

## Intergovernmental Relations and Federal Roads Infrastructure Development in Nigeria: A Study of Delta and Edo States

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**Abstract:** The study examined intergovernmental relations and federal roads infrastructure development in Nigeria Delta and Edo States a case study. The study adopted Structural-Functionalism Theory. The study employed the descriptive research design. The study evaluates the independence or correlation between categorical variables represented in the Likert scale responses. The study used both qualitative and quantitative sources. The study revealed that many of the respondents agreed that IGR has a positive impact on governance and road infrastructure. The study revealed that political rivalry as another challenge; 51.2% of the respondents strongly agreed and 40% agreed that the conflicts between federal and state governments hinder infrastructure development. The study recommended that both the federal and state governments need to guarantee adequate funding for road projects, along with measures in place to promote transparency and accountability in order to prevent corruption and inefficiencies, among others.

**Keywords:** Intergovernmental Relations, infrastructure, Development.

### INTRODUCTION

The three-tier federal system adopted in Nigeria was to ensure that everyone within the country enjoy the presence of governance within their domains. Aside these three super structures; there are also several institutions of government created to perform specific functions in order to enhance government functions. What is required most is collaboration and cooperation among these institutions of government to enhance performance in governance (Afonughe, Mukoro & Sokoh, 2023). Inter-governmental relation (IGR) which exists between two or more levels of government has become an integral and pervasive part of Nigeria's federal political system. This means that IGR is an important component of the country's political system. In recent times, IGR presents a vertical and horizontal pattern of relationship which include federal and state government, and federal, state and local government relationships. Since the return to democratic rule in May 1999, power relations, revenue allocation, provision of welfare and infrastructural development remain conflict areas in the country (Maduabum, Uwuyan, Zakari & Ochala, 2022, p.1).

In terms of distribution of power, the federal government has matters contained in the 'Exclusive Legislative List' allocated to it in Second Schedule, Part I of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic, while both the federal and state governments share matters allocated to the 'Concurrent Legislative List' (Second Schedule Part II), and the exclusive functions of local government councils and the participatory state/local government functions listed in the Fourth Schedule of the 1999 Constitution. In the event of a conflict between the central and state governments, the former takes preference. Same applies where the state executive action

conflicts with that of the central government, that of the latter (i.e. the central government) supersedes. Section 4(5) and Section 5(3) of the 1999 Constitution respectively reflect these positions (Miguel, 1995; Onimode, 1999; Nnadozie, Asogwa & Uzodinma, 2019). Inter-governmental relations among levels of government in the fourth republic which started since 29 May 1999 have been in disarray due to the unhealthy rivalries that exist between the levels of government. This quandary has always been associated with dissatisfaction among the levels of government in the distribution of functions, and lack of adequate tax powers allocated to the states and local government councils in relations to their functions (Adedire, 2014).

Okoli and Onah (2002) described inter-governmental relations (IGR) as a negotiation in which parties involved negotiate positions for power, money and problem-solving responsibility. State governments wishing to promote political, social and infrastructure development thrive to share problem-solving responsibility in order to promote good governance at the grassroots level. The reason most state governments failed in their problem-solving responsibility in Nigeria, especially when it concerns repairs of failed portions of federal roads is because they find it difficult to get refund of monies spent from the federal government. In addition, some of the regime leaders and officials falter in agreements reached with state governors before actions were taken by state governments. Aside this reason, there are other factors such as systemic corruption and poor bureaucratic settings that impact negatively on infrastructure development in the country. This development points out the fact that there is a strong correlation between good governance, inter-governmental relation (IGR) and infrastructure project success in Nigeria.

Elazar (1987, p.335) opined that since federalism is the foundation for the practice of IGR, therefore it should provide for self and shared-rule among the autonomous political units and levels of government within the political structure. Nigeria's model of fiscal federalism which perhaps represents the fundamental legal and institutional framework for policy-makers and which defines the core rules for resource allocation and distribution of responsibilities for service delivery, as well as mechanisms for interaction between the levels of government, has for a long time attracted increasing attention from both policy-makers and political analysts. This manifestation is the reflection of the fact that, for a very long time, the economic policy reforms in the country are dependent upon improvements in the organisation of inter-governmental arrangements which have direct implications for achieving national growth. Since it is the responsibility of the state (government) to split its functions among the levels of government, inter-governmental relation becomes a pre-requisite for infrastructure development (Freinkman, 2008, p.2).

