

An Assessment of the Overall Selected Methods and Practices of Local Government Administration in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

This study assess the overall selected method and practices of local government administration in Cross River State during Professor Ben Ayade first tenure administration, 2015-2019, the constitutional framework that governed the nomination of the council of local government executives and the impact on local government administration and the state as a whole. The study employs quantitative research methods. The data for the study was collected via online questionnaire at different political platforms of different local government in Cross River State, Nigeria. The population for the study comprised respondents from nine (9) local governments areas in Cross River State namely; Ikom, Obanliku, Obubra, Obudu, Odukpani, Ogoja, Abi, Akamkpa and Calabar South local government areas. The survey was made available to 360 respondents. 40 respondents are selected from each LGAs under study. Stratified random sampling complimented by purposeful sampling was used as sampling techniques. The findings of the research shows that the selected methods and practices of the selection was by appointment and not by election as it was constitutionally common to the democratic era; the constitutional framework that governed the nomination of the council of local government executives was the unconstitutional means of godfatherism; and the impact of the administration on local government administration and the state as a whole was negative. The study concludes that the responsibilities of the LGAs administrators have not been fulfilled to the people's satisfaction since the constituted council was loyal to their godfather and not responsible to their citizens. The study gave several recommendations including the facts that elections should be held for the local government executive council rather than appointments; in order to create steady and durable growth, people must vow to combat political process manipulation; there must be an unwavering opposition to the installation of pseudo-leaders in the state's local government areas and the godfather culture should be fully eliminated.

Keywords: Local Government Administration, Godfatherism, Appointment

INTRODUCTION

Local government, according to Appadorai (1975), is a governance by popularly elected authorities charged with administrative and executive functions in concerns affecting the residents of a specific area or location. Local government, as defined by the United Nations Office for Public Administration, is a political subdivision of a nation or (in a federal system) state that is created by law and has substantial control over local affairs, including the authority to levy taxes or exert labor for specified purposes. The governing body of this kind of institution is elected or otherwise chosen on a local level. Additionally, to the discourse, the 1976 Guideline for Local Government Reform has a more comprehensive definition of local government and one that encompasses the important indices of local government. Local government, according to the Reform, is: governance at the neighborhood level implemented by a representative council constituted by law to exercise authority over designated regions. These authorities should vest the council with significant control over local affairs (including staffing), as well as institutional and financial authority to initiate and direct service provision and to determine and implement projects that complement the state and federal governments' activities in their respective areas. Also, it is also to ensure, through devolution of these functions to these councils and active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, that local initiative and response to local needs and conditions are maximized (FGN, 1976).

Local government may be considered as a kind of decentralization from two perspectives: de-concentration and devolution. When a local government is viewed as de-concentration or local administration, it lacks financial autonomy over its budgetary decisions, the majority of key officials in its administrative machinery are appointed by the state or central government and are accountable to them, and for the majority of its existence, it lacks a council democratically elected by the local populace. For a long period of time, particularly before to 1976, local councils in Nigeria were seen as administrative outposts of the regional (later state) and federal governments (Okechukwu and Obinna, 2013). Local governments were just adjuncts of superior level and local administrative bodies under this setup. This indicates that persons in positions of authority under this system were serving superior powers at the state or federal level. As a result, officers lacked the autonomy necessary to be original and creative. This was the situation of local government in Nigeria before to 1976 reform and throughout the modern democratic dispensation, during which several states operated under a Caretaker Committee arrangement rather than the democratically

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elected council proposed by 1976 local government reform. However, devolution refers to the decentralization of political and administrative authority (Okechukwu and Obinna, 2013).

Local government, as the closest form of government to the populace (Ibietan and Ndukwe, 2014), is one of the most effective mechanisms for generating motivation and mobilizing for self-help, as well as incorporating the much-needed broader participation of the local population in local decision-making processes (Ukah, 2012). Local government has existed in Nigeria and other parts of the globe for a long period of time, although its function and name vary according to political system. As a result, the majority of authors on municipal governance give little attention to the definitional question. Needless to say, despite sustained study on the issue, there are still shortcomings in local government administration in certain Nigerian government regimes. Local government was born out of the belief that government should be as near to the people as possible and that tasks should be divided across various levels of government to maximize efficiency (Aworawo and Akpan, 2003). Diverse experiences were acquired at various levels of local government administration in a variety of nations and states.

Local governance is a theory that arises from the fact that it is the closest form of government to the grassroots in a democratic context and the most effective method for involving citizens in their own governing. According to Awasthi and Sanjay (2002), an ideal local government administration is one that achieves excellent government via decentralized local governance. Local governments with significant autonomy do well in terms of administration and service delivery. According to Omotola (2009), the primary cause for Nigeria's many and interminable local government administrations is the local government's inefficiency or extreme underperformance. Through consistency, multi-purpose, and a single-tier organization, the 1976 local government reforms ushered in a new era in the administration of local government in Nigeria (Ajayi, 2000 and Agagu, 2004). Chukwumerije (2003) asserts that all attempts between 1970 and 1979 to liberate local government administration from anti-democratic impediments to a unified structure prove futile. On May 29th, 1999, Nigeria entered another round of civilian rule; the 1999 constitution guarantees the existence of local government administration based on democratic principles, but does not specify the term of office for elected officers in council; however, "Decree 36 of 1998" specifies a three-year term for elected officers in council; later, the constitution was vitiated by sections 7 (1) and 8, which placed local government administration under the control of state governors (FRN, 1999). The laws

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permit state governors to conduct grass-roots operations with the assistance of non-elected authorities (Okechukwu and Obinna, 2013).

Local government administration in Nigeria has matured, not so much in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, but more in terms of its durability and resilience in terms of importance to the country's administration (Igbokwe-Ibeto, 2003). The need of establishing local government wherever in the globe originates from the desire to encourage grassroots development. As critical as local government administration has been, it seems as if there have been certain limits impinging on its activities throughout the years. These obstacles vary from unwarranted political meddling on the part of the federal and state governments, to a high incidence of bribery and corruption, to theft and a severe shortage of well-trained and competent human resources, among others (Akhakpe, Fatile & Igbokwe-Ibeto, 2012).

Cross Rivers state's local government administration has undergone several modifications. However, the time range chosen for this examination provides a unique perspective. During this period, the administration of Governor Professor Ben Ayade illegally and in violation of the Federal Republic of Nigeria's Constitution, administered Local Government Councils in the state according to his political will (Ikem, 2022) by refusing to approve the conduct of local government elections. Thus, the selection and administration procedures of local governments throughout this time period were influenced, necessitating this investigation. Thus, this research takes a critical look at how the administration was carried out and its impact on the whole local government and state. The general system and practices of local government administration chosen in Cross River State under Professor Ben Ayade's first term administration, 2015-2019, have had a detrimental effect on the growth of the state's local government regions, and hence on the state as a whole.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In reality, Nigeria's requirement for an efficient and development-oriented local government administration system is an issue and difficulty that the majority of the country's states have been unable to resolve. A representative and successful local government administration, it is widely assumed, would result in grassroots growth, given that the local government system is the closest level (tier) of government to the people (Abutudu, 2011). Thus, it is necessary to explore these administrations and their contributions to this development, their approaches to their issues, the underlying

principles of the local government, and their mobilization of local resources and people for grassroots change.

As previously stated, this objective and desire, as embodied in the Federal Republic of Nigeria's Constitution, has mostly remained a mirage since the commencement of Nigeria's current democratic government in 1999, and, in particular, in Cross River State between 2015 and 2019. This issue has continued to vex both local populations and governmental officials. Given the widespread belief that local governments are non-independent, non-autonomous, foisted (forced) on the populace by political elites, and thus unaccountable and inefficient in carrying out their democratic and political responsibilities, it is critical to ascertain whether this is true for the selected period and its administration.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

By and large, Cross River State lacks an efficient local government structure that incorporates the local populace in decision-making and ensures public accountability. This study was driven by the compelling need to examine the constitutional framework governing the nomination of the council of local government executives in Cross River State from 2015 to 2019 and the impact on local government administration and the state as a whole. The study looks at the process of appointing local government administrators and the administration's operations throughout this time period. Additionally, the research examines the selection process for local government executive councils and its influence on administration. More also, it assesses the administration's viability in growing the local government areas. Finally, the research looks at the administration's shortcomings and subsequent reforms.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1 How were the local government administrators in Cross River State between 2015 and 2019 selected?
- 2 Is the appointment influenced by godfatherism?
- 3 Does the principle of selection of local government executive impact the administration positively?
- 4 Is the local government administration under the appointed administrators better than the administration under the elected ones?
- 5 Was the administration a failed one?

- 6 Does the local government administration during the period has a positive influence on (Cross River) Nigeria politics?

HYPOTHESIS

The study hypothesises that the overall selected method and practices of local government administration in Cross River State during Professor Ben Ayade first tenure administration, 2015-2019 has a negative impact on the development of the local government areas in the state and consequently affected the State as a whole.

The above hypothesis describes the relationship between the selected method and practices of local government administration in Cross River State in 2015-2019 and its impact on the development of the local government areas. This variable is being tested to see if the impact of the administration has a negative impact on the state as a variable.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is crucial in establishing the influence of the idea of selecting local government executive councils and their management on Cross River State. However, this investigation is necessary to ascertain how administrators were chosen. It is critical to determine if appointed administrators were more active than elected administrators and to do research into the administrations' weaknesses over the era. This study is also crucial in evaluating the degree to which the administration's general techniques and principles influenced the state's growth through time.

Similarly, this will provide public administrators with valuable insight into the form and principles that best govern a successful local government. Additionally, it will educate the general population about the causes for administrators' failures and how to mobilize their resources for local development. In the same vein, this study will advance research on local government administration in Nigeria and contribute to the increasing body of research on local government and development in Cross River State and across Nigeria.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE STUDY AREA

Cross River is a state in Southern Nigeria, located in the coastal zone. It is bounded on the north by Benue; on the west by Enugu and Abia; on the south by Akwa Ibom; and on the east by the Atlantic and the Cameroon Republic. Cross River State has 20,156 square kilometers in size. It is constrained by latitudes 4015'N to 7000'N

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and longitudes 7015'E to 9030'E. It is divided into 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs). The following table lists the 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs) located within the study region, along with their respective headquarters.

