

LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL IN NIGERIA

¹Rufus Oluwatoyin SHOKOYA

²Ngozi NWOGWUGWU, Ph.D

³Chibuzor Ayodele NWAODIKE, Ph.D

¹⁻³Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State

Correspondence email: nwogwugwun@babcock.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

The provision of basic infrastructures is a prerequisite for effective and efficient service delivery at the grassroots. Despite the efforts and resources expended by successive administrations in Nigeria since 1999 to transform the local communities, there still exists lack of functional public infrastructure at the grassroots level in several states of the Federation. The study examined leadership recruitment and infrastructural development at the grassroots level in Nigeria with specific reference to Lagos and Rivers states. It relied on mixed method design. The population included the residents of selected states. Sample size of 914 was calculated using Cohen's formula. The study employed multi-stage sampling technique in the selection of respondents. Data were collected using validated questionnaire, interview guide and focus group discussion guide. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and content analysis. Findings revealed that poor leadership recruitment has affected infrastructural development at the grassroots level in selected states. Most local government areas in selected states lacked well equipped primary healthcare centres, motorable roads, properly equipped and functional public schools, and public portable water supply. The study therefore recommended that the state and local governments should intensify efforts in providing adequate infrastructures in order to improve the standard of living of residents at the grassroots level. There is equally the urgent need for electoral reforms to reposition leadership recruitment process for effective infrastructural development.

KEYWORDS: Leadership, recruitment, infrastructural development, grassroots level, local government.

1. INTRODUCTION

Infrastructure plays a key role in socio-economic and political development and enrichment of living standards at the grassroots. The significance of basic infrastructural facilities, such as accessible roads, well-built schools and health centres, drinkable water, electricity, and affordable housing, among others, in the lives of rural inhabitants cannot be over-emphasized. Efficient basic structures and facilities are necessary for enhancing public welfare and security. However, it is apparent that the local government of many states in Nigeria is grim with inadequate infrastructural facilities. As Lawal (2014:139) has observed, larger percentage of local government in Nigeria lack basic rural infrastructure needed to engender development. The rural areas are faced with not only the difficulty in promoting the welfare of the rural populace and improve their standard of living, but abject poverty, poor basic amenities, and inadequate infrastructural facilities. The creation of local government in Nigeria was to ensure that basic infrastructures are provided for effective and efficient service delivery at the grassroots level. Section 7(1) of 1999 Constitution (as amended) empowers local government to facilitate rural development through the construction and maintenance of rural roads, electricity, pipe-borne water and drainages, and other public facilities. As argued by Akpan (2012), the rural population has extremely limited access to infrastructure, such as schools, health centres, safe drinking water, and hygienic environment. Indeed, as Okoli and Onah (2002) has noted, the rural areas in Nigeria are characterised by inadequacies of human needs, as reflected in the near absence of some basic infrastructure with its attendant features of degradation and deprivation.

However, good leadership is vital in producing direction for a government at any levels, to formulate sound and well-thought out policies, and implement such policies effectively, for the betterment of the citizenry. Unfortunately, elected Nigeria's political leaders since the return to democratic governance in 1999 have not been able to ensure that the lives and welfare of the citizens are substantially improved and basic infrastructures and social amenities are adequately provided, with a view to enhancing national development at both the urban and rural settings. Consequently, people at the grassroots level

are left in wallowing in gross infrastructural deficits, and thus the local communities have continued to remain underdeveloped in all ramifications (Adebayo, 2014; Iheriohanma, Wokoma & Nwokorie, 2014; Nkwede, Moliki, Dauda & Orija, 2018; Odo, 2014). Against the backdrop of the foregoing, this study examined leadership recruitment and infrastructural development in Lagos and Rivers states in Nigeria.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Leadership recruitment

The concept of leadership recruitment is a difficult term that cannot be subjected to a straight-forward definition. The concept has rather been described than defined in literature. Scholars (Odisu, 2017; Ekundayo, 2016; Ehiabhi & Ehinmore, 2011; Ihuah, n.d), have tended simply to preface their work on leadership recruitment, or use it in the body of their works, with no or little remarks about what they mean by the term, thus signally failing to analyse or clarify the concepts with the same thoroughness that they have devoted to the discovery of its causes and implications. This depicts that the area of leadership recruitment is an emerging research interest. Notwithstanding the complexity in its clarification, this study would provide the meaning suitable for this concept. Leadership recruitment is known by different nomenclatures, such as political recruitment, candidate recruitment, candidate selection and leadership selection. As Seligman (1958, p. 14) has pointed out, that “the subject of political recruitment has always been a central theme in both normative and empirical work in politics. Governments, social orders and professional groups are distinguishable by the way they recruit leadership”. Gale (2008) referred to political recruitment as the institutional processes by which political jobs beyond the citizenship level are filled. Gale further stressed that political careers are patterns of incumbency in these political offices and roles.

