

Local government administration assignment



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System in Local Government is a mechanism of ensuring greater democratic participation of the citizenry in the law making process. Committee could be established due to the large volume of business to be transacted, Local Government may find it imperative to entrust some of their functions to committees. In running the affairs of the local government, the Local Government Executive Committee may set up standing and ad-hoc committees to handle specific assignment. The standing committees of the Executive include: I.

Education Committee II. Committee of Works. Committee of Finance and general purpose. Iv Local Government Peace and Security Committee v. Police/Community Relations Committee The composition and the functions of each committee are highlighted as follows: I. Education Committee: Section (41) of the local government Edict provided that every local government shall establish an education committee which shall consist of the following people: a). The supervisory councilor for educational matters as chairman. B). Not more than four other members of the council; and c).

Such other persons as may be prescribed by the education law. Section (42) specifies that a local government shall appoint such other standing or dados committees not being more than three In addition to those specified above.

II. Committee of Works: Every Local Government shall establish works DITTO S. L. Department and which shall consists of: a). The supervisory councilor for works as chairman; b). Not more than four members of the council and; c). Such other members of the councils as may be prescribed by committee of works. li. Finance and General Purpose Committee: Ale (2005) itemizes the unction's of finance committee in connection with section (40) that every

local government shall establish a finance and general purpose committee to consist of the following people: a) The chairman of the council as chairman. B) The supervisory councilors. C) Not more than two other members. The functions of this committee include the following as indicated in sub – section (2) guidelines: 1. The regulation and control of the finance of the local government. 2.

Subject to such upper limits as may prescribed by the Local government from time to time, the consideration and awards of contracts; 3. The implementation of the for the general running of the affairs of the local government; 4. Such other functions as the local government may from time to time delegate except the power of ‘ DODO s. L. Levying a rate of tax or of borrowing money. ‘ v. Local Government Peace and Security Committee: The composition of the Committee is as follow: Chairman of the Local Government- Chairman One representative of the Nigeria Police Force (EDP)- Deputy Chairman. Secretary to the local government – Secretary One representative of the State Security Service – Member One representative of the Army Unit (where applicable) – Member One representative of the Naval Unit(where applicable) – Member One representative of the Air Force Unit (where applicable) – Member The most senior traditional ruler in the local government area or his representative – Member Two Community Leaders one of whom shall be a non- indigene of the local government area – Member Two religious Leaders appointed by the local government Chairman One Representative of woman organizations where applicable The function of the committee are: Review of the security situation in the local government area and other suggestions to arrest unpleasant situation, or

avert similar occurrences in the future; Assessing the reactions of the people on government policies and programmer with a view o offering suggestions for modification etc. Taking stock of immigrants to ensure that they have valid entry papers and ensuring that they do not constitute themselves to nuisance or security risk. It makes its input readily available to the meetings of the State Security ‘ DODO S. L. Committee.

The Committee is made up of the following: Local government chairman- Chairman Vice chairman – Member President of the Emirate/Traditional Council or representative – Member The most senior police officer in the local government area – Member One representative of the Muslim organization – Member One representative of the Christian Association of Nigeria – Member President of the Hoteliers Association – Member President of Market Association – Member One representative of the non-indigene Association – Member Two Community Leaders – Members Secretary to the local government or his representative – Secretary The functions of the Committee are:

Regular assessment of the performance of the police force in their task of maintenance of law and order; Suggesting areas of improvement to the police and assisting in achieving closer rapport with police force; Serving as avenue for providing useful information to the police and improving the image of the police in assistance from the public. ‘ DODO s. L. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS History of local government in Nigeria The practice of local government in Nigeria ha a exchequer history. Rooted in pre-colonial system of government, Local Government in Nigeria has undergone a lot of changes. In this aspect, we shall briefly place the practice of Local

Government in historical perspective. The pre-colonial era The pre-colonial era was the period before the British colonized the entity that is today called Nigeria.

Although the salient feature of Local Government system of administration in place then had been treated earlier, suffice it to emphasize that Local Government during this period was essentially based on traditional institutions which was local in form and content. Let it be therefore further stressed that it was not the British that introduced Local Government system to Nigeria. Local Government during the Colonial Period The Colonial epoch: This era can be divided into two: the early days of Native Authority system and the period of emergence of modern local authorities. Phase I: Period of the Local Government in the early days of colonial rule was know as the era of Native Administrative System.

