

## **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF EDE NORTH AND EDE SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OSUN STATE, NIGERIA (1999-2014)**

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### **Abstract**

Local governments in Nigeria are not optimally performing as expected partly due to insufficient fund, corruption and lack of autonomy. The focus of this paper is to examine environmental factors affecting the administration of Ede North and Ede South local governments Osun State, Nigeria. The paper was descriptive, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The two local governments were purposively chosen as no study in that respect had been conducted, while copies of questionnaire were distributed among one hundred respondents selected through random sampling techniques covering officers on GL 07 and above. Six personalities were interviewed including the Timi Agbale of Ede and religious leaders. The data obtained were organized as table with frequency counts while the analysis was descriptive. The paper found the influence of colonialism, Godfatherism, corruption, excessive societal pressure, poor financing and undue interference from state government as major environmental factors while the effect of traditional institution, ethnicity and religion were not pronounced. The paper concluded that the lack of political will by the political class to make Local government work and too much expectations from privileged ones for personal gains could be addresses if Section 8 (6) of 1999 Constitution is amended to minimize state government domineering influence. In addition, political education, inclusive government and the transfer of the functions of State Electoral Commission through constitutional process to Independence National Electoral Commission to guarantee the emergence of enduring democracy at the local level.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In a democratic system of government, there are high expectations of the dividend of democracy. The needs of the people for personal security, social order, welfare, social services and general prosperity are expected to be delivered as public goods by the government as observed by Mokoro, (2005). Consequently, in order for these needs and public good to be met, governments and the public servants according to Vigoda (2000) have to work faithfully and diligently for the sake of society and its members. It is important to note that it is almost impossible to meet the needs of the citizens without taking into consideration the interaction between public administration and its environment. This is because the environment, both internal and external defines to a large extent the structure and functioning of the administrative system, while the administrative system also has the capacity to modify its environment or be modified.

It is imperative to note that for these public good to have a significant effect on the people especially at the grassroots level, the invaluable role of local government is indispensable. In this sense, the Local Government is expected is to bring government closer to the people by facilitating effective and efficient service delivery and encourage political participation and the involvement of locals in the management of their affairs. Such provision of infrastructural development according to Agba, Akwara & Idu (2013) is expected to be executed in a satisfactory, timely, effective and adequate manner. Therefore, whatever is the system of government, local government being the third tier especially in a federal state like Nigeria has been essentially regarded by Arowolo (2008) cited by Idalonu (2015) as path to, and generator of national integration, administration and development.

While there is no universal definition of the term environment, a little bit of consensus exists that it encompasses issues like water, land, air, and the socio-economic, political, biological and cultural aspects of human existence Alao (2012). The UNDP (2001) defines it is a complex weave of physical, chemical and biotic factors that interact with each other and impact upon all living things and their surroundings. By implication and to a large extent, environment cannot but influence the administrative system in which it is situated.

The present land of Ede which has been an ancient town in Yoruba land was traditionally believed to have been founded about 1500 by Timi Agbale (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2010). It is situated in Osun state and about eight kilometers from the state capital, Osogbo Ede community and its environ was carved into two local governments. These are Ede North and Ede South Local Governments with a combined population of 159,866 (NPC, 2006). There is a consensus of opinion among scholars that LGs in Nigeria are not optimally effective and efficient in service delivery. The presence of the two LGs is expected to bring development to the community faster than what is obtainable at present. Previous studies such as Kyenge (2013) that focused on indiscipline, misplaced priority, unskilled staff, financial challenges and autonomy as reasons for poor performance. Ejike, (2014), Adeyemi, (2012), Aina (2006) and Aluko (2006) partly focused on corruption while Gboyega (2001) among others concentrated on undue interference by the state Government and the personnel challenges. Ibok (2014) argued among other reasons that inadequate funding constituted a huge challenge. This study attempts to examine the effect of the environment in which the two local governments are situated on the service delivery.

