

GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF BOSSO LOCAL GOVERNMENT, NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Local governments are established to promote grassroots democracy by imbibing the general principles of democracy, thereby enhancing service delivery which will make the performance of any local government visible to the people. The study assessed grassroots democracy (representation and grassroots participation) and local government performance in Bosso Local Government from 2015 to 2020. The relevance of grassroots democracy on local government performance seemed to be defeated in Bosso Local Government by the inadequacies of leaders such as poor representation by the local leaders, non-involvement of the locals in decision making. The instruments of data collection are both primary and secondary data. While questionnaire and interview were the primary methods of data collection; reliable documents (e.g. Staff Register, Bosso Local Government Area (2020); Membership Register of Bosso Women Association; Niger State Monitoring Committee report on Local Government's Performance, 2015; and Political Parties Membership Register, Niger State comprised the secondary instruments of data collection. The theory of Community Driven Development (CDD) was adopted as theoretical framework for the study. From the findings of the study, it was revealed that representative leadership has significantly affected performance in Bosso Local Government; in the same vein, the study also found that grassroots participation has significantly affected performance in Bosso Local Government. However, the significance of this can be judged from the P value represented as "sig". The study recommended among others the need for efforts to be directed at ensuring that elections continue to be conducted in a free and fair atmosphere in order to boost representative leadership and more ways should be paved for easy mobilisation of the populace at the grassroots who by their new-found intellectual education and level of awareness are now willing to contribute to the socio-political and economic development of their environment.

Keywords: Democracy, Leadership, Participation, Performance and Representation

Background to the Study

Local governments are created to encourage democracy at the grassroots level by ensuring that the general principles of democracy are imbibed, thereby enhancing service delivery, thus making the performance of any local government noticeable to the people. Local governments in Nigeria are potentially essential for socioeconomic roles that the constitution bestows on them as they generate revenue and encourage civil involvement, as well as create a visible link between taxes and service delivery. According to Uhunmwangho and Epelle (2017), every local jurisdiction has its unique economic, social and physical characteristics and its historical tradition which are better understood by its people. Thus, the local government areas are created to provide the services which the federal and state governments cannot easily undertake due to their remoteness from the local communities. That is why Dumadu (2016) gave some characteristics of local government, as the best way to identify one as: "a level of government with philosophical commitment to democratic participation in the governing process at the grassroots level".

Needless to state at this juncture that the philosophical roots of decentralisation and local level administration can be traced to the writings of a French philosopher, Jean Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau (1920) was impressed by the emerging democratic practices and principles in operation in Sweden at that time, and argued that local government is a good training ground for democratic development and effective performance. Some other scholars after Rousseau have also argued that decentralisation may result in better service delivery. In their opinion, decentralisation of the provision of social services such as education, health, water and sanitation may improve service delivery. Thus, local governments serve as incubators for experimental policies which can then be reproduced at the national level.

This formed a core philosophical basis in the opinion of Gingrich cited in Olowu and Wunsch (2018) who observed that: "We must decentralise power and programmes away from the central government; we must liberate individuals, neighbourhoods and local and state Governments such that they can experiment with new and better methods of getting the job done – improving performance". On this basis, Altmann (2019) also opined that the decentralisation of governance to local level can lead to increased efficiency, effectiveness and an improved economy. Besides, decentralisation offers a number of benefits, according to the logic of markets. When local governments compete to attract citizens, those that fail to perform will be crowded out (Donahue, 1997).

The term 'Grassroots/Local democracy' refers to the decentralisation of power and responsibility to democratic institutions at village, municipal, city, town, district, county, and equivalent local levels (McMann 2020). It is however argued that democracy is intended to ensure that local policies reflect the needs and preferences of local communities. Effective grassroots democracy can facilitate public participation, improve

service delivery, strengthen communities, and improve development outcomes. Effective grassroots democracy is increasingly recognised as a prerequisite for ensuring sustainable and equitable economic and social development, promoting good governance and encouraging democratic values.

For some, the attractions of local democracy are intrinsic; regardless of its effect on outcomes, the value of local democracy lies in the opportunity for increased participation which strengthens civic culture, builds social capital and enables people to act as more active citizens. Others take a more instrumental view of the benefits of local democracy, focusing on the ability of local democracy to improve service delivery and developmental outcomes through increased public accountability (International IDEA, 2013). The above assertion made Afolabi and Awofeso (2019) to stress thus:

One major ground on which the existence of local government has been justified by scholars is its essentiality for a democratic climate. The existence of local government as argued by them is to promote the spread of democratic norms: representation, participation and accountability, to mention just a few.