Over the years, the federal government of Nigeria under the fourth republic has invested so much money in infrastructural development, including road infrastructure without a correspondent output; yet, infrastructure deficit remains a major problem in the country (Asaju, 2023, p.1). Infrastructure deficit in the country has been estimated to be above \$100 billion annually which constitutes over 189.77 per cent above the federal budget within the period (Proshare, 2020). In 2020, over ₦833 billion was reportedly lost for a period of 19 years as a result of failed projects across the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria alone which host Delta and Edo States. Delta and Edo States that constitute the major thoroughfares connecting various regions of Nigeria are faced with poor states of federal road (Ozioruva, 2024).

Although, the subject of federal road project failure is not limited to Delta and Edo states, but the current poor conditions of federal roads in both states questions the propensity of inter-governmental relations in the country. As Fabian and Amir (2011), Aziz (2013) and International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR) (2020) rightly stated, "instances of infrastructure project success and failure is not limited to one region but is similar in all the regions in Nigeria, but the case in hand is Delta and Edo State because of their strategic positions". Freinkman (2007) expressed the view that without better inter-governmental coordination, it would be difficult for the Nigerian state to make sustainable progress in attainment of socio-infrastructure development. Also, with ought closer cooperation between the central and state governments, there would not be adequate funding to state governments, as well as improvement in the quality

of service delivery at the state and local government levels. At the same time, some of the states will not have better funding base and could not use their resources in line with national priorities such as roads, primary education, health and rural development. As a consequence, the overall national development processes in these states are affected.

The government of Delta and Edo States respectively have expressed concerns about the states of federal road infrastructures within their domains. It is however not surprising that the governors of both states have expressed concerns about the conditions of federal roads within their domains which if fixed will bring economic development to the people, although, the quest for fixing these federal roads has been affected by the policy positions of the federal government. This development questions the need for sustenance of the principle of IGR in Nigeria since the return to civil rule in May 1999. Okinono et al. (2015) thus argued that there have been intensified efforts by governments in investing on road infrastructure in Nigeria in recent times, but very little is said about its successes. In spite of the efforts of government, there have been widespread concerns regarding the states of infrastructure decadence across the country.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this paper is to examine the nexus between IGR and federal roads infrastructure development in Nigeria with a focus on Delta and Edo States,

#### **Specific objectives of the study are to:**

- i. Examine the benefits of inter-governmental relations (IGR) in Nigeria,
- ii. Examine the challenges of inter-government relations (IGR) in Nigeria
- iii. Ascertain the extent to which inter-governmental relations (IGR) impacted on undertaking repairs of failed portions of federal roads in Delta State,

### **Research Questions**

The following questions are raised to provide direction to this study:

- i. What are the benefits of inter-governmental relations (IGR) in Nigeria?
- ii. What are the challenges of inter-governmental relations (IGR) in Nigeria?
- iii. To what extent has IGR impacted on undertaking of repairs of failed portions of federal roads in Delta State?

### **Research Methodology**

The study adopted secondary sources of data

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Inter-governmental Relations (IGR)**

The concept of inter-governmental relations (IGR) has come to occupy important place in the operations of a modern state system. Its importance is visible in virtually everywhere and all over the world in recent times. It has also come to share widespread interest among policy-makers and scholars of political science and public administration alike. This shared importance of the concept created definitional divergence to the concept, though all of these divergence conceptions of the concept are tilted or pointed towards finding clearer definition of the concept. The term is said to be invented in the 1930's as a phrase unique to the United States of America (USA). It was a novel concept invented to summarise the extensive and varied growth of relationships among the thousands of local, state, and national governing bodies, among the officials holding important policy-making positions. It credited to work of William Anderson who devoted two chapters in his book titled "Intergovernmental Relations: American Government textbook (1938)" to talk about the concept and its practice in America. In his "International Relations in Review 1960", he offered a provisional definition of the concept which he described as, "that which has become accepted to designate an important body of

activities or interactions occurring between governmental units of all types and levels .....it is human beings clothed with office who are the real determiners of what the relations between units of government will be" (Wright, 2018).

According to Henri (2004) as cited in Ali (2019, p.75), "it is a series of financial, legal, political and administrative relationships among all the units of government which also have different degrees of authority and jurisdictional autonomy". Anderson (1960) defined the concept, "as that which designates an important body of activities and interactions occurring between the components or levels of government within the federal system". Okoli and Onah (2002) described the concept as, "a negotiation in which parties involved negotiate positions for power, money and problem-solving responsibility". It implies that inter-governmental relation (IGR) is also targeted towards problem-solving in a federal system.

