

**COVENANT UNIVERSITY  
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*TUTORIAL KIT  
OMEGA SEMESTER*

**PROGRAMME: POLITICAL  
SCIENCE**

**COURSE: PAD 122**

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## **PAD 222: INTRODUCTION TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

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### **QUESTIONS**

1. What is Local Government?
2. List out the theories of Local Government.
3. Discuss the Developmental and Accountability Control Theory
4. Highlight the main components of the Holistic Integration Theory.
5. Discuss the features of Local Government.
6. Enumerate the aims and Objectives of Local Government
7. What is the Justifications for Local Government as a Third Tier System of Administration.
8. State the functions of Local Governments
9. Discuss The Traditional System of Local Government
10. Elucidate the French Integrated Prefectoral System of Local Government
11. Describe the Socialist/Communist System of Local Government
12. Explain the Post-Colonial system of Local Government
13. Highlight the intricacies of the Anglo-Saxon or the British System of Local Government
14. Discuss the sources of Local Government Finance
15. What are the various channels of Internal Revenue Generation for Local Governments
16. Enumerate the process of External Revenue Generation for Local Governments
17. Briefly discuss intergovernmental relationship between Local Government and other levels of government.
18. Briefly discuss Local Government's effect on Rural Development
19. What are the problems of Local Government
20. Proffer solutions to the problems of Local Government

## **MODEL ANSWERS IN ALTERNATE SEQUENCE (ODD NUMBERS)**

### **Question 1**

Local government refers to a political sub-division, which are created within a state for the exercise of duties and responsibilities granted by constitutional provisions or legislative enactments. It is the lowest level of government in a modern state structure that is legally distinct with powers to raise its own revenue and to undertake delegated responsibilities as provided for by the constitution. It is the lowest level through which representative government can be practiced.

### **Question 3**

This theory stipulates that the local government is an effective agent of change. This change encompasses social and economic development, work force resource development, national integration and better share of the national wealth. The theory also argues that the local government also create an avenue for proper accountability and control because, the people are familiar with the elected officials and the success of the representatives can be judged in the way the people perceived the performance of their duties effectively and efficiently for the collective good of the communities. The extent to which the elected officials achieve their designated duties and functions determines the level of trust and confidence the people will have in re-electing such an official. Therefore, the developmental and accountability control theory serve as a check and litmus test on the representatives of the local government.

### **Answer 5**

#### **1 Decentralisation**

The strategic position of the local government is more pronounced through the instrument of decentralisation. This is an important aspect of local government as a unit of government because it creates the enabling environment for democratisation and development. The goals of decentralisation can be perceived as follows; according to Laleye, local government provide for popular participation through the implementation of the democratic principle of elective representativeness in the public decision-making process; encourage local initiative and sacrifice and mobilise the human and financial resources that are available in the locality for development; ensure adequate provision for social services necessary for a decent life; and establish a functioning communication channel between the central authority and the local institutions with a view to ensuring the effectiveness of the central government's actions. Decentralisation can also be discussed in four basic variances such as deconcentration, delegation, devolution and privatisation.

#### **2 Deconcentration**

This is the transfer of administrative functions from central government or national ministries to field agencies within the local level. It involves the redistribution of executive responsibilities to sub-administrative structure. Here, the local or sub-ordinate levels of governments serve as agents of the central government. Deconcentration is a process of breaking down tasks and transferring it to the local levels for implementation. The feature here is that, the decision-making is at the central level, while the local government presents the platform for implementation, e.g. primary health care, universal primary education etc. Deconcentration can

be regarded as a limited form of decentralisation and it lessen the burden of central government. For deconcentration to take place, provincial or local government is essential.

### **3. Delegation**

The central government transfers some level of responsibilities for decision-making and implementation of specific functions to some other branch of government through this process. Under the delegation, these other branch of governments and agencies are granted some level of autonomy or powers to formulate and implement programmes over specific functions without the direct control of the central government. Delegation also means conferring of specified authority to a lower authority. Legally, the delegated authority still belongs to the principal, but in practice, its exercise is allowed to the subordinate or lower authority. Delegation is full when complete powers are conferred on the agent or lower authority. Delegation is conditional when the action of a subordinate is subject to confirmation or revision by the superior; it is unconditional when the subordinate or lower authority is free to act without reservations.

Delegation is formal when embodied in written form based on customs, conventions and understanding. Delegation is direct when no third person intervenes between the two parties to delegation; it is intermediate when it is made through third person.

Delegation of authority means more than simply assigning duties to others in more or less detail. The essence of delegation is to confer discretion upon others to use their judgment in meeting specific problems within the framework of their duties. One cannot delegate the authority which himself does not possess. Authority once delegated can be enhanced, reduced or withdrawn according to the changing circumstances.