It was first established via a system of administration know as indirect rule. Simply put, indirect rule system is a system in which the colonial authority applied the existing local institutions to carry out the governing of the people with the complement of some modern institutions. This is why Sheboygan (1987) described Native Administration as political administration through the agency of indigenous institutions. The indirect rule system is associated with the Dutch who first DITTO S. L. Applied it to rule in Java. The adoption of the system was informed by certain factors. They include: inadequate colonial personnel and paucity of funds to run colonial government.

Beyond these, the vast Nigeria territory, poor communication system, language barrier, long distance reluctance of the British to tamper with the

existing tradition institutions and the desire to grant Nigerian the opportunity to participate in their political development, also made the system of indirect rule fascinating and inevitable for the British overlords. According to Sheboygan (Cited in Coke, 2001: 175) the Native Administration System was made up of four main inter-dependent parts: (i) the Resident who provided legitimacy under the indigenous political system often supported by a council of elders (iii) the Native Treasury and (v) the Native court. The local police was also part of the Native administration system.

In providing direction and control, the residents were expected to be mindful of the values and goals of the colonial authority. In other words they were expected to drive the administration towards achieving the values and goals of the colonial power. Aside the Resident, the Native authority consisted of a Chief with a council. There were two varieties of the council: the Chief in council and the Chief and Council. In the two cases the Chief had to consult the council in the running of the affairs of the community. However in case of the Chief-in-council the majority decision could prevail; while in the case of the Chief and Council the Chief could override the session of the council. The native authorities played legislative roles.

The essential functions of native authority included the following:

- 0 Collection of taxes part of which must be paid the colonial authority

- 0 Initiating local development programmes
- 0 Construction and maintenance of native authorities schools and dispensaries

- 0 Construction and maintenance of markets
- 0 Construction of local feeder roads
- 0 General maintenance of law

- and order
- 0 Perform any other duties that may be assigned to them. The

native authority was responsible for the appointment and dismissal of its

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officials. The appointment of the Chief himself must gain the imprimatur of the colonial authority. The native administration system recorded different degrees of success in different parts of the country. In the Northern part of the country, it was a large success.

This can be attributed to the facts that, before the colonial power intruded, the Northern part of the country had already had a well centrally organized emirate system in which the Emir wielded absolute powers; strong taxation system existed and largely homogeneous religious view which emphasizes obedience or submission to constituted authority prevailed. The reliance of the colonial power on these structures could not but make the native administration system a success. In the West, the system was partially successful because the “ Bob” did not wield absolute power like the “ Emir” in the North, beyond, strongly apposition to the system by the educated elites in the region coupled with poor system of taxation and plural religious beliefs also undermined the success of the system.

In the East, the system failed major because the region did not have absolute rulers or chiefs that could exercise the kind of control the emirs could exercise on their subjects. This necessitated the appointment of warrant chiefs by the colonial authority which the people considered as alien to their political culture or institutions and oppressive because of the composition of heavy taxation they heralded. This indeed strained the relationship between the warrant chiefs and the people and eventually culminated in the Aba women’s riot of 1929. In any case, by 1950, the new crop of elites in the country who were not accommodated in the indirect rule

system revolted against the practice. This consequently provoked the desire to reform the native authority system by the colonial authority.

Asides from widening political participation, it was the thought that the system should be made more efficient and effective. The Secretary of state for the colonies Screech Jones in 1947 expressed this very when he wrote to the colonial governors thus: The encouragement of local political interest and the building up of a system of efficient and democratic (later changed to representative) local government is a cardinal feature of British policy in Africa. It is now recognized that the political progress of the territory is dependent on the development of responsibility in local government. Japan cited in Coke, 2004: 178). Consequently reform in native authority could not but emerge.

The first region to blaze the trail was the Eastern Region through the local government ordinance of 1950 which provided for remedies to the identified limitations of the Native Authority System (Ague cited in Ibid). Let us now give a summary of the reforms in the region and in the other two regions West and North. The Local Government system in Lagos as the seat of the colonial government will also be considered. Phase II: Period of the emergence of modern local authorities. ' DODO S. L. Local Government system in Eastern Nigeria The Local Government ordinance of 1950 which ushered in modern local authorities in the Eastern Nigeria was fashioned after the English system of local government. The law provided for a three-tier structure country councils, Urban and Rural District Councils and Local Councils.