Okoli (2019) described the concept as, "that which is dominated by the relationship between the central government and the sub-national governments with the main features spelled out in the constitution of the country. Okoli went further to defined the concept as that which involves pattern of cooperative relationship between various levels of government in a federal governmental structure". This means that the concept places greater emphasis on unity as opposed disharmony and clashes of interrelations among the levels of government. Aina (2012) defined the concept as, "a web of interrelationships that exist among public officials in different levels of governmental activities in a political system". For Anchor (2010), "it is web which spell out all relations that exist in a federal system, as well as the division of duties and responsibilities among the levels of government". Chukwuemeka and Aniche (2016, p.20) described the concept of inter-governmental relations as, "the interaction that often takes place among the different levels of government within a country". He went further to associates the concept with a state which has a federal administration system, in which the relationships between the federal (central or national) government and the sub-national (the province, region or state) government are formally spelt out in the constitution of the country.

In a related manner, Obasi (2006) as cited in Nosa-Ogbegie, Egobueze and Nwaoburu (2021, p.29) refer to inter-governmental relations as, "the interaction between federal, state and local governments, federal and state governments, federal and local governments, state and state interactions, state and local government or local government and local government interactions". Bankole (2000) described the concept as the "permutation and combinations of relations among the units of governments. This definition emphasizes the usual institutional and financial interactions that exist between and among the levels of government. Ademolekun (1983) described it as the interaction that takes place among the different levels of different levels of government within a given country. For Bingham and Hedge (1991), it is that which involves a wide range of interactions among all the levels of government. Grichawat, Charles and Sittipol (2019, p. 44) defined the concept as, "that which focus primarily on the interactions among different levels and types of government".

In the word of Painter (2003), it is that which encompasses a wide range of dimensions, including the division of powers and functions among levels and types of government; the administrative and political relations between levels and units of sub-national government; and the interstitial activities, relationships, and organisation that arise between levels and units of government. Ajulor and Okewale (2011) defined it as that, "which provide a platform for series of legal, political and administrative relationships between levels of government. Watts (2008) defined it as, "the formal interactions that are conducted among the constituent units of government". Origbure and Ogiangbe (2022) described inter-governmental relations as, "that mutual interactions, transactions and interplay that take place between and among the tiers of government in a political system and that which can also be seen in local-state-federal government relations". For Phillimore (2013), "it is the processes and institutions through which governments within a political system interact". Lawson (2011) cited in Nnadozie, Asogwa and Uzodinma (2019) refers to the concept as, "that which defines the series of events and activities or interactions that happens between and among the different tiers or organs of government".

This means that IGR encompasses the various interactions and permutations of exchange among the different levels of government (Nnadozie et al., 2919, p.1).

Chima, Bello, Okoroafor and Obilor (2018) defined IGR as the interaction which exist among the different levels of government, argued that which has always been associated with conflicts, making its practice conflict-ridden, and the extent of the conflict depends on how they are managed by the actors operating at the governmental levels". The concept of inter-governmental relations is used mainly to also refer to the relationships that take place between the central, state and local governments, as well as between the spheres of government in order to facilitate attainment of common goals through cooperation (Opeskin, 1998). It is also refers to as, "the mutual relations and interactions between government institutions at horizontal and vertical levels". It consists of all the actions and transactions of politicians and officials in national and sub-national units of government and organs of the state (Van der Walt & Du Toit, 1997). Wright (1988) defined it as, "the interacting network of institutions at national, provincial and local levels, created and refined to enable the various parts of government to cooperate in a manner which is appropriate to its institutional arrangements". It is also defined as, "the complex pattern of interactions, cooperation and interdependence between two or more levels of government" (Wright, 1988).

Isioma (2010) described the concept as, "that glue which holds the various organs and levels of government together". In essence, IGR seeks to achieve common goals through mutual relationship between and across vertical and horizontal governmental arrangements, alignment and cohesion across all levels of government. Malan (2012) defined the concept of IGR as, "the plethora of formal and informal relationships and transactions that develop among levels of government within a state". This means that the interactions that take place among the different levels of government within a state. Fatile and Adejuwon (2019) refer to inter-governmental relations as, "the structure, process of transactions, interconnections and cooperation among the tiers or arms of government, and their organs and agencies as they exercise their powers and carry out their functions in a political system".

Eze (2016) as cited in Chukwuemeka, Eneh, Ojiagu and Ifeanyi (2021, p.59) defined the concept as, "the series of legal, political and administrative relationships established among the units of government and which possess varying degree of authority and jurisdictional autonomy". For Nwokedi (2014), "it is the interaction that takes place among different levels of government within a state". Inter-governmental relations has also been used to refer to the relationship that take place between the central, regional and local governments, as well as governments between one sphere or level that facilitate the attainment of a common goal through cooperation. It is also used to describe the interacting network of institutions at national, provincial and local levels of governance, created and refined to enable the various parts of government to cooperate in a manner which is appropriate to its institutional arrangements (Ogo, 2017). Phillimore (2013) describes it as, "the processes and institutions through which governments within a political system interact to enhance governments' policies and programmes". In other words, all nation-states, whether unitary or federal, have IGR of some sort, provided they have more than one level of government.

