairman and shortage of qualified

teachers. The inability of the education department to generate its own revenue as well as gross mismanagement of funds and resources by the local government was also reported by three of the participants. Regardless of the greater part's conviction that local government has not been functioning optimally, eight participants disclosed that local government cannot be removed because it has deepened democracy by representing the locals and protecting their interests. Finally, one participant alleged that there is the proliferation of approvals to establish private schools.

Table 2

Breakdown of the Results of Research Question 1

Themes	# of Participants	% of Participants
Destructive force of Corruption	7	70
State interference	5	50
Inadequate funding	4	40
Mismanagement of Funds	3	30
Inability to generate revenue	2	30
Level of Education of chairman	2	20
Duplicity of efforts	2	20
Overdependence on allocation	1	10
Proliferation of private schools	1	10

Emergent Theme 1: The Destructive Force of Corruption

Local government as with other tiers of government in Nigeria is afflicted with unprincipled practices and found to be progressively linked to corruption (Mbara et al., 2021). Its intensity has increased and appears to be a standard way of life for the ordinary Nigerian. Research participants spoke to this theme based on individual opinion.

LGRP_01 noted that corruption is a spiral effect issue as money meant for infrastructural projects is taken by some few people. This greatly affects primary education service delivery. LGRP_02 opined that measures taken by the Nigerian government to curb corruption have been effective to some level as corrupt practices within the local council still exists. Furthering, he noted that if one belongs to a notable caucus there's a way that powers that always tend to try to cover up. LGRP_03 vehemently insisted that:

In carrying out Primary education service delivery function, local council officers can be *appreciated*. To me this is not corruption because stakeholders are aware of inflation concerns vis-à-vis projects delivery and supervisory functions. So, if somebody comes to the local government and you help him to deliver service and he gives something in appreciation that is not corruption. The person is just trying to encourage you and appreciate you.

LGRP_05 indicated that during the manifesto of the President he had said his first objective is to curb corruption but in the long run we are still at the same level and this cascades to the local councils affecting in no small measure its primary school service delivery function.

LGRP_06 believes that corruption starts with local council leadership. In his comments,

he queries how a corrupt leader can correct a man that is corrupt when is he is the one in charge. To him this is a major problem with corruption in Nigeria and that is why it appears there is no way out of it. While LGRP_06 is hopeful to see a way out of corruption someday he believes it is illusive. Furthering, participant LGRP_06 suggests extreme measures for individuals found wanting may reduce the menace.

LGRP_07 noted that in 2019, President Buhari promised to fight corruption, but this promise remains unfulfilled as corruption is getting deeper. According to him it has eaten deep into every Nigerian system to the extent that even when one needs a common file in the local government, he will be told it is not available, but once a bribe is offered same file will be located quickly. In conclusion, LGRP_07 believes that it will take the grace of God for any government in Nigeria to be able to fight corruption to a standstill, if not totally.

Emergent Theme 2: Interference of the State Government

Inefficient primary school delivery function across Nigerian local governments is found to be openly allied to undue interference by the State government (Badaru, 2022; Olanrewaju et al., 2022). The review of literature also reports that successive leadership in Nigeria perceive the local government and its functions as mere appendages of the State government. This perception influences governance and development at the grassroots level in Nigeria (Badaru, 2022). Participants addressed this theme based on their individual perceptions.

LGRP_01 opines that the influence of the State Executive that is the governor's red handedness or tight grip on the local government vis-à-vis the distribution of allocation is

a major contributory setback on its ability to carry out its primary education delivery function. Affirming LGRP_02 stated that local government doesn't seem to have the autonomy the full authority and the full control of running their government themselves which they should have many thanks to State kleptocracy. In addition, LGRP_04 said that Local government in Nigeria does not have the local might as there is always interference from the State government. LGRP_05 noted that local government autonomy will empower local councils to get statutory funds from the federal government directly for primary school infrastructural development projects but this remains a mirage with incessant State interference. On his part, LGRP_07 opined that because local government overtime could not deliver its Primary School delivery function largely for corruption and mismanagement of funds, State interference became a welcomed development.

Emergent Theme 3: Inadequate Funding

Participants' responses show that this emerging theme negatively affects the ability of Local Governments in Nigeria to deliver its primary education service delivery function effectively (Ogunnubi, 2022). Sufficient expenditure is considered critical as primary education with its requisite demand for infrastructural maintenance is capital intensive. While the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommends that 15%-20% of a government's budget be allocated to education, Nigerian national budget for education in recent times hover between 5-7% with only 1.2% allocated to primary education (Ojike et al., 2021). With population explosion, the attendant inflation as well as competing demands to meet health, security and other functions of local councils, efficient primary school education delivery seems far-fetched.

