

**EFFECTS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION ON  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF ASA LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT, KWARA STATE**

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**Abstract**

This study examined the impact and challenges of local government administration on rural development in Asa Local Government. The study relied on both primary and secondary data. 237 questionnaires were administered while 218 were received and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science software. Basic need approach was adopted for this study. Finding from the study showed that Asa local government council has not adequately enthrone development as it has not ensure adequate water supply, road construction and other social amenities in the local government. Failure of leadership at local level

affects rural development and community development is not adequate as a result of corruption and diversion of projects by local government officials. The paper concluded that rural development is largely undermined and recommended that political appointees and workers in Asa must imbibe the culture of leadership by example anchored on selfless service with total commitment and sacrifice. Government and non-governmental programmes on development should be implemented and executed and there should be periodic monitoring of local government projects.

Key words: Programme, social amenities, leadership, project.

### **Introduction**

The ideas behind the creation of local governments in Nigeria are that the people at the local level are assumed to have the fullest awareness of their needs. Every local jurisdiction has its unique economic, social and physical characteristics and its historical tradition which are better understood by its people. Thus, the Local Government Areas are created to provide the services which the Federal and State Governments cannot easily undertake to their remoteness from the local communities (Uhunmwangho and Epelle, 2008). Therefore, the only reasonable form of development is the one that comes from within, through the will and desires of the people.

The constitutional mandates of local government are to consider and make recommendations to a State Commission on Economic Planning or any similar body on: the economic development of the state, particularly as far as the areas of authority of the council and of the state are affected; and proposals made by the said commission or body. The government at the local level equally carries out the task of naming roads and streets and numbering of houses; provision of maintenance of public conveniences, sewage and refuse disposal; registration of all births, deaths and marriages; assessment of privately owned houses or tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of a States amongst others (Fourth Schedule of 1999 Constitution). Local government areas are also saddled with the responsibility of licensing bicycles, trucks (other than mechanically propelled trucks), canoes, wheel barrows and carts; establishment, maintenance and regulation of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs, markets, motor parks and public conveniences; construction of maintenance of roads, streets, street lighting, drains and other public highways, parks, gardens, open spaces, or such public facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the House of Assembly of a state (Amin,2018)

Rural development is equated with changes in social, economic and structural institution relationships and processes. It is not just economic growth, but fair sharing of the socio-economic benefits resulting from the growth. So, this view assumed increased production, increased job opportunities, rooting out fundamental causes of poverty, disease and ignorance, generation of new employment, equitable distribution of income between rural and urban areas, widespread improvement in health, nutrition, housing, creation of incentives and better prices, sharing in decision activities and fundamental education which should involve men, women and children (Olley, 2011). Therefore, rural development can be said to be a process by which series of changes take place within a given rural population with the aim of improving the living condition of the population of the rural community. It is a set of policies with two main goals: encourage production and the wellbeing of the rural majority and ensure adequate production that will enable the uplifting of the development of rural areas. Against this background, the paper will investigate on the effects of local government administration on rural development in Asa local government area, Kwara state.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the several developmental programs like National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Universal Basic Education (UBE), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS etc embarked upon by Federal Government of

Nigeria in collaboration with state and local government facilitate development down to rural area yet, Asa local government is presumed to have provided less rural development in terms of provision of social amenities such as health care centre, quality education, poor road network, lack of drinkable or tap water. Many scholars have worked on local government administration and rural development such as (Okoli 2000, Ezeani 2006, Onuorah 2006, Olley 2011), However, studies on the effects of local government administration on rural development in Asa local government area, Kwara state is significant. This study therefore intends to fill the gap.

#### Research Questions

- i. What are the impacts of local government administration and rural development in Asa local government area?
- ii. What are the challenges confronting democratic governance in achieving rural development in Asa local government?

#### Objectives Of The Study

The objectives of this study are :

- i. Establish the nexus between local government administration and rural development in Asa local government area;
- ii. Identify challenges confronting local government administration in achieving rural development in Asa local government.

#### Conceptual Discourse

##### Local Government

Ezeani (2006) posits that “local government is generally seen as a veritable agent of development and grassroots participation in the democratic process”. Akpan in Effiom (2001) describes local government “as the breaking down of the country into smaller units or localities for the purpose of administration in which the inhabitants of the different units or localities concerned play a direct and full part through their elected representatives who exercise powers and undertake functions under the general authority of the state or National Government”. The National Guidelines for Reform of Local Government (1976) defines local government as: Government at (the) local level exercised through representative councils established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas.

