

Political Interference And Democratic Governance In Nigeria: Implications For Local Government

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Abstract

This paper examined relationship between political interference and democratic governance within the context of local government administration in Nigeria, with a specific focus on Ogun, Osun, and Ekiti states. A descriptive approach was employed to collect comprehensive data, with a sample size of 300 respondents including local government officials, politicians, civil society activists, and scholars in political science. The findings reveal that political interference is a pervasive issue, with approximately 90% of respondents reporting instances of interference. Despite the existence of legal and policy frameworks aimed at safeguarding local government autonomy and preventing interference, respondents indicated that such frameworks are not consistently effective. Consequently, political interference erodes trust and confidence in local government authorities, raising questions about the adequacy of existing mechanisms.

Keywords: Political Interference, Democratic governance, Local Government, Perception and Development.

Introduction

Democratic governance is a cornerstone of modern societies, ensuring the participation of citizens in decision-making processes and holding governments accountable for their actions. In many democratic countries across the globe, Nigeria inclusive the principle of decentralization takes the center stage in democracy where governance and decision-making authority are decentralized to the grassroots level, allowing citizens to actively participate in shaping their local communities. Local governments in these countries consequently serves as the primary unit of governance closest to the people and constitutionally empowered to address the unique needs of their communities, thus promoting holistic development, and fostering citizen engagement in the decision-making process.

Since gaining independence from British colonial rule in 1960, Nigeria's journey towards democratic governance has been marked by periods of different transitions between military and civilian administrations with each transition leaving its prints in the local government governance and administration. However, since the return to democratic governance in 1999, the constitution recognised the federal, state and 774 Local governments areas (LGAs) with LGAs headed by an elected chairman, while the legislative arm is known as the Local Government Council. The constitution also, clearly stated that the Local Governments are expected to handle grassroots-level issues, including basic service delivery, infrastructure development, education, healthcare, and local economic development.

Nevertheless, despite progress in democratic governance, previous studies have revealed that the nation grappling with multifaceted challenges and interferences that hinder the realization of a vibrant and accountable democratic system at the local government (Adeyemi, 2017). One such challenges that profoundly affect the functioning of democracy in Nigeria is the pervasive issue of political interference within local government structures by other tiers of government (Akpan 2010) . For instance, the powers and responsibilities of local governments have been a subject of debate, with accusations of excessive interference by state governments and insufficient financial autonomy.

It is expected that Local governments in Nigeria are meant to function as autonomous bodies with elected representatives who are accountable to their constituents (Agbaje, 2014). However, the reality often differs due to political interference, which disrupts the democratic principles upon which local government administration is based. In addition, political interference in Nigeria's local government affairs is a complex web of influence wielded by politicians, political parties, and powerful interest groups to manipulate, control, or undermine the functioning of these grassroots institutions (Dalhatu & Bukar, 2013). This interference often takes various forms, ranging from overt intervention in administrative processes to subtle manipulation of decision-making mechanisms (Okoli & Olowononi, 2015). The consequences of such interference can have profound implications for the democratic governance landscape in Nigeria, affecting transparency, accountability, and ultimately the welfare of its citizens.

While political interference in Nigeria's local government system is widely acknowledged, its implications for democratic governance remain poorly explored. This research problem raises questions about the extent of political interference, its impact on local government administration, and the broader implications for democratic governance. This paper therefore examined the implications of political interference on democratic governance in Nigeria, with a focus on local government administration. This paper was segmented into five main sections. Section 1 provided an overview of the topic, established the significance of political interference in democratic governance, and introduces the research problem. Section 2 is the literature review where existing literature on Nigerian politics, democratic governance, and previous studies related to political interference in local government was reviewed, while section 3 described the research methodology adopted, including data collection and analysis techniques. Section 4 presents the findings obtained from the analysis of data and discussed the implications of political interference on democratic governance and the conclusion.

Literature Review

Political Interference

Political interference represents a complex phenomenon that has attracted significant attention from scholars and practitioners alike. Numerous definitions of political interference exist, reflecting the diverse nature and implications of the concept. One commonly acknowledged definition refers to political interference as the deliberate intrusion of political actors into areas traditionally considered independent from political influence (Smith, 2015). Smith's definition highlighted the intentional interference from political actors in decision-making processes, often undermining the autonomy of institutions. Bovens and Zouridis (2002) explained the reason for political actors intrusion when they iterated that political interference is "the act of politicians intervening in the implementation of policies through direct or indirect means to serve political interests". They emphasize that political interference occurs whenever politicians seek to shape the goals, values, or outcomes of public agencies. Hood (1991) elaborates on the concept, which refers to "the increasing involvement of political actors in the realm of otherwise impersonal and expert-based organizations". While Brown et al. (2018) emphasized political interference as an abuse of power by politicians for personal or political gain, leading to unwarranted interventions in various sectors. His perspective of political interference underscored the negative consequences of political interference, which can range from corruption and inequality to compromised service delivery and jeopardized institutional functioning.

