

Review of: "Financial Autonomy: Panacea for Improved Service Delivery in Imo State Local Government System"

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The study is an attempt to highlight a genuine and important issue faced by local governments, not only in Nigeria, but in every part of the developing world. Overdependence on financial transfers from the higher tiers of governments and inadequacy of own revenue sources reduce the financial autonomy of local governments and their ability to provide services. Corruption and inefficiency of systems and procedures make the problem even worse.

With the right intentions, the study tries to make use of the available evidence to build a case against the overdependence of local governments on state governments. However, there are a few observations about the study that bring down the academic rigor:

1. The statistical evidence is not well laid out enough to make the strong case against abolishing the financial devolution route through the state government, as the author argues.
2. The study discusses the normative account of the system, roles and responsibilities of various officials, and the functioning of the system, rather than presenting a detailed account of how things are on the ground in the study area. That leaves the readers waiting for more details and anecdotes to support the conclusions.
3. Use of strong language that may be presenting the bias of the author, including the use of words and phrases like "stooges", "big sigh of relief", "hat-in-hand", could be avoided to leave the reader with sufficient details to make their own opinions, rather than trying to paint their opinions with the author's bias.