LGRP_05 noted that local government is unable to carry out its primary education function optimally due to lack of funds. Asserting, LGRP_06 mentioned that one of the major constraints is the availability of sufficient finance to fund needed amenities and equipment or materials that will help pupils in the primary school. According to him ‘the soup when sweet na money kill am’ What this means is that the effectiveness of any organisation is based on the availability of funds or capital to run the organization effectively. Since public primary schools is meant to be free no school fees payments, no tuition payments, the school can only go as far as the level of fund provided in order to meet the need of the pupils. This makes inadequate funding is a major constraint.

LGRP_07 however argued that when it comes to funding of primary education in Nigeria, it should be the duty of the federal government, because local government does not have what it takes to take care of primary schools. Aside from the salary, not all local governments are buoyant for the provision of infrastructure, furniture, training and retraining of teachers neither do they have the financial capability to do same. LGRP_07 believes that this affect primary education which is supposed to be the foundation of all education. In LGRP_08’s view, funds are unavailable to provide the necessary materials and equipment to see that pupils learn in a conducive environment.

Emergent Theme 4: Mismanagement of Funds

Mismanagement of already stretched local government funds has hauled in several research considerations. Obisanya & Hassan (2022) states that mismanagement and its effect has rendered null and void the rationale for the establishment of local government which is to bring development closer to the grassroots populace (Obisanya & Hassan,

2022). Ngwu et al.. (2022) maintains that mismanagement of local council funds spirals into poor project execution and public distrust. The glaring non-existent infrastructure in public primary schools is sadly a grave consequence of the misuse, misappropriation and potential loss of funds (Ngwu et al., 2022). Participants articulated their opinions on this as well.

LGRP_06 averred that until the Nigerian government stamps its feet and take extreme measures, there will be no end to mismanagement of funds. LGRP_07 maintains that the inability of local council to deliver its primary education service delivery function is largely for mismanagement of funds. Furthering, LGRP_08 opines that it is the gross mismanagement of funds by local government Chairmen that necessitated intrusion by State governments to monitor and to see that the money allocated are judiciously used.

Emergent Theme 5: Inability to Generate Revenue

Aside the statutory allocation from the Federal government, the fourth schedule of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria stipulates that local governments generate revenue internally to be able to carry out their functions within their area of jurisdiction (Oloyede, 2022). This is done through the collection of property and consumption taxes, court fines, rates, special levies, and income from investments (Okudolo & Onah, 2019). The challenge is that the education department within the local council provides human capital and does not generate revenue draining from the already lean resources. Perceived as not being economically viable, research participants expressly crusaded these views.

LGRP_02 noted that the education department is not a revenue generating department within the local government and that is leading to much negligence. Furthering, LGRP_02 elucidated that on the one hand to foster meaningful teaching and learning at the primary school level, infrastructure which includes the physical and spatial enablers of coaching and scholarship requires huge capital outlay. On the other hand, there are other sectors that are revenue generating requiring attention as well within the local council and these will most likely be priority as against education the generates no funds. Affirming this stance, LGRP_04 noted that each department with the local council brings its demands, the Chairman and his board looks at which is most important per time. This is based on finance. If what is on ground is not enough, then some needs will be sacrificed for others based on the department's revenue generating capacity.

Emergent Theme 6: Level of Education

The level of education of the Local Government Chairman, the HOD of education as well as the Education Secretary is of utmost importance to the efficiency of local council to deliver its primary education delivery function (Briggs et al., 2019).

LGRP_08 asserted that the level of education of the local government Chairman and the education secretary is paramount. LGRP_08 shares that there have been instances where a hairdresser became local government Chairman because of close ties to the State governor. Lacking a secondary education and requisite skills, inputs into the primary education sector was significantly hampered. LGRP_10 maintained that just the same way the Health Service Commission is supervised by medical doctors, primary education must be managed by professionals with requisite skills in education.

Emergent Theme 7: Duplicity of Efforts

The Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) policy reform measures of the Federal government in Nigeria, purportedly has ensuring quality of basic education in Nigeria as a focal function (Akanbi & Jekayinfa, 2019). Bearing in mind that this is one of the major functions of Local government there is the enigma of the duplicity of efforts thereby hampering the efficiency of local councils to deliver its primary education delivery function. Expressing his views, LGRP_01 asserted that the creation of these organs, Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) particularly takes away most functions from the local government education department. He believes these formations are just aberrations as the 4th Schedule of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria says the day-to-day running of primary school is in the hands of the local government. The question that rises here is why segment the money that is supposed to come to the local government to run primary education to the other establishments? This diversion stalls in no small measure primary education infrastructural project delivery. For LGRP_04 the number one concern is that government has different agencies which is set up (UBEC and SUBEB) doing the same function, causing a blur around boundary lines and rivalry between the local government and other government agencies set up to oversee grassroots concerns.