Table 1: Local Government Area in Cross River State and their headquarters

S/N	Local Government Area	Headquarters
1	Abi	Itigidi
2	Akamkpa	Akamkpa
3	Akpabuyo	Ikot Nakanda
4	Bakassi	Ikang
5	Bekwarra	Abuochiche
6	Biase	Akpet Central
7	Boki	Boje
8	Calabar Municipality	Calabar
9	Calabar South	Anantigha
10	Etung	Effraya
11	Ikom	Ikom
12	Obanliku	Sankinla
13	Obubra	Obubra
14	Obudu	Obudu
15	Odukpani	Odukpani
16	Ogoja	Ogoja
17	Yakurr	Ugep
18	Yala	Okpoma

Source: Author's work

Calabar is the administrative center for the study area. The state's primary river, the "Cross River," empties into the Bight of Biafra. Cross River State derives its name from this river, dubbed Oyono, which runs across the state.

Cross River State is home to a diverse array of ethnic groups. Among these ethnic groups, the notable ones are: the Efik tribe; the Ejagham tribe and the Bekwarra group of people. The Efik tribe is composed of individuals who mostly speak the Efik language and reside primarily in the following Local Government Areas of the state: Calabar Municipality and South, as well as Akpabuyo, Bakassi, Odukpani, and certain areas of Akamkpa. They, too, dwell in Calabar regions and speak Ejagham. The bulk of the Ejagham people likewise live in the study area's northern region. The Ekois are another tribe found north of the state capital. Ekois are Biase people that live in Biase LGA and Akamkpa. (dubbed Oban) and Bahumono, both of which are located within the Abi Local Government Area. Yakurr/Agoi people also live in Yakurr LGA, as do Mbembe people in Obubra LGA. Located in the study zone's extreme northern region, this subgroup comprises numerous subgroups, including the Etung group, the Olulumo group, the Ofutop group, the Nkim/Nkum group, the Abanajum group, the Nseke group,

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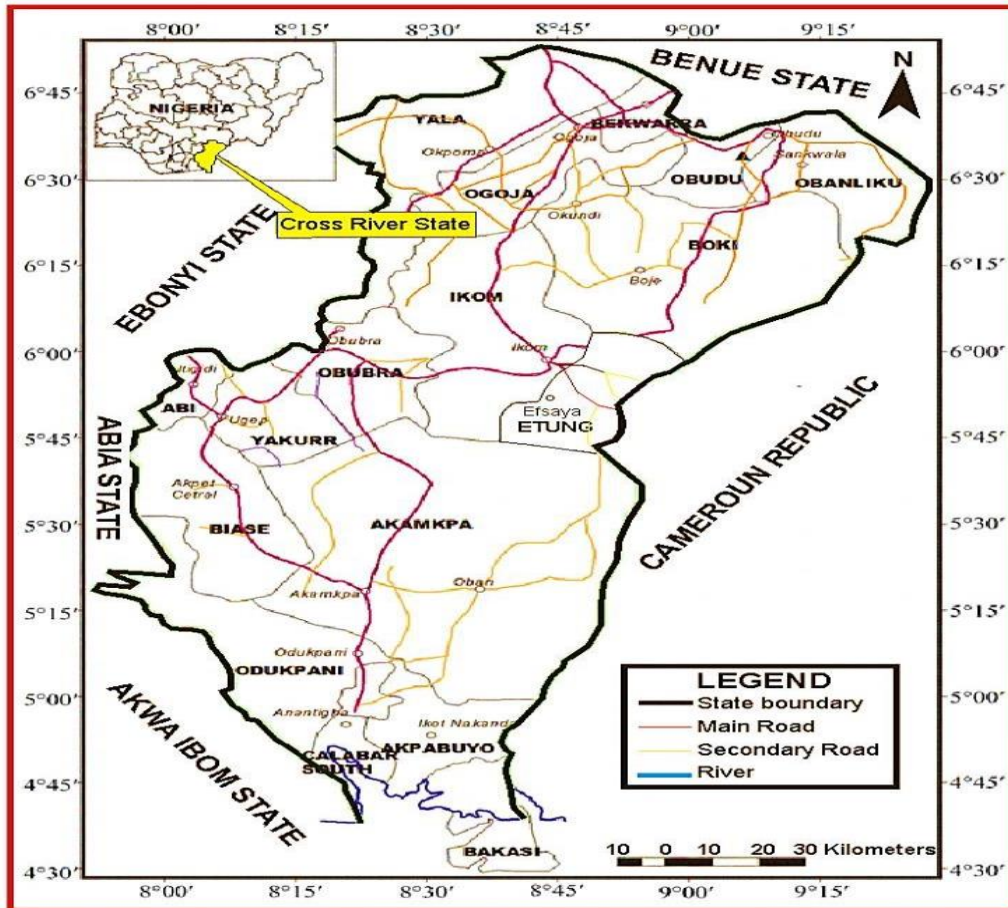
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and the Boki group, all of which are located in the Ikom Local Government Area as well as the Etung and Boki Local Government Areas, respectively. Interestingly, the Yala, Ukelle, Ekajuka, Mbube, Bette, Bekwarra, and Utugwanga peoples all reside in Ogoja and Yala, as well as Obudu and Obanliku Local Government Areas. It is worth noting that, despite the variety of dialects in Cross River State, the diverse tribes have a common Bantu ancestry (Mfoniso, Nnam, and Okoyen, 2020).

Figure 1: Geopolitical zones of Cross River State



Source: (Mfoniso, Nnam and Okoyen, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adeyemi (2019) provides an overview of the history of local government administration in Nigeria. According to the author, local government administration in Nigeria is as ancient as history, dating all the way back to the pre-colonial period. Naturally, it was traditionally a component of the system of administration among Nigeria's ethnic groups, primarily the Yoruba in the west, the Hausa/Fulani in the north, and the Igbo in the east, and each ethnic group ran it according to their cultural values. The author characterizes colonial administration as an indirect rule system.

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That is, an effort was made to rule the people through their chief. He said, however, that the system has been reconstructed and reorganized from independence and subsequently, depending on the regime and character of government in power. Comprehensively, these developments have pushed it through a sequence of uncertainty and endowed it with distinctive qualities. The investigation of the historical evolution of local government in Nigeria was therefore justified by the research technique, which relied heavily on secondary sources (Adeyemi, 2019). His results indicate that the present status of Local Government in Nigeria is defined by the State Government's unfettered intervention, and so he suggests that the Constitution be revised to empower Local Government, particularly on budgetary authority, functions, and duties (Adeyemi, 2019). This advice is appropriate since local government has historically been utilized as a means of power control and corruption, which reflects the thesis's objective. However, Adeyemi's analysis has a flaw. He made no attempt to demonstrate the system's flaws in Cross River State. The current research spans at least one semester.

Udensi et al. (2012) use the Boki local government area of Cross River State as a case study to examine community leadership and development difficulties in Nigeria. They investigate the degree to which community leaders contribute to the success of community development programs in Cross River State's Boki Local Government Area. According to them, community development happens when residents strengthen the ties that bind their neighborhoods together, construct social networks, and form their own organizations in order to develop a long-term capacity for issue resolution. To accomplish their study's aims, the author utilized a total of 150 community leaders who were chosen using a multi-stage sample procedure. They used frequency counts, percentages, Group Arithmetic Mean, and Mean Weight Value (Udensi et al. 2012). Their findings demonstrate that leadership roles are not reserved for a certain sex, age group, marital status, or educational level; rather, the period of residency of community leaders has a major role in the success of community development programs in the research region. As a result, they found that understanding the extent to which community leaders have engaged in community development and the obstacles they confront has significant consequences for implementing sustainable community development initiatives. Their advice was astute. They proposed, among other things, that specific and intentional plans be developed to address some of the issues found in their research in order to ensure sustainable community development in the region. Additionally, they urge that more committed community leaders be recruited and allocated tasks targeted at enhancing the welfare of the people (Udensi et al., 2012).

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This excellent initiative overstated community development programs, so obliterating the government's influence. Additionally, the scope of the task is limited to a single local government, necessitating the investigation of other local governments around the state.

Okon (2017) emphasized the importance of communication in facilitating the successful administration of local governments in Nigeria's Cross River state. He correctly identified the importance communication plays in supporting efficient local government administration in Nigeria's Cross River State. According to him, since local government is the closest level of government to the grassroots, it must create sufficient financial resources to offer services that contribute to the reduction of poverty among those it serves. Being closely scrutinized by the public, its operators' incapacity to live up to expectations might completely ruin their political goodwill. However, Okon employs the agenda-setting theory as a theoretical framework, which indicated that even in the absence of funding, local government administrators faced significant criticism from the public due to a lack of communication between the government and the governed (Okon, 2017). The author proposes that local government officials be proactive in their communication efforts to ensure that their constituents are continually kept informed. Additionally, he adds that the mass media should advocate for revolutionary changes in the administration of local governments in the country via their news, features, opinions, and editorial comments in order to assist in restoring local governments' functionality in Nigeria so that they can better serve their constituents (Okon, 2017). This is critical, but there is still a significant vacuum in our knowledge of the other elements that contribute to the ineffectiveness of local government administration non local government regions. The current research will address one of these variables and gaps.

Ifere and Eko (2014) used Cross River State as a case study to examine tax innovation, administration, and revenue production in Nigeria. They seek to ascertain the efficiency and efficacy of tax administration in Nigeria using Cross River State as a case study, as well as the extent to which tax income is utilized to fund critical infrastructure and social services. According to them, taxes has been ineffectual in Nigeria as a fiscal policy tool for funding infrastructure and social services critical to any society's growth. Despite the fact that taxes has been identified as one of the most stable sources of income for any government to fund its numerous development activities, Cross River State has consistently performed poorly in terms of tax yield. This is mostly due to a slew of issues plaguing the state's tax administration system. As identified, several major issues contributing to this trend include: improper tax assessment (high

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tax rate), tax evasion and avoidance, inadequate remuneration of tax officials, insufficient review and updating of tax policy, and the practice of tax clearance only when candidates for public elections or contracts are shortlisted. Additionally, the implementation of proper measures is necessary for the creation of sufficient tax income. Using Cross River State as a case study, they evaluated the efficiency and efficacy of tax administration in Nigeria. Their methodology of choice is a qualitative approach using structured questionnaires to survey the state's three senatorial districts; our analytical strategy is based on the central limit theory (Ifere and Eko, 2014). Their results indicate that there is a high degree of inefficiency in tax administration. They so advocated for frequent review and updating of tax policy in order to foster innovation and efficiency in tax administration. Additionally, efficient tax revenue allocation will spur development of critical infrastructure and social services. Despite the fact that the outcome demonstrates a significant shortfall in infrastructure development and provision of social services that are meant to be funded by taxes, there are other variables that contributed to such development (Ifere and Eko, 2014). One of such variables is the administrators' selection process and their need to be faithful to whomever chose them, whether the masses via popular election or their godfathers, most notably the governors. This is one of the areas covered by the current research.

