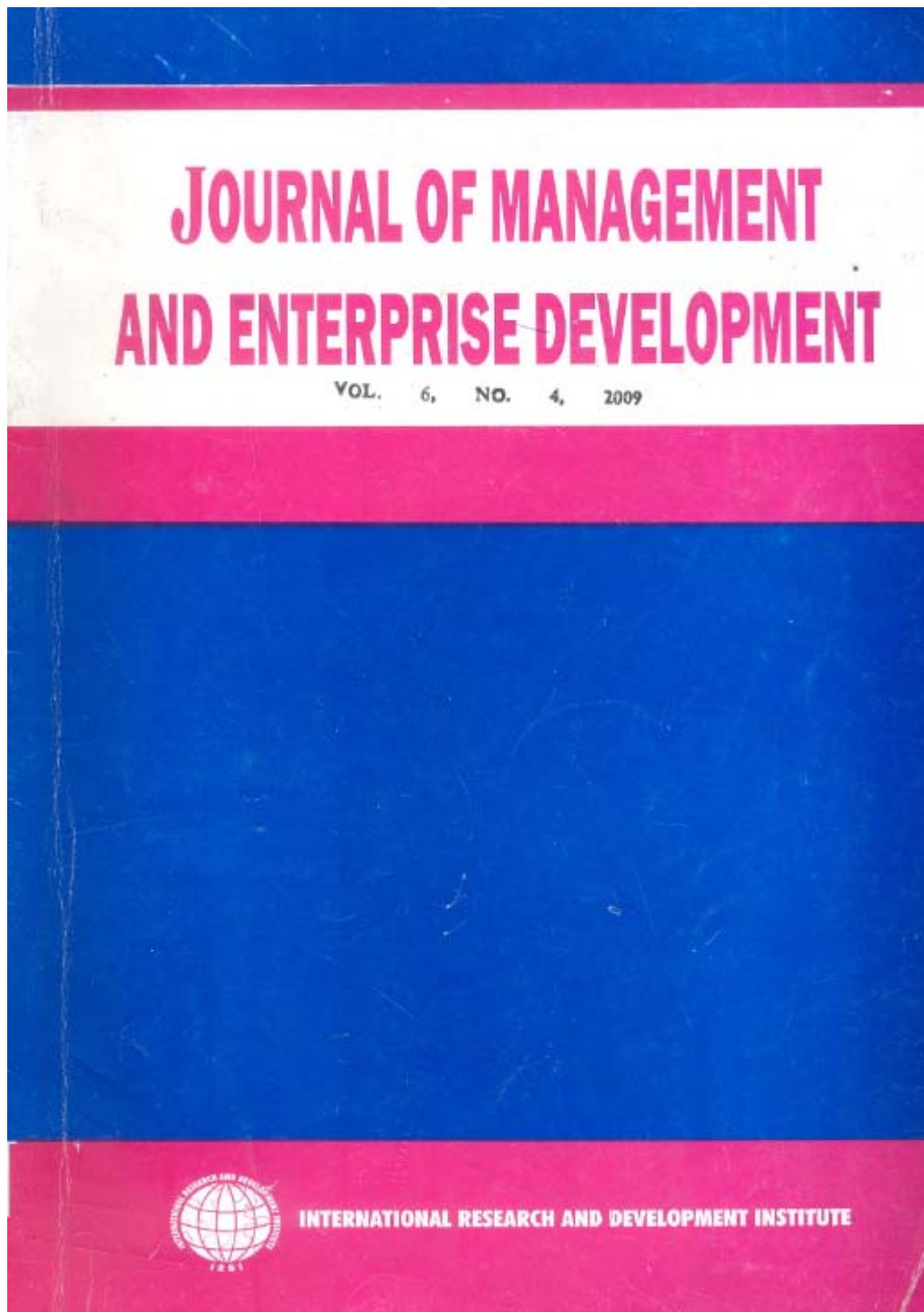


**JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT, 6/4, 2009**



# JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

ISSN 1117 - 1677

Volume 6, Number 4, 2009

## EDITORIAL BOARD

### Editor

**Dr. N. C. Ozigbo**

Department of Business Administration  
University of Abuja, Abuja, FCT, Nigeria

### Associate Editors

**Dr. P. U. C. Agundu**

Department of Banking and Finance  
River State University of Science and Technology  
Port Harcourt, River State, Nigeria

