



SDI Review Form 1.6

Journal Name:	<u>British Journal of Economics, Management & Trade</u>
Manuscript Number:	Ms_BJEMT_19478
Title of the Manuscript:	Decentralization and Local Government Autonomy: A Quest for Quality Service Delivery in Nigeria
Type of the Article	Review Article

General guideline for Peer Review process:

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound.

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PART 1: Review Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment <i>(if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i>
Compulsory REVISION comments	<p>There is a great need for good research on the effective implementation of constitutional provisions in decentralized governance in Sub-Saharan Africa and this manuscript promises much in this regard.</p> <p>While the analysis focus on the lowest tier of government as stipulated by the 1999 Constitution, and with the central aim of exploring the driving forces behind local government autonomy, the narratives did not systemically show the specific aspects of the constitution that assigned autonomous powers to the local government, and by extension the provision of public services. Also, the task set by the authors to explore the driving forces that enhance local government autonomy was skewed towards financial autonomy. For instance, the authors acknowledged from line 386 to 393 that the establishment of the Joint Allocation Account as a source of rift within tiers of government, and the deprivation of local government autonomy which have negative impact on the provision of infrastructure services. This assertion was made without first of all highlighting some of the specific responsibilities as stipulated by the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria in a bit to promote local government autonomy until in line 448.</p> <p>Again, the discussion (especially between line 452 and 454) emphasized that the inability of local government to perform their constitutional responsibilities (due to weak autonomy) was largely attributed to lack of financial autonomy. This was also reiterated in the conclusion remark (line 597). But it is possible that political and administrative aspects of local government autonomy</p>	



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	could also influence the ability of local governments to provide local infrastructure and services. Moreover, the authors identified some challenges with the decentralization framework, without illustrating first the structure of the framework as stipulated by the constitutional provisions. Hence, the need to also show the structure of the decentralization framework, as well as political and administrative autonomy per the 1999 Constitution did affect both local government autonomy and their performance in delivering public services.	
Minor REVISION comments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. While the authors indicated three forms of decentralization (as in line 116 and 117), only two have been discussed, leaving the third form 2. The assertion that decentralization can make local government more competent needs further clarification (Line 298 - 299) 3. How does the abrogation of the Ministry of Local Government signifies a remarkable achievement in the Babangida's regime (Line 420) 4. Except the participation variable of the decentralization as a framework rural development, you did not explain the remaining variables (e.g. responsiveness, legitimacy and liberty) 	
Optional/General comments		

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