### **4. Devolution**

This involves the transfer of functional responsibilities including decision-making authority to legally incorporated sub-national units of government. It entails therefore, the transfer of political authority to make decisions in some spheres of public policy from the central government to local government or similar units at the local level. The central and the local governments are structurally differentiated in the structural pattern of devolution. Each level has its own powers and separate institutions for performing its own functions and activities. Devolution is associated with local autonomy and with increase scope for popular participation in governmental activities. Under the devolution category, local governments are granted powers to source for their revenue control their finances as well as recruit their own personnel. Devolution indicate status and policy making power. Devolution of power is also designed to create a political environment in which power to access political, economic and social resources is distributed between the central government and lower levels of government. State authority is divided among a wide range of actors, making politics less threatening and therefore encouraging joint problem solving. Devolution creates a fairer political ground, protects groups and individual human rights, establishes check and balances to central power and prevents political violence among rival groups.

### **5. Privatisation**

This is a new form of decentralisation. Under privatisation, other players such as community groups, corporate organisations, voluntary associations, cooperatives, business association, civil society groups and other non-governmental organisations enter into Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to provide goods and services for the benefits of the local communities. PPP can also refer to contractual agreements formed between a public agency and private sector entity that allow for greater private sector participation in the delivery of essential goods and services. PPP relate

or connote perfection and practices affecting public private sector relationships in ensuring national global health, development and wellbeing of the society.

## **6. Other Features of Local Government**

There are other features of local government, which include structural differentiation, that is, it has a corporate identity and status different from other forms of government. It possesses the authority and institutional powers for which it has been created. The local government also has multi-functional powers, which include the power to legislate, formulate and implement policies for the benefits of its people. The local government also has defined territorial boundaries, just like other tiers of government, it has jurisdiction over people inhabiting its geographical territories, and finally, its elected or appointed officers or representatives have specified tenure of office.

### **Question 7**

#### **1. Political Justification**

Local government is said to provide the platform for local participation in politics and democracy. It provides the local citizens an opportunity to participate in the public affairs of their communities. Local government brings the government closer to the people within a geographical locality. It serves as an alternative to over concentration of political power at the central government. The complexity of modern government is simplified with the existence of local government. It promotes liberty, equality and local autonomy which requires the individuals and groups to express their views and that such view should be given equal regard in decision making process. Local government also serves as an avenue for gathering inputs from diverse localities into the policy making process at the central government. As an essential ingredient of democracy, local government provide the training ground for political leaders at the grassroots who gather such experience for national leadership. However, that local government provides a training ground for political leaders particularly at the central level is subject to debate, because, there are political leaders at the national level who did not participate in political affairs at the local level, this is coupled with the fact that some political leaders have failed elections at the local level, only to win at the national level. Again, there are no formal schools for political education at the local level that prepare political leaders for national politics. It has also been argue that national politics is so different in scale and dynamics that local experience and knowledge might be inadequate for understanding national affairs. The above notwithstanding, local participation is a vital instrument in democracy. Local government may be said to involve the conception of territorial, non-sovereign community possessing the legal right and the necessary organisation to regulate its own affairs. Local government also seek its justification from the fact that it is that part of government of a nation or state which deals mainly with such matters as concern the inhabitants of a particular district or place together with those matters which parliament has deemed it desirable subordinate to the central or national government.

#### **2. Administrative Justification**

The local government is perceived first and foremost as an administrative agency for efficient provision of services. Local government administration is to enhance the effective and efficient provision of services to the people at the local level. Here, the local government makes for the decongestion and decentralisation of administration at the central level and serves as an efficient administration of resources and provision of services to a measurable standard for the local

communities. Most importantly, is the fact that the local government is closer to the people and it is in a position to understand and analysed the problems of the people. This closeness of the local government to the people also place it in a position to have better knowledge and information of the local communities with a view to providing those specific functions that directly affects the people. Again, the local government also gives the people a sense of belonging by participating in the alleviation of their immediate problems and promoting the necessary welfare which otherwise would have been difficult by the national or central government. However, the point must be made that there are specialised administrative functions that cannot be performed by the local government, this is because, the local government is a multi-purpose institution which provide general services to the people. Local government is governments consisting of certain sub-ordinate bodies which have defined power making rules and regulations within their prescribed area of administration.

### **3. Development Justification**

The local government is regarded as the bedrock of developmental activities because of the feeling of attachment which the people have for the programmes emanating from their local communities. It provides the people a springboard to conduct their own affairs, mobilise, sustain and execute local developmental initiative in line with the local needs interests and aspirations of the people. Again, the local government is perceived as complementary in the division of labour among the various levels of governments, because the local government is said to have specialty in the efficient provision of those developmental services that are local specific.

However, some critics have argued that this justification of local government promote sectionalism and parochial interests and therefore, inimical to political and developmental integration at the national level. In spite of this, the role of the local government in developmental efforts particularly in those programmes and activities which they help to initiate cannot be over emphasised. Local government helps to cultivate, civil sense and responsibility among citizens and coordinates harmonies collaboration in common administration of common interest.

### **4. As a Channel of Communication**

Local government serves as inputs and outputs in the policy making process of the national government. New policies and programmes are sometimes test run at the local level by the national or central government to seek the realities and outcomes before it is implemented at the national level. The local government also serves as a channel of communication between the national government and the local government by aggregating the feelings, interests and aspirations of the local populace and transmitting same to the national. At the same time channel the decisions from the national down to the local people.