While the multiple definitions of political interference offer valuable insights, they often elide the fact that political interference can sometimes be positive and necessary. Stone, (2018) argued that assuming that all political interference is negative oversimplifies complex governance dynamics, ignoring instances where political intervention may be beneficial, such as in initiating reforms or addressing systemic inequalities. Therefore, limiting the focus of political inference solely to deliberate actions overlooked the inadvertent interferences resulting from systemic biases, conflicting interests, and limitations of institutional frameworks (Soares, 2016). Furthermore, definitions that associate political interference solely with politicians disregarded the role of non-state actors and interest groups, who may wield significant influence over decision-making processes. Neglecting the influence of non-state actors

limited the comprehensive understanding of political interference and undermined the efforts to address it effectively (Rossiter, 2019). It is evident that the definitions of political interference need to be refined to provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the concept.

Democratic Governance

Democratic governance is a fundamental pillar of modern society, ensuring individuals have a voice in decision-making processes and holding political actors accountable. This section critically examined different definitions of democratic governance with the aim of shedding light on the complexities and nuances of the concept.

Various scholars and organizations have provided definitions of democratic governance, each highlighting different aspects of the concept. Diamond, (2004) definition of democracy laid the groundwork for a functional democratic governance; his paper focused on the procedural dimension of democracy, emphasizing fair and competitive elections, respect for human rights, and the rule of law but failed to address the issue of political interference, which can manipulate these procedures and prevent genuine democratic outcomes. However, Rivera & Knox, (2022), building on Diamond's postulation defined democratic governance as the principles, processes, and practices that uphold democratic values and ensure the effective functioning of democratic systems.

In another perspective, Gaventa & Barrett, (2012), defined democratic governance from the procedural aspect by incorporating notions of citizen participation and deliberation. According to Gaventa & Barrett, (2012), democratic governance is inclusive decision-making processes that consider multiple perspectives and engage citizens in policy formulation and implementation. It involves the participation of citizens in decision-making, the protection of individual rights and freedoms, the rule of law, transparency, accountability, and the promotion of social equity (Rivera & Knox, 2022; Cordery et al., 2022; Murday et al., 2021; Widanti, 2022; Hayat & Rosales, 2020). While citizen participation is crucial for the legitimacy of democratic governance, political interference can stifle it by manipulating public opinion and suppressing dissenting

voices. Mansuri & Rao, (2013) further argued that democratic governance is outcome-oriented and It emphasizes the achievement of social justice, equal opportunities, and the protection of minority rights. Their views on democratic governance recognised the importance of substantive equality, but it is vulnerable to political interference, as those in power might use it as a guise to consolidate their authority and propagate their interests.

These definitions indicate the multidimensional nature of democratic governance, incorporating procedural, participatory, and substantive elements. However, they fail to fully account for the challenges posed by political interference, which necessitates a critical examination of their limitations. The procedural definition provided a necessary foundation for democratic governance but overlooks the impact of political interference on the integrity and fairness of elections. For example, gerrymandering, voter suppression, and manipulation of campaign finance undermine the principles of fair representation and electoral equality. This casts doubts on the effectiveness of purely procedural definitions in capturing the complex realities of political interference. The definition that emphasizes citizen participation and deliberation acknowledged the significance of inclusive decision-making processes. However, it remains silent on how political interference can manipulate these processes. When political actors exert undue influence over public opinion through control of media, disinformation campaigns, or even threats, it undermines the authenticity and effectiveness of citizen engagement. The outcome-oriented definition recognised the importance of social justice and equal opportunities, but the risk of political interference distorting these outcomes cannot be ignored. Political interference may lead to the concentration of power in the hands of a few, perpetuating socio-economic inequalities and hindering the realization of substantive democracy.

Political Interference and Democratic Governance in Nigeria: Historical Context

This literature review highlights the historical context of political interference in governance in Nigeria using factors such as ethnic politics, military rule, corruption, weak

institutions, and socio-economic inequalities which have significantly contributed to the perpetuation of political interference. Understanding this historical backdrop of the country is crucial for background of political interference and Nigeria's governance system.