The concept of IGR also refers to engagement between ministers and officials of government in a state. In some cases it covers multilateral and bilateral channels, including formal and informal engagements (Akash & Duncan, 2022). It focuses on the interactions among different levels and types of government (Grichawat, Charles & Sttipol, 2019, p.44). It is described as, "the processes and institutions through which governments within a political system interact" (Maduabum, Uwuyan, Zakari & Ochala, 2022, p.3). Heinemann-Gruder, Keil, Kossler and Woelk (2017) defined the term IGR as, "the formal and informal mechanisms put in place by government to ensure there is coordination and cooperation between different levels of governments in a decentralised and federal political system". In this study, the term IGR is defined as that relationship which exists between the different levels of government within a federal state system in order to ensure cooperation and coordination of the affairs of government.

## Infrastructure

The term “infrastructure” contains a Latin prefix “*Infra*” which means “below” (Paul, 2022). Infrastructural development in Nigeria undeniably has a very long history which dates back to the colonial period. There is perhaps a relationship between British exploitation of its colonies and infrastructural development in Nigeria. In order to satisfy the interests of France and Germany agitating for the control of some regions of Nigeria, they decided to sign agreements with Germany which is today known as, “The Heligoland Treaty of 1890 and another known as the “Anglo-French Treaty of 1898”. The purpose of this was to ensure that France and Germany recognised Britain’s right over encroachment areas in Nigeria. By 31<sup>st</sup> December 1899, the Royal Niger Company took direct control of the regions in Nigeria. By 1900, the Niger Coast Protectorate became the protectorate of Southern Nigeria which was later merged with the Northern protectorate in 1914 by Lord Frederick Lugard who was the Governor-General of Southern and Northern protectorates (Buhari & Ediagbonya, 2017; Okereka, Oluka & Igbini, 2020).

In order to sustained exploitation of the resources of Nigerian land space to serve the interest of Great Britain, infrastructures had to be developed which bring to context Britain’s role in developing Nigerian territorial land space. It is however not a matter of hear-say that basic infrastructure in old and new Nigeeria are in semi-comatose state because this situation has link with the events that occurred during colonial era (Duyile, Ediagbonya, Buhari & Nwachukwu, 2020). According to Asaju (2023) attempts to provide a consensus definition of the concept of infrastructure has been a subject of debate among scholars and practitioners, Despite the controversies that trailed the meaning of the concept, there is an agreement that it constitutes amenities such as good roads and rail networks, health care facilities, and rural and urban electrification among others which enhance the well-being of the people and as well lead to national development (Asaju, 2023, p.1).

Profiling the significance of infrastructure development as a driving force in increasing human development index (HDI), Okinono, Danni and Badariah (2015, p.65) described infrastructure as, “the core of economic and social development which also contributes to raising the standard of living and quality of life of the people”. If the expression above reflects the true nature of infrastructure, perhaps, road infrastructure which is the artery through which the economic pulse of a state is achieved should have the needed attention it requires in any society. According to Michael and Chathan (2022), the term “infrastructure” was first used in the late 1880s. It is a combination of Latin prefix “*infra*” which means “below”, and the French word ‘*structure*’ which means “building”. It implies that the infrastructure is the foundation upon which the structure of every economy is laid. Essentially, the survival and development of the economy of any nation-state is predicated on the availability of social infrastructure (Michaeel & Chathan, 2022).

According to Button (2002), most of the efforts to provide consensus definition of the concept of infrastructure shifted focus on physical or fixed assets, such as roads, airports, sea ports, telecommunication systems, water supply, energy supply and sanitation, as they attempt to describe the concept particularly to one which embodies softer types of facilities such as information system and knowledge bases. Because of this development, two types of infrastructure: “Hard” and “Soft” infrastructure have been identified. While the “Hard” form of infrastructure is used to describe the larger physical or fixed networks of infrastructure needed for the functioning of a modern and industrialised nation, the “Soft” form is used to describe other situations required to maintain the economic, health, cultural and social well-being of the people, such as the financial, education and health systems, as well as governance and judicial system in order to protect lives and properties in the state (Button, 2002; Kumar, 2005).

World Bank Report (1994) described the term infrastructure as, “a long-life engineering structure, equipment and facilities, and services that are obtained from and utilised in producing and in final household consumption”. Oswald, Li, McNeil and Trimbath (2011) described

infrastructure as, “that which serves as the bed rock of economic and social development in any modern state”. Jochimsen (1966) described the term as, “the sum of all basic material structures, institutional conditions and human resources available to the society and also needed for the proper functioning of the economic sector of the state”. Idochaba (1978) (1984) described it as that, “which consists of the essential capital which supports the rural settlers in their production, distribution and consumption activities, and enhance the quality of rural life”. Phillimore (2013) described the term as the relationship that exist among the levels of government. Adedire (2019) defined it as the process and institution through which governments within a particular system interact.