According to Mobolaji and Oriakhogba (2015), local governments are primarily designed to promote grassroots development, and they must be constructed in such a way that they are sustainable and capable of accomplishing this goal. The author evaluates the present local government structure in Nigeria in light of the country's constitutional framework with the goal of developing a more sustainable structure that would result in improved service delivery at the local level. Their comparisons to local government systems in the United States of America (USA) and Germany were made in order to compare best practices to the Nigerian system. According to them, one of the high points of military rule in Nigeria was the reform of the local government system, which began in 1976 under the military administration commanded by General Olusegun Obasanjo. It is correct that the reform established a single-tier uniform local government system throughout the country, and a subsequent reform in 1988/1989 under General Ibrahim Babangida's military government introduced the presidential system of administration to local government in an attempt to harmonize government styles at all levels in the country, resulting in a nationwide uniform single-tier presidential structure for local government councils (LGCs) (Mobolaji and Oriakhogba, 2015). The authors recommended the 'council-manager' model, which is used by several

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local governments in the United States of America for effective service delivery. The approach, which combines elected council members with professional managers recruited as private managers to administer local government activities, might be an alternative to the compromised system employed by the Nigerian government. According to the author, the correct method to promote grassroots growth is for local governments to be run like private businesses with elected representatives determining policy frameworks and directives (Mobolaji and Oriakhogba, 2015). This seems to be one of the solutions for avoiding self-appointed local council members who are more loyal to their appointer than to the grass-roots constituents they are meant to represent. This gap is best addressed by beginning with each state, and the practice of cross river state will be explored in this research.

Ikeji et al. (2013) employed a 900-person sample size and stratified random sampling to examine decentralization and democratic local government in Cross River State, Nigeria. They agreed that governance at the grassroots level in Nigeria is in crisis, owing to what seems to be purposeful measures to stymie democratic administration at the local government level in the nation. To them, the local government preserves its external image as a tier government. It even performs its tasks. However, the crisis has challenged its very nature as a government whose power is drawn directly from and entrenched in the Constitution (Ikeji, et al., 2013). They classified respondents according to their geographical zone, political party allegiance, and educational status. According to their results, the political class in Cross River State perceives the local government administration system as ineffective and development-oriented, contrary to the stipulations of the federal republic of Nigeria's constitution. They observed that since the commencement of Nigeria's current democratic framework in 1999, enlisting local government councils to act as agents of development and good change for communities and inhabitants has proven difficult (Ikeji, et al., 2013). The authors' conclusion and subsequent observation that the State Government meddles excessively in the affairs of the Local Governments in Cross River State is directly related to the study's objective. This involvement and powerful influence had an effect on the regime in question, which is the subject of this thesis.

Ukwayi and Okpa (2017) investigated the impact of electoral and economic crimes on sustainable development in Nigeria's Cross River State. They examined the influence of election fraud and theft of public money on sustainable development in Cross River State by focusing on two research objectives. This study used a survey research design. The authors used system theory into their analysis by using an 18-item

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questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on electoral, economic crimes, and sustainable development" (QEESD) that was produced by the researcher and used to collect data for the study (Ukwayi, & Okpa, 2017). Their findings indicated that election rigging and misappropriation of public funds have a detrimental effect on sustainable development in Cross River state, Nigeria, and they recommended, among other things, that political office holders use public funds prudently for programs and projects that benefit the citizens' well-being. Additionally, election rigging should be deemed a criminal offense punishable by life in prison or the death penalty (Ukwayi, & Okpa, 2017). While the study's objective was to analyze the impact of electoral and economic crimes on sustainable development in Cross River State, Nigeria, there is a gap in this area. That is, not only elected officials embezzled public money; appointed officials (or have a predisposition to) do far more than this research considers.

Between 1996 and 2010, Tapang (2012) evaluated the influence of revenue base on local governments' social assets in Cross River State, Nigeria (Tapang, 2012). The author used the ex-post facto study approach while gathering data from these municipal governments between 1996 and 2010, evaluating it using Ordinary Least Squares. His results indicate that revenue base has a substantial influence on the building of social assets and that domestically produced income, which is a steady source of revenue, has been overlooked owing to an over-reliance on statutory allocation from the federation account. Additionally, the state government's failure to pay Councils 10% (10%) of its domestically produced money, as required by statute, along with the consequences from the functioning of the State Local Government Joint Allocation Account (JAAC), has harmed Councils' potential to develop social assets. He stated that local governments should diversify their funding streams to help in the development and implementation of social infrastructure (Tapang, 2012). He recommended amending the constitution to eliminate the state local government Joint Allocation Account (JAAC) in order to protect Council funds from State Government interference; focusing attention on developing and utilizing local government's internal revenue base, given its controllability and stability; and requiring State Governments to adhere to the constitutional provision requiring them to remit 10% of State internally generated revenue. This would help councils increase their revenue base; budgeting and budgetary control must be ingrained in local government to ensure efficient resource management and high-level performance; and the regulatory framework governing the management of local government funds must be strengthened to ensure sincere implementation. In this respect, zero tolerance for corruption must be maintained; capacity development via

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workshops and seminars must be conducted to educate local government officials and workers with the necessary skills for creating and using their internal revenue base. Additionally, these activities should instill a stronger work culture and increase accountability and openness in local government administration, and local governments must create more efficient resource allocation mechanisms to give capital projects the attention they need (Tapang, 2012). Although before 2010, this tried a great deal on the financial administration of local government in Cross River State. The current research, in order to close the existing gap, will look at this between 2015 and 2019.

Ezeibe, Abada, and Okeke (2016) give fresh insight into public office zoning in Nigeria, relating the phenomena to the country's liberal democracy and economic progress. They investigated the relationship between political appointments and infractions of Nigeria's Federal Character Principles, using prebendal theory as a theoretical framework. The writers collected data from documentary sources and used content analysis to analyze the topic. They revealed that the majority of appointments made from 2015 to present are from the northern region of Nigeria, which has generated some consternation among other geopolitical zones in the country. They advised that the meritocratic concept, which was a defining aspect of Max Weber's Bureaucratic principle, be closely adhered to, as well as that equitable representation of ethnic groups at all levels be ensured via appointment and recruiting (Ezeibe, Abada, & Okeke, 2016). Although this research concentrated on the appointment process in Nigeria and not on local government administrators or councils, it assisted in identifying the faults related with appointment and the biases that resulted in the political climate.

Olarinmoye (2008) discusses Nigeria's godfathers, political parties, and election corruption. According to him, electoral corruption is mostly seen in Nigeria as a direct subversion of the election process by those thirsty for the personal riches that electoral victory entails in the country. While the author does not cast doubt on the personal enrichment thesis of political corruption, he takes a more nuanced approach to analyzing electoral corruption. He focuses on the realities of godfathers, political parties, and voters in Nigeria, arguing that electoral corruption is a result of the logic of electoral competition (zero-sum), which requires that political parties in Nigeria, crippled by a lack of voter mobilization capacity derived from their elite/caucus nature, resort to individuals (godfathers) possessing certain characteristics suckers. Electoral corruption, he believes, is further entrenched by the godfather's political and social existential demands, which can only be answered via additional electoral corruption, this time in favor of the godfathers themselves (Olarinmoye, 2008). This is true of

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Nigerian politics, especially the local government areas of Cross River State, which the current article seeks to examine. The author, however, did not cover Cross River local government politics in his research, a significant flaw that this study will address.

Chukwuemaka, Oji, and Chukwurah (2013) performed a critical examination of Nigeria's godfather and godson politics. The authors assessed the degree to which godfather politics contributed to Nigeria's instability and proposed solutions to the issues they observed. The survey research technique was used, with data obtained by questionnaire and evaluated using the Z-test. Their results established that Nigeria's present political instability is a result of godfatherism's politics; they also established that godfatherism is the mother of corruption in Nigeria. Indeed, godfatherism politics has bred mediocrity within the public administration as a consequence of a flawed and uneven recruiting process. Thus, the authors proposed that the National Orientation Agency expand its efforts to reorient political players and employers of labor in the public sector in order for them to become aware of the inadequacies of godfather politics. Legislators should pass a law prohibiting godfather politics in Nigeria and barring offenders from engaging in political activities in the country. The same legislation should govern the recruitment, placement, and training of bureaucrats (Chukwuemaka, Oji, & Chukwurah, 2013). Their results and suggestions accurately represent the genuine character of Nigerian politics, especially at the local government level, and so benefitted our research. However, the author makes no mention of how godfatherism influences local government appointment politics in Cross River State.

Emordi, Oshodare, and Attah-Echa (2007) examine the godfather complex in Nigerian politics between 2003 and 2005, focusing on Anambra state. Between 2003 and 2005, the authors assert, Anambra State was involved in a significant political crisis that peaked on 10 July 2003, when the state governor, Chris Ngige, was kidnapped in what was dubbed Nigeria's first "civilian" coup. The kidnapping was carried out by Nigerian police officers acting on behalf of Chris Uba, the estranged godfather of Anambra politics, who believed Ngige had broken their patron-client relationship, which granted him free access to state finances. This author conducts an in-depth examination of this development. They say that the governor's failure to cater to the godfather's whims and caprices precipitated the crisis, and that the president, which provided unwavering support to the godfather in the state, is complicit in the situation. They assert that such high-level backing resulted in the annulment of Ngige's mandate and the election of Mr. Obi, the candidate of the All-Peoples Grand Alliance (APGA). As a result, they argue that godfathers' actions were detrimental to Anambra State's

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development aims and advocate for the institutionalisation of responsible leadership as the foundation for state advancement (Emordi, Oshodare, & Attah-Echa, 2007). This is a straightforward and practical example of godfatherism and its implications, which mirror the internal conflict that exists in the state of the current study. However, the governor's decision to appoint his godsons to the local government rather than elect them has been attributed to the ill of godfatherism.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Quantitative research was used to explore the overall selected method and practices of local government administration in Cross River State during Professor Ben Ayade first tenure administration, 2015-2019, the constitutional framework that governed the nomination of the council of local government executives and the impact on local government administration and the state as a whole.