Political recruitment, as defined by Putnam’s (1976, p. 46) cited in Villarreal (2010), refer to “the process that selects from among the millions of people socially and politically motivated that shape the political stratum, the thousands which reaching positions with national significant influence”. More broadly, political recruitment is a selection process to fill vacancies in any political structure, which allows upward mobility in the political careers or a change of role from a non-political to a politician (Villarreal, 2010). Siavelis and Morgenstern (2008) in distinguishing between political recruitment and candidate selection. defined political recruitment as “the way potential candidates are attracted to compete for political office, whereas candidate selection is the process by which candidates are chosen from among the pool of potential candidates” (pp. 30-31). Candidate selection represents one of the most important functions of political parties, and as such, the methods, techniques and styles of candidate selection have lasting implications not only on the party, but also on those selected and their actions in the political office (Kura, 2014). The crisis of leadership selection or recruitment has been identified as one of the critical issues affecting local government ability to provide efficient grassroots development in Nigeria (Nnadi, 2018a; Nnadi, 2018b; Ekundayo, 2017; Odisu, 2017; Lawal, 2014).

2.2 Infrastructural development

The basic facilities, services and installations needed for the functioning of a community or society constitute what is known as infrastructure. According to Oyedele (2012), infrastructure is the basic physical structures needed for the operation of a society like industries, buildings, roads, bridges, health services, governance and so on. It is generally the set of interconnected structural elements that provide framework supporting an entire structure of development. Infrastructure is the enterprise or the products, services and facilities necessary for an economy to function (Sullivan & Sheffrin, 2003). Studies in human settlements distribution in Nigeria shows that, majority of the Nigerian populace; over 60% live in the rural areas with attendants’ socio-economic problems. This is corroborated by Otaki (2005) who argued that it is estimated that about seventy per cent (70%) of the Nigerian population lives in rural areas. From this therefore, it suffices to say that every responsible government should be responsive to meet the yearnings and aspirations of the teeming rural-folks. However; rural studies have shown that, the rural areas in Nigeria had suffered many years of neglect. The little that has been put in place by successive governments in terms of infrastructural facilities was mostly in favour of the urban centres to the neglect of the rural areas (Madu, Yusuf & Suyatno, 2015). Since it has become evident that federal or state governments alone cannot guarantee development in the rural areas, it then becomes imperative for power, authority and responsibility to be transferred from the central or state government to the local government for the purpose of enhancing development in the local areas. This is important because it is believed that local governments by constitutional provisions would be more competent in the provision of rural infrastructure at the grassroots, but unfortunately local government still lagging behind in the area of infrastructure (Lawal, 2014).

Revealing further, Lawal (2014) maintained that most of the existing infrastructures in the rural areas are not functioning, due to long years of existence, lack of maintenance, uncompleted nature of the projects, vandalisation, and lack of quality job and absence of community involvement in the execution of such projects. Local roads are left unrepaired, rural electricity are in state of dilemma, rural health centres are dilapidated with absence of drugs and necessary health personnel, rural boreholes and water pumps have no water, rural water scheme/projects are deserted. The only visible things in the rural areas are the sign posts that show the location, direction, and physical status of these rural infrastructures. In view of the foregoing,

infrastructural development involves the construction of projects, such as roads, bridges, schools, healthcare centres, markets, and other infrastructures, which makes life comfortable and secure to the people.

2.3 Theoretical framework

Integrated rural development theory and elitism theory are adopted as theoretical frameworks in explaining the connection between leadership recruitment and infrastructural development at the grassroots level in selected states. The theory of integrated rural development is associated with Robert McNamara (1973). Integrated rural development is generally seen as a way to improve a community's wellbeing in social, economic, and environmental terms. Integrated rural development theory emphasises the need of coordinating different agencies under a single management system of essential components required to get agricultural or rural development moving (Mudenda, 2006). The integrated rural development approach was adopted in Nigeria by the Federal Government of Murtala/Obasanjo military regime in 1975 with the passage of the Third National Development Plan (1975-1980). Akpan (2012) averred that:

Increased budgetary allocations was provided to fund diverse and interrelated rural development sectors as the provision for nationwide rural electrification scheme, the establishment of Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs), the establishment of nine River Basin Development Authorities (RBDAs), the construction of small dams and boreholes for rural water supply and the clearing of feeder roads for the evacuation of agricultural produce, the supply of electricity to rural areas from large irrigation dams, commitment of resources to large scale mechanised state farming enterprises, the introduction of Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) campaign and the Green Revolution and public efforts at land reforms through the Land Use Act of 1978 (p. 150).