**Dr. K. Bello**

Department of Public Administration  
Adamawa State University  
Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria

**C. E. Ezeagba**

Department of Accounting  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University  
Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

**Dr. R. O. Aruofor**

Department of Economics, Banking and Finance  
Benson Idahosa University  
Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria

**Dr. K. U. Nnadi**

Department of Transport Management Technology  
Federal University of Technology  
Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria

**B. Sabo**

Department of Business Administration  
Ahmadu Bello University  
Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria

**Dr. K. N. N. Ezike**

Department of Agricultural Economic and Extension Management  
Ebonyi State University  
Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

**Dr. P. I. Osiegbo**

Department of Finance and Banking  
University of Port Harcourt  
Port Harcourt, River State, Nigeria

**Dr. P. C. Arinze**

Department of Management Science  
University of Uyo  
Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

**S. O. Uremadu**

Department of Accounting  
University of Abuja  
Abuja, FCT, Nigeria

**Dr. O. Ukwuoma**

Department of Project Management  
Federal University of Technology  
Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria

**M. A. Aremu**

Department of Business Administration  
University of Ilorin  
Uturu, Abia State, Nigeria

**Dr. R. O. Abiola**

General Studies Unit  
Federal University of Technology  
Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria

**G. Okpara**

Department of Marketing  
Abia State University  
Uturu, Abia State, Nigeria

Articles for publication should be sent to: *The Managing Editor, International Research and Development Journals, Kan Educational Books, No. 63 Itiam Street, P. O. Box 790, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.*  
[www.irdionline.com](http://www.irdionline.com)

# JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

ISSN: 1117 – 1677

Volume 6, Number 4, 2009

S/No.	Contents	Author(s)	Pages
1.	Building a New Reputation for an Organisation (The Effect of a Good Organisational Structure)	S. E. Okojie and J. O. Atunwa	1-6
2.	An Assessment of Investments and Risk Management in the Contributory Pension Scheme in Nigeria	Muhammad Shehu Tijjani	7-12
3.	Agriculture as a Springboard for Poverty Reduction in Nigeria	Asaju Kayode	13-18
4.	The Travails of Local Government in Nigeria from Pre-Colonial Era to Date	F. F. Nchuchuwe and V. O. Ajulor	19-26
5.	The Strength Ethnicity in Entrepreneurial Development in Nigeria	Josephine N. Okoli and Emmanuel U. Abianga	27-32
6.	Innovation and Sustainable Reinvention of Third World Organizations	Prince Umor C. Agundu and Cletus O. Amah	33-37
7.	Foreign Aid Poverty Alleviation in Africa	Adegboyega R. Raymond	38-47
8.	The Definition and Dissection of Retailer-Partners in Marketing: The Role of Satisfaction	Jibril, Abdulsalam, Sule, Yahaya Sado and Bolori, Bukar Umar	48-55
9.	Remittances and Microfinance Development: An Expository Analysis of Migrants Remittal Entrepreneurship in Nigeria	I. D. O. Chikoku and Okechukwu Dominic Nwankwo	56-64
10.	Consumer's Attitudes Toward Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) Communication Services (A Case Study of Intercellular, Maiduguri District)	Bolori, Bukar Umar, Jibril, Abdulsalam and Sule, Y. Sado	65-71
11.	Global Economic Melt Down, Nigerian Banking Industry should be Careful in giving Loans (Considering American Experience)	Sunday C. Nwite	72-75
12.	Does Firm Size Determine Capital Structure Choice of Nigerian Business Firms	Oba Efayena	76-86
13.	Human Capital Development and Economic Growth in Nigeria: The Seven Point Agenda Perspective	Augustine, Ujunwa and Emilia, Nwaokwa	87-92
14.	An Analysis of the Effect of Economic Reform on Corruption in Nigeria	Hamzat Soliu	93-98
15.	Assessment of Communication Skills in the Performance of Entry-Level Accountants – A Study of Select Organizations in Uyo	O. E. Eton	99-104
16.	An Empirical Analysis of the use of Coins Payment System in Nigeria	Umar Usman	105-108
17.	Possible Causes for the Poor Performance of Public Enterprises in Nigeria: A Case Study of the Nifor Oil Mill Company Limited in Benin-City	S. I. I. Orewa	109-117
18.	Outsourcing Tax Revenue Collection in State Tax Administration: Imperative for Increased Revenue Generation	James O. Alabede	118-122
19.	An Investigation of Nigerian Insurance Stocks Prices	Hamadu, D. and Mojekwu, J. N.	123-131
20.	Primary Mortgage Institutions, National Housing Policy and Sustainable Development Issues, Challenges and Prospects	Hilary U. Onyendi	132-136
21.	Agriculture and Commercial Banks' Lending in Nigeria: The Impact on Poverty Alleviation	Kehinde Olayinka Binuomoyo	137-143