Nigeria gained independence from British colonial rule in 1960, marking the beginning of its journey as a sovereign nation. However, Nigeria faced numerous challenges in building a stable and effective governance system due to its diverse ethnic, religious, and regional dynamics (Achebe, 1994). Nigeria comprises over 250 ethnic groups, each with its own cultural heritage and interests (Isike, 2016) and initiated ethnic politics has continued to play a significant role in shaping Nigeria's governance structure and fostering political interference. Political elites, historically using ethnicity as a tool for political mobilization, and they have exploited these divisions for personal gains, leading to the promotion of patronage and clientelism rather than meritocracy in governance (Musa, 2013). Ethnic politics in the nation's early years created political instability, military coups, and civil unrest, collectively contributing to a weak democratic foundation (Ibrahim, 2012).

In the periods of oil bloom in the 70s the country became an oil dependent economy, and this fueled corruption and political interference in governance. Ibrahim, (2005) iterated that the vast oil wealth provided opportunities for politicians to exploit public resources for personal gains. Rampant corruption, coupled with weak accountability mechanisms, weakened public institutions, compromised service delivery, and perpetuated political interference (Transparency International, 2020). This further led to several military coups and military rule, further exacerbating political interference. The military regimes not only suppressed democratic values but also engaged in corrupt practices, undermined institutions, and weakened the rule of law (Osaghae, 2005). This legacy continues to haunt Nigeria's governance as it struggles to transition into a stable democracy

The military rule contributed to a large extent, to weak institutions and centralized power structures; the concentration of power within the federal government limited the autonomy of state and local governments,

facilitating political interference (Nnoli, 1981). Weak checks and balances, lack of judicial independence, and limited transparency have further hindered the effective functioning of governance institutions (Oyekanmi, 2018). Suberu, (2001) furthered argued that the military rule ignited unequal distribution of resources and limited access to public services which created grievances and deep social divisions.

However, since the return to democratic governance in 1999, political actors exploit these factors by using patronage networks to gain support and manipulate the governance process for personal or ethnic group benefits (Ibeanu, 2008).

Root Causes of political interference in Democratic Governance

One critical root cause of political interference in Nigeria stems from socioeconomic factors. Okoli and Umejesi (2018) argued that socioeconomic factors play a significant role in the prevalence of political interference in Nigeria. These factors, such as high levels of poverty and inequality, can create an environment where individuals are more susceptible to manipulation and coercion by political elites. In addition, Smith (2015) argued that the lack of access to necessities and opportunities for economic advancement makes the Nigerian populace more vulnerable to manipulation and coercion by political elites. This vulnerability makes them more susceptible to engaging in corrupt practices or supporting politicians who promise immediate relief from their socioeconomic challenges. (Wilson 2019, Brown 2017)

In another view the weakness of institutions and pervasive corruption are deeply interrelated with political interference in Nigerian governance (Thompson, 2020). The lack of an independent judiciary, a free press, and accountable law enforcement agencies perpetuates a culture of impunity, providing opportunities for political interference and allowing corruption to thrive (Thompson, 2020). As a result of these problems, those in positions of power are further exacerbating the socioeconomic difficulties that the Nigerian people already face. Without addressing these institutional weaknesses and tackling corruption head-on, it will be difficult for Nigeria to achieve sustainable development and provide relief to its citizens.

In addressing the root causes of political interference in governance, Mahmud (2013) identified ethnic and religious politics. Politicians looking to consolidate power within their respective communities have taken advantage of deep-rooted ethnic and religious divisions. This manipulation often leads to electoral violence, the imposition of ethnic or religious agendas, and the exclusion of minority groups from the political process (Mahmud 2013).

A lack of civic education and political awareness among the population contributed to political interference in governance. (Agbaje, Adejumobi, and Mustapha 2013). When citizens are uninformed about their rights and responsibilities, they become susceptible to manipulation by politicians. Strengthening civic education and promoting political awareness can empower citizens to hold politicians accountable and minimize the propensity for political interference. By educating citizens about their rights and responsibilities, they can become active participants in the political process. This would ensure that minority groups are not marginalized and have a voice in decision-making. Moreover, a politically aware population would be better equipped to recognize and challenge any attempts by politicians to interfere in governance for personal gain. Ultimately, the empowerment of citizens through civic education and political awareness would lead to a more inclusive and transparent political system.

The influence of external actors, such as multinational corporations and foreign governments, is another critical factor in political interference in Nigeria (Olukoju, 2005; Obi 2017; Ekeh 1975; Oyewole, and Aluko 2017; Soyinka, 2004; Mamdani, 1996). Corporate influence and foreign interference in policies and decision-making processes often erode the sovereignty and self-determination of the Nigerian government. These external interests manipulate governance structures to serve their own agendas, depriving the Nigerian population of true representative governance.

