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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Local government in Nigeria could have been said to have started when politicians assumed leadership role of regional legislators under colonial reforms. That gradually led to regional self-government in the early 1950s. Before this, under the native system, indirect rule was introduced. Indirect rule sought to rule the local people through their

local chiefs. (Abia, B.E 2003:5)

Nigeria's rural area have for many decades remained backward and static, especially at a time when global economy is experiencing tremendous change. This is more evidence after the country's civil war(1967-70) featuring others. Upsurge petroleum revenue, the consequent ability of government to finance large construction prove of in urban centre, as well as unprecedented migration of able bodied youth from rural urban center, all combine to force a decline in rural area development (Tomiro, 1995:12).

The essence of creating local government any where in the world stems from the need to facilitate development of the grassroots. Local government councils are constantly structuring to improve the effectiveness and efficiency service delivery. Most especially, in the area of health care and education services, local government in Nigeria are striving to ensure that priorities are not misplaced in this country Nigeria in the provision of service delivery to their rural area or rural dwellers (Ajayi, 2000:70)

Local government in its real sense, is very vital in the socio-economy polity of Nigeria, this is so because it is the nearest form of government to the common man in the observed rural settings everywhere. However, not every or much has been achieved by the way of development of rural area. Largely due to lack of focus administration of local government councils, if any are is in doubt of this assertion, then such a person perhaps may not have paused to ask for reason why almost rural villages lack good roads, electricity, school, healthcare centers and social amenities in which Mopa-Moro local government is not left out. What happen to all the resources been allocated to these local government areas?

The rural development of rural dwellers has been concerned of every responsive and responsible local government. Development remains insignificant if development does not positively affect the lives of people in the society (Lawal, 2000:46)

Further, past administration has recognize the important of rural areas in the general development strategies in the country. Hence, various programmes have designed and operated and relevant institutions have been established to promote the rural development. One of the paramount programme designed to achieve this aims in 1976 local government reforms by Murtala administration of General Murtala and General Olusegun Obasanjo.

Local government are expected to carry out regional policies with respect to ameliorate poverty, unemployment etc in the 21st century you may wish to imagine that living in most rural Nigeria is traumatic, if you care to observe, you will see men and women, boys and girls pursuing menial activity or task just to survive. Local government has undergone very numerous and constant reforms aimed at evolving a viable system that could serve the purpose of which local government is created. In essence, local government should be a machinery for rural development and transformation, but research findings and empirical evidence have shown that most local government activities have not adequately mobilized the people for rural development activities (Ijere, 2000:16).

The year 1976 was never a product of many years of socio-economic and political changes. It further makes a water-shed when the whole country acquired a uniform

provision in its local government system. Hence, policies and strategies are made for implementation as a means to an end. Therefore, local government administration should be a strategy for socio-economic and political development. From below show that all resources at the disposal of the country can be effectively and efficiently tapped to achieve and accelerate basic needs. It is through this system that basic and necessary facilities are provided which are geared towards improving and changing living conditions in the rural areas. In fact, majority of the population are left disorganized (Titus 2000:2-6).

Consequently, local government is a form of devolution of power of state. It is the government of the grass root which is designed to set up as an instrument for rural development or transformation. From ideological perspective, local government fosters the principle of democracy as local government brings government nearer to the people and if properly designed it goes to mass participation of people in the process of government.

Thus, local government is designed to achieve its goals, that is, multi-dimensional goals of economic, social and political development. For local government to achieve its goals, it should be appropriately organized/structured, adequately funded and sufficiently staffed with well qualified and consciously trained and motivated, competent and educated personnel.

Furthermore, local government in Nigeria started when her politician assumed leadership of regional legislative under colonial reforms that led to regional self government in the 1950. The instituted reform that gradually transformed local government authority from traditional rulers to elected representatives in the process, they created vacuum and space for political participation for local elites especially western educated elites who hitherto played little or no role in local governance (Egi J. 1997:45)

In addition to this, local governments in Nigeria have undergone very numerous and constant reforms aimed at evolving a viable system that could suit the purpose for which local government is created. Before the advent of colonial administration various traditional political communities in Nigeria were governed through the instrumentalities of their traditional political institutions. In the Northern part of Nigeria, the Hausa/Fulani operated a highly centralized hierarchically organized authoritarian large Fele state and were ruled by powerful Emirs. The Yoruba of the western Nigeria had centralized freedom in which the Oba's who played constitutional role. In Eastern Nigeria, the Igbo have fragmented and diffused autonomous local government of which Ozo title association, the council of elders shared in political authority with the Chief of the community.

In the light of this, local government should be a machinery tool for rural development, but research finding and empirical evidence seems to have shown that, most local government have not adequately mobilized the people for rural development activities. Consequently, this study will like to stress out the impact of local government on rural development and the way forward.