Emergent Theme 8: Overdependence on Federal Allocation

The handicap on its ability to generate its own revenue has rendered local government administration almost completely dependent on allocation from the Federal government (Egbide et al., 2021). This portends danger for primary school delivery. Local government needs to revamp, diversify, mobilise and boost its source of internally generated revenue to reduce dependence on the Federal allocation and thereby fund primary education better (Oloyede, 2022).

LGRP_06 pointed out that most of politicians in Nigeria do not know that to rule any locality, a leader must be intellectually sound and dynamic and have working understanding of the locality and terrain as this will provide a footing on how funds can be internally generated without assistance from the Federal government. From what is generated internally, a particular percentage can be forwarded to the education sector for primary education service delivery. Over dependence of federal allocation has ultimately not done the local councils much good.

Emergent Theme 9: Proliferation of Private schools

Participant perceptions of effects of the proliferation of Private schools within Lagos and as it affects primary education delivery function of the local government was also disclosed.

LGRP_09 asserts that one of the challenges is probably because of the multitude of approvals given to the private schools, which make the public primary school to be neglected. With a class teacher to more than forty pupils, the private schools appear to pay more attention to children than the public primary schools even though some are ill

equipped. In addition, the society or the new generation parents for status reasons prefer enrolling their children and wards in these private schools.

Research Question 2

The second research question asked was: In what way does inefficient provision and maintenance of primary educational facilities challenge achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria? The analysis of the interview reveals that 50% of research participants insist that sustainability of efficient primary education delivery in Nigeria is not feasible mainly due to inadequate funding. Subsequently, three significant perceptions were identified on why primary education service delivery function of local government administration was not sustainable in Nigeria. They include free education, the circle of pain caused by corruption and State government total takeover of primary education service delivery function.

Table 3

Breakdown of the Results of Research Question 2

Themes	# of Participants	% of Participants
Inadequate Funding	6	60
Free Education	3	30
Cyclical pain of Corruption	1	10

Emergent Theme 1: Inadequate Funding

Although local government is constitutionally recognized as the legitimate third tier of government in Nigeria and therefore entitled to its fair share of allocation from the Federal government as well as enabled to generate its income internally (Oloyede, 2022), it has been bedevilled with inefficiency to carry out its primary education service delivery function due to overpopulation, economic recession, poverty and inflation (Akmal & Pritchett 2021). In the light of this theme as it affects sustainability of primary education service delivery of local councils, research participants explicitly canvassed their views.

LGRP_02 noted that Education remains the major ingredient for effective national development. Expounding, he remarked that since primary education forms the bedrock of development as children learn foundational skills including aspects of economic growth that eventually break the cycle of poverty, inability to drive primary education due to lack of funds may negatively impact Nigeria's trajectory for years to come.

Alluding, LGRP_03 remarked that national goals are achievable within the framework of a country's basic educational arrangement. In this age of technology therefore, primary school pupils need to be engaged with tools that are relevant to current realities.

Insufficient funding means they lag behind their counterparts all over the world.

LGRP_06 stated that notable level of national development overtime depends principally on the type and quality of primary education provided at the grassroots. A situation where children are expected to learn, compete with the rest of the world in flooded

buildings with leaking roofs and broken windows due to inadequate funding will only exacerbate under development.

LGRP_07 opines that local government does not have what it takes to take care of primary schools in their jurisdiction. Local governments are not buoyant; do not possess the financial capability for the provision of infrastructure, furniture, training and retraining of teachers. And there's no way this will not affect primary education, which is supposed to be the foundation of all education.

Professing a solution, LGRP_08 reasons that local councils will need to engage non-governmental agencies (NGO's) to adopt particular primary schools and assist financially to equip libraries and sick bays for the schools adopted to assuage the challenge of insufficient funding across local councils in Nigeria. LGRP_09 maintained that the full realization of Nigeria's national sustainable development goals depends entirely on the provision of a functional primary education which is presently jeopardized by insufficient financing.