##### Rural Development

Maboguje (1980) opines that rural development is concerned with the improvement of the living rural standards of the low-income people living in the rural area on a self sustaining basis through transforming the socio-spatial structures of their productive activities. It implies a broad based reorganization and mobilization of the rural masses and resources, so as to enhance the capacity of the rural populace to cope effectively with the daily tasks of their lives and with the changes consequent upon this. The Asbridge Conference on Social Development emphasizes that rural development should be designed to promote better living for all in the whole community with the active participation and initiative of the community. According to Mishra and Sharma (1979), rural development is not merely development of rural areas but also the development of quality of life of the rural masses into self-reliant and self-sustaining modern communities, so that each component of rural lives changes in a desired direction. Chambers (1983) mentions that the target group in rural development should include poor man, women and children, poorest of the poor amongst the small-scale farmers, tenants and the landless labourers. He has critically analyzed and stated that the poorest should be first put in order to narrow down the gap between the rich and the poor. Singh (1986) pointed out that development is not only an increase in income and infrastructure facilities but it also brings about changes in the attitude of the people. Development is not only implementing government package programmes but it means to develop and to obtain a desirable change of the rural people.

#### Literature Review

Nwaka (1999) argues that government imposition of rural development programme on the communities have been cog in the wheel of rural development. As he put it, government have often set community development; priorities without the participation of the target or relevant communities. He suggests that since government, communities are the engines of growth; government should play down its excessive control in betting out development goals and priorities for local communities. Okoli, (2000) contends that the British colonialists in Nigeria hatched community development ideology in order to under develop the people through his negative manipulation strategy. He regrets that his strategy has continued to be employed by indigenous rulers in the post-colonial state. He further contends that this strategy predicated upon the colonial policy of economic exploitation of the local area in an instrument used to sustain the self-interest of the ruling classes while the rural communities suffer under poor, hash and stagnated conditions.

Aborisade (1988) highlights the various development programmes designed by successive governments in Nigeria, which aimed at developing the rural communities. He gives an example of River Basin and Rural Development Authorities established in 1975 to promote rural development. He laments that in practice the scheme bloated bureaucracies feeding on mega million naira contracts for irrigation and other agricultural projects while the rural areas for which they are meant seemed to have recorded deeper in debilitating poverty. Nnoli (1980) sees self-help, as a strategy for rural development as a form of exploitation because, according to him, for the rural people it is viewed as the task resort to their survival due to government neglect. According to him, the community development process arises from the crying need of the rural population for social welfare services, unwillingness of the rural class to provide these amenities, the exploitation of the ruling class of the competition among communities for those social artefacts which are deemed to reflect social progress, and the exploitation by the ruling class at the tendency by Nigerians to invest more time, energy and resources and those tasks approved by their communities than those sanctioned by the national collectively via-the-state.

### **Methodology**

This research is a descriptive study designed to investigate the effects of local government administration on rural development in Asa Local Government Area, Kwara State. Both primary and secondary data were used. The population of this study is drawn from Asa local government area. The Simple random method is used for this study for avoidance of bias and ensures equal representation in response to questionnaire administered. The sample size for this study is 237 but 218 were retrieved. The first section captures bio-data information of the respondents while the second section captures information based on the concept of this research, using a 5-point Likert scale with "1= Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree". The data gathered would be analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) for easy analysis.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study adopts the Basic Needs Approach propounded by Paul Streeten in 1981. The approach assumes that the rural population requires certain basic human facilities which are essentially social in character. Accordingly, it proposes that development plan should be directed specifically at the provision of essential amenities so as to benefit the poor in areas such as power supply, health facilities, sanitary conditions, access road, nutrition education, housing, water supply (Paul,2007). As a concept, this approach seeks to relate development to the socio-cultural and economic realities of the rural populace.

It seeks to identify practical socio-economic and cultural constraints to the welfare and development of the rural people and formulating/executing plans to eliminate these constraints. It is a more contemporary approach to rural development as manifested in government's preference for it through the establishment of ADPS, RBRDAS, DFRRI. Through these various programmes, government has applied the principles embedded in this approach in its determination or efforts in realizing reasonable development in rural areas on a continuing basis.

