

# Application of Checks and Balances Of Power on Local Government Administration in South East Nigeria

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**Abstract:** *The study examined the application of checks and balance of power on local government administration in selected local governments in South East Nigeria. In doing that, the study had, as its specific objectives, to find out the effect of executive veto on the quality of local government bye-laws, establish the effect of legislative oversight on the efficient execution of local government projects and, ascertain the effect of legislative approval on the probity of local government estimate. In carrying out the research, survey research methodology was adopted and data collected was analyzed and hypotheses tested using Chi-squared test ( $\chi^2$  test) statistical tool. The key findings of the study were that executive veto improved the quality of local government bye-laws; legislative oversight led to efficiency in the execution of local government projects and that legislative approval enhanced probity in the local government estimate. In line with the findings, it was concluded that checks and balances of power was a key factor in efficient and effective local government administration. Based on this, the study recommended more effort at application of checks and balances of power as encompassed in the acts of executive veto, legislative oversight and legislative approval of estimate.*

**Keywords:** Balances Of Power, Local Government, Administration, South East Nigeria

## INTRODUCTION

In virtually all government systems in the world, particularly in democratic and constitutional ones, there exists the doctrine and practice of separation of government power into three arms. These three arms are the legislative, the executive and the judiciary arms. The legislative arm makes the laws; the executive arm implements the laws while the judiciary arm interprets the laws.

Very closely associated with separation of powers is checks and balances of power. Basically, checks and balances of power is a principle of governance that requires the different arms of government to use their powers to check or prevent abuse of power or arbitrary actions of each other. Indeed, the underlining idea in the concept of separation of power is checks and balances of power which entails that the power of any of the arms should be used to check the powers or activities of other arms in order to create a balance in the use or exercise of power. The power of the executive arm, for instance, should be used to check the power of the legislative arm and vice versa. Specifically, for instance, the executive is expected to, where necessary, veto bills passed by the legislature. The legislature can also override the veto by the executive. The executive can also check the judiciary through its power to appoint or remove judges while the judiciary can check the executive by declaring executive directives or delegated legislation made by it unconstitutional or null and void. The legislature can also check the activities of the executive through its oversight of the execution of governmental projects or programmes. The legislature can also check the executive through approval or amendment of budget proposal. The judiciary can equally check the legislature by declaring laws made by the legislature null and void or unconstitutional.

In summary, the major components of checks and balances of power include the exercise of executive veto on legislative bills, the exercise of oversight power on project execution by the executive and the exercise of legislative power of vetting, amending and approving of the budget or estimate prepared by the executive. The exercise of veto power basically entails stopping or refusing to assent to the enactment of legislation by the legislature. The exercise of oversight function basically entails the activities of the legislature of monitoring and supervising of the execution of projects or programmes by the executive while the exercise of power of approval of budget entails the legislature activity of examining, scrutinizing and recommending for amendments where necessary before finally approving the budget proposed by the executive (Brenda, 2019; Usoro, 2018; Boris, 2015).

In Nigerian Federal System of government, there are three tiers of government. These are the federal, state and local government. Local government is the third tier. There are 774 local government areas (LGAs) in Nigeria. Key officers involved in the local government administration include elected executive chairman, who is the chief executive of the local government, the vice chairman, elected councilors, other political appointees like secretary and supervisors and career civil servants.

Generally, local government administration entails some activities like legislation or making of bye-laws, executing laws, programmes or projects and preparing and approving estimates yearly as a guide or framework for the administrative activities of the local government among others. In essence, the key components of local government administration are legislation or making of bye-laws, executing laws or projects and preparing and approving yearly estimates. The expectation is that a local government in its

administration should perform the above functions properly and diligently to enhance the lives and development of people within its jurisdiction.

### **Statement of the problem**

Sections 4, 5 and 6 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria apparently provides for a system of separation of powers as it provides for the three key functions of government to be performed by three distinct arms. The legislature, the executive and the judiciary performs the functions of law making, law execution and law interpretation respectively. The principle of separation of power applies at both the federal, state and local government levels. What is increasingly becoming a major concern, however, is not just the existence of separation of powers but the practice of checks and balances of powers between or among the arms of government and its effects on public administration and governance generally. Indeed, in Nigeria, the division of government into three arms (the executive, the legislature and the judiciary) each with separate and distinct functions is not much in contention. What has really become of critical concern is the application of checks and balances of power and the determination of its effect on the administration of the various level of government in Nigeria. This is more so for the local government that is closest to the people and for which the quality of administration is of serious consequences for development and service delivery to the people at the grass root level. It is in the context of this concern that this study is necessitated.