Emergent Theme 2: Free Education

The goal of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program is principally to provide free, universal and compulsory basic or primary education for every Nigerian child (Akanbi & Jekayinfa 2019). According to LGRP_04 many Nigerian parents relegate the education of their young children and wards to the local government due to poverty and where there is insufficient funding sometimes supervisors and teachers give monetary stipend to augment local council efforts. This brings to question how free is free education and the sustainability of the same. Broadening, LGRP_05 noted that free

education must be total and that includes free uniforms, free exercise books and free meals to mention but a few. Beaming a torchlight on the free meal program for primary schools, continuity has been a major challenge which means parents will need to give pupils money for meals every day. This may not be sustainable where local government is already grappling with the challenge of insufficient funds. Also, LGRP_10 avers that the problem is the issue of free education. When you say free, it must be total, and this is unrealistic in Nigeria presently. He believes once primary education is not tuition free, local councils will be better able to carry out its primary education service delivery function and focus on other capital-intensive demands.

Emergent Theme 3: Cyclical effect of Corruption

Education plays a pivotal role in the development of the society and human capital development (Horii et al., 2021). Any level of education or whatever growth is achieved educationally starts from primary education, which is the bedrock in any society (Sun & Lee 2020). LGRP_01 maintained that it will be difficult to achieve sustainable development goals and because there is no way corruption will not affect primary school and inversely affect the general developmental goal of the society. And once that foundation is laughable, whatever is put on it cannot stand.

Research Question 3

The third research question asked was: How can training foster and institutionalize a relearning culture? All 10 research participants affirm the importance of training and retraining but interview data reveal that 100% received training organized by the local government at least once a year but retort that post Covid-19, cost constrains and the fact

that education is not a revenue generating department, no trainings have been organized. 20% of participants however mentioned that the trainings they have undergone in the recent past were funded by the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB). To the question how often you are trained research participant's responses are captured below.

LGRP_01 states since he joined the local government service in 2011, local government has never sponsored a training for education officers. He referred to this as suffering and being punished because of the perception that the education department does not bring in much in terms of revenue. So, to spend for primary school development and even for human capital development is a mirage. Corroborating, LGRP_02 stated that there is really no frequency of training. On LGRP_03's part, it is expedient that all local council education officers undergo training and retraining so that they can par with colleagues around the world. LGRP_04 argues that trainings received are intra training within local education staff. LGRP_05 states that he has spent close to 10years in the local council but has had the privilege of training in Akure (a city in Southwestern Nigeria) once. For him there may be trainings organized for heads of department but there are no trainings for officers. LGRP_06 opines that there were trainings once a year but the advent of Covid halted the process. LGRP_07 avers that trainings attended were funded by UBEC and SUBEB but from the local government there are no trainings no never. LGRP_08 alluded to same stance. For LGRP_09, some NGO's like Save the Children offer trainings on efficient work ethics but corroborates the stance that the local government does not

engage its local council staff for training. Furthering, LGRP_10 opines that training is only done by SUBEB.

Summary

This chapter contained the presentation of the findings from the analysis of the interviews with the 10 participants of the study. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the determining factors that shape the culture of inefficiency in the primary education service delivery function across local government councils in Nigeria, consider its impact on sustainable development in Nigeria and investigate how the culture of efficiency can be relearned. Purposeful sampling approach guided the selection of research participants, and all participants were duly informed of their rights and signed informed consent forms prior to the commencement of semi structured, open-ended, face-to-face in-depth interviews. The data were analyzed using the thematic coding strategy to discover themes that would provide meaning to the purpose and research questions of the study.

The first research question attempted to decipher the factors that influence the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the service delivery of quality primary education in a Nigerian local government council. The analysis revealed several themes tall among which is corruption. Other emerging themes include inadequate funding, the mismanagement of already insufficient funds, the inability of local government to generate revenue closely tied to its overdependence on federal statutory allocation, the level of education and expertise of the local government Chairman, proliferation of private schools, and the interferences of the State and Federal governments. With 70% of

research participants alluding to the negative effects of corruption, the results therefore suggest that corruption is a major factor influencing the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the service delivery of quality primary education in the Nigerian local government council and extreme measures must be put in place to stem this menace.

Research question 2 sought to know what ways inefficient provision and maintenance of primary educational facilities challenge achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria. 10% of the participants believe that the effect of corruption is cyclical as that is the reason why monies disbursed are mismanaged leading to poorly equipped schools which does not foster sustainable development. 30% are strongly opposed to the policy on free education as they think though laudable it presents an entitlement mentality and poses a threat to the already stretched allocation. Furthering, they believe free education is not sustainable with the overpopulation and inflation challenge in Nigeria. The remaining 60% averred that local government are inadequately funded putting a strain on her ability to provide and maintain primary education infrastructure directly stalling Nigeria's sustainable development goals. The results suggest policy change on free education and percentage allocation to local governments.