Fulner (2009) described it as “the technical structure that support a society such as roads, water supply, and sewage control, electricity grids, telecommunication, among others”. He also defined it as, “the physical components of interrelated system providing communities and services that are essential in order to enhance societal living condition of the people”. Abubakar (2011) categorised infrastructures such as roads, water supply, sewage control, electricity supply and telecommunication as social infrastructures. He went further to define infrastructure as physical facilities provided for the betterment for the lives of the individual citizens and the community. Furthermore, he described infrastructures as large scale public systems, services and facilities that are necessary for economic activities, including power and water suppliers, public transportation, roads, schools and telecommunication. Ahmed (2011) defined infrastructure as a “set of interconnected structural elements such as roads, bridges, water supply, sewer, electricity gadgets and telecommunication that provides the framework for economic growth and development. For Hassan and Nor (2017), “it is the basic physical and organisational equipment such as roads and bridges that are needed for the operation of a society or enterprise”.

Ayakaiye (2003) defined the term as “the large-scale public system, services and facilities of countries that are necessary for economic activities. It is also the component of hard form of infrastructure which include electricity and transportation (road, rail, ocean and air)”. This definition emphasized the physical and tangible aspects of infrastructure that are needed for human existence and economic growth and development. Spacey (2018) defined infrastructural development as “the constitution of those fundamental services that stimulate economic growth and good quality of life”. Bertha (2007) defined infrastructure development as, “the improvement of the quality of the various components of the quality of the various components of infrastructure such as roads, power, information and communication technology (ICT), water and sanitation”. Boyle and Perez (2024) defined infrastructure as, “the basic physical systems of a business, region, or nation and often involves the production of public goods or production of processes”. They went further to provide examples of infrastructure to include: transportation system, communication networks, sewage, water, and school systems.

World Bank (1994) as cited in Central Bank of Nigeria Research Department Occasional Paper (2003) described infrastructure as a generic term for basic structures and facilities that are essential to the generation of economic growth and development in modern economics generally referred to as economic and social overhead capital which include education, water supply, sewage systems, energy, postal and telecommunication services, transport system, hospitals and roads. Blackridge Research and Consulting (2024) defined the term as, “the collection of systems and facilities that serve as the basis for the economic growth of a country”. It is also described as, “the underlying structure or installations that facilitate the functions of other system in a modern state”. “It refers to services and facilities that help to uplift a state’s economic activities and the growth of its productivity”. Profiling the meaning of infrastructure, Miller (2021, p.2) stated that the term should be defined according to the role it plays in the economy of a state. Citing Investopedia she described the term as, “the general term for basic physical systems of a business region, or nation”.

Cruz (2016) described the term as the, “basic systems and services that a state or organisation needs in order to function properly”. “She also described it to include all the physical systems such as the road and railway networks, utilities, sewage, water, telephone lines and cell towers,

air control towers, bridges, etc, and services such as law enforcement, emergency services, healthcare, education, etc". It is also refers to all such activities, services and facilities needed to provide different kinds of services in country. It is also regarded as the support system for a country's economic and social development. Simply put, the term is a support system essential to effective operation of a modernised state, and which is presence facilitates effective functioning of a nation's economic and social systems. This means that it is the framework that helps a country to develop socially and economically (GeeksforGeeks, 2024).

According to African Development Bank (2024), "it is often a key driver of every economy, and critical for productivity and sustainability of a state's economic growth and development". "It is also that which contributes significantly to human development, poverty reduction, and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)." Investment in it accounts for improvement in economic growth of any nation. Therefore, for the researcher, the term infrastructure is used to refer to facilities that are used to support the functioning of a society (state or country) or organisation, such as roads, railway networks, bridges, water supply, sewage, electricity, healthcare facilities, among others.

## **Development**

The concept of development has varying definitions across disciplines. It is also complex, contested and sometimes vague. Though, as it stands today, it is a user-friendly term that has attracted a number of definitions from professionals and researchers. Affirming this notion, Abuiyada (2018, p.115) stated that the concept has various meanings to different people and can be explained in different contexts by different professionals and researchers. For example, Emin (2020) used the term to refer to progressive, enhancement and material upliftment of the state. It is also an evaluative term which means it transits from one condition to another. It is also a concept that is friendly and optimistic. It is associated with modernism and efforts of government to serve both the rich and privileged group, and the poor and powerless group in the community. The term stresses the virtues of entrepreneurship and individualism. To a great extent it is closely related to welfare and again, equated with happiness on the one hand, and on the other hand, with the fulfilment of desires. The term is classified to have both physical and monetary contexts. While the physical enhancement of development is connected with physical features and material resources, the monetary progressive enhancement is connected with economic development (Emina, 2020, p.187).