### **Objectives of the study**

The general objective of the study was to examine the effect of the application of checks and balances of power on local government administration using selected local government areas in South East Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i) Find out the effect of executive veto on the quality of local government bye-laws.
- ii) Establish the effect of legislative oversight on the efficient execution of local government projects.
- iii) Ascertain the effect of legislative approval on the probity of local government estimate.

## **BRIEF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Local government**

Egwu and Obiora (2017) defined local government as a statutory authority in a specified local area, having the power to raise revenue through taxes for the performance of local services such as sanitation, education, water supply among others. Alao, Osakede and Awolabi (2015) conceived local government as a unit of government below the central, regional or state government established by law to exercise political authority through a democratically elected representative council within a defined geographical area.

*The 1976 Guideline for Local Government Reform in Nigeria* captures the relevant attributes of Local government in its definition of local government as government at the local level exercised through representative council, established by law to exercise powers within defined areas. These powers, according to the Guideline, should give the council substantial control over local affairs (including staffing) and institutional and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of service and to determine and implement projects so as to compliment the activities of the state and federal government in their areas and ensure, through devolution of these functions to these councils and through the active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, that local initiative and response to local needs and conditions are maximized (FGN, 1976).

Necessary to note about local government in Nigeria is that the logic of the national political system (presidential system of government) obtains at the local government level particularly as it relates to the functions of the executive and legislative arms, separation of powers and checks and balances of power between or among them.

### **Local government administration**

Local government administration is the management of the affairs of a local government to achieve the purposes of effective and efficient service delivery to the people within the local government area (Ugwu, 2010). The ultimate objective in local government administration, according to Okoli and Onah (2002) is (a) enhancement of democratic political participation at the grass root level or in the locality of its jurisdiction; (b) enhancement of effective and efficient service delivery at the grass root level or in the locality of its jurisdiction and (c) enhancement of development generally both at the grass root and national level.

Wilson (2013) notes that local governments is designed with the purpose of creating order in ways that serve the general public and the people within the locality specifically. Local government administration, therefore, need to be geared towards: (i) improving social, economic, and environmental viability and sustainability in the local government area; (ii) promoting appropriate business and employment opportunities for the citizens who reside in the area; (iii) using the available resources efficiently and effectively and in ways that provide the most value for the most people in the area; (iv) planning and providing services and facilities for local citizens' use and development; (v) building and strengthening infrastructures for the people; (vi) raising revenue to enable the local government carry out its functions; (vii) creating, passing and enforcing progressive bye-laws.

### **Checks and balances of power**

Checks and balances of power is basically a principle of government under which separate arms of government are empowered to prevent actions by other arms and are induced to share power (Brian, 2020).

Checks and balances of powers is very essential for the securing of the liberty of the citizens, balancing each of the powers of the arms of government and in checking the tendency in human nature toward tyranny (Ifeanyi, 2005). Checks and balances of power was also conceived as a mechanism for reducing mistakes, preventing improper behaviour and reducing the risk of over centralization of power (Brenda, 2019). The power of the judiciary to examine the actions of the legislative, the executive and administrative arms of government to ensure that they are constitutional is an important instance of checks and balances of power. Other forms of checks and balances include the executive veto of legislation, the legislative override of executive veto, executive impeachment by the legislature, assenting to the appropriation bill by the head of the executive arm, (the president, governor or chairman). The legislature also by initiating constitutional amendments, checks and balances the power of the judiciary. Also, the fact that the president appoints the members of the Supreme Court but only with the consent of the legislature, which also approves certain other executive appointments is a form of check. The legislature also must approve treaties as entered into by the executive arm for them to be official or legal.

### **Executive veto**

Generally, a veto is the power used by an officer of the state, for example, to unilaterally stop an official action, especially the enactment of legislation. In essence, veto is the power of one department, branch or arm of a government to forbid an action of another department, branch or arm. Most commonly, the chief executive of the government (the president of a country, governor of a state or chairman of local government) has the power to veto a bill or legislation brought to him by the legislature for his assent. In this case, it is referred to as executive veto.