This study assessed the effects of grassroots democracy on local government performance in Bosso Local Government. The gap between our study and the extant studies is on the use of the two major tenants of grassroots democracy (representation and grassroots participation) and the magnitude of effects it made on Local Government performance between 2015 and 2020. What informed the choice of the period is the establishment and structure of government policies on improved civil service efficiency and productivity such as SERVICOM, New Public Management and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Statement of the Research Problem

Considering the constitutionally stipulated structure of governance in Nigeria, local governments ought to be the primary political structure for addressing the concerns and socioeconomic demands of people at the grassroots. However, systematic neglect by higher levels of government and the ineptitude of local government officials, among other factors, have contributed to making this level of governance ineffective.

Ideally, local government is premised on the idea that it is the level of government that is better placed for effective performance at the local level (to effectively formulate and implement development policies and programmes that can effectively solve problems of service delivery at the local level). However, this idea seems defeated by some inadequacies of the leaders such as poor representation by the local leaders, non-involvement of the local people in decision making as well as other challenges facing the local government system in Nigeria. This is in consonance with the assertion of Adedeji (1999), when he stressed that, "No democracy can become dynamic, acceptable

and sustainable if the system of governance at the grassroots level is not people-oriented, friendly, participatory and accountable". This has been the tradition in Bosso Local Government.

Representation by the local leaders in Bosso Local Government, Niger State, is so poor that a representative strives to make him/herself happy at the detriment of the populace. The Niger State Monitoring Committee report on Local Government's Performance (2019) has it that only a tiny proportion of Bosso Local Government, Niger state, is represented in every administration. This is caused by the internal segregation among Bosso Districts. Each representative tries to satisfy the home district where he/she belongs, thereby neglecting the other districts. It has persisted for a long time according to the report.

In the same vein, non-involvement (participation) of the locals (starting from the level of initiation, to planning, implementation and to monitoring and evaluation) in decision making has been reported to be one of the hindering factors to the performance of Bosso Local Government, Niger State. In essence, the system of governance in Bosso Local Government, Niger State, is not people-oriented, which has made most decisions from the leaders unsustainable, thereby hindering the performance of Bosso Local Government (Niger State Monitoring Committee report on Local Government's Performance, 2017).

Recently, with the World Bank assisted organisations like Community and Social Development Projects (CSDP) (which was implemented in close partnership with the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), 30 States and the FCT, between 2009 and 2014); and the additional financing (AF) (that became effective on 17 August 2015) sought and obtained by the Federal Government of Nigeria with the Niger State Government (with its projects decentralised to local government areas) meant to continue to support project implementation in the vulnerable communities. Information in Niger State now shows improvement in the performance of Bosso Local Government (Niger State Monitoring Committee on Local Government's Performance, 2017). It is against these stated problems that the study is out to assess the effects of grassroots democracy on performance in Bosso Local Government, Niger State.

Research Objectives

The overall objective of the study is to assess the effects of grassroots democracy on local government performance in Bosso Local Government, Niger State. The specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. examine the effect of representative leadership on local government performance in Bosso Local Government.
- ii. assess the effect of grassroots participation on local government performance in Bosso Local Government.

Research Hypotheses

Ho₁ Representative leadership has no significant effect on local government performance in Bosso Local Government.

Ho₂ Grassroots' participation has no significant effects on local government performance in Bosso Local Government.

Methodology

This study adopted sequential mixed research design. Sequential mixed method procedures are those in which the researcher seeks to expand on the findings of one method with another method. This involves beginning with a quantitative method (e.g. questionnaire results) followed by a qualitative method involving detailed exploration with a few individuals (Cresswell, 2009). The target population of the study comprised the political and administrative staff of Bosso Local Government, major party leaders/assistants, district heads, co-opted members of the four districts making up the local government and executives of Bosso Women Association. The table below summarises the target population of the study.

Table 2 Target Population of the Study

S/N	Respondent Category	Population
1.	Political staff of Bosso Local Government	12
2.	Administrative staff of Bosso Local Government	337
3.	Major party leaders/Assistants, Bosso Local Government	8
4.	District Heads, Bosso Local Government	4
5.	Co-opted members of the Four Districts	$15 \times 4 = 60$
6.	Executives of Bosso Women Association	15
7.	Co-opted members of Bosso Women Association	14
**	Total	450

Source: Staff Register, Bosso Local Government Area (2020), Membership Register of Bosso Women Association and Political Parties Membership Register, Niger State (2018).