The third research question was aimed at understanding how training can foster and institutionalize a relearning culture. Most research participants concur that training was important to develop local council officers' efficiency, 100% however stated they have not undergone any training for cost implication reasons. The result recommends policy creation on regularity of trainings for local council officers.

Chapter 5 contains the interpretation and discussion of the study findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications for social change, and conclusion.

Chapter 5: Discussions, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Education has been universally acknowledged as a deliberate enterprise with a focus on the economic revitalization of a community or nation (Akmal & Pritchett, 2021). Aside from catering to human capital resources, it is the agent responsible for cultivating the needed technological implements and know-how for economic ascent (Sun & Lee, 2020). Primary education is that which provides children with critical fundamental skills that will be the foundation for life, academic careers, work, and active citizenship. In Nigeria, local government, the third tier of government, is charged with the primary education service delivery function. Even though primary education is officially free and compulsory in Nigeria, it suffers from substantial flaws which include lack of basic facilities such as classrooms, desks, and chairs and lack of basic amenities such as electricity and water supply making it difficult to deliver quality education (Nnebedum & Akinfolarin, 2018). The purpose of this study was to explore the determining factors that shape the culture of inefficiency in the primary education service delivery function across local government councils in Nigeria, consider its impact on sustainable development in Nigeria, and investigate how the culture of efficiency can be relearned. The following research questions were employed to guide the study:

RQ1: What factors influence the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the service delivery of quality primary education in a Nigerian local government council?

RQ2: In what way does inefficient provision and maintenance of primary educational facilities challenge achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria?

RQ3: How can training foster and institutionalize a relearning culture?

Other follow-up questions from the interview guide were posed to extract additional valuable information to assist in providing an understanding of the study phenomenon. The chapter consists of the interpretation of research findings, the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research as well as implications for social change.

Interpretation of Findings

The research questions and their interrelated follow-up questions took into consideration the factors that influence the prevailing culture of inefficient primary education service delivery function of local councils, the feasibility of achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria and relearning the culture of efficiency through training.

The Cankerworm of Corruption

Analysis of responses of research participants as well as relevant documents suggest that the reason the third tier of government in Nigeria has failed to deliver its primary education function is because of the cankerworm of corruption is assiduously intertwined with state government interference, inadequate funding, the mismanagement of funds, the level of education and expertise of the local government chairman, and the inability of local councils to generate its revenue internally. This finding is in line with Jacob and Stephen (2021) who submitted that corruption is a scourge, an evil, and a behavior that spawns shortage of already stretched funds, unavailability of infrastructural facilities, poor quality of education, weak capacity development and poor implementation of basic education policies in Nigeria. Abdullahi (2018) stated that corruption is a multidimensional phenomenon that has been institutionalized and has “created a vicious

circle of deficit culture so intensive that policies, plans, and budgetary provisions for primary education in Nigeria end up being misappropriated and halted” (Abdullahi, 2018, p. 23). Ajayi and Sikiru (2021) and Adekunle (2019), opined that with the recommendation of the UNESCO 26% for developing countries, Nigeria habitually underfunds its basic education needs, the steady rise in population notwithstanding. Buttressing this stance, Chima and Abdulhamid (2015) and Badaru (2022) stated that corruption holds sway because local government is defective by construct and grossly debilitated. Local councils are almost entirely funded via monthly allocations whittling down in no small measure their powers exacerbated by corruption and complicated by the continuing interference of the Federal and State government (Adetiba & Adedokun, 2021). Sections 7(6)(a) and 162(6) of the 1999 Constitution of the federal government of Nigeria bestows legitimacy for this interference and the lack of fiscal independence is further reinforced by the creation of a state joint local government account where statutory allocations for local councils are paid into. State government and local elites embezzle and divert funds meant for primary school supplies to enrich themselves, build patronage networks, and manipulate political outcomes (Ogunnubi, 2022). When classrooms are poorly equipped, families are made to pay for dishonest levies for basic education otherwise meant to be free. By implication, the developmental benefit of equitable primary education further is placed out of reach for the ordinary Nigerian child. Again, interview responses insinuated that insufficient funds for the internal administration of primary schools in the country is caused by administrative corruption in the administrative offices and ministries in charge of primary school administration.