# **THE TRAVAILS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA FROM PRE-COLONIAL ERA TO DATE**

**F. F. NCHUCHUWE AND V. O. AJULOR**

Department of Industrial Relations and Public Administration  
Lagos State University Ojo, Lagos State, Nigeria

## **ABSTRACT**

The paper examines the travails of Local Government in Nigeria since the pre-colonial era to date. It views the Local Government as though a veritable instrument for providing services to the people in the Local areas but has been lacking in its capacity and capability to do so. The paper attributes this to the political environment within which the Local Government finds itself which makes its supposed autonomy impracticable. The paper reveals that Local Government in Nigeria does not enjoy autonomy in its real sense especially in decision - making compared with what obtains at the state and federal levels. Similarly, it views its inability to generate enough revenue for its service delivery system as a crucial factor that has subjected it to control and constant interference by the federal and state governments. It therefore recommends that local government in Nigeria be granted relative autonomy through a review of the constitution to define its functions, power, sources of revenue and its relationship with other tiers of government. This, the paper posits will go a long way in making it a true and virile third tier of government in Nigeria. It will also enhance its service delivery capacity to improve the life of the teeming population at the local level.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Local government is grass root government established essentially to run the affairs of the local areas all over the world. It is created to perform specific functions within

defined areas. Local government is usually vested with substantial powers over local affairs. This includes the initiation and implementation of services and projects to complement the activities of the central governments. The role of local government is inevitable at the local level, in that, it is the closest government to the people with great impact (Ajulor, 2007). Most people relate with their local government than the central governments. In local government, the decision makers are usually from the local citizens who are known to the people. The local government understands the people better and are in the position to handle their problems fairly well than those at the center. Essentially is the fact that local government helps to decongest governance at the centre thereby, allowing the central governments room to address other issues. In Nigeria, the objectives of the local government as indicated in the 1979, 1989, and 1999 constitutions are among other things to make local government harbinger of national socio-political and economic development and the hallmark of participatory democracy. As a result, local government was made the third tier of Nigerian federation. This is also to enhance the service delivery capacity of the local government at the local level. (Yakubu, 2003). However, local government administration in Nigeria has not been able to effectively deliver services to the people. This is evident by the level of decay and underdevelopment at the local level. The people are impoverished and faced with the problems of lack of infrastructures like; good road, drinkable water, electricity, good health delivery system and security among others. These travails of the local government have been linked with constant interference by the central governments on the local government affairs. This has made it's supposedly operational freedom difficult. The inability of the local government to generate enough revenue internally for its services has also compounded its problems further. This is because it looks up to the state and the federal governments for funding. Apart from the pre-colonial period when local government in Nigeria enjoyed absolute autonomy, such was lost during the colonial and postcolonial periods. Several reforms were carried out in order to ameliorate the situation without success. This paper therefore, examines the travails of

the Local Government in Nigerian details and attempts some suggestions. It is subdivided into the following headings:

- The Concept of Local Government
- The Theory of Local Government: Models and Justifications
- Approaches to the Study of Local government in Nigeria
- The Travails of Local Government Administration in Pre-Colonial Period
- The Travails of Local Government Administration in colonial period.
- The Travails of Local Government Administration in Post-Colonial Period till date
- Conclusion

## **THE CONCEPT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Local government means different things to different scholars. According to Igbuzor (2002), local government is a grass root government. Yakubu (2003) refers to it as "the management of service and regulatory functions by locally elected councils and officials responsible for them, under statutory and inspectorial supervision of central legislations..." Bryon (1970) argues that local government is government by local bodies freely elected which while subject to the supremacy of the national (and state) government are endowed in some respect with power, discretion and responsibilities over their decisions by higher authority. The late Nigerian sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo (W.H.A 1952) reported that local government is a "system of government where local council make, accept responsibility for and implement their own decisions subject only to such control as may be exercised by the people through their own regional government". In support of the above, Robson defines local government as;

The conception of a territorial non-sovereign Community, possessing the legal right and the necessary organ to regulate its affairs. This in turn pre-supposes the existence of a

local authority with power to act on independently devoid of external control as well as the participation of the local community in the administration of its own affairs.