It should be noted that despite the resources expended to implement the development plan, Nigeria has continued to be deficient in the standard of living of the people at the grassroots level. The post-third development plans, in the view of Akpan (2012), saw increasing participation of all tiers and levels of governments in rural development activities, especially in the areas of roads construction, healthcare services, and electricity provision, and water supply, etc. This period undoubtedly marked a turning point in grassroots developmental efforts in Nigeria. Even though the general perspective of the theory is clear enough, it is vague in reality as previous rural development programmes which is designed to provide physical infrastructures have recorded little success which means that the practicability of the theory may be difficult to achieve. This, according to Ogunkoya, Lasisi, Hassan & Elumah (2015), is due to the centralised control of the programmes set up by members of the elite who do not have the database on the socially-deprived groups (target beneficiaries). Other problems militating against such effort include poor coordination, lack of trained or professional workers, flexibility of rural development agencies, lack of funds, and lack of people's participation (Ugboh & Tibi, n.d.). More particularly, political leaders wield enormous power and influence over the machinery of government, to the extent that corruption, nepotism and poor leadership have combined to inhibit the proper functioning of development plans and strategies that are meant for infrastructural development at the grassroots level.

Elitism theory is mostly associated with Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca and Robert Mitchels. Dowse and Hughes (1983) cited in Arowolo and Aluko (2012:799-800) highlighted the basic assumptions of elite theory thus: the society consists of two categories: the selected few, who are capable and, therefore, have the right to supreme leadership; and the vast masses of people who are desired to be ruled; that the majority of human beings are apathetic, indolent and slavishly uninformed about what goes on in the administrative system and permanently incapable of self-government. That is, the elite decides on the structure, the personnel, the process of public policies of the administrative system; and that the structure, substance and output of the administrative system may be viewed as the preferences and values of the governing elite. Elitism theory emphasises that the society and powers are largely determined by a small group of people with overriding monopoly of power and exceptional abilities to influence the governed. These elites existing in all societies are always powerful people with wherewithal to secure power, perpetuate it and rule (Friedrich, 2014; Okonofua, 2013). In the argument of Robert Mitchels, political leaders form cohesive groups because they recognise that this improves their chances of remaining in power, while rank and file of their members tend to be apathetic to the needs of the masses (governed) (Mazi Mbah, 2007). The theory has been criticised for over-romanticising the concept of "elite" or those referred to as "governing elite" in the society.

In Nigeria, elites are synonymously referred to as godfathers. Osakede and Ijimakinwa (2016) argued that godfathers (elites) are those who govern, and are known as the kingmakers, the notables and often seen as strong men who control politics in their different domains. They select or appoint whosoever, most especially their stooges, protégés and godsons (clients) to be the political candidates for election and ensure they get elected into leadership positions by all means necessary. Since the return to democratic rule in 1999, the so-called elites (leaders) have employed all available means including blatant rigging of elections and manipulation of election figures, to 'grab' power (Anazodo, Igbokwe-Ibeto & Nkah, 2015). The leadership recruitment process has been one of fierce struggles among politicians and political power seekers, usually characterised by godfatherism, militarism, rigging, corrupt practices and delay judgements from election tribunals (Ekundayo, 2017). According to Okeke (2017:66), the Nigerian elections have never been marked by "stellar performances" because the results

