

ABSTRACT

This research attempts to explore the documented challenges that constrain the implementation process of the decentralization process within the Local Government Areas (LGAs) in The Gambia. Critical review on the multiple challenges in the decentralization process in The Gambia was thoroughly done to set the basis for the paper. The Paper used primary and secondary sources to gather information relevant to the thematic area. The secondary sources included journal articles, books, Government Reports and Local Government Service Regulations and legal instruments on decentralization in The Gambia. Observation method was also used based on the author's background and experience in the thematic area. The paper found that decentralization as a process and as an approach has limited potential and that has seriously limit the impact of Councils to provide basic services to the local communities in The Gambia. However the study identified three major challenges which are multi-faceted and integrated in character. They comprise policy induced challenges, skills and organizational challenges and performance induced challenges.

Hence the paper strongly recommends a critical institutional review and re-design of the decentralization process, conduct a robust capacity assessment in all the Local Councils to measure their capacity and readiness to meet the demands of the decentralization process. Enforcement mechanisms with financial support, change of mind set and working culture and finally political and leadership will remain critical to ensure that initiatives and policies are monitored and coordinated to meet the demands of decentralization within the Local Government sector.

Keywords: Decentralization, Local Government Authorities, Implementation.