### **Question 9**

The Traditional system of local government is sometimes referred to as the “non-western” patterns of local government. This pattern refers to the pre-colonial or pre-literate types in many underdeveloped or developing countries of the world where local administration are centred or structured around traditional political institutions such as the chief or traditional rulers, council of elders, the extended family system or the clan system. Here, the local traditional institutions formulate and implement policies for the traditional communities. The policies often times have been a reflection of the socio-political and culture realities of their environments.

### **Question 11**

The Socialist/Communist system of local government constitutes part of complex governmental agencies whose purpose is socialist planning for economic development of the whole country. Here, the communist party exercises firm direction and leadership required for central planning. In this system, all subordinate units of government operate and take directions from centrally pre-determined decision. There is little or no initiative emanating from the local or sub-national government. Local independence is restricted as control device are extensive and vigorously applied. This system connotes that the local government is an agency of the central government and part of the central administration through strict party discipline and compliance. The local government in the communist countries is examples of deconcentration of authority rather than decentralisation. In other words, the local government unit is an agency of the central government and its functions are an integral element of hierarchical administrative system of the state. The area of local independence is narrow and extends only to minor matters whereas control devices are extensive and vigorously applied.

### **Question 13**

The Anglo-Saxon or the British system of local government bases its emphasis on the autonomy of the local government. This autonomy is expressed through its policy-making organ or a council of elected or appointed members representing local interest. Here, the institutions of local government are distinctively separated from those of the central government. Also, as a separate tier of government its sources of revenue and personnel management are clearly defined and spelt out in an official document. In this type of local government system, there is often time, a local government service commission or board, which is charged with the responsibilities for the recruitment and management of local government personnel. The underlying basis of local government is the principle of self-determination in which every community is given substantial measure of freedom in the administration of its own affairs. This prevents the local government from rigid and absolute control from above however, the degree of autonomy of local governments varies from country to country but in all cases, a considerable degree of local independence prevails.

### **Question 15**

#### **1. Taxes**

Taxing the workable adults in the community. This is referred to as poll tax and it is supposed to be a substantial source of annual income for the council. Unfortunately, because of lack of adequate population statistics, it is difficult to adequately know and tax the employable adults in the locality. This is coupled by the fact that there is large scale evasion of taxes in Nigeria by the simple excuse that the rate of unemployment is high.

#### **2. Rates**

These include among others; tenement rate, radio and television licenses fees, bicycle license fees, hoarding permit fees, motor park fees, registration of marriage fees, registration of birth and deaths, slaughter fees, truck license fees, advertisement fees, market fees, hawkers permits, registration of local government contractors fees, administrative charges, liquor license fees, sale of land of local government layout, dispensary and maternity and registration fees, miscellaneous receipts. The list is not exhaustive. Rates often times are flat irrespective of the ability of the payer to pay. This is one of the major defects of rates which make payers to avoid paying whenever they can.

### **3. Commercial Activities**

It involves the council administration management ability to engage in commercial activities such as setting up of business ventures which might include micro finance, savings and loans or mortgage finance, building of stalls and shopping malls, renting out of local government properties like reception halls, chairs, canopies, tables, hire of local government plants such as tractors, generators, local and interstate transportation and ferry and boat transportation in the riverine areas and commercial farming amongst others

#### **Question 17**

The federal, state and local governments must co-operation for the benefits of carrying out government programmes and policies for the good governance of the country. Inter-governmental relations are for the co-operation of governments at different levels for the successful implementation of programmes and policies with the needed effectiveness and efficiency. No single level of government carries out programmes and policies that involve the daily existence of the people without the co-operation of all the levels of government. However, the nature of inter- governmental relations does not always present a rosy situations of co-operation, acceptance, peaceful, smooth and friendliness at all times. Relations among the federal, state and local government can sometimes be very hostile and antagonistic. Particularly, where the political ideology or party is different, where there is personality clash, perception of political and party leaders etc. In fact, discontentment and disagreement are even more rampant under the democratic dispensation because of the freedom of expression, association and democratic principles than under the military regime where everyone is to conform to the dictates of the ruler. It is pertinent to conclude that, the more the three tiers of government co-operate in the implementation of programmes and policies, the more developed and united the federal system will be and the more the people will benefit from the government policies.

#### **Question 19**

- Local Party Rivalries
- Political Rivalries between State and Local Governments
- Issues of Socio-Cultural Beliefs
- Friction with Traditional Institutions
- Over Fragmentation of the Nation into Local Councils
- Frequent Change of Government Developmental Policies
- Absence of Local Contents and Inputs
- Ineffective Public Support
- Over-Dependence on Statutory Allocation
- Undue Financial Control by the State Government
- Problem of Tax Evasion
- Lack of Business Initiatives
- Diversion of Local Government Allocation
- Erosion and Environment Degradation
- Problem of Drought and Deforestation
- Problem of Poor Road Network

- Power Communication and Power