Scope of Political Inference in Democratic Governance in Nigeria

The scope of political interference in Nigeria is vast and extends to various sectors of governance. Studies reveal the intrusion of politicians in the judiciary, security forces, and

election processes (Oyekanmi, 2017; Udomisor, 2011; Bello, 2019) and the intrusion of politicians into bureaucratic decision-making processes and the control they exert over government institutions (Onah, 2016; Agbaje & Adejumobi, 2003).

Rossiter, (2019) opined that administrative interference involves political actors interfering in the functioning of administrative bodies, such as the civil service and local government. This involvement often hampers the autonomy of administrative bodies, leading to inefficiency and the distortion of public policies (Lucky, 2014)

Judicial interference can be suicidal to governance in any country because it undermines the judiciary's ability to deliver impartial justice, compromising the rule of law and citizens' confidence in the judicial system. It can take many forms, including the appointment or removal of judges based on political affiliations, intimidation of judges, or exerting pressure on court verdicts. Political actors exert influence on the judiciary through appointment processes, financial inducements, and the manipulation of legal frameworks (Oyekanmi, 2017; Omodia, 2014).

Furthermore, the media and civil society organizations are not immune to political interference (Adetula, 2012; Babalola, 2018). Media interference involves the manipulation and control of media outlets by political actors to shape public opinion, suppress dissenting voices, or disseminate fake news. This type of interference can limit media freedom, hinder the accurate flow of information, and undermine democratic processes by influencing public perception and electoral outcomes

Political interference can be noticed in the economy and refers to political actors utilizing their power to manipulate or influence economic activities for personal or political gain (Lucky, 2014; Omodia, 2014). It may involve favoritism in awarding contracts, directing public funds towards preferred industries or cronies, or using regulatory measures to stifle competition. Economic interference can result in corruption, economic inefficiency, and erosion of public trust in government.

Methodology

This paper adopted the descriptive approach. The purpose of this methodology is to gather comprehensive and well-rounded data on political interference and democratic governance in Ogun state, Osun State and Ekiti state in Nigeria, particularly its implications for local government. The research instrument used in this study was questionnaire which contained open-ended questions was to allow respondents to provide detailed explanations or viewpoints on specific issues related to political interference and democratic governance.

The questionnaire was administered using convince sampling technique to a sample size of 300 respondents. which included individuals who have firsthand knowledge and experience in the political and governance landscape of Nigeria. These individuals included local government officials, politicians, civil society activists, and scholars in political science. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics such as pie chart frequencies and percentages.

Finding and Discussions

Sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents

The result in Table 1 shows the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents. As shown in the table, of the 300 respondents interviewed, majority were males (90%), largely 40-49 years (43%) or 50+ years old (40%). Majority of them were employed as local government officials (30%), civil servants (23%), academicians (10%) and self-employed (10%). The rest of them were either retired or developmental specialists. (20%).

Table 1: sociodemographic characteristics

	Freq	Percent %
Gender		
Female	30	10.0
Male	270	90.0
Age		
Under 30	20	6.6
30-39	30	10.0
40-49	130	43.3
50 and above	120	40.0
Occupation		

None	1	3.3
Academician	30	10.0
Citizen/Resident	60	20.0
Civil Servant	70	23.3
Development Specialist	10	3.3
Local Government Official	90	30.0
Self employed	30	10.0

Political interference in local government affairs

The results in Figure 1 indicates that about 90% of the respondents reported to have witnessed instances of political interference in local government affairs. Of the proportion reporting that they had witnessed political interference in the LG affairs, about one-third reported direct or indirect manipulation of electoral processes, while over one-quarter (25.9%) reported state government's interference in LGA administration and activities. Less than one-fifth (14.8%) reported a reduction or non-remittance of LGA monthly allocation by the state government and manipulation of recruitment and promotion processes of LGA workers. The rest reported that the major sources of revenue of the LGAs have been taken over by either the State or Federal government (Table 2).