are usually disputed, and the disputes are usually the functions of generic fraudulent tendencies on the part of the political elite. Zoaka, Ogbu and Abundude (2017:139) lamented that local governments in Nigeria are controlled by the elites who seize the opportunity of their political hegemony in the states to usurp the powers and opportunities for the development, administration and general autonomy of the local government for their selfish interests. These few influential and powerful individuals, who are in the minority, make important decisions concerning the local people while others follow. Thus, the manipulative process employed by the governing elite to dominate the local government is a complex one that threatens the infrastructural development at the grassroots level.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed mixed method design which combined the use of both qualitative and quantitative data. The study population were the residents of selected local government areas in Lagos and Rivers states. The sample size of the study was 914 calculated using Cohen's formula at 99% confidence level. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted in selection of respondents. In the first stage, the existing three Senatorial districts in both Lagos and Rivers states were identified. This is followed by the selection of six local government areas (LGAs) from the three districts using purposive sampling technique. Then, five political wards from each LGA were randomly selected using stratified sampling technique. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to select the target respondents. The instruments of data collection were validated questionnaire, interview guide and focus group discussions guide. The response rate was 98 percent. Thirty interviews and twelve FGDs were held with participants drawn from the rural communities, civil service, legal and medical professions, academia, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), political actors, retirees, farmers, artisans, traders, change agents, community heads/leaders, and other members of local government areas in Lagos and Rivers states. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation, while qualitative data were content analysed.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section covers the detailed presentation and analysis of data collected from the respondents through questionnaire, interview sessions and focus group discussions. The data gathered through the administration of questionnaire were systematically analysed in tables, using descriptive statistics of simple percentages, mean and standard deviation. It also contains the discussion of findings derived from the analyses.

Table 1: Responses on Leadership Recruitment and Infrastructural Development at the Grassroots Level in Lagos and Rivers states

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D.
	The way a leader is recruited would determine the infrastructural development of the society he represents.	408 (45.3%)	358 (39.8%)	96 (10.7%)	38 (4.2%)	3.26	0.81
	Healthcare centres in the local communities lack adequate facilities due to poor leadership recruitment process.	360 (40.0%)	426 (47.3%)	92 (10.2%)	22 (2.4%)	3.25	0.73
	Poor infrastructural development at the grassroots level is as a result of poorly recruited political leaders.	378 (42.0%)	396 (44.0%)	102 (11.3%)	24 (2.7%)	3.25	0.76
	Poor leadership recruitment process has caused the roads leading to many of the local areas to remain in bad shapes.	386 (42.9%)	370 (41.1%)	120 (13.3%)	24 (2.7%)	3.24	0.78
	Industries are lacking in the rural areas due to poor leadership recruitment process.	366 (40.7%)	390 (43.3%)	102 (11.3%)	42 (4.7%)	3.20	0.82
	Poor leadership recruitment process is a major cause for dilapidating schools at the rural areas.	348 (38.7%)	398 (44.2%)	120 (13.3%)	34 (3.8%)	3.18	0.80
	Poor leadership recruitment process is responsible for lack of rural boreholes and water pumps at the rural areas.	302 (33.6%)	430 (47.8%)	142 (15.8%)	26 (2.9%)	3.12	0.77

Review of Public Administration and Management (ROPAM)

Poor markets are a consequence of poor leadership recruitment process.	334 (37.1%)	390 (43.3%)	128 (14.2%)	48 (5.3%)	3.12	0.84
Average mean					3.20	0.79

Source: Field Survey, 2019/2020

Table 1 presents the opinion of the respondents on the effect of leadership recruitment on infrastructural development at the grassroots level in Lagos and Rivers states. The table shows that 45.3% of the respondents strongly agree that the way a leader is recruited would determine the infrastructural development of the society he represents, 39.8% agree, 10.7% disagree, while 4.2% strongly disagree. The mean and standard deviation are 3.26 and 0.81 respectively. This implies that on the average the respondents are of the opinion that the way a leader is recruited would determine the infrastructural development of the society he represents. Also the table shows that 40.0% of the respondents strongly agree that healthcare centres in the local communities lack adequate facilities due to poor leadership recruitment process, 47.3% agree, 10.2% disagree, while 2.4% strongly disagree. The mean and standard deviation are 3.25 and 0.76 respectively. This implies that on the average the respondents are of the opinion that healthcare centres in the local communities lack adequate facilities due to poor leadership recruitment process.

Equally, the table shows that 42.0% of the respondents strongly agree that poor infrastructural development at the grassroots level is as a result of poorly recruited political leaders, 44.0% agree, 11.3% disagree, while 2.7% strongly disagree. The mean and standard deviation are 3.25 and 0.76 respectively. This implies that on the average the respondents are of the opinion that poor infrastructural development at the grassroots level is as a result of poorly recruited political leaders. Also the table shows that 42.9% of the respondents strongly agree that poor leadership recruitment process has caused the roads leading to many of the local areas to remain in bad shapes, 41.1% agree, 13.3% disagree, while 2.7% strongly disagree. The mean and standard deviation are 3.24 and 0.78 respectively. This implies that on the average the respondents are of the opinion that poor leadership recruitment process has caused the roads leading to many of the local areas to remain in bad shapes.