According to Carl and Andrew (2018), veto provides impetus for making informed bye-laws and helps to ensure that bye-laws or any piece of legislation for that matter reflect the public interest and good. Very importantly, veto allows the executive to propose amendments to bills as may be considered appropriate and more beneficial. Veto as well creates in the mind of the legislatures the consciousness to be thorough, considerate and fair in their law making effort and process. It is important to note that executive veto could be overridden by the legislature. This is called veto override and it occurs when the legislature vetoes to reverse a veto issued by the president, governor or chairman (Carl & Andrew, 2018). A veto can be overridden only by a two-thirds vote of the legislature. If this occurs, the bill becomes law over the chief executives objections. This power to override executive veto makes the veto power of the chief executive not absolute.

### **Bye laws**

According to Ese (2008), a by-law is a rule or a law established by an organization or community to regulate itself, as allowed or provided for by some higher authority. The higher authority, could be a legislature or some other government body that establishes the degree of control that the bye-laws may exercise. Bye-laws may be established by entities such as a business corporation, a club, a neighborhood association, a municipality or local government. Specifically, bye-laws as it relates to local government are defined as a law that is made by a local government authority for the purpose of governing the people who live within the local government area. Bye -laws are less superior to the general laws of a land (The Constitution). Since the constitution is the highest law of the land, it goes without saying that bye-laws fall under the constitution and must be in line with the constitution of the land. Bye-laws cannot affect the entire citizens of a nation. They affect only those in a particular local government area. Indeed, in Nigeria, local government bye-laws are enactment of local government council whose source is a state law (Ugwu, 2010).

Many reasons have been identified as to why bye-laws are made by local governments. Some of these reasons include, among others, the following: Bye-laws are made in order to help maintain law and order in local governments; Bye-laws enable the people know their basic rights and responsibilities; Bye-laws help to regulate the lives of the people by giving them the rules and letting them know what will happen to any individual that goes contrary to the rules. This helps regulate the behavior of the people; Bye-laws contain the aspirations and goals of the people (Ese, 2008).

### **Legislative oversight**

According to Eze (2012), legislative oversight entails reviewing, monitoring, and supervision of operations and activities of the executive arm and this takes a variety of forms and utilizes various techniques. These range from specialized investigations by select committees to annual appropriations hearings. It also include questions to ministers (oral and written), votes of no confidence, impeachment, establishing ad-hoc committees or commissions of inquiry, public hearing, resolutions arising from motions, budget process, physical inspection of projects, investigative hearing, confirmation, etc (Goubadia, 2015, Wilson, 2013).

Indeed, the gains of legislative oversight cannot be overemphasised as it has helped in exposing corruption as well as ensuring effective implementation of laws and projects by the executive. Particularly in a growing democracy, the legislative oversight stands out and is indispensable tool of checks and balances for strengthening and enhancing good governance and efficiency, enhancing accountability, reducing impunity in the operations of the executive, ensuring budget discipline, enabling the legislative to expose corruption, waste and inefficiency in the execution and administration of laws and in the disbursement of public fund as appropriated by the legislature and ensuring that target outcomes of projects are largely or sufficiently achieved (Torsten, 1997; Anthony, 2020).

### **Project execution**

Project basically is a planned, organized and goal oriented work that is initiated and executed to address identified problem or to bring improvement in some given social economic life of the people (Boris, 2015). Project is also defined as a sequence of tasks that when completed attains certain objectives (Ojo & Lawal, 2014). Usually, the goals and objectives of projects are defined at the point of beginning of the project. Further, project usually has its own budget that are usually captured in the overall annual estimate of the local government. The budget may be either labour resources or money or both. Depending on its complexity, a project can be managed by a single person or group of person. In the context of local government administration, project may include building a garage or motor-park, constructing a road, building primary health centre, constructing a school building block, a cottage industry, a drainage system, building a local market among others.

Project execution is the phase where deliverables are constructed and presented to the beneficiaries and key stakeholders. Indeed, it involves carrying out the details of a project charter in order to deliver products or services to the designated people. First comes project planning. Then comes project execution. But no matter how well a project plan is, it will not be successful unless it is effectively executed (Boris, 2015).

### **Legislative approval of estimate**

Local government estimate, in the view of Osuebi, Nwachukwu, Arinze and Nnadi (2019) is a comprehensive financial plan of its income and expenditure within a specified period of time which serves as the basis for its operations during the period. It is also conceived as a systematically designed plan of proposed financial allocations to various services and programmes with detailed and carefully calculated projections of income from all its revenue sources. The local government estimate is generally for a period of twelve months, hence it is commonly known as annual estimate.