Fueled by the lack of an explicit term of office for elected local council officers and the need for an ostentatious lifestyle, local council chairmen abuse entrusted authority by embezzlement, fraud and bribery (Obisanya & Hassan, 2022). When local council officers observe leadership's audacity with no consequences corruption is all the more learned and enshrined as the prevalent culture. Political and fiscal autonomy are further jeopardized with a lack of political will to see through primary education projects earmarked for community needs (Adetiba & Adedokun, 2021). Also, the leadership of local councils are placed by political party affiliation arrangement and not by merit. Research participants alluded to this when they opined that there have been chairmen who had no university training but were artisans in the good books of their state and federal masters and the local council administration became their reward for allegiance. The development of primary education and grassroots democracy is put at risk as education much like medicine and engineering require expertise to deliver expected dividends (Ogunnubi, 2022).

Achieving Sustainable Educational Development goals in Nigeria

With the second research question and its related follow up questions I sought the perceptions of local council officers on the relationship between the inefficient provision and maintenance of primary educational facilities challenge and achieving sustainable development goals in Nigeria. Analysis of interview responses and perceptions and journalized field notes, as well relevant documents, implied that the feeble equipping and sustenance of primary educational facilities negatively affects sustainable development goals in Nigeria. When basic infrastructure such as laboratory, library, electricity, and

quality learning environment is nonexistent or in a deplorable condition below acceptable standards, it infringes on the right of the child to education, affects academic performance and sustainable education goals (Asukwo et al., 2020). What this means is that a child's performance and capacity for future oriented thinking is enhanced in schools with better physical learning environments therefore investments in quality school infrastructure are strongly associated with positive learning outcomes.

There is, however, an interconnection between resources and basic infrastructure availability in the third world. This is supported by the assertions of Ebi and Ubi (2017) that there is a clear-cut correlation between education and the disbursement of requisite funds for education and access to primary education in Nigeria. Stressing their stance, Ebi and Ubi cited the disparity between UNESCO index of 26% of statutory allocation to education and Nigeria's allocation that is incessantly not more than 6% of her national budget to education. This translates to primary education inaccessibility and hampers sustainable development goals.

Sustainable development goals place premium on the ease of access, affordability, and the comprehensive, fair, and unbiased nature of education such that it supports the culture of learning over the course of life (Lewin, 2019). This can only be put into effect if educational facilities are put up and continuously refashioned to present realities to provide safe, nonviolent, and effective learning environment for children. Olanrewaju et al. (2021) postulated that the most public primary schools in Nigeria were closed completely during COVID-19 because of the dearth of digital infrastructure. They explained that only private schools where parents pay exorbitant school fees for their

children and wards were able to continue with online learning. This inequality has stifled the accessibility, equality, and all-inclusiveness goal of sustainable development.

One way to achieve sustainable development is setting policies. There is however the problem of policy implementation in the duplicity of efforts with regards to primary education service delivery in Nigeria. The Nigerian government established the UBEC to provide greater access to and ensure free primary education for all (Akanbi & Jekayinfa 2019). Then there is the SUBEB responsible for ensuring unfettered access, equity and quality basis education for the Nigerian child. Then there is the Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) which is responsible for the administration and management of primary schools at the local government level (Nigeria: Lawmakers, 2019). The LGEA works closely with the state government and the Federal Ministry of Education to ensure that educational standards are met and that school children have access to quality education. The query here is domiciled in the place and function of the local government as the third tier or aberration of government. My study confirmed that this duplicity of agencies and efforts breeds confusion and conflicts and renders obscure the functions local government was established to deliver. This obscurity is the breeding ground for corruption, laxity, and gross misappropriation of funds as there is no accountability and “sharing of the national cake” is rift (Ojo, 2020). The duplicity of efforts triggered by too many establishments handling the same functions inhibits answerability and public trust, and stakeholder participation is stumped (Melugbo & Onwuka, 2020).

Institutionalizing Training and Development

A lack of training for local government officers was also reported by research participants. Uncovering the nonexistent training for local council officers, this investigation revealed that research participants are actually schooled but not trained and are grossly naïve about ethics of governance in the 21st century. Again, contemporary times demand local council workers possess competences with a transnational outlook (Asukwo et al., 2020). Assiduous learning culture and development are essential for a worker not only to do extremely well but also to stay relevant in their sphere in a changing because new knowledge gained can be applied in the workplace. Training positively impacts the learners' minds and hearts. When there is a positive impact, there are better chances of remembering the concepts and their application to the job and personal development. Training is not only a way to teach new skills and knowledge, but also a way to motivate, engage, and retain workers. Training can redirect local council officer's energy from needs which fires up corruption. Fatile and Hassan (2020) stated that "the regular training of workers enhances the improvement of skills, knowledge and professional development that engenders the overall development of human capital in Nigeria" (Fatile & Hassan, 2020, p. 71). What this means is that training provides the ambience to learn, unlearn, and relearn transforms in knowledge and other modes of working. Seeing culture ultimately drives behaviors, shapes relationships, and impacts overall success, then learning, unlearning, and relearning orchestrated by training can create a change in prevailing culture. Research participants allude that the training and of local council staff is principally dependent on state government control (Ogunnubi,

2022). What this means is that training cannot be assured by local government administration.