The United Nations Division of Public Administration as quoted by Ola defines local government as;

A political sub-division of a nation (or in a federal system, a state) which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs. including the power to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribe purposes. The government body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected.

The definitions above showed common trend. Awofeso (2004) summarizes them as;

- (a) an organized entity with distinct territorial boundaries
- (b) a corporate and legal personality with powers to perform some specified functions
- (c) a system of representation through election of principal officers, effective citizen participation and inbuilt accountability.
- (d) Substantial autonomy over finance and staffing with limited and complementary central control.

In the same vein, Olowu (2002) identifies the characteristics thus;

- (a) a local body which exist constitutionally separate from government and responsible for a significant range of services.
- (b) Own treasury, a separate budget to produce a substantial part of its revenue.
- (c) have its own staff with power to hire and fire, though there can be some officers seconded from the central government to fill top positions mutually.
- (d) Decision making in policy and procedure in the hands of a council which genuinely represents and is accountable to all parts of the local community.

- (d) Central government administrators to serve as external advisers and inspectors but have no role either as councillors or officers of the local authority.

The above criteria for local government call to question if actually local government exist in Nigeria.

## **THEORIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT: MODELS AND JUSTIFICATIONS**

### **Models of Decentralization**

Awofeso (2004), argues that the United Nation Document on Decentralization for National Development is a good reference point to discuss the different types of decentralized systems in the world. According to him the document classified decentralized systems of government into four categories, namely; comprehensive local government system, partnership system, dual system and integrated field administration system. Olowu argues that the classification was based in different level of autonomy, regional cohesiveness, and in addition to the range of basic (or technical) services performed at the local level. Table 1, below explains the United Nations decentralization models.

**Table 1: United Nations Decentralization Models**

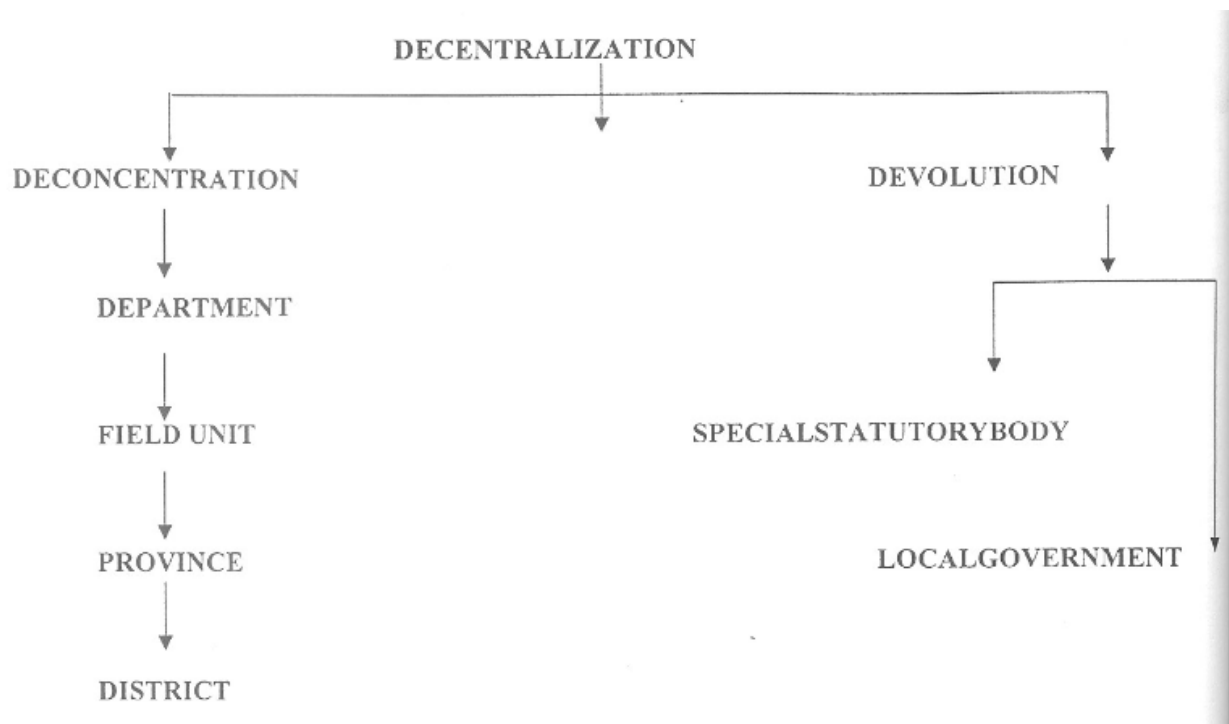
Type and National Examples	Provisions of technical services	
	Local government	Field Administration
1. comprehensive local Government system (India, Pakistan, Sudan at Various stages)	all	Support service only
2. Partnership system (Ceylon & English Speaking Africa)	Shared	Shared
3. Dual system (most Latin America notably Brazil)	None only legal power to perform	All
4. Integrated field system Administrative (South-East and Mid East Asia)	None	Direct central government Administration Field units Area coordinated.