Rabie (2016, p.1) described development as, "an economic concept that has positive connotation, and involves the application of economic and technical measures to utilise available resources to bring about economic growth and improve citizens' quality of life". According to Todaro and Smith (2006, P.22) the term development is, "both a physical reality and a state of mind in which a nation has secured the means for obtaining a better life". In essence, it is a process through which a society ensures there is growth in wealth acquisition and mental enrichment and betterment of the quality of living conditions of all the people of the society. Gran (1983) defined it as, "a social and practical process which its target is liberation of human potential so that people acquire the maximum socially feasible and practical control over all the available resources needed for the realisation of basic human needs and security".

Korten (1990, p.57) described development as, "a process through which members of a community increase their personal as well as institutional capabilities to mobilise and manage their resources to produce sustainable development consistent with their collective aspirations". Burkey (1993, p.35) describes the term also as, "a process through which an individual develops self-respect, and becomes more self-confidence, self-reliant, cooperative and tolerant to others, and which can only be achieved through working and cooperating with others in a community". According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (1990, P.10), development is, "a process of increasing people's choice which among others, encompasses opportunities for being creative and productive, as well as capable of acquiring self-actualisation and self-respect in a given society". Seers (1972) as cited in Abuiyada (2018, p.115) averred that development,

“is the condition for realisation of human personality, which implies that it has three criteria, namely: poverty reduction, unemployment reduction and reduction of inequality in any given society”. For Pearson (2000), it involves “an improvement qualitative, quantitative or both in the use of available resources in a state”. It means that development refers not only on a particular perspective, particularly on socio-economic development but also on environmental transformation from current state to a desired one.

Sen (1999) described development as, “a tool employed in enhancing socio-economic development at the highest level for the betterment of the people in a society as well as enhance their abilities or potentials at a higher level”. In addition, he described the term as a tool used to attain economic and social freedom and family actions, etc. Ingham (1993) described the term as, “a goal toward which a state strives, and also a process which involves causal relationships”. The purpose of development therefore is to ensure that the people in the society create an enabling environment capable of expanding their development agendas. To this end, one may describe development as a process of creating and improving upon societal development programmes such as roads, railways, healthcare facilities, water supply system, sewage, among others infrastructure necessary for the development of the society.

### **Nature of Inter-governmental Relations in Nigeria**

In Nigeria, IGR depends majorly on the orientations of the regime in power, and the direction of the social forces and interest groups especially those of the dominant social forces in the larger society. When the interest of these dominant groups shift towards a specific direction it influences the decisions of government and manifests in the control of the central government and IGR tilts more in favour of the central government. When these forces or interests move against the regime in power, IGR tends to move towards concentration of authority on the area of interest. Part I of the Second Schedule of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) provides for exclusive jurisdictional powers to the federal government which contains functions that are preserve of the federal government alone which include: currency, conduct of foreign affairs, army, prisons, immigration, customs, excise duties, among others. Part II of the Second Schedule of the Constitution provides for concurrent jurisdictions which are matters under both the federal and state government, such as health, education, industries, agriculture, taxes, road infrastructure, among others. There are also the residual jurisdictions which are matters under the jurisdiction of the state governments such as customary laws, rural development, social welfare, functioning of local government, among others (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 Constitution).

In truism, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 provides for devolution of power between the federal and its component units. Presently, the country is highly centralised as the central government has enormous powers conferred on it by Section 4, Sub Section 5 of the 1999 Constitution. By this provision, the central government is constitutionally granted two sets of legislative powers: those listed in the exclusive list and those contained in the concurrent list. Besides, laws made by state governments can be overridden by federal laws where there is conflict (Mbanefo, 1998; Eneanya, 2009; Ugog, 2011). Akume (2014), Adeyemo (2015) and Ikelegbe (2015) identified national – state - local government, federal - state, federal - local government, state - state, state - local government, local - local government, national/federal - civic group, state - civic group, local government - civic group, and inter-civic groups, as the different types of inter-governmental relations in Nigeria. Under these arrangements finance is the most critical issue in inter-governmental fiscal relations in the country. As the federal – state – local government have powers under the concurrent legislative list on tax collection, there are also overlaps in these taxes and levies collections among these tiers of government (Mbanefo, 1998).