The study layout consisted of introduction in section one, theoretical framework in section two, literature review in section three and environmental factors influencing LG administration in

section four. Section five consisted of presentation of data and discussion why the last section was devoted to conclusions and recommendation.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The study was descriptive and the study areas were purposively selected as there was no known previous study in respect of the evaluation of environmental factors on the LGs operations. The study combined quantitative and qualitative methods while the data sources are both primary and secondary. A structured questionnaire was used to obtain quantitative data while 100 copies were administered in the two LGs and 97 were returned. Simple random sampling was adopted to select the respondents in the two local governments limited to officers on GL 07 and above that this study believed may be able to respond effective to the issues involved in this study. The secondary data sources included unstructured interview, relevant text books and journals. The interview with selected community leaders include the Timi of Ede and 6 other notable personalities in the 2 LGs. The data obtained was organized as tables why the analysis was descriptive.

## **3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

For the purpose of this study, the System Theory and Democratic Participatory Model were adopted. This is predicated on the need to recognize and fully understand the interdependence between an organization and its environment as highlighted by the systems theory. On the other hand Local government is generally conceived as a form of public administration domiciled at the lowest tier of administration, which makes it a level in a governmental system through which participatory democracy could be enhanced and efficient service delivery.

A 'systems' as defined by Bertalanffy (1968) is "a set of elements standing in interaction". In other words, a group of things which have something in common. This includes any grouping with any sort of relationship - a collection of people, a forest, among others. As long as it is possible to identify a group of things, this cluster can be seen as a "system." Basically System theory lays emphasis on the whole rather than parts. The parts could be organisms, organization or societies, not looked at separately believing that the functioning of the whole is causally and inescapably tied to the functioning of the parts (Mukoro, 2005). Haynes (1980) believes that a system is always very complex; a mixture of sub-systems which interrelate with each other in various aspect. He further pointed out that all systems are related to other systems in an almost infinite and multidimensional hierarchy.

As applicable in the field of public administration, system theory connotes interaction between the bureaucratic system and the wider society, animate and inanimate in service delivery. This makes it possible for the organization and its parts to interact and depend on each other to achieve the purpose for which the organization was set up. The implication of this is that administrative organization exists within an environment which has external and internal influences. The internal environment could be classified as those forces within that influence the direction and the success of the administration. The external environment such as social, economic, political and historical factors equally impact the administrative system as noted by Mukoro, (2005).

On the other hand Democratic Participatory Model holds that local governments exist to bring about democracy and to afford the citizens the opportunities for political participation, training in the art of self-government and for political education and socialization (Adeyemo, 2011 and Chukwuemeka et al, 2014). In this respect, the concept of local government involves a philosophical commitment to democratic participation in the politics and governing process at the grassroots level. It is assumed that at this level accountability, transparency and effective representation as basic characteristics of democracy are attainable, in greater measures. That is why (Chukwuemeka et al, 2014) stated in essence that local government allows for autonomous self-governance of smaller constituent units of government directly and democratically responsible for their own electorates.

When placed side by side with the situation of LGs in Nigeria, it could be observed that the system approach is applicable in terms of the interactions existing between the administrative system and the entire internal and external environments. Democratic participatory model provides a guide of what the role of the LGs should be within its environment though contrary is the experience. Nonetheless, it provides a window of opportunity to assess the role of the LG.

#### **4. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW**

##### **4.1 Local Government**

Local government as a concept has been given various definitions by various scholars. According to Appadorai (2006) in Kyenge (2013), local government is government by the popularly elected bodies charged with administrative and executive duties in matters concerning the inhabitants of a particular place or district. Awa (1981) sees local government as a political authority set up by a nation or state as a subordinate authority for the purpose of dispersing or decentralizing political power. In the same vein, Wraith (1984) defines local government as the act of decentralizing power, which may take the form of deconcentration or devolution. Deconcentration, he observes, involves delegation of authority to field units of the same department and devolution on the other hand refers to a transfer of authority to local government units or special statutory bodies such as school boards. From this perceptive, one can see local government as a lesser power in the national polity.