Sampling Technique

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$1+N(e)^2$$

The study adopted Yamane (1967) sampling technique for objective determination of a representative sample size.

Where:

n = Sample size required

N = Number of people in the population

e = Allowable error or Level of Precision ($\pm 5\%$)

450

$$1 + 450 (0.05)^2 = \underline{212}$$

Let this formula be used for our population, in which $N = 450$, with $\pm 5\%$ precision with 95% confidence level and p value = 0.5, we get the sample size as:

n = Sample Size

As shown in the above calculations, the sample size is 212 which was arrived at through Taro Yamane sampling technique. Among this sample size, some respondents like the principal staff of Bosso Local Government including four district heads and four party leaders in addition to the six (6) executives of Bosso Women Association were interviewed for corroboration of information generated through the questionnaire. Simply put, four respondents were interviewed face-to-face while six executives of Bosso Women Association were interviewed as a focus group.

Instruments of Data/Data Analysis

The instruments of data collection are both primary and secondary data. While the use of questionnaire and interview were the primary methods of data collection for this study; reliable documents: i.e. Staff Register, Bosso Local Government Area (2020); Membership Register of Bosso Women Association; Niger State Monitoring Committee report on Local Government's Performance, 2015; and Political Parties Membership Register, Niger State (2018) formed the secondary data for the study. However, the primary (quantitative) data was analysed using multiple regression and the interview responses were thematically presented and analysed.

Conceptual Clarifications

Local Government Performance

'Local Government performance' could be defined as the delivery of the aforementioned functions (both the mandatory and concurrent functions) measured by service delivery. Generally, performance could be regarded as one of the key determinant factors that are widely used in measuring the success or failure of organisations. Although several research works have been carried out on performance related issues as it affects organisations or firms, its definition remains challenging to researchers. According to Roger and Wright (1998), performance is probably the most widely used dependent variable in organisational research today, yet it remains one of the vaguest and loosely defined

constructs. They further confirmed that the struggle to establish a meaning for performance has been ongoing for many years and it is not limited to academicians.

Gavrea, Ilies and Stegorean (2011) confirmed the fact that defining performance has been very challenging to researchers because of its diverse meanings. However, they traced the history of the attempted definitions of performance as noted by other researchers between the 1950s and 2006. In the 1950s organisational performance was defined by Georgopolis and Tannebaman (1957) as the extent to which organisations fulfilled their objectives. In this era, performance evaluation focused on work, people and invariably, staff performance.

However, there are a number of measures that can be taken into consideration when measuring performance, for example, using productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, quality and profitability measures (Ahuja, 2012) as briefly explained hereafter. Profitability is the ability to earn profits consistently over a period of time. It is expressed as the ratio of gross profit to sales or return on capital employed (Wood and Stangster, 2002). Efficiency is the ability to produce the desired outcomes by using as minimal resources as possible, while effectiveness is the ability of employees to meet the desired objectives or target (Stoner, 1996). Productivity is expressed as a ratio of output to that of input (Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert Jr, 1995). It is a measure of how the individual, organisation and industry convert input resources into goods and services; the measure of how much output is produced per unit of resources employed (Lipsey, 1989). Quality is the characteristic of products or services that bear an ability to satisfy the stated or implied needs (Kotler and Armstrong, 2002). It is increasingly achieving better products and services at a progressively more competitive price (Stoner, 1996).

According to McLennan (2009), performance is commonly understood to mean “the provision of goods or services by a government or other organisations to those who need or demand them”. Such performance by whoever is constitutionally responsible takes into consideration numerous social factors. This includes even rearrangement and reallocation of resources, social equality, improvement of people’s living conditions and stimulating the economy to ensure the sustainability of service provision.

Berry (2004) opines that performance is conceptualised as the relationship between policymakers, service providers and poor people. It encompasses services and their support systems that are typically regarded as a state’s responsibility. These include social services (primary education and basic health services), infrastructure (water and sanitation, roads and bridges) and services that promote personal security (justice, police). Similarly, the World Bank (2004) sees local government performance as:

A relationship of accountability between users, providers and policymakers and proposes a possible framework for conceptualising pro-poor service delivery that examines the relationships of accountability between the policymaker, the provider and the citizen – indicating the central role of the public institutions (e.g. local government) in guaranteeing the provision of pro-poor services and the role of politics in this process.