The data about the research problem was collected via online questionnaire at different political platforms of different local government in Cross River State, Nigeria. The online questionnaire was also shared among some staff of local governments in the state. Quantitative data was gathered first, and then qualitative data was collected to aid in the explanation or expansion of quantitative results. This online survey was developed for those who have knowledge and experiences about the local government administration in the period of this study. The survey gathered a brief information on respondents' backgrounds and their view on the research questions.

A series of questions were designed to determine state of the local government administration in the state between 2015 and 2019. The information were about the appointment of the local government administrators in Cross River State, the appointment and the influence of godfatherism, the principle of selection of local government executive and the impact on the administration, the local government administration under the appointed administrators and the administration under the elected ones, the administration to determine if it is a failed one and the positive influence of the local government administration on Nigeria politics during the period. The information was collected using standardised questionnaire. The gathering of email addresses of respondents has been deactivated to safeguard their anonymity, and no personal identity-revealing questions have been included.

Sampling method

The population for the study comprised respondents from nine (9) local governments areas in Cross River State namely; Ikom, Obanliku, Obubra, Obudu, Odukpani, Ogoja, Abi, Akamkpa and Calabar South local government areas. Therefore, the sample technique that was adopted here was thus stratified random sampling. Similarly, because respondents must have experience of the local government administration in Cross River State between 2015 and 2019, purposeful sampling was used to select respondents for survey. The survey was made available to 360 respondents. 40 respondents each are selected from Ikom, Obanliku, Obubra, Obudu, Odukpani, Ogoja, Abi, Akamkpa and Calabar South local government areas. The gender was not sampled as it is expected to be identified by their responses. The figure is selected as preferred for the study.

All the data collection process was conducted online. Generally, adults from different age ranges were captured in the questionnaire with at least a primary school leaving certificate, working class and majorly Nigerians.

Data collection procedures

The key tool used in data collection is the standardised questionnaire, and the correlation regression analysis of the data collected is carried out. The respondents were asked to fill out the online survey and at the same time forward the announcement to their colleagues inviting them to participate in the online survey. The survey took about 7-10 minutes to complete. The instrument makes use of a five-point Likert scale checklist of questions. The questionnaire is separated into two sections. Below, these sections are explained:

Section A: This section of the questionnaire includes the respondents' demographic information. Questions about the sample's personal details are given here. Such questions include age, gender, marital status and level of education. In the context of a checklist, the questions under this section are asked.

Section B: This section consists of two sections. Part 1 includes questions relating to sufficient knowledge of the local government administration in Cross River State between 2015 and 2019 i.e., the constitutional process of selection and *the modus operandi* of the administration. It uses the five scales of Likert: strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree, and strongly agree. Part 2 includes concerns about success and impact of the process and administration on the state. This section also makes use of the Likert scale of five points.

Assumptions

The research makes a variety of assumptions in order to pick a reasonable sample reflective of the underlying population. Several critical assumptions include the following: the sample size chosen for this study will adequately reflect the whole population required for the research. Additionally, the tool employed in the qualitative study, the questionnaire, is assumed to be valid and to assess the intended components. More also, it is assumed that respondents would be excessively candid in their responses to the survey questions and that their genuine response to piracy testing will include both seen and observed events.

In terms of validity and the questionnaire's ability to measure the desired variables, it is assumed that responses are mutual and that the questions are capable of accommodating all possible responses, are phrased neutrally, do not contain any prestige bias, and do not make respondents feel guilty in any way. Furthermore, it is assumed that the mechanism of administration, the questionnaire, guarantees that all questions are answered.

Method of Data Analysis

The study data was analysed using the computer software programme (SPSS: Statistic Package for Social Sciences, version 23) as follows:

- i. Descriptive statistics in the form of frequency and percentage were used to evaluate and present the demographic details of the respondents (section A).
- ii. Section B of the questionnaire was graded and presented in the form of an average using descriptive statistics.
- iii. The regression analysis was implemented using SPSS to verify the degree of relationship between the variables.
- iv. Question scoring was analysed using the Linkert scale of five points, which is as follows;
 - Strongly agree - 5 points
 - Agree - 4 points
 - Disagree - 3 points
 - Strongly disagree - 2 points
 - Undecided - 1 point

This gave a vivid and encompassing analysis of the collected data.

DATA ANALYSIS

- **Demographic Information of Respondents**

Table 2: Sex of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Sex	Female	39	10.8	10.8	10.8
	Male	321	89.2	89.2	100.0
	Total	360	100.0	100.0	

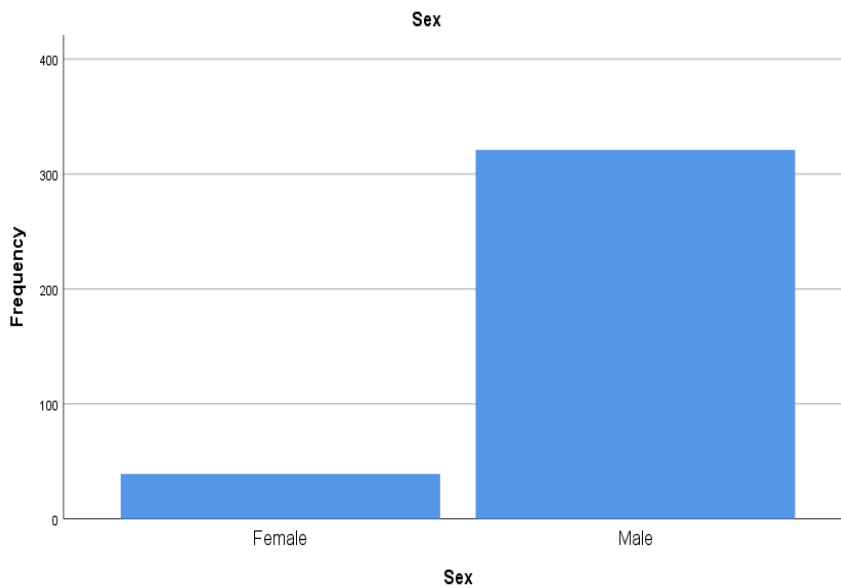


Figure 2: A Chart showing illustrating the Sex of the Respondents

Source: Author's survey

Table 2 shows the breakdown of the sex of the respondents. The table shows that there were a total of 360 participants. According to the results, 89.2% of those who took the survey were males, while 10.8% were female. Majority of the respondents were males.

Table 3: Age Bracket of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Ages	18-25	53	14.7	14.7	14.7
	26-35	36	10.0	10.0	24.7
	36-45	175	48.6	48.6	73.3
	46-55	56	15.6	15.6	88.9
	Above 55	40	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	360	100.0	100.0	

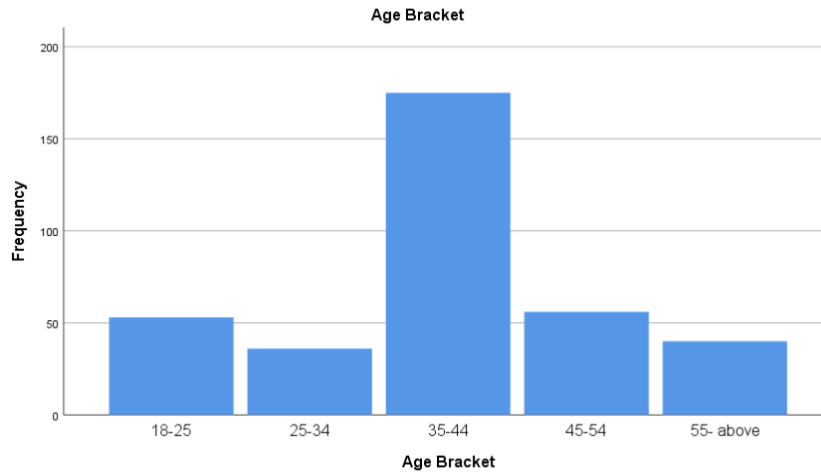


Figure 3: A Chart illustrating the age bracket of the respondents
Source: Author's survey

According to Table 3, 14.7% of survey respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25, 10% were between the ages of 26 and 35, 48.6 percent were between the ages of 36 and 44, 15.6 percent were between the ages of 46 and 55, and the remaining 11.1% were of the ages above 55. The respondents' mean age was 39±4 years.

Table 4: Educational Background of the Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Secondary	37	10.3	10.3	100.0
Primary	17	4.7	4.7	89.7
PhD	15	4.2	4.2	85.0
Master	45	12.5	12.5	80.8
Bachelor	246	68.3	68.3	68.3
Total	360	100.0	100.0	

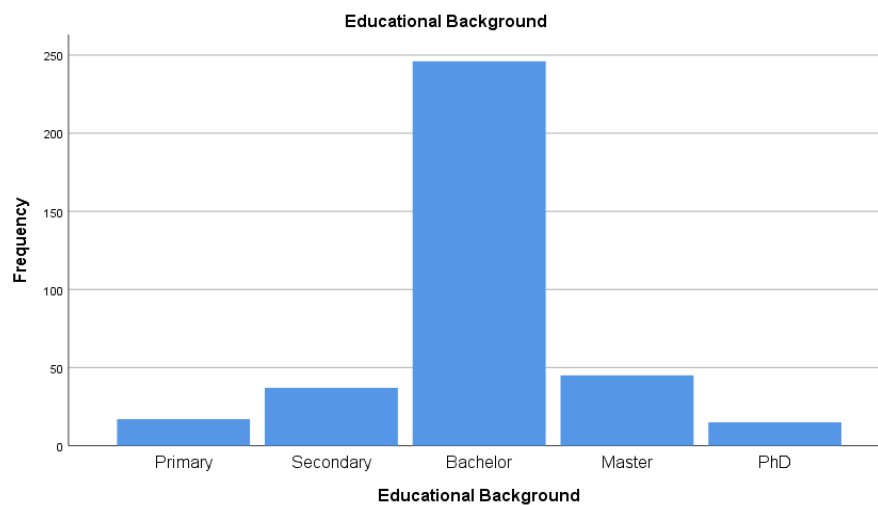


Figure 4: A Chart illustrating the educational background of the respondents
Source: Author's survey

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The findings of the respondents' educational backgrounds shows that 4.7 percent of those who responded had primary school certificates, 10.3 percent had Secondary school certificates, 68.3 percent had bachelor degrees, 12.5 percent had Masters' degree, and 4.2 percent had Ph.D.s, according to the results of the survey.