### **Local Government Administration And Rural Development**

The local government, being the government nearest to the rural populace, is one of the best institutions for generating motivation and encouraging mobilization for self-help, as well as inducing the much needed wider participation of the local population in the decision-making process at the local level (Raji and Amin, 2017). It is estimated that rural local governments account for about 80 percent of the entire Nigeria population, and it is plausible to argue as pundits do, that the so-called third world is a rural world where any meaningful discussion of rural development really means not only talking of overall national development, but also because it is in the rural areas that the problem of inequitable distribution of resources or a marked lack of purchasing power and of grinding poverty in which the wretched members of society stagnate and stare one in the face with brutal clarity (Jide, 2010).

To guarantee the satisfaction of basic social needs, therefore, local responsibility and co-operation must be encouraged and that can best be developed through the participation of the local citizenry, not only in the affairs of their local government, but also in their own community affairs (World Bank, 1975). It is important to observe that the existence of the third tier system of government in Nigeria should at least, halt the deteriorating living conditions in the rural areas of this country. An effective local government will be better disposed than the state or federal governments not only to stem the grim reality of the "rising tide of rural poverty", but also better placed to evoke the spirit of "local co-operation", thereby being more able to galvanize and mobilize the support of local citizenry in participating in all the programmes that may affect them (Jide, 2010).

### **Challenges of Rural Development**

Some of the rural development programmes are designed to be genuine without a clearly defined source of funding eg cases of the Housing for ALL, Health for ALL, Universal Basic Education (UBE) and so on. They are often initiated before sourcing for funds from philanthropists and international donors which may never come. The armed conflicts ranging from ethnic, religious and communal issues which do not provide enabling environment for the implementation of sustainable development programmes in such areas. For instance, a situation where foreigners and government workers in some coastal rural areas are target of kidnappers demanding ransom is obviously not conducive for development work. Also, corruption poses a very big threat to rural development. There is lack of integrity, accountability and transparency on the part of people who are supposed to implement development projects in the rural areas. Adedire (2014) as cited in Nwakoby (2007) laments that public funds made for rural projects are stashed away in bank vaults in Europe and America while an overwhelming proportion of the population live in abject poverty.

Equally, lack of political-will and commitment, policy instability and insufficient involvement of the intended beneficiaries of the programmes, hence according to Chiloikwu (2006), most of them died with the government that initiated them. For example, development programmes like Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution, Free and Compulsory Primary Education, Low cost Housing Schemes which impact positively on the rural dwellers could not be sustained. Umebali and Akubilo (2006) list such challenges like: Vicious cycle of poverty, poor infrastructure, high population density, high level of illiteracy, low social interaction and local politics and rural - urban migration. Rural dwellers have been

considered as the thermometer through which one determines the impact of rural development. Adedire (2014) as cited in Obot (1989) justifies that the development policies geared towards the improvement of the rural dwellers remained almost a house - hold word without corresponding success especially at the implementation states.

Furthermore, the inadequacy of skilled workers to implement various developmental programmes can be solved by investing in human beings, Adedire (2014) as cited in Obada (2002) believes that the most permanent and deepest way to ensure ideal development in the rural areas is to invest in human beings which policies like National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Universal Basic Education (UBE), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) etc are meant to do. Also, a viable system of development at local government level must provide political leadership and guidance to plan and execute various programmes and policies. But this must be done without curbing local initiative and participation. Indeed, Bureaucrats and Technocrats are needed to assist and advise the local people. If these officials are to appear as masters of the people it will be difficult to change their mentality and attitude. The only way to integrate themselves with the local people is to appear as genuine servants of the people and to place themselves under the political authority of the locally recognized leaders. Also, the concern for corruption in Nigeria society must be removed in the conduct of local government.

Above all, provision of education, health and other social services must be the priority of the local government authorities to create new man with attitude prepared to challenge oppression and exploitation. The problem of lack of due consultation and non-involvement of local dwellers by the local government before embarking on developmental programmes can be eliminated if the local government can run an open administration that will encourage the local communities to express their opinions on issues that affect them, thereby allowing local government to implement programmes that are demanded by the people. Thus, this will prevent misplacement of priorities and wastage of resources (Adedire, 2014).