VNG (2007) opines that performance is measured by service delivery which is an essential function of the relationship between governmental bodies and citizens. This has, over the years, categorised the citizens as customers and has changed the way governments think and act. In the world of government therefore, (particularly local government) customers have a right to demand services from their suppliers that meet their needs: fast, accessible, of good quality and at modest cost, and all wrapped in friendly treatment. This applies particularly to the government as a supplier of key public services. Kayode (2013) sees performance of local governments to imply the provision of tangible and intangible goods and services by the government in order to improve the well-being of the citizenry. These include social services (primary education and basic health services), infrastructure (water, sanitation, roads and bridges).

Conceptualising Representative Government

Manin (1997) defined representative government by presuming that the purpose of a representative government is to represent the will of the people in some way – by translating popular sentiment or public interest into policy. It therefore presumes that a good measure of the performance of representative democracy, at least in its representative capacity, involves comparing policy results with public opinion as it is or as it should be. The classic study of Miller and Stokes (2013) focused on “the extent of policy agreement between legislator and district”. Another sensible definition of representative government hinges on the responsiveness of elected politicians to the preferences and interests of their constituents” (Bartels, 1991). Occasionally, the notion of responsiveness is examined in more depth by Manin (1997) and Przeworski, and Stokes (2016) by stressing that “the purpose of representative government is to be an instrument of the popular will”.

We could therefore conclude that Dahl (2005) is surely right to suggest that the notion of responsiveness is central to any understanding of modern democracy. He added that the purpose of representative government is to multiply and challenge governmental claims to represent the people. Recently, Loeper (2016) came up with a broad definition of representative government by asserting thus:

Representative government, also known as indirect democracy, is a type of government founded on the elected persons representing a group of people which can function as an element of both parliamentary and the presidential systems of government (manifested in the low chambers known as house of representatives in Nigeria and house of commons in the United Kingdom).

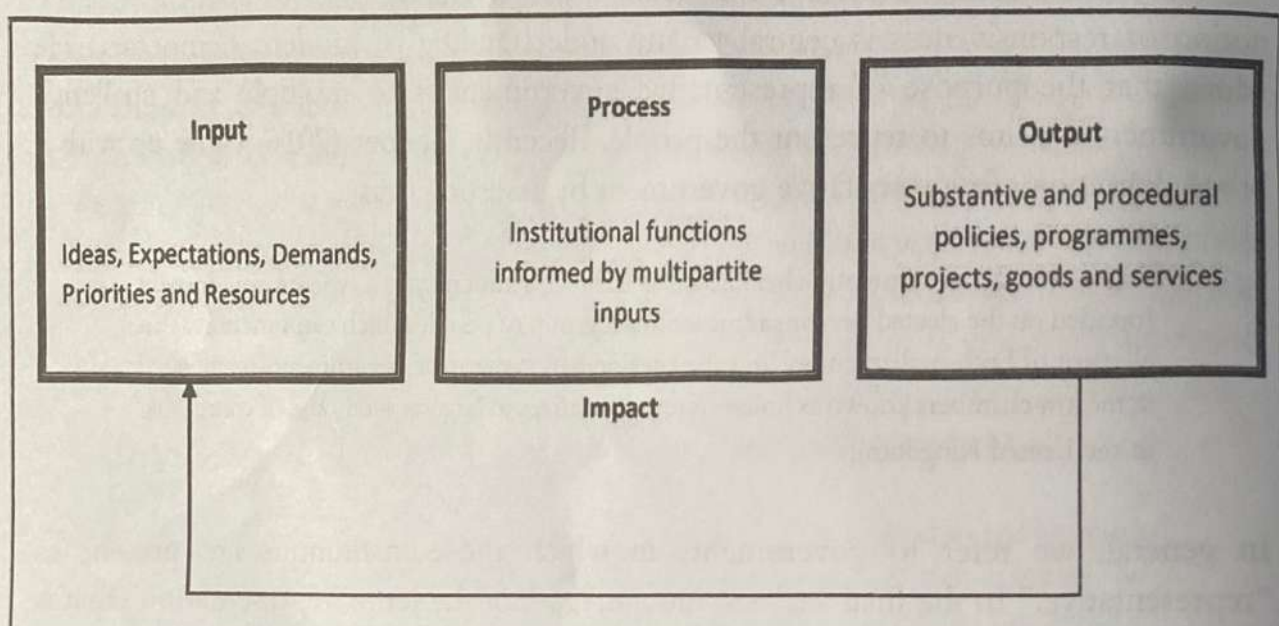
In general, we refer to governments in which those institutions are present as “representative.” In the final analysis, though, it is not the term “representation” that is important here. It will simply be a question of analysing the elements and consequences