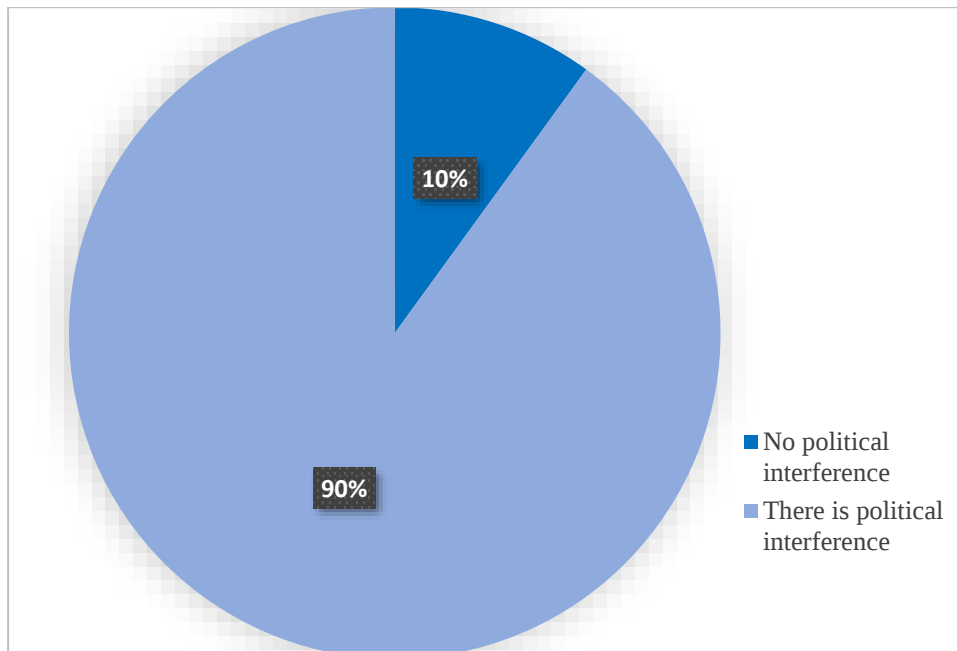


Figure 1: Presence of political interference in local government affairs

Table 2: Political interferences in local government affairs

	Frequency	Percent
Instances of political interference encountered or observed		
Reduction or non-remittance of LGA monthly allocation by the state government	40	14.8
Direct or indirect manipulation of Electoral Process	90	33.3
Manipulation of LGA workers' appointment and promotion	40	14.8
Interference in LGA administrations and activities	50	25.9
Taking over LGA's major sources of revenue.	20	7.4

Perceptions about political interference

The result in Table 3 shows the perception of the respondents about political interference in local government affairs. When asked about their perception about common political interferences, the most reported perception was the manipulation of local government elections which was perceived by 37% of the respondents. Next to this is the imposition of caretaker committees on local government administration, reported by 27% of the respondents; followed by interference in budget allocation and resource distribution (23%) which can hinder the fair distribution of resources for public services. About 10% believed that political interference affects LG administration through influence on appointments and recruitment, suggesting that political considerations may influence hiring decisions. These practices can disrupt the stability and continuity of local governance. Meanwhile, a small percentage (3.3%) specified interference in other areas. It would be essential to explore and understand these specific instances further to address them effectively.

Regarding the impact of political interference on democratic governance, nearly half (47%) of the respondents believed political interference is eroding local government autonomy. This is a critical issue as autonomy is a key element of democratic governance. Over one-fifth (23%) also opined that political interference undermines citizen representation and participation, which are core aspects of democratic governance. A smaller proportion believe that

such interference hinders public service delivery (17%), which impacts citizens' access to essential services. Similarly, about 13% associated such interference to reduced accountability and transparency.

Responding to questions on the impact of political interference on LG ability to serve communities, over one-third (35%) of the respondents asserted that it reduces the effectiveness of LG administration. More than one-quarter (28%) identified reduced accountability and transparency as an effect of political interference, which can impede efficient administration. Also, approximately 21% see political interference as weakening the strength and autonomy of LG authorities, which may affect their decision-making. A small proportion (7%) of the respondents believed it leads to the cessation of funds meant for LG administration, which can hinder service provision, while others agreed to its effect on the recruitment of competent officials.

Table 3: Perceptions about political interferences in Nigeria

	Frequency	Percent
Common political interference affecting LG administration in Nigeria		
Imposition of caretaker committees	80	26.7
Influence on appointments and recruitment	30	10.0
Interference in budget allocation and resource distribution	70	23.3
Manipulation of local government elections	110	36.7
Other (Please Specify)	10	3.3
How political interference affects democratic governance in Nigeria's LG system		
Erosion of local government autonomy	140	46.7
Hindered public service delivery	50	16.7
Reduced accountability and transparency	40	13.3
Undermining citizen representation and participation	70	23.3

How political interference impact LG administration and its ability to serve the needs of the communities effectively		
Cessation of the flow of fund necessary for local administration	20	6.9
Hinders getting the best brain that can deliver on good governance.	10	3.4
Reduced accountability and transparency	80	27.6
Weakens the strength and autonomy of LG authority	60	20.7
Negatively	20	6.9
Reduces the effectiveness of LG administration.	100	34.5