Table 5: Marital Status of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Marital Status	Divorce	17	4.7	4.7	4.7
	Married	105	29.2	29.2	33.9
	Single	223	61.9	61.9	95.8
	Widow(er)	15	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	360	100.0	100.0	

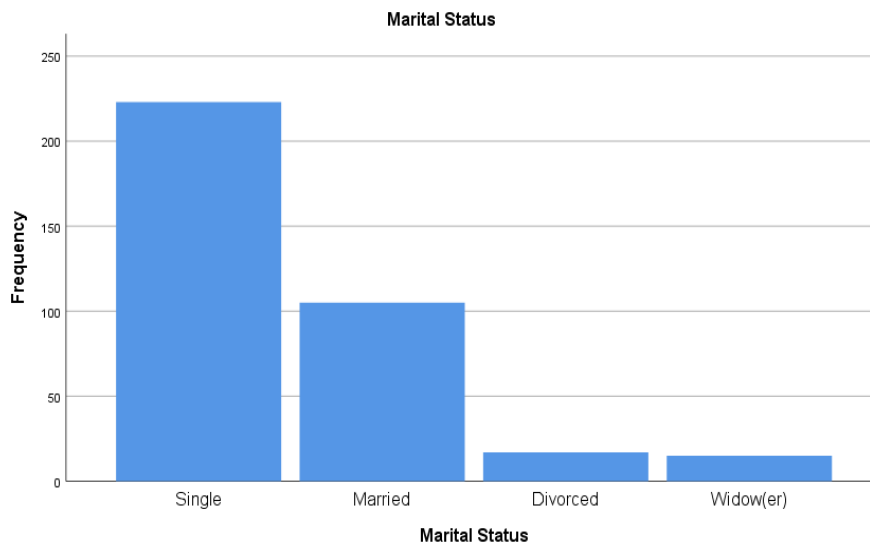


Figure 5: A Chart illustrating the Marital Status of the respondents

Source: Author's survey

The results of the respondents, as represented in the preceding table show that 61.9% of the respondents are single, 29.2% of them are married, 4.7% are divorced, while 4.2% are either widows or widowers.

- ***Assessment of the local government administration experience between 2015 and 2019***

Table 6: Knowledge of the local government administration between 2015 and 2019

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Response	No	3	0.8	0.8	0.8
	Yes	357	99.2	99.2	100.0

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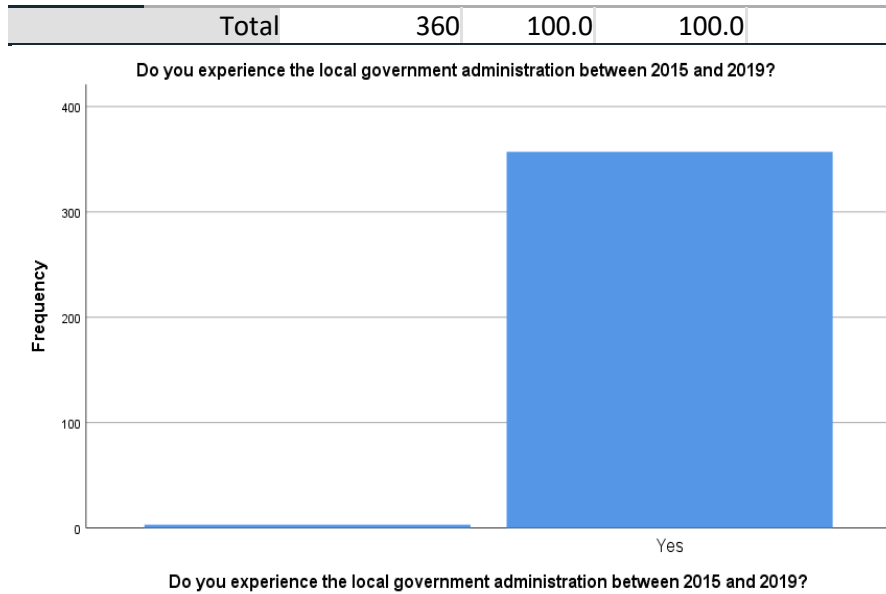


Figure 6: A Chart illustrating Experience of the local government administration between 2015 and 2019

Source: Author's survey

The response of the respondents in the Table 6 above, illustrates that 99.2% of the entire respondents experienced the local government administration between 2015 and 2019. On the other hand, 0.8% of the total population of the respondents have no experience of the local government administration between 2015 and 2019.

Table 7: Residence in any local government in Cross River State

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	6	1.7	1.7	1.7
Yes	354	98.3	98.3	100.0
Total	360	100.0	100.0	

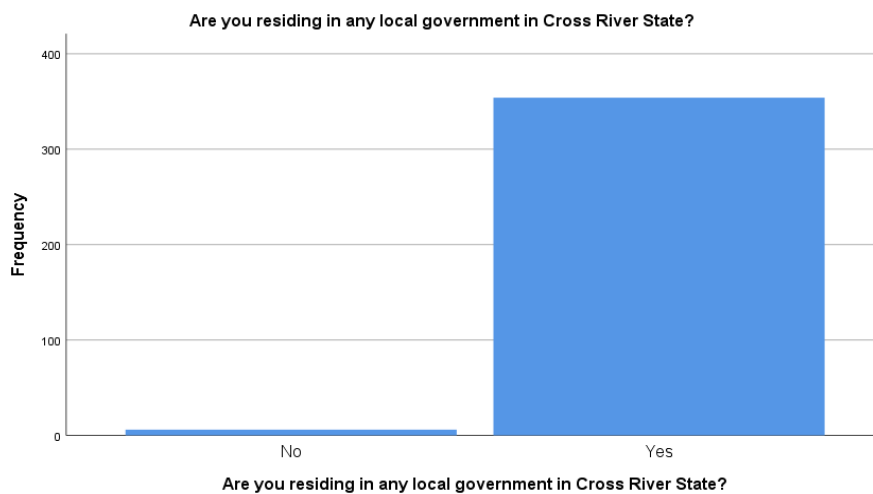


Figure 7: Residence in any local government in Cross River State
Source: Author's survey

From the findings, 98.3% of the respondents are resident in Local Government Areas in Cross River State. However, 1.7% of the respondents are not resident in any Local Government Areas in Cross River State.

Table 8: Voting During Elections

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	12	3.3	3.3	3.3
Yes	348	96.7	96.7	100.0
Total	360	100.0	100.0	

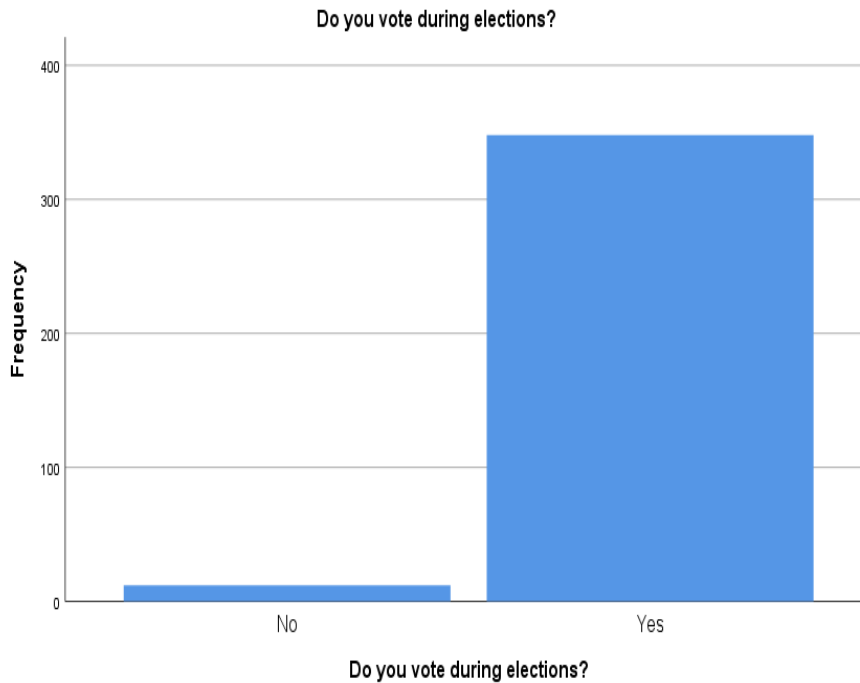


Figure 8: Bar chart illustrating Voting of the respondents during Elections
Source: Author's survey

Table 8 illustrates how many of the respondents vote during elections. From the findings, 96.7% of the overall respondents usually vote during elections, while, 3.3% of the respondents do not vote during elections.

Table 9: Election of the local government council in Cross River State

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	137	38.1	38.1	38.1
Yes	223	61.9	61.9	100.0
Total	360	100.0	100.0	

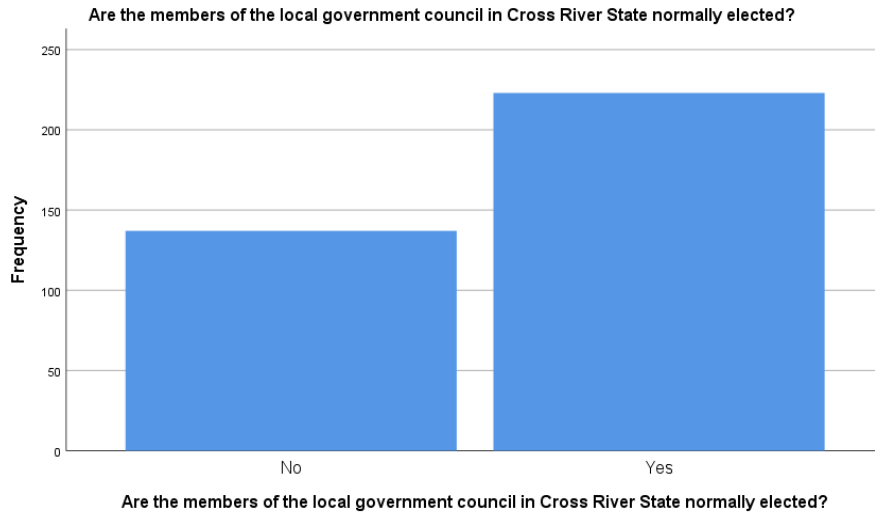


Figure 9: Election of the local government council in Cross River State
Source: Author’s survey

The respondents’ response in Table 9 regarding whether the local government council in Cross River State is normally elected or not. According to the findings, 61.9% of the respondents consented to the fact that the local government council are normally elected, while 38.1% of the respondents consent to the fact that the council are normally not elected (appointed).