Furthermore, the table shows that 40.7% of the respondents strongly agree that industries are lacking in the rural areas due to poor leadership recruitment process, 43.3% agree, 13.3% disagree, while 4.7% strongly disagree. The mean and standard deviation are 3.20 and 0.82 respectively. This implies that on the average the respondents are of the view that industries are lacking in the rural areas due to poor leadership recruitment process. Also the table shows that 38.7% of the respondents strongly agree that poor leadership recruitment process is a major cause for dilapidating schools at the rural areas, 44.2% agree, 13.3% disagree, while 3.8% strongly disagree. The mean and standard deviation are 3.18 and 0.80 respectively. This implies that on the average the respondents are of the belief that poor leadership recruitment process is a major cause for dilapidating schools at the rural areas.

Moreover, the table shows that 33.6% of the respondents strongly agree that poor leadership recruitment process is responsible for lack of rural boreholes and water pumps at the rural areas, 47.8% agree, 15.8% disagree, while 2.9% strongly disagree. The mean and standard deviation are 3.12 and 0.77 respectively. This implies that on the average the respondents are of the opinion that that poor leadership recruitment process is responsible for lack of rural boreholes and water pumps at the rural areas. Also the table shows that 37.1% of the respondents strongly agree that poor markets are a consequence of poor leadership recruitment process, 43.3% agree, 14.2% disagree, while 5.3% strongly disagree. The mean and standard deviation are 3.12 and 0.84 respectively. This implies that on the average the respondents are of the opinion that poor markets are a consequence of poor leadership recruitment process.

The implication of the foregoing results is that poor leadership recruitment process has affected infrastructural development at the grassroots level in Lagos and Rivers states. Drawing from the submissions of the respondents, it can be inferred that the major effects of poor leadership recruitment process on infrastructural development at the grassroots level included inadequate healthcare centres, poor markets, dilapidating schools, lack of rural boreholes and water pumps, as well as lack of industries at the local communities. It was concluded that poor infrastructural development at the grassroots level is as a result of poorly recruited political leaders.

The opinions of interviewees on how the leadership recruitment has affected the level of infrastructural development at the grassroots level in both the Rivers and Lagos states are analysed in this section. Majority of the interviewees believed that poor selection of leaders determines the level of infrastructural development at the grassroots level. One of the Special Advisers to the Chairman of Alimosho Local Government Area, noted that the road which was so bad was reconstructed, but the problem remains that of water. The government cannot provide pipe-borne water to all the communities. This is because it is not easy to do that. The water was not flowing to other area. The road was done for more than fifteen years and is still perfectly there. He disclosed that most roads are constructed by the immediate government. The chairman rebuilt the Secretariat. He also built another office to accommodate more staff. In the view of a business man and a resident of Ikwerre community:

Across the thirteen wards, as I speak to you, we have contractors on site. Nineteen different projects are going on in the thirteen wards under the leadership of the local government chairman. In addition, primary schools are being built. We are not talking about higher ALGON buildings. Go to ALO, you will see what is going on there. Go to Igruta, you will see healthcare centres being built. In Isoko that we are currently in, there are market and community halls. Go to Omargua, secondary schools are completed and students are inside as I speak. Go to Omargua, you will see civic centre. If you go to Elele, you will see drainage and markets. These are the kinds of projects we are talking about, infrastructural developments. Now, when we are talking about recognising grassroots efforts, we give free UTME and WAEC forms to students. That's how we contribute to social amenities (Uzokpe, in interview conducted at Ikwerre on 27/11/2019).

It was pointed out by a change agent in Rivers State that the issue of leadership recruitment process is a challenging one (Tony, interview conducted at Abua-Odual on 27/11/2019). A respondent in Gokana local community stated that in the education sector, some schools were built but not properly equipped with the required facilities to facilitate them to function properly. According to him, "Some schools are dilapidated, and abandoned for so many years. One craft school in my place has been built for over ten years. The craft centre is not functioning. It has been taken over by the military and is being used as a military camp. But it was once a craft school, but it has been converted to a military base (Amechi interview conducted at Gokana on 28/11/2019).