Similarly, the expediency of local government everywhere in the world stems from the need to facilitate development at the grassroots. The importance of local government is a function of its ability to generate sense of belonging, safety and satisfaction among its populace. All forms of government regimes or political systems for ensuring national

administration development and political efficiency are found in the concept and practice of local government. Whatever is the mode of government, integration, administration and development (Okoli O. 1998:31).

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

The argument for giving increased attention to the problem of rural areas is pioneer and widely acceptable by scholars. It has become a tremendous and pretentious phenomenon in Mopa-Muro local government, since the government was expected to serve as effective instrument of rural development.

However, the level of effectiveness of local government in rural development would be affected by the following variables, finance, inadequacy of skilled workers, problems of participation and involvement.

Many people in the rural live on miserable low income; as a result, their standard of living is very poor. Apart from this, they do not have access to social amenities and other basic necessity of life such as water, electricity, roads, health care services etc.

One of the problem of Mopa-Muro local government can be said to be the rush with which rural programmes are been implemented in the country. The rural communities view need and priorities are not always reflected in policies and programmes meant for rural development.

Secondly, a low level of participation by the poor, even through the ultimate shareholders in the rural development efforts are the rural poor, all often they are derived a voice in the formulation, implementation and management of rural development programmes.

Thirdly, most rural development programmes have had a single vector or intension and have failed to confront the multi-dimensionality of rural areas in Nigeria.

Fourthly, absent of thorough knowledge of local system and the needs of rural people as well as grass root action research and service programme designed primarily to test how to plan and implement rural development programmes within the co-operation of recipient often made governments rural development efforts to fail.

Fifthly, the lack of political will and stability, there has been no continuity in rural development efforts in Nigeria state since independence. Each successive regime introduced its rural development programmes. Such programmes ends with the termination of the regime introduced it.

In addition, the rural areas are lacking so many things among which are good roads, good educations, good water supply and good health care system etc. these problems looting about rural-urban drift which had created a myriad of socio-economy problems for both rural and urban centers. As a result of rural-urban migration, rural areas have been deprived of human resources, engage mostly in the agricultural sector, and have the low level of productivity. The aftermath of this scenario includes housing problems in cities, unemployment and increase in crime rate.

Furthermore, inadequacy of skilled workers is another major obstacle confronting much local government, same form few local council in Lagos state and perhaps, some Southern

states, local government generally has experiencing death of skilled, technical and professional staff like qualified Engineers, medical Doctors, Accountants, Town planners, to mention but a few.

In the same vein, problem of participation and involvement is another obstacle of local government. For the past decades, more euphemistic phrases have been employed to justify people's participations at the grass roots. They include: "Development from below", Bottom-up approach to the development", popular participation", bringing government closer to the people's etc. In addition and corrections, research and physical observation have shown that there has been more hue and cry than action.

Similarly, misplaced priority poses another problem. Hardened and limited resources accrued to and raised by local government are always mismanaged. Priorities are misplaced, projects are done not accordingly or as demanded by the people but regrettably in line with selfish and agreement of the political leadership in collaboration with the senior bureaucratic at the local government level of administration.

The degree of external influence and intrusion in local government affairs by higher level of government is worrisome and needs to re-valuation. Situation where the state governor unconstitutionally dissolved the entire elected councils officers without proper investigation on spurious allegation is not good for the future of the local government administration in the country.

All these foregoing issues have prompted this research work and it intends to shed more light on problems of local government by attempting answer some question associated with these questions below:-

- a. Has Mopa-Muro local government contributed to the development of her rural areas?
- b. Has Mopa-Muro local government area been able to utilize her monthly allocation for rural development?
- c. Are there some positive or negative effect of Mopa-Muro local government in the development of rural area?
- d. How as Mopa-Muro local government affected rural development?

Despite all the programmes designed to improve rural areas, such as epoch-making, Directorate for Food, Road and Infrastructural (DFFRI), River Basin and Rural Development Authorities (RBADAS), Agricultural Development Project (ADP), the school to land programmes, Better Life Programme for Rural Women (BRP), and the family support programmes to mention a few. The rural dwellers still complain of low per-capital income, lack of basic roads, pipe-borne water, electricity, health care centers, etc.

This has necessitated this research to access the role of the local government in rural development in Nigeria with specific attention to Mopa-Muro local government of Kogi State.

### **1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The overall aims and objectives of this study is to evaluate the performance or roles and effort of Mopa-Muro local government area in rural developments specifically. The objectives of the study are as follows:-

- a. To find out the extent to which Mopa-Muro local government areas is identifying with

the rural development of the rural areas.

- b. To examine the extent to which the general objectives of the rural development has been attained in Mopa-Muro local government area
- c. To find out major achievement and implement facing development aspiration of Mopa-Muro local government area.
- d. To ascertain whether sufficient funds have been made available to Mopa-Muro local government area or not.
- e. To explore and recommend appropriate alternative line of actions that will revive and sustain the rate of Mopa-Muro local government in rural development.
- f. To develop pro-efficiency in systematically examining rural development problems
- g. To identify the critical area of concerns in the field addressing issues of rural neglect

#### **1.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Local government is located in energy nook and cranny of the state. The scope of this study is basically limited to Mopa-Muro local government area in Kogi State.