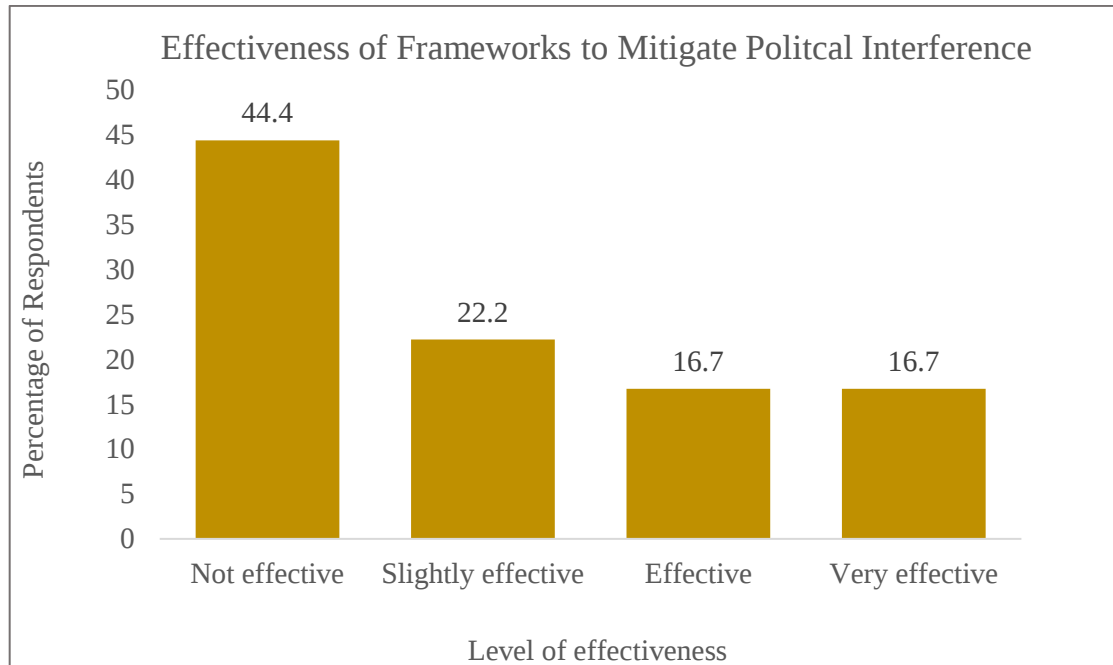
Political interference, and effectiveness of existing framework

Table 4 below shows the political interference and effectiveness of existing framework, from the result, most of the respondents (97%) reveal that political interference hinders citizen trust and confidence in local government authorities. Concerning availability of existing legal and policy framework, 60% of the respondents noted that there are existing legal and policy frameworks in Nigeria aimed at safeguarding local government autonomy and preventing political interference. About 27% reported that such frameworks are unavailable in the country.

Table 4: Political interference, and effectiveness of existing framework

	Frequency	Percent
Political interference hinders citizen trust and confidence in LG authorities		
Maybe	10	3.3
Yes	290	96.7
Existing legal and policy frameworks to safeguard LG autonomy and prevent		

political interference in Nigeria		
No	80	26.7
Unsure	40	13.3
Yes	180	60.0



Information on specific cases of political interference

From Figure 3, 83% of the respondents indicated that they are aware of some specific cases of political interference in local government administration in Nigeria, while 17% indicated no awareness. Among those who indicated awareness, they provided detailed examples of the cases of political interference they have experienced.

Consequences of political interference

The results in Table 6 indicate that more than half (59%) of the respondents perceive that administrative development has a low or no impact on grassroots due to political interference. This suggests that development efforts might not be reaching the intended beneficiaries. Also, about 15% of the respondents perceive abnormality in governance because of political interference, indicating that political interference may lead to deviations from established norms and practices in the governance structure. Lack of accountability and transparency was also identified as one of the consequences of political interference in LG affairs. According to the result, about 11% of the respondents

agreed with this perception. This indicates that political interference might undermine the principles of open and responsible government. Lack of autonomy in LG administration was also reported as one of the consequences. This was supported by about 7% of respondents, implying that local government officials may have limited control over decision-making due to external influences. Another 7% of respondents see the manipulation of local government recruitment and electoral processes because of political interference. This poses serious threat to the fairness and integrity of the recruitment and electoral processes in the LG administration.

Table 6: Consequences of political interference

Consequences of political interference	Frequency	Percent
Abnormality in governance	40	14.8
Lack of accountability and transparency to the masses	30	11.1
Lack of autonomy in local government administration as the consequence of political interferences	20	7.4
Low/no impact of administrative development on the grassroots	160	59.3
Manipulation of local government recruitment/electoral process	20	7.4

Local government autonomy and measures to foster improved governance

Strengthening Local Government Autonomy

The result in Table 7 shows various ways of strengthening local government autonomy and measures to foster improved governance. One of the ways suggested by the respondents was that local governments should have their autonomy. Over two-fifths (44.8%) of the respondents supported this position. A significant proportion (37.9%) also highlights the importance of an effective legal framework, emphasising the role of laws and regulations in ensuring local government autonomy. Others suggested a system representing the grassroots. A small percentage of respondents (6.9%) believe that having a system

representative of the grassroots is key to strengthening local government autonomy. This implies that governance structures should align with the needs and interests of the local population. A similar percentage of respondents also advocate for clear responsibilities and the election of reliable leaders (6.9%). This suggests that well-defined roles and trustworthy leadership are seen as essential elements to reduce political interference. A smaller percentage supports the direct payment of monthly allocation to local government officers.