of the combination of arrangements, whatever name we give it. Four principles have invariably been observed in representative regimes, ever since this form of government was invented:

- Those who govern are appointed by election at regular intervals.
- The decision making of those who govern retains a degree of independence from the wishes of the electorate.
- Those who are governed may give expression to their opinions and political wishes without these being subject to the control of those who govern.
- Public decisions undergo the trial of debate.

Concept of Democratic/Grassroots Participation

The concept of democratic participation as applied to both national and local government discourses has various meanings. In a more generic sense, it can be understood to refer to the manner in which governmental institutions allow communities to take part in the decision-making process intended to delineate their operations. It involves a multipartite approach to decision making in the interest of all (Houston, Mpanyane, and Liebenberg, 2001). It is about incorporating the values of democracy in dealing with communities. It emphasises institutional operations that are responsive to community needs thereby making sure that service delivery is consistent with community expectations. Thus, democratic participation involves going out to the communities to find out what their needs are and rationalising these with the institutional objective conditions in terms of financial and technical capacity and then concocting a mixture of goods and services that have a community flavour. This analysis presupposes a systemic approach to understanding democratic participation.



Source: Adapted from Nsingo and Kuye, 2015.

Figure 1 is a systemic approach to understanding democratic participation encapsulating the inputs (i.e. ideas, expectations, demands, priorities and resources needed from the people), the process (i.e. the institutional functions informed by multipartite inputs) and outputs (i.e. substantive and procedural policies, programmes, projects, goods and services). If the inputs are not sufficiently taken from the general public, the outputs might not be the priority (i.e. the needs and aspirations) of the citizens.

Summarily, democratic participation informs local governments to accept democracy as a way of life for these local level institutions and that the participation of communities should be an indispensable phenomenon of this life. There is no room for manoeuvring. Thus, democratic participation implies active citizenship and ownership. It is part of civic engagement and citizenship which is a major principle of good local governance. It captures the poor and marginalised to have interest in local affairs, to take control of local resources, and make decisions to utilise them in a sustainable manner (World Bank, 2003). Democratic participation should ensure a commitment to the provision of high quality services to the community; responsiveness to the needs of the community; representativeness of all sectors of the community; a commitment to the training and development of all public employees; and the entrenchment of democracy in the internal procedures of the institution and its relation with the community (Nel, 1996).

The Nexus between Grassroots Democracy and Local Government Performance

Nsingo and Kuye (2015) summed the linkage between grassroots democracy and local government performance by stating that local development can only be meaningful to the local people if they are given the opportunity to participate in the determination of programmes and projects initiated to contribute to their development. In line with the argument of Nsingo and Kuye, Maddick (1963) averred that:

The exercise of democracy and human rights can only be meaningful if demands and policies can be translated into physical development including the provision of basic socioeconomic services. Some of these are basic health, basic education, agriculture and revenue raising and regulating functions. He added that people expect such services to be delivered to make any meaning of democracy and bureaucracy at the local level thereby making the performance visible.

In providing socioeconomic services, local governments have to work with community groups and the citizenry to harness community energies and input into development. A greater part of the developmental initiatives and effectiveness in local governments is a function of community development or self-help groups. The argument of Maddick on carrying the citizenry along as input for development made Cavaye (2000) to make the following assertion:

The role of local government in socioeconomic development include: creating a "vehicle" for local people to express and act on existing concerns; judging appropriate interaction with communities from "consultation" to genuine partnership and facilitation; personal relationship between local public servants and community members as crucial to government's involvement in local affairs and capacity development; moulding formal "structures" that mediate community involvement with the grassroots culture of local participation; community members "unlearning" the role of government solely as a "provider" and government "unlearning" the historical technical assistance approach to communities; fostering relationships between community members and government workers by increasing the "networking" role of public servants in communities and initiating contact with a greater diversity of clients (p. 2).

