


Multiplicity in Municipal Administration and Its Implication on Urban Planning Functions in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the effects of multiple components of municipal administrations on the functions of urban planning agencies in Nigeria, using Osun State as the case study. It examined the profile of the professionals across the levels of planning agencies in the state, the key activity areas of the planning agencies, operational parameters of the planning agencies, and the relationship between the planning agencies. Data used for the study were sourced from questionnaire administered on the heads of all the 35 planning agencies in the state. The study revealed that the agencies experienced conflict of interest in their operations and the reason for that was mostly jurisdictional. Also, the agencies seldom related with one another. The study concluded that the structure of municipal administration in Nigerian is responsible for proliferation of planning agencies and, consequently, the duplication of planning functions in the state, nay, Nigeria. It recommended, among others, legislative reform for effective municipal administration in the state and Nigeria, as a whole.

KEYWORD

Duplication, Municipal Administration, Nigeria, Urban Planning

INTRODUCTION

Urban population growth and the spatial expansion of cities in Nigeria have been on the rise. The urbanisation rate confirms the prediction that the 21st century is ‘an urban millennium’ (United Nations Human Settlement Programme [UN-HABITAT] 2002). It is estimated that by 2025, the percent urban in Nigeria would have tremendously increased (60.3%) and by 2050 the share of the population living in urban areas (75.4%) will be about three times the share of the population living

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in rural areas (24.6%) (UN-HABITAT & UNEP, 2010). This trend of urbanisation has revealed that the urban population and physical expansion of Nigerian urban areas will continue to increase in the foreseeable future. The great majority of the increase in the urban population will be previously rural residents who either migrate to the cities or are living in peripheral villages which will become incorporated into the main urban areas.

In Nigeria, the menace associated with rapid urban growth is well documented (Memon, 2002; Daramola, 2012; Olawuni & Daramola, 2013; Daramola, 2016; Daramola & Olowoporoku, 2017; Olowoporoku, 2017). The rate of waste generation and lack of capacity to properly dispose of that waste creates challenges for solid waste management. Also, lack of water supply and poor wastewater services are challenges in urban water management (Memon 2002, Daramola & Olowoporoku 2016). Beside these are problems of urban crime and urban poverty. These social, economic and environmental challenges which urban settlements face, coupled with the speed of urban expansion, emphasises the need for new approaches to local governance. However, despite the rising concern, less attention has been paid to urban governance in Nigeria.

Studies have established it that Nigerian cities are not properly governed (Falade, 2010; Olawuni & Daramola, 2013; Daramola & Olowoporoku, 2017). This is attributable to lack of municipal administration. The determination of the administrative boundaries of local government areas gives no recognition to municipal administration. Cities such as Lagos, Ibadan and Kano contain multiple independent local governments within their metropolitan areas. As such, coordinated city management becomes a difficult task and ensuring good urban governance remains a daunting challenge in Nigeria. These are with several implications. The resulting experiences include institutional fragmentation, multiplication of agencies, disparity of powers and responsibilities across different tiers and departments of governmental and non-governmental institutions, confusion over who does what and disjointed development. To avoid this, a municipal administration is necessary. It is characterised with an area delimited by well-defined administrative boundaries; predominantly urban in character; and governed by a local elected body (Popescu, 2006).

The practice of municipal administration is historical in Nigeria. Before the colonisation by Britain in 1861, traditional paramount rulers were in charge of city administration. The Nigerian cities were characterised with self-governance in commerce, security and environmental sanitation. In the colonial era, Native Administrative Authority was introduced as an attempt to fit local administration to the traditional political structure (Falade 1985). Cities were considered as centres of governance expected to generate revenue and perform urban functions on their own. However, negation of the idea of municipal administration started with creation of multiple of urban local governments in Nigeria leading to divergence in the practice of city-wide governance system.

Constitutionally, Nigeria practises the federal system of government comprising a federal government, 36 states and 774 local governments. In the operative 1999 constitution, town planning is a residual matter and only the state governments that can legislate on it. Despite this, there is a federal ministry in charge of urban planning; each of the states also has a ministry in charge of urban planning with each local government area having a department or division for urban planning. Prior to the operation of the constitution in 1999 was the enactment of Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Decree in 1992. Its main objective is the promotion of land use planning and development control functions of the three-tier government structure in the country (Federal Government of Nigeria, 1992). The legislation set up a commission at the federal level, a board in each of the 36 states, and a local planning authority in each of 774 local government areas. The act provides that development plans such as regional plan, sub-regional plan, urban plan and subject plan could be prepared by bodies at the three levels. In the same vein, all these bodies are saddled with the responsibility of carrying out development control within their areas of jurisdiction.

Across several states, there has also been creation of a planning agency called State Capital Development Authority. This is to ensure the coordinated planning of the metropolitan area of the state capitals known as the state capital territory. Nonetheless, the approach has created conflicts

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