Limitations of the Study

Firstly, the chosen methodology for this investigation served as a limitation. I employed the qualitative case design research tradition. On its part, the qualitative research method is described as inadequate due to its subjective outlooks on studies compared with the objective stances attributed to quantitative research (Kalman, 2019). Then the employment of case design meant that there was difficulty in delineation as the study on the functions of local government is too broad. I addressed this through the context of the primary school service delivery function of a local government in Nigeria.

The second limitation was the sample size for the study. I collected data from only 10 Local council officers from a selected local government within the metropolis in Lagos State Nigeria. This sample may not have captured and represented the perceptions and beliefs of local council officers in Nigeria as well as all the perspectives relevant to the research problem (Tutelman & Webster, 2020). Be that as it may, representation was not something I was perturbed about but instead my interests bordered on garnering considerable and rich data from research participants who possessed requisite knowledge about the research phenomenon up until I reached data saturation using the purposive sampling technique.

The use of the interview method to collect data also served as the third limitation (Edwards & Holland, 2020). Research participants' responses were envisaged to be truthful; however there remains the possibility of bias or distortion of actualities since it

was substantiated on experiences. Nevertheless, member checking was used to reconfirm narratives and research participants were assured that all data recorded, their identities, and other information would be stored within a secured vault and after five years, should be destroyed.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future researchers may perhaps attempt a look at other qualitative research designs such as ethnography to examine the considerations of research participants. In addition, quantitative and or mixed methods can also be employed for prospective investigations to ascertain the vacillations and correlations of perceptions from the findings of my study. Speaking on quantitative options, an increase in sample size using varied local government areas out of the 774 in Nigeria as well as research participants from more than one department within the local council may also be considered to enhance the applicability and universality of results. Furthering, of the 774 local governments in Nigeria, a comparison study can be carried out with local councils situated in the rural communities. This may provide in-depth comprehensions into the disparity if any on inefficiency of local councils to carry out their primary education service delivery in the rural areas as opposed to urban areas and if policy change with regards to local council in urban or rural areas can be occasioned.

One of the primary findings is that corruption is a major factor that influences the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the service delivery of quality primary education in the Nigerian local government council. Research participants recommended employing extreme measures and sanctions such as execution, life sentence without the possibility of

parole, confiscation of properties and the imposition of tougher penalties of whatever kind to put a hard stop to the culture of corruption in Nigeria. They insist that punishing corruption is a vital component of any effective anti-corruption effort in Nigeria as it is the ultimate betrayal to individual citizen and the whole grassroots community. Research participants insist that this is the only language that the Nigerian would understand and recommend legislation that would prescribe extreme penalties as punishment for corruption in Nigeria. The differential association theory advocates that criminal behavior is learned when one associates intimately with other people who indulge in criminal behavior. This can affect practices and behavior over time as families will actively sensitize its members on the repercussions of corruption thereby shaping individual member behavior overtime. Extreme measures will likely expose corrupt activities and risks especially in the local government, keep local administration honest, transparent and accountable, stop dishonest practices and ensure local council officers act always in the interest of the local communities it was established to serve. Review of relevant literature suggest countries like China that support extreme measures to curb corruption still struggle to fully ascertain the efficacy of such anti-corruption measures (Tao et al., 2023; Chen & Ma, 2022). Supporting this stance, Andoh (2022) advocates that “adhering strictly instead to the democratic tenets of good governance is crucial for curbing corruption” (Andoh, 2022, p. 179). That is to say insistence on economic reforms and the rule of law regimes which will include political will, using technological tools to develop institutional trust and the media to sensitize locals on the benefits of honesty and patriotism will strengthen perception on negative effect of corruption and deter it

completely than capital punishment (Shenkoya, 2023). Again, there is already a public distrust for the government especially local government in Nigeria and this may be viewed as another trick to rob the masses. These dissenting views require therefore additional systematic studies to thoroughly scrutinize and authenticate the validity of these research outcomes within the backdrop of the Nigerian environment.