Review of Empirical Studies

Nsingo and Kuye (2015) explored democratic participation for service delivery in local governments in Zimbabwe: Humanising structural configurations and legal provisions. The study adopted the exploratory research design depending on organisational documents that describe the performance of local government institutions in Zimbabwe. The paper argues that it is vital to show commitment to the democratic process through implementable plans that compel councillors in Zimbabwe's rural district councils (RDCs) to involve communities in the service delivery process. The paper acknowledges that although Zimbabwe has arguably adopted commendable local government policies and has established appropriate structures for democratic participation, the practice does not justify the effort. The study also found that RDCs tend to minimise or underplay the role of communities in service delivery. The study recommended among others the need for local effort and commitment to 'humanise' these policies and structures through mobilising the ultimate beneficiaries of RDC action to participate in processes of service delivery.

Awofeso and Afolabi (2019) examined the extent to which democratic values and practices have permeated politics and administration at the grassroots level in Nigeria. The paper identifies the disparities between democratic ideals and actual practices at the local government level in Nigeria, especially in the areas of election, accountability and responsibility. The study was entirely conceptual, relying on the viewpoints of scholars on the concepts of democracy and grassroots democracy. The study realised that democratic values are yet to be fully integrated into the grassroots administration in Nigeria because elections are still massively rigged, corruption still pervasive, government officials still remain irresponsible and the masses still languish in abject poverty. The study recommended that all efforts should be directed at ensuring that elections are conducted in a free and fair atmosphere; corruption should be fought in order to be reduced to its barest minimum, government officials should be legally held accountable while in office and after leaving office.

Madumo (2014) evaluates the importance of public participation in fostering effective service delivery at the local government level in South Africa. The study explored the

relevance of public participation in the discipline of public administration in the quest for service delivery. The study is a pure qualitative study relying on face-to-face interviews from executives of the Youth Association and few staff of the local government totalling 18 respondents sampled purposively. The data for the study was thematically analysed. The study found out some of the challenges facing public participation in the local government sphere to include apathy among community residents as a result of non-involvement in decision making.

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Community Driven Development (CDD)

CDD is a new vision enabling people to take their destiny into their hands. It is an approach that puts the community in the driver's seat of development. Communities set their agenda for their own development (Odoh, 2014). The World Bank (2002) added that with CDD, communities can take control of investment decisions.

It was launched by the World Bank to alleviate the problems of over-reliance on the central government as the main service provider in order to ensure responsiveness to local demands and inclusiveness. The World Bank defines CDD as 'a development approach that gives control over planning decisions and investment resources to community groups and local governments' (Dongier *et al*, 2003). Community-driven approach is a development strategy (initiative) that provides control of the development process, resources and decision-making authority directly to community groups (Adamu, 2015). According to Chamber (1995), the underlining assumption of CDD project is that communities are the best judges of how their lives can be improved. In addition, CDD is:

A key to promote social and infrastructural services, to organise economic activities and resource management, to empower people to improve governance and to enhance security of the poorest; a mechanism for enhancing sustainability, improve efficiency and effectiveness and target poverty reduction and CDD encourages partnership with demand-responsive support agencies and service providers (Odoh, 2014).

Data Presentation and Analysis

A total of 212 copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents (including the staff, party leaders and executives of Bosso Women Association, etc.). Though 212 copies were distributed only 190 representing 89.61% of the total questionnaire were duly filled and returned, while 22 copies of the representing 10.37% were not returned. Therefore, 190 responses from the formed the basis for analysis and interpretation.

Presentation of Results**Table 3 Regression Output 1**

ANOVA ^a					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1802.639	3	600.880	3476.407	.000 ^b
Residual	67.237	389	.173		
Total	1869.876	392			

- a. Dependent Variable: LOCAL_GOVERNMENT_PERFORMANCE
 b. Predictors: (Constant), LEADER'S REPRESENTATION AND GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION

Source: SPSS Output, 2022.

Table 3 above shows the result from the multiple regression analysis which tests the effects of the independent variables (representative leadership and grassroots participation) on local government performance. The F-statistic for analysis of variance (ANOVA) which measures the adequacy and goodness of fit of the model and tests the joint significance of the variables in the study model stood at 3476.407 with a p-value of 0.000^b which is significant at 5%; this shows that the model is absolutely fit for the data.