Akpan (1972) sees local government as the breaking down of a country into small units or localities for the purpose of administration on which the inhabitants of the different units or localities concerned play a direct and full part through their elected representatives who exercise power or undertake functions under the general authority of the national government.

Further to that is the definition given by the United Nations in 1961 as a political sub-division of a state, constituted by law and has control of local affairs and the governing body either elected or selected. Similar to the United Nation Organization definition is the 1976 Local Government Reform guidelines which defined local government as government at the local level, exercised through representative council, establish by law to exercise specific powers within a defined area”.

From all the definitions given, the focus is on the transfer of political powers to local areas by involving the inhabitants in the provision of basic needs in their respective communities. Kyenge (2013) therefore sees it as a political authority with right to exercise political power, which

means, right to take decisions which are binding on the people and to obtain compliance. In effect, local government is a creation of central government and subordinate to central authority.

It is essential to note that there is no uniformity globally in the mode of creation, the structure and the running of the local government system and that actually help to justify the study of effect of the environment in which it is situated. Even with Nigeria where unified local government system is practiced, there are differences in the way the administration is conducted and the extent to which the system is democratic. In the US, local government falls within the prerogative of the state that is empowered by the constitution to create and run it without interference from the center while in UK, US and France it has a multi layer structure unlike in Nigeria with only one layer.

Unfortunately, while the general trend is to see the local governments as an agent of democratization, contrary is the experience in Nigeria due to selfish reason, the state government hiding under Section 7 (6) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria developed many cynical tactics hindering the growth of the system. This manifested in the adoption of caretaker committee in place of elected council. When elections were held through the State Electoral Commission, they fell below the minimum standard of acceptable election in any civilized and democratic society as it could be described at best as imposition of loyalists of Governor on the people. In effect, the dividends of democracy at the local government levels are only felt mostly on the pages of news paper and other media rather than among the people. Hence, local government system has not come of age in Nigeria.

### **3.2 Public Administration**

The concept of public administration like other concepts in the field of social sciences, have not yet received a particular or generally acceptable definition. In the quest for a generally acceptable definition that is commonly agreed upon, public administration has undergone various stages of transformation right from the period of Wilson when the debate on Politics/administration dichotomy started. The transition according to Agagu (1997) has been partly due to increasing responsibility of government which rendered its traditional roles untenable in a dynamic society.

Tomori (1985) opined that public administration can be described as the apparatus of government, including personnel, equipment and the administrative processes designed to assist governmental public policy formation and implementation. This could be explained within the parameters of Wilson's (1887) classification of public administration as the detailed and systematic execution of public law. The same thing goes for the position of Bartholomew (1972) who once claimed that public administration in the political sense has two distinct meanings. In a broad sense, it denotes the work involved in the actual conduct of government affairs, such as the administration of justice or the administration of the affairs of any office. In a narrow sense, the term denotes the operations of the administrative branch only, that is, the activities of the chief executive and officials called administrators.

Linking these definition to this study, it will attempt to locate the influence of the environment on the administrative system and the extent to which it facilitate the attainment of the goals and objectives of creating LGs with specific reference to Ede North and Ede South LGs.

### **3.3 Environment**

There are many definitions of the term “environment” and it is a function of what one attempts to achieve. However, among scholars it is believed to encompass issues like water, land, air, socio-economic, political, biological and cultural aspect of human existence. The Federal Environmental Protection Agencies (FEPA, 1988 in Essien, 2008) notes that environment includes water, air, land, plants, and human beings or animal living therein and the interrelationships which exist among these or any of them. Aina (1991) views environment as everything external to the organism which influences its life in the place where it lives, and it includes non- living things like climate, soil, rock and the biotic components of the environment.