*Source: Adopted from Awofeso (2004) "Issues in local Government Administration in Nigeria."*

The above table shows the level of autonomy enjoyed by local government and the countries practicing the various systems. It indicates the four models of decentralization with a particular method by which services are provided at the grassroots, either by the local government, field administration or both, and goes ahead to specify some countries that have practiced them. Another dimension that is related to United Nations Model of Decentralization is what Rhode (1992), refers to as "the form which decentralization can take". According to Awofeso, literatures on decentralization generally presents three related concepts—deconcentration, delegation and devolution as the different forms of that decentralization may assume, either in a bureaucratic authority or in a political authority. Mawhood, P. (1983), argues that the term local government refers to a political authority for the purpose of decentralizing political

power. The act of decentralizing power may take the form of decentralization or devolution. Decentralization involves delegation of authority to field units of the same department. Devolution on the other hand refers to a transfer of authority to local government units or special statutory bodies such as school boards, water board, refuge board, etc. Wraith (1971) explains the term local government within the concepts of decentralization and delegation and devolution. According to him, delegation has to do with the individual administrator, without it; there may be frustration and inefficiency. Decentralization which is the umbrella term refers to the transfer of authority on a geographic basis, whether by decentralization, that is, delegation of authority to field units or local government unit or special statutory bodies. In a simple language, decentralization refers to any particular service or function that ought to be performed by central authorities, but is delegated to field unit. Whereas, devolution refers to function that is perform by local authority with relative autonomy. Table 2 below clarifies it further;

**Table 2: Classification of Decentralization into Deconcentration and Devolution**



## JUSTIFICATION FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

There are two sets of theories identified by Gboyega on the justification of local government. The first set tries to justify the existence of or the need for local government on the ground of its essentiality to a democratic regime or for practical administrative purposes like responsiveness, accountability and control. The second set opposed the first that the existence of local government cannot be justified by any of those reasons mentioned above in that "local government institutions are neither democratic in their internal operations nor admit of responsiveness, accountability and control". According to the latter argument, local government and democracy stand at the extreme opposite ends of a polar or are in antithetical relationship to one another such that the weakness of one is the strength of the other. Gboyega states some of the scholars in the first category as Mill, Panter-Brick, Wilson, Bentham, Mackenzie, Harold Laski and Visaker. Their lines of arguments as expressed in Gboyega (1987) are;

- (a) services are made relevant to local people and are locally administered
- (b) provides education in citizenship
- (c) provides training in political leadership
- (d) makes available to the government information about localities which is essential for adequately meeting their need efficiently, and minimizes concentration of political power by diffusing it in reality.
- (e) The values stated above promote democracy and contribute to the development of democratic climate.

In domesticating the above theories, Oyediran (1998) argues with reference to Nigeria that;

- (1) certain functions of local government are purely local in character and should be locally demanded

- (2) local government gives a viable opportunity for educating citizenship (political education) in other words local government provides an opportunity for democratic decision making.
- (3) Local council is more easily held accountable to local groups and individuals than the other levels of government and their agencies.
- (4) Local government is a training grounds for state and national political leaders
- (5) Particularly in a developing country such as Nigeria, local government has important role to play in nation development.