The new schedule of the 1999 constitution empowered federal government of Nigeria to collect the taxes, namely: company income tax, petroleum profit tax, VAT, education tax, capital gains tax, stamp duties of corporate entities, personnel income tax of armed forces, foreign affairs,

police, and residents of the federal capital territory of Abuja. While state governments are empowered to collect personal income tax, withholding and capital tax, stamp duties from individuals, road taxes, development levy and business premises and registration level. Local governments on the other hand are empowered to collect levy on shops and kiosks; slaughter fees; marriage, birth and death fees; motor parks fees; cattle tax; radio and television tax; and advertisement tax (Eneanya, 2009, p. 254). Crisis often arises while these specified functions are being exercised by these levels of government which create financial controversialism among them. Evidently, inter-governmental relations between the levels of government in the country have witnessed several conflicts resulting in conflicting fiscal relationships among these levels of government expressed in the debates for resource control and a review of the 1999 federal constitution.

In Nigeria, there are recognised and functional institutions for managing inter-governmental relations. These institutions perform specific functions that are crucial to the survival of the country, although conflicting in inter-governmental relations often centred on issue of obtaining adequate financial resources to discharge essential constitutional responsibilities but it does not mean that these institutions are not performing their constitutional responsibilities. Among these institutions are: Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) which has authority to monitor accruals and disbursement of revenue from the federation accounts to the levels of government, and review from time to time the revenue allocation formula and principles in operation to ensure equity. There is also the Conflict Resolution Machinery charged with the responsibility of resolving conflicts on tax jurisdiction, road construction jurisdiction, state security and federal jurisdiction on the use of political powers for certain national issues, etc (Eneanya, 2009).

There is also the Resource Control Machinery charged with the responsibility of resolving conflict that may arise among the tiers of government concerning states possession of off-shore mineral resources and 13% revenue formula. Other bodies coordinating inter-governmental relations are the National Planning Commission (NPC) which has considerable influence on fiscal policy coordination in the country; the Federal Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) which its membership comprises of the Minister and Commissioners of finance, the Central Bank, RMAFC, National Planning Commission and Federal Inland Revenue Service (Eneanya, 2009; Ugoh, 2011). The inter-governmental fiscal relations in Nigeria like other federal states is designed to ensure that both the macro-economic management and income distribution goals of government are not compromised, improve of public spending and a reduced administrative costs, a balance of expenditure profile of each of the levels of government, and encourage sub-national governments to generate revenue internally, and enhance accountability and transparency in public sector management (Littrack & Wallich, 1993; Sewell & Wallich, 1994). Inter-governmental fiscal relations among the different levels of government in Nigeria has always mobilised by the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation in Abuja.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study adopted Structural-Functionalism Theory. Since inter-governmental relations, especially in a federal state like Nigeria depicts the existence of different levels and structures of government that perform specific functions and share certain responsibilities in order to achieve collective goal which is national development, structural-functionalism theory as espoused by Almond and Powell in 1966 is adopted in this study. Basically, this theory talks about the existence of societal structures expected to perform defined functions or roles that will enable the system operationally efficient and effective. While functions deal with the consequences involving objectives and processes of the patterns of action, structure on the other hand refers to those arrangements within the system which perform the functions. This implies that function on its own represents objectives that must be achieved, while structure on the other hand connotes arrangement in the state such fiscal arrangement, inter-governmental arrangement and bureaucracy (Das & Choudhury, 2002; Nnaeto & Okoroafor, 2016, p.11).

Structuralism which concerns itself with the existence of autonomy of the sub-national units- the state and local government, to function in a way that can favour the whole federating units, becomes the tenet of the theory. However, the major aim of structural-functionalism theory is to achieve functional or operational synergy among the three tiers of government. It implies that the governmental structures- the central, state and local government must synergise in order to share responsibilities and information, as well as share the powers of the state, ensure they enjoy autonomy and existence of resource control at all levels of governance (Nnaeto, 2016, p.174). Talcott Parsons sees structural-functionalism as that which came to describe a particular stage in the methodological development of social science, rather than a specific school of thought (Parsons, 1977).

Macionis (2011) described structural-functionalism theory as a framework used for building theory that sees a society as a complex system whose component parts or units work together to promote solidarity and stability. The theory sees the society also as macro-level orientation which is a broad focus on the social structure that shapes the society as a whole. It also conceived the society as that which evolved from like organisms. This theory also talks about social structure and social functions of the component units of the system. Originally, functionalism deals with the society as a whole and the function of its constituent elements, namely norms, customs, traditions and institutions. This presents a common analogy called the organic or biological analogy, popularised by Herbert Spencer. Spencer presents these parts of the society as human body organ that work toward for the proper functioning of the body as a whole (Urry, 2000).