All these councils were made directly responsible to the Regional Authority created under the Native Authority ordinance of 1933, for the provision of local government services (Eluded pop, cit, 105). However, the Eastern Nigeria Local Government Law of 1955 which replaced the ordinance abolished the post of the Provincial Resident and brought the new Local authorities under ministerial control (Ibid). The law equally made provision for all purpose authorities in the Urban areas. Further still, it provided for the establishment of municipalities for large towns in Eastern Nigeria and a “two-tier system of District and Local Councils outside any country organization whenever the inhabitants wanted them (Ibid). The Regional transferred from the Governor to the Minister of Local Government by the same law.

Also, appointment to, and dismissal from the services of the councils were also subject to the approval of the Minister, Soon after, the three-tier system was replaced with a two-tier type Under this structure, the existing District Councils took over the function of the country councils while the country councils were renamed all-purpose authorities. This development was a response to the people’s demand for more independent councils. Thus the aim when eventually created was to achieve a stable, reliable and efficient system of local government in which local authorities play a full part in the management and DITTO S. L. Development of social services (Ibid).

Local Government System in Western Nigeria Two years after the Eastern Regions floated its local government reform, the Western Nigerian Local Government Law of 1952 was enacted. It became effective on February 25, 1953. The law equally borrowed the British local government structure and <https://assignbuster.com/local-goverment-administration-assignment/>

provided for a three-tier structure which had Divisional, District and Local Councils. The law provided that no council should have more than one quarter of total membership as traditional members while the remaining members should be elected or stipulated in the law. The law made traditional Chiefs or Boas the Presidents of such Councils, while the day to day functions of the Chairman.

Under the law powers of the Residents in charge of the Provinces were transferred to Inspectors of Local Government. In order to ensure high standards in Local Government practice new staff Regulations and Financial memoranda were introduced by the Western Nigerian Government. A Local Government Service Commission was also established. Local Government in Northern Nigeria In 1952 also, the wind of change blew up North and the Local Government system in the region. In that year, the Native Authority (Definition of Function)s law was passed. This law was, however, repealed and its provision incorporated in the Native Authorities Law minted in 1954. It was the provision of this law that formed the basis of Local Government in Northern Nigeria.

Under the 1954 law the following types of Native Authorities were created: I. A chief or other person in council appointed by the Premier; ii. A chief or other person and council appointed by the Premier; ' DODO iii. A council appointed by the minister for Local Government; Ib. A group of persons appointed by the minister for Local Government; and v. A chief or other person appointed by the Premier. The Minister for Local Government was empowered to determine the composition of empowerment of the Native Authority councils to make " Standing Order" with the approval of the

minister of the regulation of their meetings; and election into the council among others.

Under the reform, many councils also adopted the practices of allocating portfolios to their members (supervisory duties or duty) as in today's practice of appointing supervisory councils. Like in the West and East, the regions also contrived financial instructions which were issued to the Urban and District Councils for the collection and disbursement of funds. The Sudan Capital Territory had a different administration. Its territory was created in 1956 by the Sudan capital law of that year. The law made Sudan, adjoining areas that formed part of the District of Kari Native Authority and all the government reserved areas into a capital territory.

It also placed it under the control of an administrator directly responsible to the Governor-in-council. The administrator had the powers and duties of a local authority as well as Native authority under section 48 of the declare or modify customary law. He has an advisory board which he presided over.

Local Government System in Lagos Initially Lagos as a town was administered by a Board of Health established in 1869. Following the enactment of Lagos Township Ordinance of 1919, the Board was replaced by the Lagos Town Council. Some of the members of the Council were elected. This was consequent upon the introduction of elective principle in 1922.