Table 10: Witness of the entire period of the administration

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	12	3.3	3.3	3.3
Yes	348	96.7	96.7	100.0
Total	360	100.0	100.0	

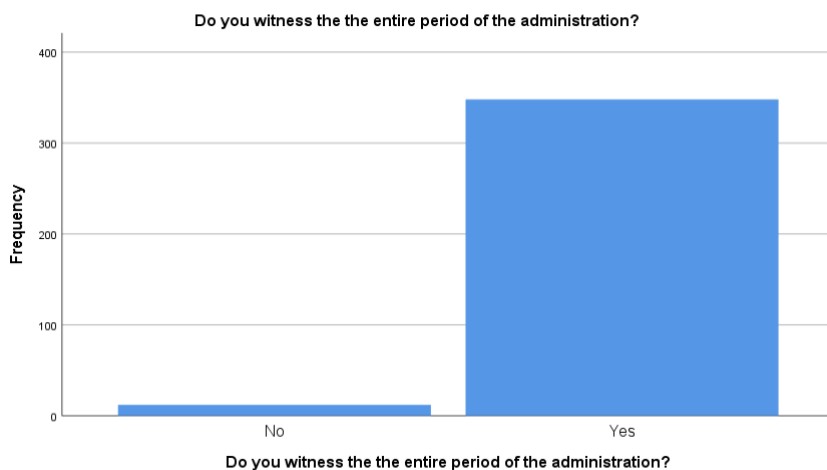


Figure 10: A Bar Chart illustrating the Respondents' Witness of the entire period of the administration

Source: Author's survey

From the findings, 96.7% of the respondents witnessed the entire period of the administration. On the other hand, 3.3% of the respondents did not witness the entire period of the administration.

Thus, based on the foregoing facts, it is obvious that the survey respondents possessed the required characteristics of the sampling distributions, hence excluding any possibility of research bias.

- **Research questions**

Table 11: Assessment of selection of the Local Government Administrators in Cross River State between 2015 and 2019

		Frequency	Percent
Response	Strongly disagree	25	6.9
	Disagree	30	8.3
	Neutral	1	0.3
	Agree	53	14.7
	Strongly Agree	251	69.7
	Total	360	100.0

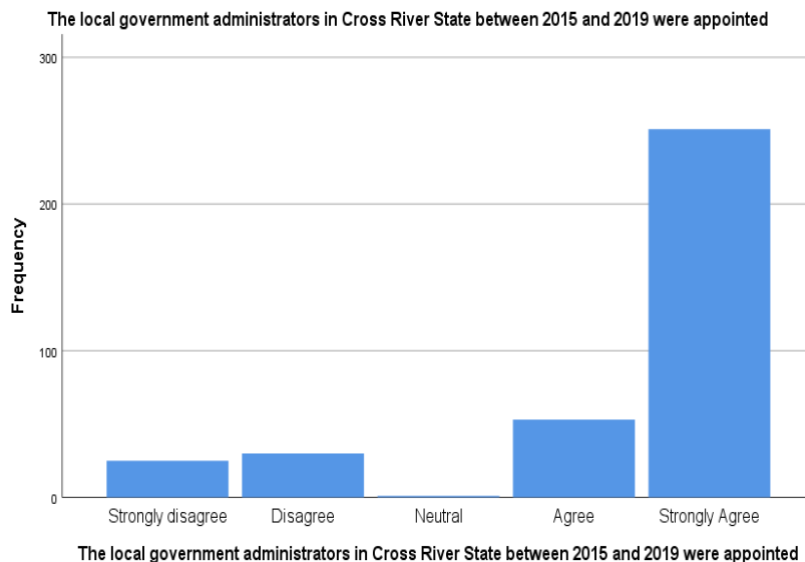


Figure 11: A Bar Chart showing the Frequencies and Percentages on statement regarding Respondents' Response on selection of the Local Government Administrators in Cross River State between 2015 and 2019

Source: Author's survey

The majority of the respondents 84.4% agreed that the Local Government Administrators in Cross River State between 2015 and 2019 were appointed. However,

15.2% of the respondents disagreed that the Local Government Administrators in Cross River State between 2015 and 2019 were elected, implying that they were appointed.

Table 12: The influence of godfatherism on the appointment

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	4	1.1
Disagree	8	2.2
Neutral	3	0.8
Agree	74	20.6
Strongly Agree	271	75.3
Total	360	100.0

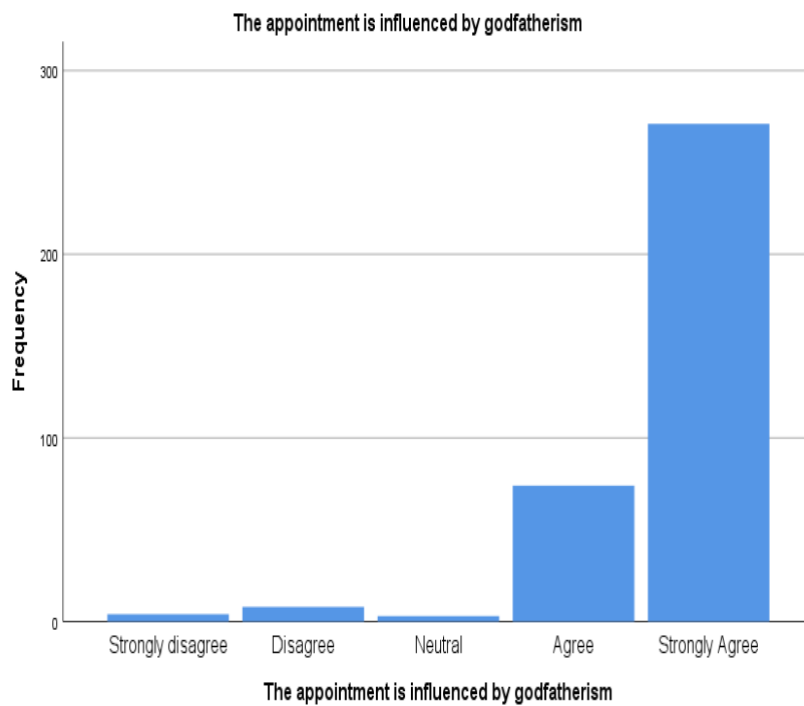


Figure 12: The respondents' response on the influence of godfatherism on the appointment

Source: Author's survey

According to the results of the research, 95.9% of the respondents consented that the appointment was influenced by godfatherism. However, 3.3% of the respondents disagreed to the notion that the appointment was influenced by godfatherism.

Table 13: Impact of the principle of selection of local government executive on the administration

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	253	70.3
Disagree	55	15.3
Neutral	2	0.6

Agree	25	6.9
Strongly Agree	25	6.9
Total	360	100.0

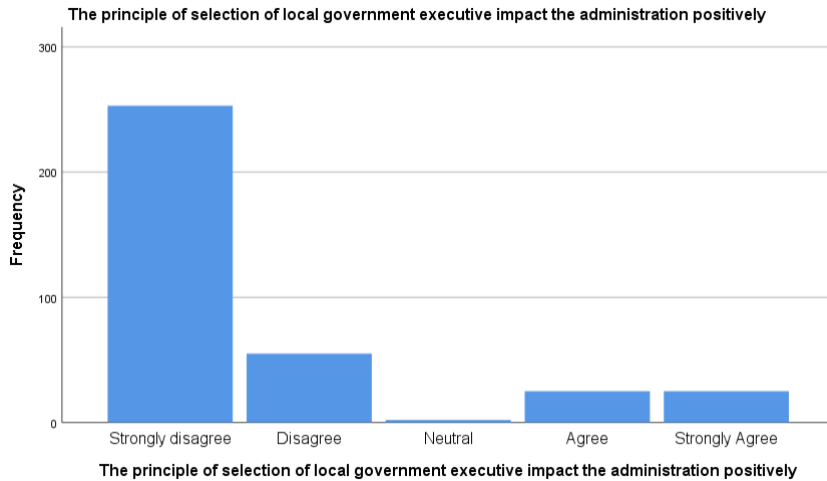


Figure 13: The respondents’ response to the impact of the principle of selection of local government executive on administration

Source: Author’s survey

From the summary of the results, 13.8% of the respondents agreed that the principle of selection of local government executive had a positive effect on the administration. On the other hand, 85.6% of the respondents disagreed that the principle of selection of local government executive had a positive effect on the administration.

Table 14: Appointed administrators is better than the administration under the elected ones

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	258	71.7
Disagree	71	19.7
Neutral	3	0.8
Agree	20	5.6
Strongly Agree	8	2.2
Total	360	100.0

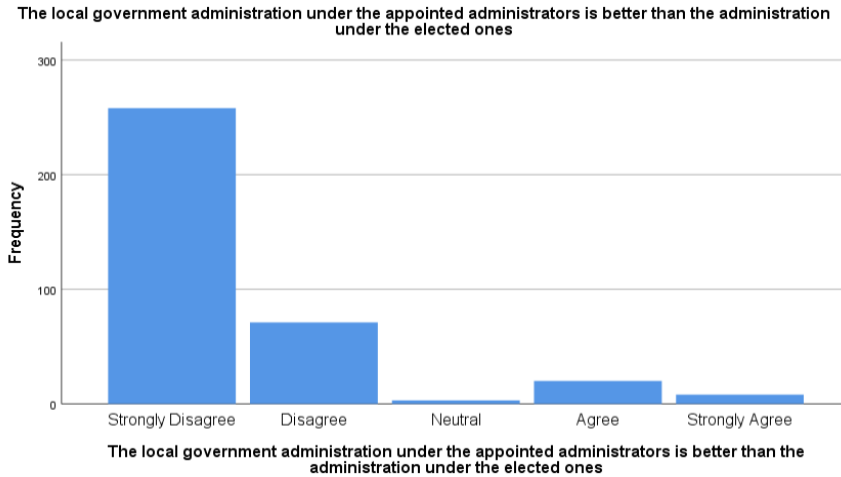


Figure 14: The respondents' response on whether the local government administration under the appointed administrators is better than the administration under the elected ones

Source: Author's survey

From the findings, majority of the respondents, 91.4% disagreed to the point that the local government administration under the appointed administrators is better than the administration under the elected ones, while a lesser population, 7.8% agreed that the local government administration under the appointed administrators is better than the administration under the elected ones.