Measures to Enhance Accountability and Transparency

The respondents also highlight various measures to enhance accountability and transparency in the LG administration. For instance, a significant portion (41.4%) of the respondents emphasizes achieving full autonomy through laws and their effective implementation. This highlights the role of legal structures in safeguarding local government autonomy. Additionally, approximately 17.2% suggest that effective monitoring and supervision by various government agencies can enhance accountability and transparency within local government administration. A similar percentage supports electoral and financial transparency as a measure to combat political interference. This indicates a concern for the integrity of elections and financial processes. About 10.3% believe that the elimination of external interference is essential, thus aligning with the goal of reducing external influences on local governance.

Improving Citizen Participation and Engagement

Measures were also suggested to improve citizens' participation and engagement. As shown in the table, majority (64.3%) of the respondents advocates for engaging citizens in robust participation and adopting a bottom-up approach in rural development. This underscores the significance of involving the local population in decision-making. About 17.9% believe that improving citizen participation can be achieved through citizens' orientation and education. This highlights the role of awareness and education in fostering democratic governance. Financial accountability and responsible governance were another measure suggested by the respondents. Approximately 10.7% stress the need for financial accountability and responsible governance in enhancing citizen participation.

A small percentage (7.1%) highlights the importance of an effective legal framework, especially regarding financial relations with state governments.

Table 7: Local government autonomy and measures to foster improved governance

	Frequency	Percent
How local government autonomy can be strengthened to reduce the influence of political interference		
A system that must be representative of the grassroots	20	6.9
Clear demarcation of responsibilities and election of reliable leaders	20	6.9
Direct payment of monthly allocation to the local government officers	10	3.4
Effective legal framework	110	37.9
Local government should have their autonomy	130	44.8
Measures to enhance accountability and transparency within local government administration to combat political interference		
Effective monitoring and supervision of Local Government by various agencies of government.	50	17.2
Electoral and financial transparency	50	17.2
Elimination of external interference	30	10.3
Ensure full autonomy through laws and implementation of those laws	120	41.4
Strengthening the citizen representation and participation through free and fair local government election	40	13.8
How citizen participation and engagement can be improved to foster democratic governance in local government administration		
Effective legal framework, especially on financial relation with the state government	20	7.1

Engaging the citizens in robust participation in the Local Government activities and adopting the bottom-up approach in rural development.	180	64.3
Financial accountability and responsible governance	30	10.7
Through Citizens Orientation and Education	50	17.9

The Table below on specific cases of political interference is a repletion of what has been addressed in other questions. So, I suggest we expunge the table and the chart