The United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP 2001) notes that it is a complex weave of physical, chemical and biotic factors that interact with each other and impact upon all living things and their surroundings. This paper perceives it as the life supporting system endowed by nature for human existence and other living things’ survival which also provides the basic needs for socio- economic progress and sustainability and the effect of human activities on the natural endowment.

Alao (2012) citing Olorunfemi et al (2001) and Essien (2008) views environment from natural and cultural perspective. The natural environment according to Olorunfemi et al (2001) encompasses the atmosphere such as gases, water bodies, lithosphere and biosphere. The cultural environment, Raheem (2000) cited in Essien (2008) calls man’s spatial unit. The natural and cultural environments are relevant to this study as there is in existence a number of interactions that lead to various types of human-related activities that may hinder or enhance development of the two local governments in Ede.

Environment is not a static concept in the sense that it is subject to changes, occasioned by series of developmental programmes and projects, as well as changes in the institutions of government. The changes as rightly observed by Otite (1999) include the shifting of socio-economic and political boundary through the creation of new districts, local government, state and sitting of the headquarters. Al Gore, the former United States of America Vice-President gave an expanded view of environment when he noted that:

It is our sense of community- the obligation we have to each other and future generation to safeguard God’s earth. It is about our sense of responsibility and the realization that natural beauty and resources that took millions of years to develop could be damaged and depleted in a matter of decades. (Cited in Essien, 2008:23).

In effect, the focus of this paper is to examine the social, economical, cultural and political environments on the administration of Ede North and Ede South Local Governments. This is based on the assumption that an ancient town like Ede, with two local governments should be rapidly transformed in terms of socio-economic and political development.

## **5. PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS**

The result of the one hundred (100) copies of questionnaire administered in respect of environmental factors influencing public administration in Nigeria with specific reference to Ede North and Ede South local governments are presented on Table II below.

**Table II: Result of the respondents view in respect of environmental factors influencing Ede North and South**

<i>Environmental factors influencing public administration in your Local Government.</i>		SA	A	U	D	SD
1	<i>Your Local Government gets enough funds and statutory allocations to carry out assigned responsibilities</i>	10(14.3)	8(11.4)	2(2.9)	26(37.1)	24(34.3)
2	<i>Your salaries and other welfare packages are paid as at when due</i>	14(20.0)	0(0)	0(0)	20(28.6)	36(51.4)
3	<i>The appointment of the caretaker chairman is good for effective administration of the local government in Ede</i>	8(11.4)	2(2.9)	8(11.4)	30(42.9)	22(31.4)
4	<i>There is undue political interference from the state government in the administration of your local government (no autonomy)</i>	22(31.4)	30(42.9)	4(5.7)	6(8.6)	8(11.4)
5	<i>There is undue political interference in the affairs of the local government administration from the Timi of Ede Land</i>	10(14.3)	4(5.7)	16(22.9)	24(34.3)	16(22.9)
6	<i>The local government administration do not consult the local people and the traditional leaders for the preferred project before embarking on the project</i>	6(8.6)	26(37.1)	20(28.6)	8(11.4)	10(14.3)
7	<i>Corruption is one of the factors influencing local government administration in your local government.</i>	22(31.4)	14(20.0)	11(15.7)	13(18.6)	10(14.3)
8	<i>Religion plays a vital role in the administration of the local government</i>	8(11.4)	20(28.6)	6(8.6)	30(42.9)	6(8.6)
9	<i>Most workers in the local government are not qualified</i>	2(2.9)	6(8.6)	6(8.6)	30(42.9)	26(37.1)
10	<i>Bureaucracy is one of the factors influencing your local government administration</i>	12(17.1)	36(51.4)	6(8.6)	2(2.9)	14(20.0)

**Source: Researchers' field work**



## **6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS INFLUENCING LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION:**

### **6.1 Colonial and post colonial influences**

Black nations in general have rich historical setting in terms of administration of their numerous communities prior to colonialism. With colonialism, the administrative system to a large extent was dictated by the exigencies of the era and therefore attempted to conform to that of colonial power largely making the boss to occupy larger than life posture while the subject were to obey. The post colonial leaders instead of absorbing the positive aspect of the imported administrative system at the local levels copied it entirely. The administrative system generally in Nigeria manifested servant-master relationship while the governed were always at the mercy of the governed. The two LGs in Ede are no exception why the political and administrative heads act as if their doing the citizenry a favour by serving them. Though in some instances when the political leaders were elected, the experiences under military system further reinforced servant-master relationship and the hope of inclusive and democratic local government system has become a mirage. This has manifested in all the political leadership that have ruled in the two LGs since their creation.