There are divergent views on the impact of Leadership recruitment on infrastructural development in Lagos State. There are two schools of thought; those who believe that it has negative impact and those who believe that it has positive impact. According to an interviewee, "leadership recruitment process has made very negative impact on infrastructural development. Leaders after they are elected and get into office, they are not performing as expected. So, invariably the citizens have not felt the positive impacts of our leaders. They are there for their selfish interests only (Mukaila in an interview conducted at Ikorodu on 10/12/2019). An interview resident in Eti-Osa local government made it known that there is a connection between leadership recruitment and infrastructural development in the local government. For instance, the chairman of the local government was elected by the popular votes and as a result he is providing basic needs, such as water, security, and repairing roads for the masses. It is believed that he is the best for the masses at this period. According to her,

With his performance, we are happy that we elected a chairman that is serving and providing development we have been craving for. We pray that God should give him good health, more knowledge to do more projects and perform better. The chairman provides portable water to the people. He is allowed to work for the people without dictations. In fact, people of this local government really appreciate him, because he provides for commoners (Mrs. Adams in interview conducted at Eti-Osa, on 19/12/19).

Most of the respondents also believed that there ought to be rural boreholes and water pump at the rural areas that should be accessible to the public for free. Ogunnusi asserted that it is unfortunate that most of the constructed boreholes by the past administrations have not been well managed by both the government (Ministry of Special Duties) and the people. Many of these projects have gone into extinction. This in effect according to them is as a result of poorly recruited political leaders (Ogunnusi, Amuwo-Odofin, 17/12/2019). Some respondents also identified poor leadership recruitment as one of the reasons for dilapidated schools, inadequate health facilities, while industries are found to be missing in most of the local communities. A member of NGO in Lagos State gave his kudos to the then state government under the leadership of Akinwunmi Ambode, stating that his administration tried as much as possible to ensure that necessary infrastructural facilities are provided in the state's urban and rural communities. "Notwithstanding, there are areas particularly in the rural areas that are yet to enjoy the dividends of democracy and good governance from the government. Many schools infrastructures are still in shamble needed to be renovated and necessary facilities need be provided for the greater academic performance of the students/pupils of the state." (Adeyemi in interview conducted at Lagos Mainland on 17/12/2019). He also commended the government on the area of provision of health facilities in the primary healthcare centres (PHCs) but more need to be done to enhance the healthcare delivery for the people of the state.

A political representative in Rivers State observed that the effect of leadership recruitments in local government is not too satisfactory. This is because the local government as a system has not been run properly. They have many issues and barriers. For instance, it is always difficult for local government to receive funds allocated to it by the Federal government. So, it is discovered that local government chairmen have not been able to do much. Most times, they battle with a lot of problems, like insecurity, poor roads and calls from people for share in the national cake. At the end of the day, developmental projects are abandoned since the little money released to them has been exhausted through sharing (Manager in an interview conducted at Degema on 24/11/2019). In a similar vein, a trader in Rivers State also confirmed that "there is no much development, because a lot of other people (godfathers and relatives) are interfering in the government. She gave an instance that a local government chairman has a sphere of influence but he is also influenced by some set of people who he is accountable to" (Richy in an interview conducted at Abua-Odual, on 26/11/2019). A respondent called the attention of local

government councils to what they need to provide for the people. According to him “What the local government should do at this period is to provide well-equipped primary healthcare centres (PHCs), and not unnecessary big projects. It is left for the state government to build the facilities. Local government councils have to ensure that the facilities provided by the state are running by maintaining them for the benefit of the people.” He encouraged the local government councils to look into the areas that can make the local government financially buoyant. “Right now, some local government areas are performing better than others because of revenue base. As a local government, there is the need to look into revenue base will be improved upon so as to achieve more.” (Mukaila in an interview conducted at Ikorodu on 10/12/2019). Based on the foregoing, it could be concluded that the leadership recruitment process has affected the level of infrastructural development at the grassroots level in both the Rivers and Lagos states.

The responses of the focus group discussants on the effects of leadership recruitment on infrastructural development at the grassroots level in Lagos and Rivers states formed the opinions presented in this subsection. However, two questions were asked under this discussion as indicated in FGD guide. Majority of the discussants thought that poor leadership recruitment is a threat to infrastructural development of the state and its local government areas. Rating the level of infrastructural development in their respective local government areas, majority of discussants stated that they are not satisfactory. The current government needs to put in place measures to enhance the provision of infrastructural development to the rural communities rather than concentrating on the urban areas alone. The discussants also revealed that the provision of infrastructures such as facilities for schools, health centres, roads, bridges and others that could make life comfortable for the rural dwellers have not been into consideration by our leaders. Some of the discussants noted that most of the schools are in dilapidated while roads are death trap for the passers. Money spent for the repair of vehicles cannot be accounted for. They maintained that majority of people in the local communities are lacking in safe drinking water. The health centres are in deplorable condition.