Table 15: Response to whether the administration was a failed one

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	138	38.3
Disagree	95	26.4
Neutral	33	9.2
Agree	79	21.9
Strongly Agree	15	4.2
Total	360	100.0

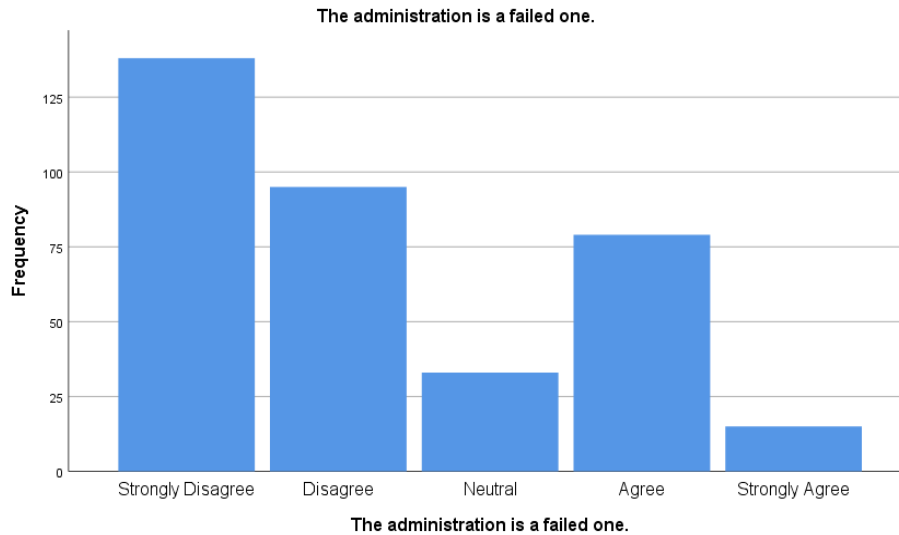


Figure 15: The respondents' response to whether the administration was a failed one
Source: Author's survey

Table 15 summarizes the response of the respondents as to whether the administration was a failed one. 27.1% of the respondents agreed that the administration was a failed one. On the contrary, a majority, 64.7% of the total respondents disagreed that the administration was a failed one.

Table 16: Influence of the local government administration during the period on (Cross River) Nigeria politics

		Frequency	Percent
Response	Strongly Disagree	198	55.0
	Disagree	68	18.9
	Neutral	2	0.6
	Agree	77	21.4
	Strongly Agree	15	4.2
	Total	360	100.0

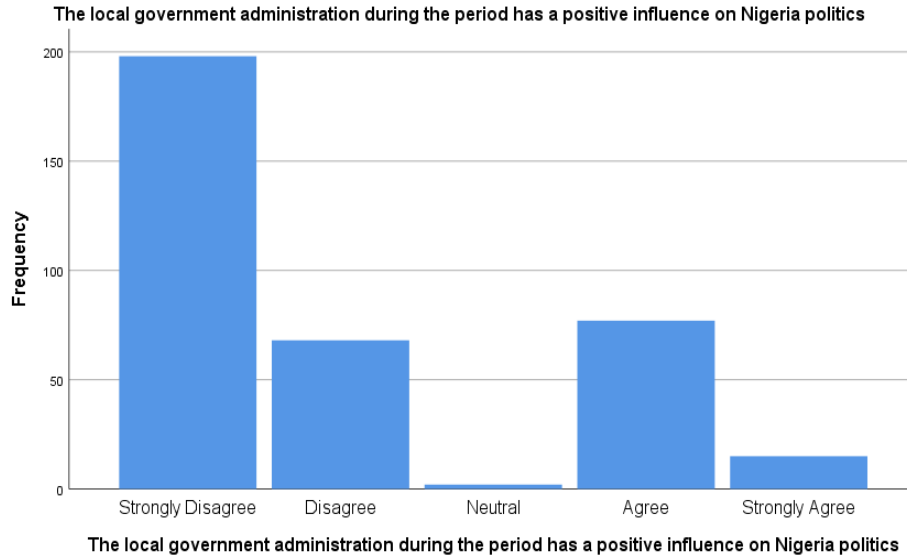


Figure 16: The respondents’ response on the influence of the local government administration during the period on (Cross River) Nigeria politics
Source: Author’s survey

According to the extracted results, a higher 73.9% of the population disagreed to that the positive influence of the local government administration during the period on (Cross River) Nigeria politics. On the other hand, 25.6% of the respondents agreed that the local government administration during the period had a positive influence on (Cross River) Nigeria politics.

In general, the study shows via the above survey results that the Local Government Administrators in Cross River State between 2015 and 2019 were selected (appointed) and not elected. This marked 84.4% of the respondents who agreed that the Local Government Administrators in Cross River State between 2015 and 2019 were appointed. Similarly, the study also shows that the appointment was influenced by godfatherism. This marked 95.9% of the respondents who consented that the appointment of local government administrators in Cross River State was influenced by godfatherism.

This study also informs that the principle of selection of local government executive in Cross River State had a negative effect on the administration. This marked the 85.6% of the respondents who disagreed that the principle of selection of local government executive had a positive effect on the administration. Similarly, the result shows that the local government administration under the elected administrators is better than the administration under the appointed ones. This marked the 91.4% respondents who disagreed that the local government administration in Cross River

State under the appointed administrators is better than the administration under the elected ones.

It is also important to affirm that the administration was reported by the survey to be a successful one based on the majority, 64.7% of the total respondents who disagreed that the local government administration was a failed one. Finally, the study also shows that the administration had a negative impact on (Cross River) Nigeria politics. This was the result of 73.9% of the respondents who disagreed to it that the administration had a positive impact on (Cross River) Nigeria politics.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The overall result of the study indicates that the local government administrators in Cross River State appointed within the period of our study were appointed and not elected as it is constitutionally right. This study also agrees with Ezeibe, Abada & Okeke (2016) who examined the link between political appointments and the violations of the Federal Character Principles in Nigeria and established that most appointments are ethnically biased (Ezeibe, Abada & Okeke, 2016). The study also agrees with Dahlström (2009) study on political appointments in 18 democracies, 1975-2007 which show that there were always irregularities in such appointments and demonstrate different trends in countries belonging to different administrative traditions (Dahlström 2009). This study also agrees with Clancy & O'Connor, (2011) opinion who noted that some problems of ad hoc system are arguments for more meritocracy, transparency and suggested a range of options for improving the current appointments process (Clancy & O'Connor, 2011). This study agrees with Mobolaji and Oriakhogba, (2015) who proposed the 'council-manager' model as practiced in some local governments in the USA for efficient delivery of local services rather than appointment. They further argue that the proper way to ensure grassroots development is if the local governments are administered as private concerns but with elected representatives of the people setting policy frameworks and directions (Mobolaji and Oriakhogba, 2015). Hartmann, (2004) also noted that rather than appointments, electoral rules are just one set of institutions that matter in local politics, and there is no doubt that other variables (such as local administration, resource allocation or capacity-building) are equally important. But the assumption is that local electoral institutions are relevant for the democratisation of both local and national politics, and should thus merit closer scrutiny (Hartmann, 2004).

The result of the study also shows that the appointment of the local government administrators in Cross River State was influenced by godfatherism. This agrees with the study of Ikeji, et al., (2013) who observed that there is undue interference by the State Government in the affairs of the Local Governments in Cross River State (Ikeji, et al., 2013). This result also agrees with Olarinmoye, (2008) study who argues that electoral corruption is entrenched by the political and social existential demands of the godfather, which can only be met by further exercises in electoral corruption, though this time in favor of the godfathers themselves (Olarinmoye, 2008). This findings also supports the findings of Chukwuemaka, Oji, & Chukwurah, (2013) which revealed that the current political instability in Nigeria is a function of the politics of godfatherism, it also revealed that godfatherism is the mother of corruption in Nigeria. They author come straight that the politics of godfatherism has also introduced mediocrity in the public bureaucracy resulting from faulty and lopsided recruitment method (Chukwuemaka, Oji, & Chukwurah, 2013). This study is also consistence with the study of Emordi, Oshodare & Attah-Echa (2007) who claim that godfather complex in Nigerian politics was the cause of political instability (Emordi, Oshodare & Attah-Echa, 2007). This findings also supports Adeoye (2009) findings that there was a shift in the modus operandi of post-independence godfatherism, and what obtains in contemporary Nigeria was violence-inspired godfatherism, which successfully replaced politics of welfare by politics of warfare in the affected areas. Adeoye (2009) however, recognized the inevitability of godfathers in politics but suggest the need for proper management of godfather/godson relationship (Adeoye, 2009). This study also agrees with Majekodunmi & Awosika (2013) who noted that the role of godfathers as a political phenomenon has impacted on the body politics of country negative virtues which are now potential threat to the relatively new democracy (Majekodunmi & Awosika, 2013). This study also agrees with Ololade (2007) who contends that the activities of Godfathers, their use of violence to achieve control of government machinery make clear that the contrary is the case, that the godfather is the boss of an organised political crime outfit against the Nigerian people. His claim that the current prominent role of the godfathers as middleman role played for politicians seeking political power and legitimacy in the face of an apathetic citizenry is apt. However, the consequences of such brokerage activity by the godfather is a perverse one as their very existence and success has demanded terms of exchange that lean heavily in their favor and in which their control over economic and coercive resources facilitates the preservation and manipulation of the scarcities and insecurities experienced by the local populace (Ololade, 2007). The study also agrees with Ebohon &