Structural-functionalism which is also known as “functional-structural analysis” in sociology and other social sciences is describe by Brian (2024) as a school of thought in which each of the institutions, relationships, roles and norms that together constitute a society serves a purpose, and each is indispensable for the continued existence and functioning of the others, and of the society as a whole. In structural-functionalism, social change is regarded as an adaptive response to some tension within the social system. When there are changes in some parts of an integrated social system, a tension between this and the other parts of the system is created, which may be resolved by the adaptive change of the other parts (Brian, 2024). This has become necessary because each of the component units of a whole system is expected to perform specific functions as well as complement each other in terms of conflict or tension, which is the essence of inter-governmental relations.

Structural-functionalism in its original postulation intends to access every aspect of the society and how each of these aspects contributes to the stability as well as functioning of the society. For example, within the society there are laws created in order to keep the society a safe place to be. The government also contributes a lot in providing for the people, such as social infrastructure including roads, bridges, railways, and sea ports, and education and health care infrastructure for the benefit of the people. The provision of infrastructure by the government helps to support the social wellbeing of the people, and in return, the people must be law abiding citizens. This theory is very useful because both structuralism and functionalism approaches are very useful because both have part in the influence and development of the government and the society. The government thus makes a huge difference in society such setting laws and policies, and ensuring they meet the social needs of the people, among other things (Writix Samples, 2024). Since structural-functionalists express the social relations which exist in inter-governmental relations, and the relationship between certain areas within society by exploring the functionality of every aspect to dictate how it contributes to the structure and solidarity of the society. It views the society as correlated areas that are produced to meet the social needs of the people in the society, which makes it applicable to this study.

The strength of the theory depends on its application in the subject area. Using structuralism in social analysis makes it to identify the dynamics of the society through the existence of different social structures. The strength of the theory also lies on the fact that it expresses the social order and relationship that exist between certain areas within a society, and by exploring the

functionality of every aspect to dictate how best it could contribute to the development of the existing structures and solidarity among these structures of government. Since structural-functionalism theory views the society as a structure that has correlated areas that are established to produce or meet up with the social needs of the citizens in the society, its relevance to social development in the society or state cannot be overemphasized. This expresses the thought of Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) when he compared the organs within the human body which are structured to perform specific functions but depend on one another to keep the body functioning, to what exists in modern day societies which also have several units that perform certain functions as well work together to keep the society functioning (Writix Sample, 2024). The strength of the theory is also in its attempt to explain the imperative of the various institutions in the society and a clear structure between them (Best, 2016). One other strength of the theory is its emphasis on the importance of social order and stability. By heightening the interdependence of social institutions, structural-functionalism provides a holistic understanding of how society works and how changes in one area can impact the entire system. This means that its strength lies in its effort to provide a framework for understanding how different parts of society work together to meet the needs of individuals and society as a whole.

Since structural-functionalism theory which views the society as a whole has both advantages and disadvantages. Its major area of criticism is its notion about the functioning within the society. The theory is also criticised for not paying attention to the harmful aspects of society as other theories do, such as conflict theory. Also, the theory is criticised for ignoring the contributions of other social institutions in the state (Study.com, 2024). The theory also fails to consider individual differences within society because not all societies look or act alike. Its assumption that everything in the society is largely positive is criticised because it fails also to consider those who are not working towards the common good of the society. Its deterministic view is also criticised (Best, 2016). Furthermore, structural-functionalism is criticised for being too static and unable to provide account for social changes and transformations that occur in the society. Again, the theory is criticised for ignoring the role of power and conflict in shaping social structures and relationships (Social Work Team, 2023).

## Conclusion

The research indicates that the state of federal road infrastructure in Delta and Edo states is a clear result of the disjointed and frequently ineffective intergovernmental relationships in Nigeria. Even though federal roads are under the jurisdiction of the federal government according to the Constitution, the lack of cooperation with state governments has resulted in numerous important obstacles. Included in these are roles that overlap, project execution delays, and inadequate road maintenance.

The research indicates that project delays and duplicated efforts, leading to wasted resources, are caused by inadequate communication between federal and state governments. State governments frequently start road repair or construction projects with insufficient cooperation with federal authorities, causing conflicting priorities and underfunded initiatives. Delays or cancellations of federal road projects often occur because of insufficient funding, which is made worse by disputes over jurisdiction and responsibility. The state of federal roads in Delta and Edo states illustrates the lasting effects of these problems. Numerous roads are in bad shape, resulting in increased road accidents, slower economic development, and limited access to vital services for rural areas. The research suggests that a major revamp of the existing system of collaboration between governments is needed to guarantee that federal road construction projects are completed promptly and at a superior level.

Additionally, it requires a restructuring of the responsibilities of the federal and state governments in the development of road infrastructure, suggesting that the federal government should focus more on oversight and funding, with states in charge of daily road construction and upkeep.

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