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

**Table 1: Demographic Data of Respondents**

Sex	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	144	66.1
Female	74	33.9
Total	218	100
Marital Status	Frequency	Percent (%)
Single	54	24.8
Married	164	75.2
Total	218	100
Age	Frequency	Percent (%)
18-30	56	25.7
31-40	102	46.8
41 and above	60	27.5
Total	218	100
Occupation	Frequency	Percent (%)
Civil Servant	164	75.2
Farmer	9	4.1
Artisan	28	12.8
Others	17	7.8
Total	218	100

Length of Service	Frequency	Percent (%)
Below 5years	56	25.7
Between 5 and 10years	58	26.6
10years and above	104	47.7
Total	218	100
Qualification	Frequency	Percent (%)
Primary/S.S.C.E/Equivalent	40	18.3
NCE/ND/DIPLOMA	71	32.6
BA/BSC/HND	96	44.0
MBA/MSC/PHD	11	5.0
Total	218	100

Source: Researcher's Field Survey 2018

The above table presents the respondents' profile. These include sex, marital status, and age, and occupation, length of service, qualification and staff category. A total of 218 of respondents completed the questionnaire. The respondents consisted of 144 (66.1%) male and female 74 (33.9%) responses to the survey. That shows that the majority of the respondents were male. The majority of the respondents are married. The distributions of respondents' age are categorized into three. Respondents from 31-40 years old are the majority, 102 (46.8%). The majority of the respondents are civil servants, 162 (75.2) and 10years and above 104 (47.7%) are the majority and the majority of the respondents are BA/BSc/HND holders, 96 (44.0%).

**Table 2: Impact of Local Government Administration on Rural Development in Asa Local Government**

Items	Opinion	Percent	Mean	Standard D ev ia ti o n	Remark
Asa local government ensures the availability of tap water to Asa populace.					
Strongly Disagree	73	33.5			
Disagree	74	33.9			
Undecided	21	9.6	2.2706	1.23883	Disagree
Agree	39	17.9			
Strongly Agree	11	5.0			
Total	218	100			

Asa local government provides borehole and well water for rural dwellers.					
Strongly Disagree	53	24.3			
Disagree	38	17.4	2.8991	1.38421	Agree
Undecided	28	12.8			
Agree	76	34.9			
Strongly Agree	23	10.6			
Total	218	100			
Grading and construction of roads is executed on yearly or quarterly basis by Asa local government council.					
Strongly Disagree	60	27.5			
Disagree	91	41.7	2.2844	1.13667	Disagree
Undecided	15	6.9			
Agree	49	22.5			
Strongly Agree	3	1.4			
Total	218	100			
Poor basic amenities have led to loss of lives.					
Strongly Disagree	7	3.2			
Disagree	14	6.4	3.9954	.99537	Agree
Undecided	24	11.0			
Agree	101	46.3			
Strongly Agree	72	33.0			
Total	218	100			
Asa local government has built hospital					
Strongly Disagree					
Disagree	87	39.9			
Undecided	58	26.6	2.2523	1.32527	Strongly Disagree
Agree	18	8.3			
Strongly Agree	41	18.8			
Total	218	100			
Asa local government builds modern market.					
Strongly Disagree	62	28.4			
Disagree	66	30.3	2.5321	1.33419	Disagree
Undecided	18	8.3			
Agree	56	25.7			
Strongly Agree	16	7.3			
Total	218	100.0			
Asa is ahead of other local governments in Kwara State in the provision of basic social amenities.					
Strongly Disagree	92	42.2			
Disagree	67	30.7	2.1239	1.28740	Strongly Disagree
Undecided	15	6.9			
Agree	28	12.8			
Strongly Agree	16	7.3			
Total	218	100			

Source: Researcher's Field Survey 2018



**Table 3: Challenges of Local Government Administration and Rural Development in Asa**

Items	Opinion	Percent	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Failure of leadership at local level negatively affects rural development in Asa.					
Strongly Disagree	16	7.3	3.6009	1.20345	Agree
Disagree	31	14.2			
Undecided	29	13.3			
Agree	90	41.3			
Strongly Agree	52	23.9			
Total	218	100.0			
Rural development is not adequate in Asa as a result of corruption.					
Strongly Disagree			3.4128	1.32130	Agree
Disagree	31	14.2			
Undecided	29	13.3			
Agree	18	8.3			
Strongly Agree	99	45.4			
Total	41	18.8			
	218	100.0			
There is lack of commitment and dishonest on the part of government officials.					
Strongly Disagree	16	7.3	3.5275	1.19587	Agree
Disagree	37	17.0			
Undecided	24	11.0			
Agree	98	45.0			
Strongly Agree	43	19.7			
Total	218	100			
Embezzlement and diversion of projects by politicians affect rural development.					
Strongly Disagree	29	13.3	3.3578	1.31998	Agree
Disagree	37	17.0			
Undecided	19	8.7			
Agree	93	42.7			
Strongly Agree	40	18.3			
Total	218	100			
Local government election under the control of State Government as provided by the Constitution hinder development at grassroot.					
Strongly Disagree	15	6.9	3.6514	1.19041	Agree
Disagree	29	13.3			
Undecided	28	12.8			
Agree	91	41.7			
Strongly Agree	55	25.2			
Total	218	100			
Misuse of state power over State Joint Account affects Asa local government to discharge its responsibilities as regard to provision of basic amenities.					
Strongly Disagree	14	6.4	4.1789	1.07768	Strongly Agree
Disagree	6	2.8			
Undecided	8	3.7			
Agree	89	40.8			
Strongly Agree	101	46.3			
Total	218	100			