#### **THE TRAVAILS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD IN NIGERIA**

In pre-colonial period in Nigeria, local government enjoyed complete autonomy. The people were able to cope with whatever problem brought about by their local conditions. This was because each community fashioned out the type of administrative structure that suited its environment. The local people were in charge of their own affairs and destiny. They did not receive order directly from anywhere. For example, in Yoruba land there was a fairly centralized system of government which was also fairly democratic. The Oba was the head of the political, cultural and spiritual activities of the kingdom. He was not an absolute ruler. This was because there were inbuilt checks and balances. If Oba exceeded his power he was immediately presented with calabash or parrot egg and he was expected to naturally commit suicide. The council of elders called Oyomesi assisted the Oba. The secret society called Ogboni checked the council of elders. There were police and Armed forces selected from Age grade responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the community. The Hausa/Fulani community in the north in pre- colonial political settings in Nigeria was run according to Muslim injunction. The emirate was headed by the Emir who was the supreme authority in a highly centralized system of government defined by the Qu'ran. He was vested with

religion, political and administrative power. He executed laws, maintained order and appointed advisory council as well as other district leaders to aid his administration and collection of taxes. He maintained his own police called the "Dongari", the head of the military called "Madawaki". Sakin Fada" head of the palace workers, "Maaja" was in-charge of the treasury, "Sakin Ruwa" in charge of fishing, "Sarkin Powa" in charge of Butchers. The Alkalis were the judges on the Sharia court used in the administration of justice. The "waziri" who was the most senior member of the council doubled as the Prime Minister. In the Eastern part of Nigeria during pre colonial period was the Igbos. It was acephalous society and practiced what was called the Age grade system of government. There was no single powerful leadership like the Emir in the North or Obas in the West. All the administrative, political, religious, economic activities were shared among the ranks and files of the Age Grade. When an important issue arose to be discussed within the extended family, the matter was resolved at the assembly made up of household heads and all adult males convened at which everybody had a right to speak. Decisions were arrived at collectively and the enforcements were also done collectively. In general, pre-colonial Nigeria local administration enjoyed reasonable autonomy. The people understood the system and supported it. Laws were made with the consent of the people. Corrupt practices were minimal compared with what obtains today. For example, in the North where the Emir runs a supreme authority; the people have absolute trust in the Qu'ran. There was no question of injustice. The laws and decisions were enforced without fear or favour.

## **THE TRAVAILS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION DURING COLONIAL PERIOD**

It will not be out of place to say that Local government travails in Nigeria actually started during British colonial administration. This is because it was during this period that the freedom hitherto enjoyed by the local administration over their decisions and policies ceased and corrupt practices began. Let us examined how these began to surface. The

first is the issue of autonomy or put in another way limited or hindered freedom. It started with the conversion of the existing structures of traditional administration by introducing indirect rule (Oluyemi-Kusa, 1990) which entails the use of traditional rulers and chiefs to indirectly rule the people. Thus, the traditional rulers, though still commanded respect from their people but lost the freedom they enjoyed in ruling the people direct. Their administration over the people was subjected to strict colonial control. Other features of the colonial administration were; that the local government was encouraged to engage in economic enterprises, to raise loan, acquired land and raise fund. During this period, local government could not embark on developmental activities. This was because there were no enough funds. The local government was mainly concerned with payment of salaries and the maintenance of skeletal services such as dispensary. Another feature was that as a result of the level of control of local government activities and expenditure by the colonial officials, there was high level of accountability borne out of various monthly checks on the finances of the local government carried out by the Divisional officers. The second issue is that of corruption. Following the introduction of representative councils in the 50's Nigerians were elected into various councils. In the East, there were County, District and Local councils. Each of the local councils was independent of the other. Direct election was introduced with over 80 percent of council members elected. The new council took over the management and control from the agents of native authority system — the Residents and the District officers — there was relative autonomous. This is because the council was able to raised tax, recruited its own staff and awarded contract. The new system introduced was foreign and was marred with corruption, embezzlement and high-handedness of the council officials who were concerned about their personal gains and selfish interests and introduced different devices to achieve it (Awofeso, 2004). The ensued unhealthy rivalry and competition among the councillors over who gets what of resources, spelt doom for the system. The regional government took steps to ameliorate the situation with little or no success. For instance, it promulgated a law in 1955 to curtail the activities of the local councils which limited them to award contracts not exceeding 100 pounds. Minister for