Table 4 Regression Output 2

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.982 ^a	.964	.964	.41575	1.65

- a. Predictors: (Constant), LEADER'S REPRESENTATION AND GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION

- b. Dependent Variable: LOCAL_GOVERNMENT_PERFORMANCE

Source: SPSS Output, 2022

Table 4 above depicts the summary of the multiple regression analysis. The empirical findings show that R, the multiple correlation coefficient, stood at 0.982^a which indicates a correlation. R², i.e. the multiple coefficient stood at 0.964 indicating that about 96.4% of the total variation in Local Government performance in Bosso Local Government is explained by variations in the 'independent variables' –representative leadership and grassroots participation captured in the study. Thus, the remaining 3.6% of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by other variables not captured in the study.

Table 5 **Regression Output 3**
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.036	.104		-.348	.728
REPRESENTATIVE LEADERSHIP	.606	.022	.837	27.385	.000
GRASSROOTS' PARTICIPATION	.149	.018	.199	8.248	.000

a. Dependent Variable: LOCAL_GOVERNMENT_PERFORMANCE

Source: SPSS Output, 2022

Table 5 depicts the outcome of the respective variables on local government performance. Upon the fulfilment of the assumptions of regression analysis, multiple regression analysis was considered suitable in testing the research hypotheses. The respective hypotheses as tested in table 5 are discussed as follows:

H₀₁ Representative leadership has no significant effects on local government performance in Bosso Local Government

The coefficient of “representative leadership” stood at 0.606 which is positive. This implies that an increase in representative leadership would lead to an increase in local government performance in Bosso Local Government. However, the significance of this can be judged from the P value represented as “sig”.

The t statistics of “representative leadership” stood at 27.385 with a p-value of 0.000. The p-value is less than 0.05, indicating that the relationship depicted in the model is significant at 95% confidence level. This implies that the study does not have enough statistical evidence to accept the null hypothesis. Based on the above analysis, the study failed to accept the null hypothesis H₀₁, which states that: Representative leadership has no significant effects on Local Government performance in Bosso Local Government.

H₀₂ Grassroots participation has no significant effects on local government performance in Bosso Local Government

The coefficient of “grassroots participation” stood at 0.149 which is positive. This implies that an increase in grassroots participation would invariably increase local government performance in Bosso Local Government. However, the significance of this can be judged from the P value represented as “sig”.

The t statistics of “grassroots participation” stood at 8.248 with a p-value of 0.000.

The p-value is less than 0.05, indicating that the relationship depicted in the model is significant at 95% confidence level. This implies that the study does not have enough statistical evidence to accept the null hypothesis. Based on the above analysis, the study failed to accept the null hypothesis H_{02} , which states that: Grassroots participation has no significant effects on local government performance in Bosso Local Government.

Analysis of Interview Responses Using Thematic Analysis

Socio-Demographic Data of Interview Respondents

S/N	Position	Code	Date
1.	Two District Heads	(R_1 & R_2)	23/06/2022
2.	APC Leader and Deputy	(R_3 & R_4)	23/06/2022
3.	PDP Leader and Deputy	(R_5 & R_6)	23/06/2022
4.	Executives of Bosso Women Association	(FGD ₁)	24/06/2022

Source:

Researcher's Survey 2022.

Theme I: Representative Government and Local Government Performance in Bosso Local Government

Sub-Theme I (a): Elective principles and improvement in local government performance in Bosso Local Government

There is unanimous agreement among the respondents that:

Elective principles adopted in recent political activities have enhanced democracy which in turn enhanced local government performance in Bosso Local Government. This is because the choice of the majority is chosen to represent them at Local Government and NNULGE. This has motivated the staff as their demands are quickly attended to ($R_1, R_2, R_3, R_4, R_5, R_6$, and FGD₁).

Sub-Theme I (b): The performance of Bosso Local Government is enhanced through deliberative decisions by the general public.

According to the respondents, deliberative decisions by general public are the reasons there is appropriate representation. The public do have congress meetings before sending their representatives to take the decided ideas when converging with other council members to make relevant decisions ($R_1, R_2, R_3, R_4, R_5, R_6$, and FGD₁).