In this study, there are lot of difficulties were encounter. In the first place, these were difficulties in searching for available data as a result of poor record keeping of the local government administrators and most of the data were not published as to find in our libraries. As a result of these, this work can be said to be basically limited to Mopa-Muro local government area of Kogi State. In which the study covers 1999 to date which mark Nigeria fourth Republic.

#### **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

One of the basic reasons of this study is the desire to contribute to the ongoing clamoring of more viable and workable rural settings development in Nigeria

- i. Moreso, the product of this study will be very useful in the area for policy/decision makers, scholars and the society organization on how best to organize and promote grassroot development.
- ii. This study will assist local government administrators to know the problem faced by the local government which would assist greatly checking their lapses of previous administrator and as a results, it will assist greatly in the provision of essential that Nigeria can be said to be interested in establishing strong local government that are capable of achieving the triple objectives of promoting political participation, delivering efficient service and mobilizing local resources. The reason is not that far-fetched because the population of the country (Nigeria) is more of the grassroots.
- iii. Last but not the least, this study will also serve as a contribution to ensuring literature on local government and rural development in Nigeria.

#### **1.6. RESEARCH STATEMENT**

Is it true that many people in the rural live on miserable low income; as a result, their standard of living is very poor, do not have access to social amenities and other basic necessity of life such as water, electricity, roads, health care services etc.

Can local government problem said to be to be as a result of the rush with which rural programmes are been implemented in the country. The rural communities view need and

priorities are not always reflected in policies and programmes meant for rural development.

Thus, low level of participation by the poor, even through the ultimate shareholders in the rural development efforts are the rural poor, and all often they are deprived a voice in the formulation, implementation and management of rural development programmes.

How sure that, most rural development programmes have had a single vector orientation and have failed to confront the multi-dimensionality of rural areas in Nigeria.

## **1.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In any research or finding these are two methods of gathering data and they are categorized into two in which are primary and secondary method of data collection.

i. Primary sources: deals with the raw data which includes the administration of questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion etc. while

ii. Secondary source:- This source consists of readily available compendia and already compiled statistical statements and reports whose data may be used by researcher for their studies, e.g. Reports to government department, sample survey of organization reports of trade association, publication of international organization such as UNO, IMF, World Bank, Financial Journals, Newspaper etc.

However, for the purpose of the study, secondary method of data collection was used. The data analysis was based on qualitative method that is, information was gathered from secondary source were analyzed through content analysis.

## **1.8. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

### **1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

According to Remi A. (2008:3-7), local government is a political division of 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 exact labour for prescribed or otherwise locally selected.

Oxford Concise Dictionary of politics (2009:312) define local government as a governing institution which has authority over a sub-national territorially defined area, in federal systems a sub-state territorially defined area.

### **2. RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Rural development in accordance to Ayodele (2002:15), is a strategy which is designed to bring about an improvement in the social and economic life of the rural communities

Furthermore, Ekong E. (2003:356) defines rural development as a vital in the general process of rural development. It entrances prompt delivery of inputs to farmers and evacuation of farms produce to market. He also defines rural development as a process of which a set of technical, social-economic condition in order to achieve harmony and balance both on the regional and national levels (Ekong 2003:361).

### **3. INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Aminuzzaman (1988) in Ayodele (2002:1.6) defines it as a new and complex organization innovation in which aims to serve target population through multi-agency efforts and in which heterogeneous technologies several sources and collective initiatives are

required to attain its broad goals.

## **1.9. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

The research work is organized into five (5) chapters. The first chapter focuses on the background to the study, statement of the problems, objectives of the study, scope and limitation of the study, significance of the study research question, and research methodology definition of the terms and finally terminates with organization of the study.

The chapter two dwells on the conception and theoretical framework, local government, purpose of local government, role of local government to rural development, area of which ideal government facilitate rural development, functions of local government, Local Autonomy, Development, purpose of Development, Rural Development, Nature of Rural Development, Integrated Rural Development, features of Integrated Rural Development, Nexus between Local Government and Rural Development

Theories/Theoretical framework which is comprises of Development school Approach, Human Development Approach and Localist Theory.

Further, chapter three (3) concentrates on the historical background of Mopa-Muro local government area, geographical location, physical features of Mopa-muro local government, occupation and language of the people, number of districts that form the local government area, organizational structure of Mopa-muro local government area and how Mopa-muro local government has helped in the development of her community members

Furthermore, chapter four focuses on the functional task of local government institution in Nigeria, problematical issues in the local administration of local government in Nigeria and evaluation of findings.

Lastly, chapter five (5) comprises of summary, conclusion and recommendation.

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