local government was empowered to exercise control over the local authority. The minister was also given power to dissolve any council that erred and order a new election or appoint a caretaker committee. He could alternatively appoint a field officer if he wished. This action apart from addressing corruption, also took away the temporary autonomy enjoyed by the council. Thus, local government activities were totally subjected to the control of regional government. However, the system survived up to 1960. While the Regional Government thrived, the local government remained underdeveloped. In the West, the three tier system of Divisional, District and local councils were also introduced. Election was also conducted to elect council officials on universal adult suffrage. The elected officials had 3/4 of the council while the remaining 1/4 was left for the traditional institutions. Local government inspectorate and local government service commission were created to control the activities of local government. Despite the control there were high level of corruption and misappropriation of funds. There was also conflict among the councils just like the Eastern region. The 1958 amendment law in the Western region was to address the problem of local councils. The law further empowered the governor's appointed sole administrator or management committee ' to displace the councils. The travails of local government during this period in the western region were similar to that of the East as a result of which there was also no positive development. In the north, with the connivance of the northern elites, the colonial native authority held on to power. This continued till 1958 when a representative government was introduced. As a result of excessive control on local government, the regional government thrived while the local government similarly remained underdeveloped. The travails during this period were generally lack of autonomy and corrupt practices in the local governments. The British people were in-charge and the local administration was arranged to suit British purpose of colonialism and domination.

## **THE TRAVAILS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN POST-COLONIAL PERIOD TILL DATE**

The travails of local government in this period can be examined first from Independence to 1966. This was the first indigenous government in Nigeria which was infested with various crises. This was attributed to the fact that, the immediate postcolonial Nigeria was marked with spate of forces, an event promoting political instability. Local government was also affected. Local government was far from being autonomous. Politicians were able to control local government council. Each party ensures that its supporters were in control of local government. It was interesting to note that the councils were dominated by party rivals and were dissolved or deliberately refused grant. The government in power also makes sure that the areas controlled by the opponents were not supplied with basic amenities like electricity, water and good roads. When the oppressive technique and the intimidation failed, the government in power would dissolve the council and appoint a sympathetic administrator. The freedom of action of the local government became a far dream (Oluyemi-Kusa, op cit). The local government was unable to deliver services to the people. There were divisions, strives, acrimonies, agitations and the attendant political upheaval culminated in military intervention in Nigerian politics through the coup of 1966. This brought about another era of local government travails in Nigeria. The military which took over power in 1966 started the balkanization of the Nigerian State from 12 in 1967 to 36 in 1996, apart from the federal capital territory, Abuja. The creation of state by the various military administrations destroyed the public services to the extent that it destroyed whatever the degree of institutionalization that was achieved. This was because each time additional state was created the existing bureaucratic apparatus was disbanded and a new one set up. This involved the transfer of personnel and office location. It thus seriously affected local government effectiveness. The various military governments also carried out reforms. In 1976, the Federal Military Government imposed a national system of local government in all states of Nigeria. Through this reform, 301 local

governments were created on uniformed basis and they became the third tier of government in Nigeria. As a result of this, each state government set up a local government service board which was responsible for employment, posting and disciplinary matters of all serving local government staff. Also, the various systems of local government involved in each region and state were abolished. The 1976 reform showed clearly the federal government direct involvement in the local government affairs and with pretension of solving the problem of poor finance, untrained staff and political interference by the state. In 1984 Dansuki committee reports gave the traditional ruler the power to vet the major functions and decisions of the local government before they became effective. This subordinated local government to the control of unelected body. In 1988, there was an attempt to reform local government. The reform abolished the various state ministries of local government and later substituted them with Local Government Board, thereby, making local government autonomy a mirage. One would have expected the 1999 constitution to have addressed the mistake of the past in local government but it complicated it further. As Khemani (2009) puts it, "the current constitution (1999) in Nigeria is ambiguous..." For example, the constitution under section 7 (1) guaranteed the system of local government by democratically elected council but confused the issues that every state shall provide for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and function of the council. Igbuzor (2002) argues that the constitution does not provide for the tenure of office holders of local government. The constitution under the concurrent list gave the national assembly the power to make laws with respect to the registration of voters and procedure regulating election of the local government council. The same constitution gave power to the state houses of assembly to make law with respect of election to the local council. The 1999 constitution brought about another civilian government of President Olusegun Obasanjo. The travails of local government by this period were enormous. Before this period it was a known fact that all is not well with local government administration in Nigeria. There were several contending issues such as:

- (a) Impeachment and actual impeachment of local government chairmen. This happened as a result of the incessant conflict between the legislative and the executive arms of the local government during the fourth republic. The case of Akwa-Ibom alone was instructive. In less than three years, three cases of impeachment of local government chairmen were recorded. There were other cases throughout the Federation. (Awofeso, 2004).
- (b) Many additional local governments were indiscriminately created by the various state governments. The creations of these local governments were politically motivated without economic viability considerations.
- (c) There were zero allocations to the councils. Some state governments also withheld some money meant for the council. Many of the councils could not carry out their developmental activities.
- (d) There was also a controversy over the tenure of office of the local government chairman. This also forms part of the conflict. The state houses of Assembly of various state legislated 3 years tenure for the local government chairmen. The chairmen on the other hand preferred 4 years tenure like the governors and the president (Awofeso, op cit.).