In order to generally further the cause of public probity and accountability and guarantee that public resources are scrupulously or judiciously applied, annual estimates submitted to the local government council is usually carefully examined or scrutinized by the council, before it is approved (Coker & Adams, 2012). This process of estimate approval specifically is the process of examining, scrutinizing, vetting and giving legal sanctions to the estimate of revenue and expenditure of the local government in a financial year (Lienart, 2010). Estimate vetting, scrutiny and approval by the legislature is required in order to specifically ensure that: (a) each project contained in the estimate is feasible, desirable and likely to facilitate the meaningful development of the local government area; (b) adequate provisions have been made for the execution of each project such that it is not likely to be abandoned; (c) development projects are not unduly concentrated in any particular section of the Local government area and; (d) there is probity in the entire estimate (Lienart, 2010; Wehnor, 2007)

### **Theoretical framework**

The theory considered appropriate as the framework of this study is the good governance theory. Good governance theory, basically, is a governance theory that sets some basic principles or tenets according to which a good government, whatever its form and level, must be run. The foremost proponent of good governance theory is the World Bank. World Bank introduced the concept in its 1992 report entitled "Governance and Development". The World Bank believes that good governance is an essential complement to sound economic policies and it is central to creating and sustaining an environment which fosters strong and equitable development. In the report, the World Bank identified key indicators or tenets of good governance which all focus on effectiveness and efficiency in public administration and governance. Such principles or tenets as have been articulated by Jan-Erik, (2018), Tony (2010), and UNDP (2007) include participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, equitability and inclusiveness.

In adopting the theory of good governance as the framework for the study, the study views local government administration against the background of the effect of checks and balances of power on its efficiency and effectiveness and good governance generally. As Tony (2010) noted, analysis of governance or administration could centre on the relationships, among others, between the legislative and executive arms of government, between government and citizens and between local institutions and urban and rural dwellers.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Survey research design was adopted for the study, for among other reasons it enhances the dependability or reliability of data or information gathered. The area of the study is South East Nigeria. South East Nigeria is made of five states. These states are Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. There are 17, 21, 13, 17 and 27 local government areas in the states respectively. In each of the states, three local government areas were sampled on the basis of one local government area from each of the three senatorial zones that make up the states. The population of the study is 270 people comprised of 225 councilors, 15 chairmen, 15 treasurers and 15 clerks of the selected 15 local government areas across the states. The total population of 270 was considered small, hence, the whole population was used for the study. Data and information were collected from both primary and secondary sources of data collection. The method of data collection from the primary source of data collection was questionnaire. The statistical tool used for analyses and in testing the hypotheses is Chi-Squared test ( $\chi^2$  test). The hypotheses were tested on the basis of the respondents' responses to the closed-ended questions.

**DATA PRESENTATION, DATA ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

**Data presentation and analysis in relation to the test of hypothesis 1** (Executive veto improves the quality of local government bye laws)

**Table 1: Data in respect of hypothesis 1**

S/No	Response option	No. of Reponses	% of Responses	Total
1.	Yes	196(196.20)	79(78.79)	275
2.	No	38(37.81)	15(15.19)	53
3.	Don not know	15(14.98)	6(6.02)	21
4.	Total	249	100	349

Source: Fieldwork, 2021.

**Level of significance**

Taking  $\sigma$  to be 5% = 0.05

**Critical region**

$$\chi^2_{(r-1)(c-1)}$$

Test statistic

$$\chi^2_{cal} = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{O_{ij}}{E_{ij}}$$

**Decision rule**

If  $\chi^2_{cal} < \chi^2_{tab}$ ; accept the hypothesis

**Analysis of data**

$$E_{ij} = \frac{n_i \times n_j}{N}$$

$$E_{11} = \frac{275 \times 249}{349} = 196.20$$

$$E_{12} = \frac{275 \times 100}{349} = 78.79$$

$$E_{21} = \frac{53 \times 249}{349} = 37.81$$

$$E_{22} = \frac{53 \times 100}{349} = 15.19$$

$$E_{31} = \frac{21 \times 249}{349} = 14.98$$

$$E_{32} = \frac{21 \times 100}{349} = 6.02$$

$$\begin{aligned} \chi^2 &= \frac{(196-196.20)^2}{196.20} + \frac{(79-78.79)^2}{78.79} + \frac{(38-37.8)^2}{37.8} + \frac{(15-15.19)^2}{15.19} + \frac{(15-14.98)^2}{14.98} + \frac{(6-6.02)^2}{6.02} \\ &= 0.000002+0.0005+0.0009+0.0024+0.00003+0.00007 \\ &= 0.0039 = 0.4 \end{aligned}$$