Source: Researcher's Field Survey 2018

**Table 4: Correlations**

	AV_IMPACT2	AV_CHALLENGES2
Pearson Correlation	1	.188**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.005
N	218	218
Pearson Correlation	.188**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	
N	218	218

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 -tailed).

The table was used to know the correlation coefficient among the variables being used in the course of this study. Based on the results from the table above, it is being observed that challenges of rural development in Asa Local Government has the highest value .188 which is greater than the P-value of 0.05.

Table 5: Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.188 <sup>a</sup>	.035	.031	5.62244	1.222

The above table shows that R .188<sup>a</sup>, R Square is .035 Adjusted R Square .031 and Durbin Watson is 1.222.

Table 6: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	250.242	1	250.242	7.916	.005 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	6828.144	216	31.612		
	Total	7078.385	217			

a. Dependent Variable: AV\_IMPACT

b. Predictors: (Constant), AV\_CHALLENGES

The above table shows that significant value of regression is .005<sup>b</sup> and the sum of square of regression is 250.242

Table 7: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Constant)	1.943	.224		8.672	.000
	AV_CHALLENGES2	.170	.060	.188	2.814	.005

a. Dependent Variable: AV\_IMPACT2

The table shows that the difference between local government administration and rural development in Asa is .170 while significant level of AV\_CHALLENGES2 is .005. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected

### Discussion Of Findings

The study reveals that majority disagreed that Asa local government council ensures tap water available to populace. The majority of the respondents agreed that administration of Asa local government council supports availability of borehole and well water. From the findings, majority of the respondents disagreed that grading and construction of roads is executed quarterly or yearly basis by the council. The study revealed that the majority of the respondent agreed that poor basic amenities have led to loss of lives while the majority strongly disagreed that Asa local government builds hospitals. It is also discovered that majority of the respondents disagreed that Asa local government has facilitated modern market while the majority strongly disagreed that Asa local government establishes standard schools and maintenance of old schools. Also, majority of the respondent strongly disagree that Asa is ahead of other local governments in Kwara State in the provision of basic social amenities.

In the vein, the study reveals that majority of the respondent agreed that failure of leadership at local level negatively affects rural development in Asa. The majority of the respondents agreed that community or rural development is not adequate in Asa as a result of corruption.. The majority of the respondents also agreed that there is lack of commitment and dishonesty on the part of local government officials. The majority of the respondents agreed that embezzlement and diversion of projects by local government officials hinder development in Asa. The majority of the respondents agreed that local government election under the control of State Government as provided by the Constitution hinder development at grassroot .The majority of the respondents agreed that misuse of

state power over State Joint Account affects Asa local government to discharge its responsibilities as regard to provision of basic amenities. .

### Conclusion

This study examined the impact of local government on rural development as challenges of rural development in Asa local government of Kwara State. The study revealed that Asa local government is confronted with several problems which include corruption on the part of local government officials, failure of leadership. It has become obvious that corruption is the major issue in the developmental study of the local government councils in Asa Local Government of Kwara State, Nigeria. The paper concluded that rural development is largely undermined in Asa local government.

Asa local government should be more people-centred in approach, such that necessary collaboration or partnership with communities in its domain can facilitate the process of rural development. Both government and non-governmental programmes on development should be implemented and executed in Asa. There should be periodic monitoring of projects. Local governments should strive to raise and maintain revenue that would enable her deliver projects and services that guarantee quality living to the grassroots. Local government should not be under the financial control of State government. People should be enlightened and empowered. There should be a serious drive towards poverty reduction and inequality through people-oriented policies and programmes which would address the basic necessities of life. The political appointees and workers in Asa must imbibe the culture of leadership by example anchored on selfless service to the people with total commitment and sacrifice. Control measure should be put in place to check possible frauds and embezzlement. Political consideration in the allocation of contracts should be discouraged in Asa local government.

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