In 1941 the Lagos Township Ordinance of 1941 was passed and later amended in 1948. The ordinance granted Lagos the status of a first class township with a council made up of the commissioner of the colony as president, five elected members representing the five wards into which

Lagos was divided. The council also had eight nominated members of whom three were Nigerian. One woman represented women's interests and another "White Cap Chief" represented the interests of the Chief". The remaining law members were officials. In 1950, the Lagos Local Government law was passed. The law granted Lagos municipal status. Under the law, majority of the members was elected. Provision was also made for a mayor.

The daily administration of the council was under the supervision of Treasurer and the Town clerk. In 1953, Lagos became part of Western Nigeria. In the same year the Lagos Local Government Laws was passed and the Town Council which had earlier been dissolved in 1952 as a result of competition was reconstituted. The post of mayor was abolished and the Bob of Lagos. In its place was made ex- officio. President of the council. Elected members constituted the majority in the council while eight white cap chiefs were made traditional and was responsible for the day to day administration of the affairs of the council. It should be noted that Lagos Local did not operate the old Native Authority Ordinance or a Native Court.

According to Eluded even when it was part of Western Nigeria in 1953, and after it came the Federal Territory in 1954, it was governed by the Lagos Local Government established it had responsibility for provision of a number of social amenities or services such as markets, parks, bus service, maintenance of roads, refuse disposal, public health, maternity, burial of the dead etc. The council, partly operated through meetings; its different committees and officers headed by the City Clerk, the DITTO S. L. Engineer, the Medical Officer of Health and Treasurer. The council was founded by federal government grants, loans, rates and levies on service and property.

Local Government in the first republic During the era, most of the regions still operated the local government system bequeathed by the colonial administration.

However towards the end of the first republic the provincial system of administration was introduced. This administration was akin to what was then in practice in Tanzania. In the North, the Provincial Administration Law, 1962 empowered the Premier to appoint a Provincial commissioner with the status of a minister with the responsibility to administering each of its provinces made up of divisions. The Provincials Administration or Commissioner Native Authorities assumed the duties of the Resident in each province. The East, West and the Mid-West which was later created also practiced the Provincial Administration System under their different Laws.

Local Government in Nigeria under the Military (1966-1976) Nigeria suffered the first military coup in 1966. The development which affected the governmental structure of the entire country also affected the fortunes of local government system in the country. Following the coup 1966, all the military governors in the regions dissolved all the existing councils thereby pave way for the operation of diverse system of local government or administrations still. For instance, in the Western State, Local advisory Councils or Committees were introduced. Each committee was made up of the District Officer and ten members. In 1972, the Council Manager system was adopted for the DITTO S. L. Administration of the council.

This was fashioned after the United States and the Canadian Council-Manager model or system. Following this, the Local Advisory Councils or

Committees ceased to exist and in its place were instituted a standing management committee and administrative executive. The management committee played legislative roles and other roles which include: policy formulation, making bye-laws enacting local ordinances and regulations and formulating plans and schemes. This was what was in practice in the state up till 1976. In the Eastern part, which had been split into more states on the eve of the civil war, different systems of local government emerged after the war.

The philosophical underpinning of local government in the Eastern States after the war was basically adopted the French model of local government administration with ameliorate the devastating effects of the civil war in the development of the area. Divisional Administration System was adopted in the states following the dissolution of the country councils and local government. In the Northern part of the country which was also split into more states: North Central, Awkward, Kane, Venue, Plateau and North Western States, some reforms or changes were equally made. Between 1968 and 1970, different edicts were promulgated by these states on local government system or administration.

Some of the noticeable thrust of the reforms include: abolition of the Provincial Administration in some states, splitting of some large council into smaller ones; and hanged of names of some Native Administration or Authorities among others. On July 29, 1975, another coup occurred. The coup which was bloodless ended the regime of General Yakima Gown and ushered in the regime of General Marital Mohammed. Upon assumption of office, Marital recognized the fact that the Local Governments in the country were

grossly inefficient and ineffective. Thus the regime was determined to reform the local government system with a view to reinvigorating them.

In doing this, a holistic approach was adopted instead of the usual regional or state by state reform. After a wide consultation, the reforms were introduced. One major thrust of the reform was the introduction of a single-tier system of local government through out the country. More comprehensively, the major features of the 1976 local government reforms are as outlined below. (a) Establishment of a multi-purpose single-tier local government with complete, and self contained budget so that the entire system of local government can be identified, coaxed and coordinated.