$$\therefore \chi^2_{cal} = 0.04$$

$$\chi^2_{(r-1)(c-1)} = 0.05$$

$$R = 3 \text{ and } c = 2$$

$$\chi^2_{(3-1)(2-1)} = 0.05 = \chi^2_{2 \times 1} = X^2_{2} = 5.99$$

**Conclusion/decision rule**

Since  $\chi^2_{cal}$  is (0.04) <  $\chi^2_{tab}$  (5.99), the hypothesis that executive veto improves the quality of local government bye-law is accepted.

**Data Presentation and Analysis in Relation to the test of Hypothesis 2** (Legislative oversight leads to efficiency in the execution of local government projects).

**Table 2: Data in Respect of Hypothesis 2**

S/No	Response option	No. of Reponses	% of Responses	Total
5.	Yes	213(212.61)	85(85.39)	298
6.	No	19(19.26)	8(6.88)	27
7.	Don not know	17(17.12)	7(6.88)	24
8.	Total	249	100	349

Source: Fieldwork, 2021.

**Level of significance**

Taking  $\sigma$  to be 5% = 0.05

**Critical region**

$$x^2(r-1)(c-1)$$

Test statistic

$$x^2 \text{cal} = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{O_{ij}}{E_{ij}}$$

**Decision rule**

If  $x^2 \text{cal} < x^2 \text{tab}$ ; accept the hypothesis.

**Analysis of data**

$$E_{ij} = \frac{n_i \times n_j}{N}$$

$$E_{11} = \frac{298 \times 249}{349} = 212.61$$

$$E_{12} = \frac{298 \times 100}{349} = 85.39$$

$$E_{21} = \frac{27 \times 249}{349} = 19.26$$

$$E_{22} = \frac{24 \times 100}{349} = 6.88$$

$$E_{31} = \frac{249 \times 249}{349} = 17.12$$

$$E_{32} = \frac{100 \times 249}{349} = 6.88$$

$$x^2 = \frac{(213-21.61)^2}{212.61} + \frac{(85-85.39)^2}{85.39} + \frac{(19-19.26)^2}{19.26} + \frac{(8-6.88)^2}{6.88} + \frac{(17-17.12)^2}{17.12} + \frac{(7-6.88)^2}{6.88}$$

$$= 0.0008 + 0.0009 + 0.004 + 0.1823 + 0.0008 + 0.002$$

$$= 0.1907 = 0.2$$

$$\therefore x^2 \text{cal} = 0.2$$

$$x^2 \text{tab} = 5.99$$

**Conclusion/decision rule**

Since  $x^2 \text{cal} (0.2) < x^2 \text{tab} (5.99)$ , the hypothesis that legislative oversight leads to efficiency in execution of local government projects is accepted.

**Data Presentation and Analysis in Relation to the test of Hypothesis 3** (Legislative approval enhances the probity of local government estimate).

**Table 3: Data in respect of hypothesis 3**

S/No	Response option	No. of Reponses	% of Responses	Total
9.	Yes	198(198.34)	80(76.66)	278
10.	No	28(27.83)	11(11.17)	39
11.	Don not know	23(22.83)	9(9.17)	32
12.	Total	249	100	349

Source: Fieldwork, 2021.

**Level of significance**

Taking  $\sigma$  to be 5% = 0.05

**Critical region**

$$x^2(r-1)(c-1)$$

Test statistic

$$x^2 \text{cal} = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{O_{ij}}{E_{ij}}$$

**Decision rule**

If  $x^2 \text{cal} < x^2 \text{tab}$ ; accept the hypothesis.