Theme II: Grassroots Participation and Local Government Performance in Bosso Local Government

Sub-Theme II (a): Grassroots participation in the planning of public decisions and enhancement of Bosso Local Government performance

The respondents asserted thus:

Grassroots participation in the planning of public decisions is always very key to the enhancement of Bosso Local Government's performance. The public recently ranked their problems and needs; designed a community action plan and logical framework. The decision taken from the ranking and community plan of action is conveyed to the representatives to be acted upon ($R_1, R_2, R_3, R_4, R_5, R_6$, and FGD_1).

Sub-Theme I (b): Grassroots participation in the implementation of public decisions and enhancement of Bosso Local Government performance.

In their words, they stated thus:

We have not been involved in the implementation of public decisions, we felt if our plans and ideas are conveyed to our representatives and is acted upon, we are satisfied, even if we are not partaking in its implementation. Additionally, our children, brothers and sisters (who are staff of works department) are part of the implementation process ($R_1, R_2, R_3, R_4, R_5, R_6$, and FGD_1).

Summary of Findings

From the analyses of data, a number of findings were arrived at which are discussed below.

The study found that:

- i. Representative leadership with 0.606 coefficient has significantly affected local government performance in Bosso Local Government. However, the significance of this can be judged from the P value represented as "sig". This is supported by interview responses in sub-theme I (a & b).
- ii. Grassroots participation with 0.149 coefficient has significantly affected local government performance in Bosso Local Government. However, the significance of this can be judged from the P value represented as "sig". This is supported by interview responses in sub-theme II (a & b).

Conclusion

Local development can only be meaningful to the people if they are given the opportunity to participate in the determination of programmes and projects initiated to contribute to their development and the leaders are as well representative. This study assessed the effects of democratic governance (operationalised into representative leadership and grassroots participation) on local government performance. From the presentation and analysis of results, the study concludes that democratic governance through representative leadership and grassroots participation has a positive significant effect on local government performance in Bosso Local Government, Niger State.

Recommendations

The research findings discovered in this study necessitate some recommendations. They include the following:

- i. To boost representative leadership, it is therefore recommended that all efforts be directed at ensuring that elections continue to be conducted in a free and fair atmosphere.
- ii. With respect to grassroots participation, more ways should be paved for easy mobilisation of the masses at the grassroots who by their new-found intellectual education and level of awareness are now willing to contribute to the socio-political and economic development of their environment.

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Appendices

Appendix (A): Questionnaire for the Local Government Staff

Dear Respondent,

I am undertaking a study on the topic: **"Effects of Grassroots Democracy on Local Government Performance in Bosso Local Government"**. Your response shall be used only for the purpose of this research and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

Major Issues Relating to the Objectives and Hypotheses

Effects of grassroots democracy on local government performance in Bosso Local Government (2014-2018); please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement by ticking (✓) the appropriate response.

Note. Strongly Agreed = (SA) – 5; agreed = (A) – 4; Undecided = (U) – 3; Disagree = (D) – 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1

	Assessment Criteria	Rating Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
	<i>Effects of the following elements of grassroots' democracy have been assessed as under:</i>	SD	D	U	A	SA
A.	Representative Government (V₁)					
1.	Direct regular election is the means of appointing local government leaders in Bosso Local Government					
2.	The wishes of the electorate have a high degree of independence over decision making in Bosso Local Government					
3.	Public decisions undergo the trial of debate before the final decision is taken in Bosso Local Government					
B.	Grassroots Participation (IV₂)					
1.	There is involvement of local communities in decision making and service delivery					
2.	There is participation of local communities in planning local programmes and policies					
3.	There is participation of local communities in implementation of local programmes and policies					
4.	There is participation of local communities in monitoring and evaluation of local programmes and policies					
C.	Local Government Performance(DV)					
1.	There is provision of high quality services to the local communities in Bosso Local Government					
2.	There are enough boreholes constructed in Bosso Local Government					
3.	Enough primary healthcare centres are established and constructed in Bosso Local Government					

Source. Adapted from Toyin and Oluwaleye (2014).

Appendix (B): Interview Schedule

Theme I: Representative Government and Local Government Performance in Bosso Local Government

- a. How have elective principles improved the performance of Bosso Local Government?
- b. How has deliberation of decisions to the general public enhanced the performance of Bosso Local Government?

Theme II: Grassroots Participation and Local Government Performance in Bosso Local Government

- a. Comment on the fact that grassroots participation in the planning of public decisions has enhanced the performance of Bosso Local Government.
- b. Comment on the fact that grassroots participation in the implementation of public decisions has enhanced the performance of Bosso Local Government.