The above findings, corroborate earlier studies, including, Okoli & Onah (2002), Akpan (2012), Bello (2013), Abiona and Bello (2013), Kalu, Ibiam, Nwazue & Ukpabi (2014), Lawal (2014), and Madu, et al. (2015), who found poor infrastructural development at the grassroots levels. For instance, Akpan (2012) has earlier observed that the rural population is extremely lacking infrastructure, such as schools, and health centres. He argued that the highest number of the populace lacks access to safe drinking water. Okoli and Onah (2002) in their studies also contended that the rural areas in Nigeria are characterised by inadequacies of human needs as reflected in poor basic infrastructure. Abiona and Bello (2013) claimed that the underdevelopment nature of rural communities is evident. They observed that many states and local government areas are deficient in infrastructural facilities. To them, electricity supply has degenerated, pipe-borne water supply is non-existent, schools are ill-equipped, with many of the hospitals now death centers rather than medical centers.

Ugwuanyi and Chukwuemeka (2013) equally stressed that the rural population has not witnessed significant level of infrastructural development since independence. They observed that lack of basic infrastructural facilities and abysmal poor quality of life has not been enjoyed by rural populace. Lawal (2014) also maintained that most of the rural areas in Nigeria are in a pathetic state of infrastructure delivery, even, some of the urban local government areas are also deficient in infrastructure delivery. Some of these infrastructures where available, are left uncared for. In the words of Madu, et al. (2015), the infrastructural facilities put in place by successive governments was mostly in favour of the urban centres to the neglect of the rural areas. The study also found a political factor in the impact of leadership recruitment process on infrastructural development, as some local governments experienced negative impact, while others experienced positive impact. This finding corroborates earlier studies by Nwogwugwu, Ajayi & Iyanda (2015) on the influence of the political factor on infrastructural development. The impact of leadership recruitment on infrastructural development at the grassroots level was dependent on the leadership in place in a particular local government.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has investigated leadership recruitment and infrastructural development at the grassroots levels in Lagos and Rivers states, using mixed method design. It looked into the challenges facing infrastructural development at the local government areas in the selected states. In view of the foregoing findings, the study concludes that poor leadership recruitment has affected the provision of infrastructural development at the grassroots level in Rivers and Lagos states. Therefore, the study makes the following recommendations towards strengthening leadership recruitment process towards ensuring robust grassroots development in Nigeria in general and selected states in particular:

- The leadership recruitment process in Nigeria should be repositioned in order to avoid fierce struggles among politicians and political power seekers that usually characterised the electioneering process, such as campaign, primaries and general elections. Hence, it is recommended that there is the urgent need for electoral reforms to reposition leadership recruitment process for effective infrastructural development in Nigeria.
- The State and Local governments should intensify efforts in providing adequate infrastructures in order to improve the standards of living of rural populace at the grassroots level in these states.
- There is urgent need to provide basic infrastructural facilities, such as accessible roads, well-built schools and health centres, drinkable water, electricity, and affordable housing, to the affected communities in the selected states.

- Parties' stakeholders must ensure that party internal democracy is given a priority over personal interests by the party leaders and executives. Party executives and leaders must allow party members' preference to prevail on candidate nominations and selections, as a way of enhancing credible elections in Nigeria.