### **6.2 Traditional Institution Influence on the Local Governments Administration**

Prior to Colonial era in Nigeria, each society or kingdom was directly ruled by the traditional ruler. Like in other Yoruba communities, the powers of the Oba, in this case, the Timi Agbale of Ede was subject to check and balances. The coming of the white men further enhance the power of the traditional institution, thereby making the Oba to serve as the sole representative of the community jettisoning to a large extent the checks and balances within the system. This explains why Blench, Longtau, Hassan, and Walsh, (2006) note that from the point of view of the colonial authorities, traditional governance was a convenient and cheap method of both maintaining order and collecting tax with limited resources and was supported. This arrangement made the traditional ruler more relevant in the affairs of their local communities.

While enlightenment through education is suppose to liberate the mind and soul of the people, the institutional arrangement continued to sustain the position of the traditional rulers in post colonial era. This is even more pronounced during the military era that lacked legitimacy and saw the traditional institution as a means of reaching and controlling the people. This by implication enhanced the potential of the Timi- Agbale of Ede to have firm grip on the affairs of the two LGs. This does not connote negative influences on the socio-economic development but could be situated within the purview of the respect accorded the institution by the people and the government. This was confirmed from the field study where 57 percent of the respondents noted that the Timi of Ede land influences the local government administration positively contrary to the norms that the influence of the traditional institution is negative. It was further corroborated by the responses from those interviewed.

Nonetheless, the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria does not assign a specific constitutional role to the traditional institution in Nigeria but in actual sense their influences are dominant in the management of the LGs and even in conflict resolution as well as the emergence of the political leaders. Therefore, no leadership in the two local governments could disregard or take for granted the invaluable position and roles of Timi-Agbale of Ede as the father of all.

### **6.3 Godfatherism**

The political environment in Nigeria is dominated with preponderance of god fathers and god sons while the case of Ede North and Ede South is not an exemption. This was demonstrated in



the works of Nwogwugwu (2012) and Ogundiwin (2012) in their studies of politics in the South Western Nigeria that kingmakers popularly known as ‘godfathers’ in Nigeria politics have very strong influences on who emerges as President, Governor, Legislators and council official. The is based on the fact that these council chairmen and other operatives selected or appointed by their godfathers to rule over the affairs of the local government could not be given free hand to operate as they must always act the scripts of the godfathers.

Hence, Local council chairmen are typically nominated by political party “kingmakers” who help to finance their election campaigns. Because politicking in the country is quite expensive, federal allocations to local councils have become the means of paying back “kingmakers” or godfathers for supporting their election campaigns. By implication, the godfathers dictate who are not to be appointed to the system or deployed therein because of their connections at the state and federal levels. In effect, delivering the dividend of democracy becomes secondary while satisfying the appetite of the political godfather is primary.

Specifically, in Ede North and South Local Governments, the political environment is dominated largely by Ex- Governor, Senator Isiaka Adeleke, a son of a prominent politician in the town. Senator Adeleke because of his fearlessness was nicknamed “Seru bawon” literally translated to mean “strike fear in them”. The table below presents the chairmen of the councils since 1999 and the godfather.