The above stated reasons and others led to the desire to reform the local government in 2003. The Obasanjo administration set up an 11-Man committee headed by the late Etsu of Nupe on the reform. The committee was to examine among others; problem of inefficiencies and high cost of governance in the local administration with a view to reduce wastage. Review of the performance of local council and considers the desirability or otherwise of retaining them as the third tier of government. The committee submitted the report to the president in which part of the recommendation was to grant local government autonomy to make it a truly third tier of government. The issue of autonomy thus remains a major cause for concern in the Local Government system of Nigeria.

## CONCLUSION

In the light of the above, it is clear that the political environment where the local government operates in Nigeria is not conducive to allow for effective service delivery at the local level. It does not have freedom over its decisions and policies, as a result of constant interference by the upper tiers of governments during the colonial and postcolonial era. It is therefore, recommended that local government in Nigeria should be properly provided for in the constitution just as the Federal and State governments. The constitution should clearly specify its process of establishment, power, and function, sources of revenue and its relationship between the state and the Federal government. This will also reduce the conflict between Federal and State governments over the local government. The local government should relate with the state Government equally as the state relates with the Federal government and should be free to make its decisions without interferences. No power should allow the state governor or the president to remove the chairman of a local government at will. The money accrued to the local government from the Federation account should be allocated directly and the state Government should not be empowered to deduct from the allocations. Finally, the political aspect of local Government should be separated from the administrative aspect, this is the essence of modern day public administration which is based on efficient and effective delivery of service to the people without fear or favour. By these, we can have a virile local Government in Nigeria.

## REFERENCES

- Ajulor, O. V (2007), "Local Government Autonomy and Political Environment in Nigeria" in Folarin et al (eds) Environment, Values and Policies in Nigeria, Lagos, EBAN Publication.
- Awofeso, O. (2004). Issues in Local Government Administration in Nigeria. Lagos: Lisjohnson Resources Publishers.
- Awolowo, O. (1952), in " Western House of Assembly Debates", July, Cited in Yakubu, J. A. (2003), (ed), Socio-Legal Essays in Local Government Administration in Nigeria, Ibadan, Demyaxs Law Books.
- Bryon, S. M (1970), Local Government, Nelson Hall Co.
- Gboyega, A. (1987). Political Values and Local Government in Nigeria. Lagos: Malthouse Press.
- Igbuzor, O. (2002). "Local Government Reform and Constitutional Review in Nigeria" in Folarin et al (eds), Environment, Values and Policies in Nigeria. Ria. Lagos: EBAN Publishers.
- Khemani, S. (2009); "Local Government, Accountability for Service Delivery in Nigeria in Public Sector Review, volume 1, Issue 01, Jan- Mar, pp76-91
- Mawhood, P. (1983), Decentralization: "the Concept and the Practice" Mawhood (ed) Local Government in the Third World. The Experience of Tropical Africa, New York, John Willey & Sons.
- Olowu, D. (2000), Stalled Decentralization Reforms. The Nigeria case and Lessons from other African Countries. Lagos: Heinemann Books.
- Oluyemi, K. (1990). "Theoretical Aspect of Structural Reorganization of Local Government Council in Lagos State of Nigeria 1969-1979", Lagos: LASU Social Sciences Journal, December.
- Oyediran, O. (1998), Introduction to Political Science. Ibadan: Oyeleye Oyediran, Consults International. United Nations, (1962), "Decentralization for National Government", New York, United Nations. Wraith, R. (1972). Local Administration in West Africa. London: G. Allen and Unwin.
- Yakubu J.A. (2003), "The Legal Implications of Role Performance in Acting Capacity" in Yakubu , (eds. Socio-Legal Essays in Local Government Administration in Nigeria, Lagos, Demyaxs Law Books.