REFERENCES

- Abiona, I.A., & Bello, W.N. (2013). Grassroots participation in decision-making process and development programmes as correlate of sustainability of community development programmes in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development*, 6(3), 47-57.
- Adebayo, A.S. (2014). Local government and the challenges of rural development in Nigeria (1999 to date). *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 19(4), 21-32.
- Akpan, N.S. (2012). Rural development in Nigeria: A review of pre- and post-independence practice. *Journal of Sociological Research*, 3(2), 146-159. Doi:10.5296/jsr.v3i2.2302
- Anazodo, R.O., Igbokwe-Ibeto, C. J., & Nkah, B.C. (2015). Leadership, corruption and governance in Nigeria: Issues and categorical imperatives. *African Research Review (AFREV)*, 9(2), 41-58.
- Arowolo, D.E., Aluko, O.A. (2012). Democracy, political participation and good governance in Nigeria. *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 1(3), 797-809.
- Ehiabhi, O.S., & Ehinmore, O.M. (2011). Nigeria and the challenges of credible political leadership since 1960. *Canadian Social Science*, 7(4), 136-143. Doi:10.3968/ j.css.1923669720110704.035
- Ekundayo, W. J. (2016). Political parties, party system and leadership recruitment in Nigeria since independence in 1960. *Public Policy and Administration Research*, 6(5), 39-44.
- Ekundayo, W. J. (2017). Political elite theory and political elite recruitment in Nigeria. *Public Policy and Administration Research*, 7(5), 1-8.
- Friedrich, C.J. (2014). A critique of Pareto's contribution to the theory of political elite. Librairie Droz. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/>.
- Gale, T. (2008). Political recruitment and careers. *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. Retrieved from <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/political-recruitment-and-careers>
- Iheriohanma, E. B. J., Wokoma, C. U. & Nwokorie, C. N. (2014). Leadership question and the challenges of community development in Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal*, 10(35), 204-216.
- Lawal, T. (2014). Local government and rural infrastructural delivery in Nigeria. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 4(4), 139-147. Doi: 10.6007/IJARBS/v4-i4/771.
- Madu, A. Y., Yusuf, R. & Suyatno (2015). Democracy and rural development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: Challenges and prospect. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(6), 445-451.
- Mbah, C.C. (2007). *Foundations of political science*. Nimo-Anambra: Rex Charles Pub. Ltd.
- Mudenda, M. (2006). An integrated approach to rural planning and development in Zambia. XXIII FIG Congress, Munich.
- Nkwede, J.O., Moliki, A.O., Dauda, K.O., & Orija, A.O. (2018). Leadership, governance crisis and the challenge of grassroots development in Nigeria: A focus on Ijebu North-East Local Government, Ogun State, 2009-2016. Paper presented at the Toyin Falola @65 Conference: African Knowledges and Alternative Futures, held at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria, 29th-31st January.
- Nnadi, H. (2018a, July 26). Effective leadership recruitment in Nigeria: The path to good governance (Part 1). *Grassroots*. Retrieved from <https://grassroots.ng/index.php/2018/07/26/effective-leadership-recruitment-in-nigeria-the-path-to-good-governance-part-1/>
- Nnadi, H. (2018b, July 27). Effective leadership recruitment in Nigeria: The path to good governance (Part 2). *Grassroots*. Retrieved from <https://grassroots.ng/index.php/2018/07/27/effective-leadership-recruitment-in-nigeria-the-path-to-good-governance-part-2/>
- Nwogwugwu, N., Ajayi, F. & Iyanda, R (2015). Political economy of public infrastructure development in Ogun State, Nigeria (2003 – 2011). *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review (OMAN Chapter)*, 5(4), 45 – 65.
- Odisu, T. A. (2017). Leadership recruitment process and the travails of development in Nigeria. *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs*, 5(4), 1-3. DOI: 10.4172/2332-0761.1000293.
- Odo, L. U. (2014). Local government and the challenges of grassroots development in Nigeria. *Review of Public Administration and Management*, 3(6), 204-213.
- Ogunkoya, O. A., Lasisi, J. O., Hassan, B., & Elumah, L. O. (2015). An integrated approach to rural development in Nigeria. *International Journal of African and Asian Studies*, 11, 78-83.
- Okeke, R. C. (2017). Elitism, local governance and development in Nigeria. *Specialty Journal of Politics and Law*, 2(3), 62-72.
- Okoli, F., & Onah, F. (2002). *Public administration in Nigeria: Nature, principles and application*. Enugu: John Jacobs Classic Publishers.
- Okonofua, B. A. (2013). Who rules Papa's land? C. Wright Mills and the Nigeria power elite. Sage Open. Retrieved from <http://sgo.sagepub.com/>

- Osakede, K. O., & Ijimakinwa, S. O. (2016). Political godfatherism and democratic consolidation in Nigeria: Empirical evidence from Oyo state and Kwara state. *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review (OMAN Chapter)*, 5(8), 1-12.
- Seligman, L. S. (1958). Recruitment in politics. *Political Research, Organisation and Design*, 1(4), 14-17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000276425800100405>
- Siavelis, P. M., & Morgenstern, S. (2008). Candidate recruitment and selection in Latin America: A framework for analysis. *Latin American Politics and Society*, 50(4), 27-58.
- Ugwuanyi, B. I., & Chukwuemeka, E. E. O. (2013). Enhancing rural development in Nigeria: Periscoping the impediments and exploring imperative measures. *Singaporean Journal of Business Economics and Management Studies*, 1(8), 1-11.
- Zoaka, Y. A., Ogbu, C., & Abundude, O. J. (2017). Roadblocks to grassroots democracy, good governance and development: A case study of state and local government councils relations in Nigeria, 1999-2016. *International Journal of Development Strategies in Humanities, Management and Social Sciences (IJDSHMSS)*, 7(2), 135-200.