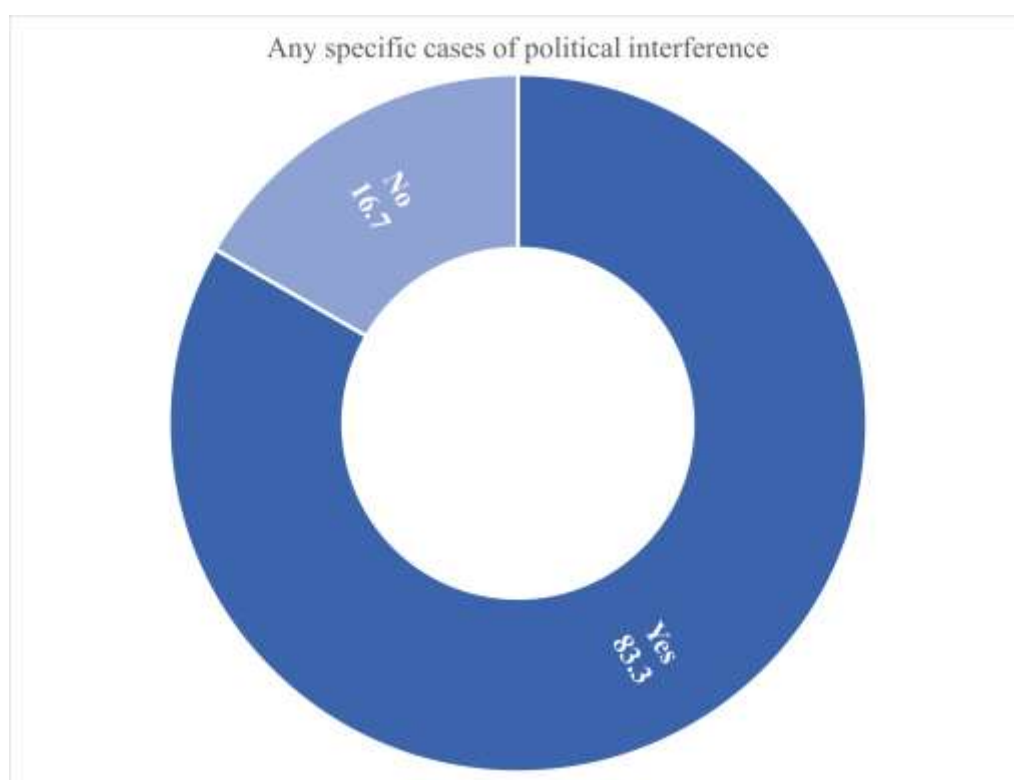


Table 5: Information on specific cases of political interference

	Frequency	Percent
Details of specific cases of political interference in LG administration in Nigeria		
The States sit on the Allocation (from the Federation Account) for the Local Governments. In some states, the items under the	1	6.6

Schedule 4 of the Constitution that is to be collected by the Local Governments have been taken over by the States and the Local Governments are not given a dime from what is collected, other states give their Local Governments a paltry sum from what is collected. The States treat the Local Governments as though they are State area offices.		
The local government executive do not have financial independence. All Nigeria Governor do take larger percentage of local government fund. Appointment of local government executive by the ruling party	1	3.3
Allocations meant for Local Governments not released to them	1	3.3
Between 2014 to 2018 Administration in Ekiti State.	1	3.3
Direct instruction on LG finance	1	3.3
During the Era of Governor Daniel in Ogun State, the Chairman Ijebu East Local Government Hon Oladunjoye was suspended from office because he opposed illegal deduction from Local Government Accounts (suspension of LG chairman from office)	1	3.3
Financial manipulation.	1	3.3
Governors wanting to corner local Government funds.	1	3.3
Imposition of caretaker chairmen on the people rather than the grassroots people choosing their leaders by themselves. That is what local government is all about.	1	3.3
Inauguration of caretaker committees.	1	3.3

Influence on. Appointment and Recruitment	1	3.3
Interference in recruitment and appointment. Political thugs are sometimes recruited as staff.	1	3.3
Lagos and all over the States	1	3.3
Local government election in Osun State by OSIEC	1	3.3
No	4	13.3
No remittance of local govt monthly allocation and overtaking of local govt IGR	1	3.3
No.	1	3.3
Political interference is evident in budget processes, utilization and resource allocation	1	3.3
The appointment of the permanent secretary to the local Government service commission	1	3.3
The evidence is at everywhere. A case study of Oyo state current system of local government	1	3.3
The revenue sources specifically set out in the constitution for local government to collect and which the state government has taken over deceptively and the joint account committee (JAC) where the state government pretend to distribute among the local government and process divert into their pocket.	1	3.3
The scenario of local government election in Osun state 2022	1	3.3
The transitioning of power between Prince Olagunsoye's Administration to Ogbeni Aregbesola. The former practiced presidential system of government even at the local level, people were allowed to vote for their candidates but the latter imposed executive secretaries all over the 30 LGAs in the state.	1	3.3

Withholding and tampering with local government statutory allocation, arbitrarily suspension of local government political functionaries and no free and fair election at the local government level etc	1	3.3
Yes, In all sphere they receive order from State Government before any functional duties. Also, budgetary allocation from federal is monitored by state government. Likewise, politicization of placement and promotion of local government administration is embedded	1	3.3
Yes. Between 2003 and 2013, 25 States out of 36 States experienced the administration of Caretaker Committee System at the Local Government Levels in Nigeria, such as recorded in Anambra, Katsina, kwara, Ogun, Osun, Zamfara, etc.	1	3.3

Conclusion

Political interference poses significant challenges to democratic governance at the local government level in Nigeria. This study emphasized the erosion of democratic principles, diminished service delivery, increased corruption, and the perpetuation of inequality and highlighted the importance of strengthening legal frameworks, promoting civic education, and empowering independent oversight institutions as potential remedies to address the implications

Recommendations

To address the implications of political interference on local government, several measures need to be implemented. Strengthening legal frameworks, promoting civic education, ensuring transparency in political appointments, and empowering independent oversight institutions are among the key strategies that can safeguard the autonomy and effectiveness of local government systems.

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