**Analysis of data**

$$E_{ij} = \frac{n_i \times n_j}{N}$$

$$E_{11} = \frac{278 \times 249}{349} = 198.34$$

$$E_{12} = \frac{278 \times 100}{349} = 76.66$$

$$E_{21} = \frac{39 \times 249}{349} = 27.83$$

$$E_{22} = \frac{39 \times 100}{349} = 11.17$$

$$E_{31} = \frac{32 \times 249}{349} = 22.83$$

$$E_{32} = \frac{32 \times 24}{349} 100 = 9.17$$

$$\begin{aligned} x^2 &= \frac{(198-198.34)^2}{198.34} + \frac{(80-76.66)^2}{76.66} + \frac{(28-27.83)^2}{27.83} + \frac{(11-11.17)^2}{11.17} + \frac{(23-22.83)^2}{22.83} + \frac{(9-9.17)^2}{9.17} \\ &= 0.0006 + 0.1455 + 0.0010 + 0.0026 + 0.0013 + 0.0032 \\ &= 0.1542 = 0.2 \end{aligned}$$

$$\therefore x^2_{cal} = 0.2$$

$$x^2_{tab} = 5.99$$

#### Conclusion/decision rule

Since  $x^2_{cal} (0.2) < x^2_{tab} (5.99)$ , the hypothesis that legislative approval effects the probity of local government estimate is accepted.

#### Discussion of Findings

##### Discussion of findings in respect of hypothesis 1.

The finding following the analysis of data in respect of hypothesis 1 is that executive veto improved the quality of bye-laws made in the local government. Indeed, for the understanding and awareness that a bye-law not fairly and properly made or crafted could be vetoed by the executive creates in the minds of the legislators the consciousness to carefully and responsibly make bye-laws that is of high quality in terms of their being beneficial to the population, in terms of their overall utility in enhancing development in the local government area and in terms of their being fair progressive and practicable.

##### Discussion of findings in respect of hypothesis 2.

The finding following the analysis of data in respect of hypothesis 2 is that legislative oversight led to efficiency in the execution of local government projects is quite understandable as in the course of oversight functions, improper actions that could derail the efficient implementation of projects are identified and actions taken to put the project execution on proper course. The fact too that the executives are aware of the oversight of the legislatures on the projects being executed makes them implement projects promptly and efficiently as intended or planned. In essence, the oversight activities of the legislature is critically important in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency with which the executive arm executes projects.

##### Discussion of findings in respect of hypothesis 3.

The finding following the analysis of data in respect of hypothesis 3 is that legislative approval of estimate improved its quality is quite understandable. Indeed, in the process of scrutinizing the proposed estimate, the legislature observes errors, omissions, misplaced priorities, uneven spread of estimate allocations among others and insist on proper things to be done. The fact too that executives are aware that the legislature would scrutinize and would direct for amendment in the estimate before approval makes the executive to be careful and prudent in the estimate preparation. All these contribute in improving the probity of local government project specifically in terms of enhancing the prudence in the allocation of the scarce resources of the local government.

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### Summary of findings

The summary of the findings are that:

1. Executive veto improved the quality of local government bye-laws. This is confirmed in the result of the test of hypotheses  $x^2_{cal} (0.04)$  being  $< x^2_{tab} (5.99)$  and for which the hypothesis that executive veto improved the quality of local government bye-laws was accepted.
2. Legislative oversight led to reduction increase cost in the execution of local government project. This is confirmed in the result of the hypothesis of  $x^2_{cal} (0.2)$  being  $< x^2_{tab} (5.99)$  and for which the hypothesis that legislative oversight led to efficiency in the execution of local government project was accepted.
3. Legislative approval enhanced the probity of local government estimates. This is confirmed by the result of the test of the hypothesis of  $x^2_{cal} (0.2)$  being  $< x^2_{tab} (5.99)$  and for which the hypothesis that legislative approval enhanced the probity of local government estimate was accepted.

##### Conclusion

Achieving effective and efficient local government administration requires significant application of checks and balances of powers between the executive and legislative arms of the local government. Such checks and balances as are reflected cardinally in the exercise of executive veto power, legislative oversight power and legislative estimate approval power creates and sustains the framework for good local government administration devoid of power abuse, despotism, maladministration and misgovernance.

##### Recommendations

In line with the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The executive arm of the local government need to increase its will and inclination to exercise its veto power whenever necessary to ensure that the content and nature of draft bye-laws are beneficial to the local government inhabitants and that the content substantially reflect the aspirations and goals of the people.
2. The legislature needs to entrench in their minds and in their consciousness that they are the representatives of the people and as such should not only concern themselves with law making but also with the utilization of its oversight prerogative

to ensure that local government projects are efficiently and effectively executed and in such ways that meets the intent of the government.

3. The legislature should, given the critical importance of scrutiny and approved of estimate, beef-up its thoroughness in doing that. The legislature needs to realize that the financial resources available to the local government is limited and so should always thoroughly examine provisions in the estimate to ensure prudence and probity in the provisions for expenditure.

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