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Oghoator (2012) who said that in the rise of the godfathers, the long period of the political armies, the rise of a statist economy, globalization, privatization and mass disqualifications of politicians are self-implicated (Ebohon & Oghoator, 2012). Omotola (2007) also affirm this fact when he opines that unprecedented influence of the 'godfathers' enables the monetisation, privatisation and criminalisation of politics, ably assisted by the undemocratic attitudes and behaviour of major political actors at the highest level. He also stated that the result of the activities of godfatherism has been the deinstitutionalisation of core institutions of democracy and people who have been reduced to mere clients/consumers/spectators rather than primary stakeholders in the democratisation process (Omotola, 2007). Of course, the activities of some Nigerian godfathers could be likened to attributes of mafianism; however, some still see the existence of godfathers as the balancer of power in a democracy. It is believed that the need to have a good-hearted individual (people's hero) at the sole realm of absolute power makes a godfather to distribute power as he deems, and anoints who rules. But, godfatherism has taken a strange dimension in Nigeria's political environment. It has become a menace pulling down the foundations of masses-driven governance, thereby denying Nigerians the much-deserved dividends of democracy. Godfatherism became popular in Nigerian political space in the 1960's, and early post-independence leaders became godfathers (Mamah, 2007). The handiwork of godfathers was visible at the return to civil rule in 1979, but military regimes that characterized the 1980's obstructed its activities. The 1999 civil rule ushered in another form of godfatherism (Adeoye, 2009). Looking for solution to the issues of godfatherism in Cross River State local government, Tapang, (2012) recommended that amendment of the constitution to abolish the state local government Joint Allocation Account (JAAC) to secure Council funds from State Government interference; direction of attention to developing and exploiting the internal revenue base of local government, in view of its controllability and stability; there is the need for the State Governments to adhere to the constitutional provision to the effect that they remit 10% of State internally generated revenue to Councils (Tapang, 2012). Chukwuemaka, Oji, & Chukwurah, (2013) also recommended that the National Orientation Agency should intensify efforts in the reorientation of the political actors and employers of labour in the public service to enable them know the shortcomings of godfather politics. Similarly, that the law makers should enact a law to prohibit godfather politics in Nigeria and offenders should be barred from participating in political activities in Nigeria. Same law should guide recruitment, posting and training in the bureaucracy (Chukwuemaka, Oji, & Chukwurah, 2013). Adeoye (2009)

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however, recognized the inevitability of godfathers in politics but suggest the need for proper management of godfather/godson relationship (Adeoye, 2009).

Furthermore, the result of the study shows that the principle of selection of local government executive impacted the administration negatively rather than positive. This is in agreement with Nahmod, (1972) who opine that the tentative inquiry into the right to an election was impacted in part by the reapportionment cases which reflect the special attention given to the citizen's voice in selecting those governmental officials whose decisions will affect him. Of course, the existence of a right to an election would, because of political considerations, often discourage state and local governments from creating special purpose units with adequate powers to meet special needs. If this meant that these needs would go unattended, then the effect of a right to an election would be undesirable. On the other hand, it is also possible that special needs would generate enough public pressure to force the state or municipality to take some kind of action, despite political considerations. This study also agrees with Hessami, (2018) who studied accountability and incentives of appointed and elected public officials and argues that the study of political agency models suggest that elected public officials choose different policies than appointed officials do indicating their weakness. This study also agrees with Lim, (2013) who opines that under appointment, policy congruence with voter preferences is attained but under election, they face strong re-election incentives, while selection on preferences is weak.

In addition, the result of the study shows that the local government administration under the appointed administrators is not better than the administration under the elected ones. This is also in agreement with the study of Ikeji, et al., (2013) who submit that since the inception of the present democratic dispensation in Nigeria in 1999, getting the local government councils to function as development and positive change agent for communities and residents has been a challenge (Ikeji, et al., 2013). Feiock, Lee, & Park, (2012) also observed differences between elected and appointed officials in their modus operandi and in how administrators and elected officials structure their policies. The elected are always most preferred (Feiock, Lee, & Park, 2012). However, Partridge & Sass, (2011), using different case study find no consistent differences in the performance of elected and appointed superintendents. This study also agrees with Andrew and Goldsmith (1998) who reviewed the changes which have affected local government and continue to do so and the changes which have taken place within local government, giving rise to the currently fashionable idea. They however noted that some external change would be the consequence of changes taking

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place within the nation-state: the privatization of state services; restructuring the local government system; changing intergovernmental relations. But some changes are political, in the partisan sense, as when political control changes in a municipality, while others might be social: widening social segregation in cities; growth in drug related crime.

The result of the study indicates that the administration was not a failed one. Although not a complete successful one, the study shows that the administration has some achievements. This is in agreement with Xue-Ming, (2002) study which insist that the core of government achievement appraisalment is the acknowledgement of its administration achievements and the estimation of their value, the ultimate measurement. This study agrees with Ikeji, et al., (2013) who claims that the political class themselves perceive the local government administration system in Cross River State as not effective and development-focused based on the provisions of the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria. Locating the areas of its weakness, Tapang (2012) opined that local governments should expand their internally generated revenue bases to aid planning and execution of social infrastructure.

More also the study shows that the local government administration during the period has a negative influence on (Cross River) Nigeria politics. This agrees with Ukwayi, & Okpa, (2017) study which support that election rigging and misappropriation of public funds affects sustainable development in Cross River state, Nigeria. They argue that 'political office holders' should judiciously utilize public funds for programmes and projects that would positively affect the well-being of the citizens. The result of this study also agree with Piotrowski and Van Ryzin, (2007) who noted the negative effect of local government in the aspect of non-transparency. They noted that citizens have different degrees of interest in and demand for governmental transparency.

The study hypothesizes that the overall selected method and practices of local government administration in Cross River State in Professor Ben Ayade first tenure administration, 2015-2019 has a negative impact on the development of the local government areas in the state and consequently affected the State as a whole. To further cumulate the aforementioned rationale, when the whole survey on the overall selected method and practices of local government administration in Cross River State in Professor Ben Ayade first tenure administration, 2015-2019, the constitutional framework that governed the nomination of the council of local government executives and the impact on local government administration and the state as a whole was

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conducted, it was discovered that, first, the selected method and practices of the appointment was by appointment and not by election as it was constitutionally common to the democratic era. This result agrees with Adeyemi (2019) who also opine that the current state of Local Government in Nigeria is characterized by unbridled interference of the State Government. Second, the constitutional framework that governed the nomination of the council of local government executives was the unconstitutional means of godfatherism. This result agrees with the findings of Udensi et al. (2012) who claim that leadership positions are not the exclusive preserve of a particular sex, age group, marital status or educational status; rather result indicated that the duration of residence of community leaders is a significant factor in the success of community development projects in the study area. Third, the impact of the administration on local government administration and the state as a whole was negative. This aligns with the study of Okon (2017) who said the local government is the closest level of governance to the people at the grassroots; and as a result, needs to generate enough financial resources to provide services that can help in reducing the poverty index of those it serves but has failed to carry out these duties.

CONCLUSION

By examining the overall methods and practices of local government administration in Cross River State during Professor Ben Ayade's first tenure administration, 2015–2019, the constitutional framework governing the nomination of the council of local government executives, and the impact on local government administration and the state as a whole, this study has contributed to and improved the study of local government administration in Cross River State and Nigeria in general. The research topics covered several areas of local government administration, which resulted in fresh discoveries for the study of local government and public administration studies.

Indeed, local governments in Cross River State, like all other local governments worldwide, are responsible for the administration and delivery of critical public services. From trash collection and street cleaning to education and care for the aged and vulnerable, these groups inevitably pioneer the invention and implementation of novel solutions to emerging societal challenges. Along with being at the forefront of delivering and providing essential public services, local governments are often the most visible face of the state (Walker & Andrews, 2015). Through their interactions with customers and service users, "street-level bureaucrats" who offer local public services play a critical role

in molding what it means to be a citizen (Vinzant and Crothers 1998). These and other responsibilities have not been fulfilled to the people's satisfaction since the constituted council was loyal to their godfather and not responsible to their citizens.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are appropriately recommended for redressing the administrative imbalance in Cross River State local government administration and the selection procedure for administrators.

To begin, elections should be held for the local government executive council rather than appointments.

Second, in order to create steady and durable growth, people must vow to combat political process manipulation.

Third, there must be an unwavering opposition to the installation of pseudo-leaders in the state's local government areas.

Fourth, the godfather culture should be fully eliminated. This is because the godfathers effectively seized control of Cross River State's political institutions at a time when the electorate's participation was rapidly dwindling. The absence of participatory democracy, the 'economic' divide between citizens and godfathers, and passion for the election process all work against the institutionalization of party politics in the state.

Fifth, political violence should be avoided in order to oppose godfatherism. This will also guarantee peaceful local government administration in the state.

Sixth, residents of Cross River State should work to elect a leadership that is accountable, articulate, and attentive to the people's yearnings and ambitions, as well as a leadership that upholds the rule of law and democratic values and practices. Institutionalizing such leadership will go a long way toward ensuring the state's and country's future democracy.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

This study has a number of limitations, which indicate the need for more research. Not all research on the process of selection and effect of such local government managers will be published on public administration themes such as this. Several of these studies are available in the disciplines of political science and urban studies, as well as in specialist policy publications in subjects like as housing and education. These findings might be included into future research to provide a more complete picture. The scope of this research does not allow for an examination of the methodological concerns

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and selection criteria used in the appointments. The report does indicate, however, that although the usual election process has certain requirements, godfatherism has a significant impact on appointment. Although the liberal democratic system has come to be widely accepted as the best form of government due to its use of "ballots," Africa's experience with democratic transition and governance has been disappointing in terms of the system's inability to achieve certain utilitarian goals, such as the enthronement of much needed democratic but responsible leadership (Emordi, Oshodare & Attah-Echa, 2007). Thus, the restriction of the criterion, which is godfatherism, is that the investigation cannot include everything.

The outcomes of this research indicate an interesting topic for future investigation. Additionally, the study data implies that use indices to quantify performance is not the optimal technique to operationalize the notion. Nonetheless, certain methods to research design may have an effect on the study's conclusions and should be scrutinized. On a more practical level, academics who publish research on local government administration might benefit the academic community by include correlation coefficients in their multivariate analyses. This would offer two significant advantages. To begin, future researchers will be able to do more typical meta-analysis that includes effect sizes, and to publish publications that incorporate both support score data and meta-analysis, offering analysis that adjusts for other factors (support scores) while also examining effect sizes (meta-analysis).

Additional study should be conducted in dynamic, collaborative, and introspective studies of local government administration. Given that not all local governments in Nigeria conform to these results, identifying more local governments in the nation that do should be another subject of future investigation. Although this study concentrated on the election process and the administration's influence, it would be fascinating to analyze the interaction between the masses and local government council members, as well as their collective accomplishment, in future research. Similarly, at the state level, it would be an interesting field of study to evaluate and compare the performance of each local government inside the state.

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