Additionally, one of the findings of this study is that inadequate funding stunts sustainable development goal as well as the training and development of local council officers vis-à-vis the primary education service delivery function. Sequel to this, research participants proposed policy amendment of Section 18 (1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, where the government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy, and provide free, compulsory and universal primary education. In an economy plagued by overpopulation, inflation and recession and one unable to habitually meet the 26% UNESCO education budget proposal, research participants recommend that primary education should not be free. Free education means free tuition, free books, free uniforms and free meals. Implementation of free primary education policy is yet to have any positive policy outcome majorly for inadequate and mismanaged funds. Nigerian policy makers need further policy analysis and policy advocacy probe as it concerns free primary education which all falls within the purview of public policy and administration.

Implications for Social Change

The findings of this study have implications for creating positive social change for the Nigerian local government administration in the efficiency of its primary education service delivery function. As a resource material, the outcomes and recommendations of

this investigation is an accompaniment to existing data that will enhance the comprehension and perceptions of the consequence of corruption on local council efficiency. This will furnish policy makers with vital information to bolster policies that will create school curriculum reforms that will promote anti-corruption education and project national unity and patriotism.

By inculcating the culture of patriotism and integrity at primary education level all through to tertiary training, the study emphasizes Edwin Sutherland's differential association theory that maintains that criminal behavior (the culture of corruption) can be learned much the same way the culture of efficiency and honesty can be learned overtime. This is one step at a time to grooming the future today.

Conclusions

Local government is the third tier of government established by the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to exercise specific powers within its defined area. As government closest to the people, local government's relevance and impact is its poverty reduction, economic growth and sustainable development drive encapsulated in its functions. One of the major functions of local government in Nigeria is the provision of primary education. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the root cause factors for the inefficient primary education delivery function of local government administration in Nigeria. Previous researchers have concluded that abysmal failure of local government is linked with corruption, lack of funds, dearth of requisite leadership and educational skills a lack of local government autonomy. These expected findings were found in the results of the study. The primary finding from this study showed that

corruption is a principal factor responsible for the inefficient primary education service delivery of local councils. Closely linked with corruption is inadequate funding, state interference, mismanagement of funds, and the inability to generate its own revenue. Other factors include the level of education of the local council Chairman, the duplicity of education agencies, and over-dependence on statutory allocations. In this chapter, the findings and the conclusions were discussed. The limitations and recommendations for future research were also presented. This chapter brings the study to a close.

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Appendix

Interview Protocol Topic: Relearning Culture: Significant factor for Efficiency in the Nigerian Local Government Administration

Time of the Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of the Interviewee:

1. The interview session will begin with customary salutations and greetings, a brief personal introduction, and a review of the research topic.
2. Appreciation will be given to the research participant for willingness to participate in the study and for taking the time to permit the interview.
3. A brief review of the signed consent form will occur to ensure complete understanding and if any final questions are needed.
4. The participant will be informed a digital recorder is being turned on and I will take note of the date, time, and location.
5. The coding identification (where applicable) of the interview will be indicated verbally and written on the actual consent form.
6. The interview will begin.
7. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes for exhaustive responses to the questions.

8. I will use the questions in sequence.
9. I will pause after each question is asked to ensure the research participants understand the question. If they do not want to answer any particular question, they may do so for any reason or no reason at all.
10. At the end of the interview, I will thank the interviewee again for taking the time to participate in the study.

Questions

1. The functions of Local government are well defined in the 4th Schedule of the 1999 Nigerian constitution. What is your general opinion about local government efficiency?
2. Vis-à-vis the fiat of its creation, what is your perception as to whether local government is efficient or inefficient, necessary or should be scraped
2. What factors influence the prevailing culture of inefficiency in the service delivery function of quality primary education in the Nigerian local government council?
3. In your opinion, would you say that the various measures taken by the Nigerian government to address the corruption challenge has been generally effective or ineffective, and why?
4. If you were the local council Chairman, what would you do differently to address the inefficient provision and maintenance of primary education and service delivery function?
5. To what extent does the local council have authority that affects primary education in its domain without interference by the state or federal government?

6. What are the steps taken by the local council to ensure due process in the provision and maintenance of primary schools?
7. Can you explain your perceptions in relation to the efficiency of local government and corruption?
8. What is the potentials of the primary education delivery function to compromise sustainable development goals in Nigeria?
9. What are your specific appropriate recommendations to address the potential challenges that may be associated with the primary education delivery function of local government?
10. What other policy recommendations do you have?
11. What is your perception about the efficiency of local government efforts in Sustainable Development goals?
12. What is the frequency of training?