**Table 1: Chairmen of Ede North and South Local Government and Godfather**

PERIOD	EDE NORTH LG	EDE SOUTH LG	GODFATHER
1999-2003	Olagoke Kamorudeen	Atidade Sunday	Sen. Isiaka Adeleke
2003-2007	Adisa Tajudeen	Ololade Musa	Sen. Isiaka Adeleke
2008	Adewumi Kareem (caretaker)	-	Governor’s appointee
2008-2010	Akinleye Kazeem	Salami B.T	Sen. Isiaka Adeleke
2010-2015	Tiamiyu Bello	Adekanmi Funmilayo	Governor’s appointee Caretaker Committee

This was further confirmed from the field study where 74% of the respondents alluded to undue political interference by either the godfather or the governor of the state in respect of the appointment of the caretaker chairmen and supervisory councilors. In addition, 77 percent of the respondents revealed that the process of appointing chairman reflected undemocratic procedure which cannot but affect the performance of the councils. The implication of the dominance of godfather in Ede North and South LG by an individual is that Senator Adeleke occupied a position of prominence and can therefore influence the political and socio-economic direction of the councils. In addition, the scenario might to an extent curtail the emergence of a truly participatory democracy. This scenario led Gambrell, (2011) to observe that the godsons who don't obey lose out and may become politically irrelevant while those who follow their orders end up living fat at the expense of the welfare of the people.

#### **6.4 Economic and Financial environment**

Ede is situated relatively in a strategic location that could sustain rural development, mini industries and enhance socio-economic transformation because of the vast rich loamy soil, traders and farming population as well as its proximity to Osogbo, the state capital. The presence

of two local governments in a town should ordinarily and positively influence the development. In effect, the basic economic life and source of financing the two LGs is through statutory allocation allocated from the center and the internally generated revenue. The presence of Redeemers University and Adeleke University in the community cannot but bosat the socio-economic life of the LGs. As in some other states in the federation, there is the refusal to remit 10% of the state internally generated revenue to the LGS. Hence, the economic environment is not sufficiently utilized and could affect the financing of the LG that manifested in unpaid staff salaries for upward of eight months before federal Government bail out by Buari administration as confirmed by 80% of the respondents. This agrees with the respondents' view where 74 percent indicated that the 2 LGs are facing financial challenges.

#### **6.5. Truncated Career Progression and Political Appointees**

According to Ovaga (2012) in most cases, an elected chairman comes into an office and appoints his political loyalists who in various capacities will serve as secretary, chief of staff, assistants of different capacities including advisers who are there only to collect their stipends at the end of every month. Their appointments terminate immediately the chairman's tenure expires. In other words, these political appointees come and go with the chairman who appointed them jn consultation with their godfathers. The practice does not only cause chaos in the administrative system but keeps the career local government staff redundant. This is because, these appointees in creating job for themselves hijacks the duties of career staff that they are not competent to perform. The institutional procedure to curb these anomalies are weakened as the director of administration cannot survive without cringing and show demonstrated signs of loyalty to the chairman rather than the system contrary to the provisions in the Civil Service Rule and Financial Instruction. Though the result from the field study revealed that 70 percent of the respondents disagreed that the LGs are not staffed with unqualified staff but the interview conducted with the people was to the contrary.

The implication is that little development could be achieved in a situation that the system is over burdened with unnecessary political hang-on that are paid by the council at the expense of provision of social infrastructure while the bureaucrat are technically renders useless.

#### **6.6. Poverty of Leadership and Patronage Politics**

Poverty of leadership at the local government level remains one of the most daunting challenges influencing the sustainability of development of the grassroots' in developing countries. While we recognize the fact that leadership problem is a national phenomenon in Nigeria, local government administrations have come under serious criticism over years for poor service delivery and bad governance. Both political and administrative leadership are in deficit at this level of government due to patronage system of politics. According to Anazodo, Igbokwe-Ibeto, Osawe & Nkah (2014) most leaders at the local government level have a sit-tight mentality which does not allow for new ideas, fresh initiative and innovation. Such apposition is true to some extent why this study argue that the scenario is occasioned by the quality of political and administrative managers driving the affairs of the council which to some extent id beyond their control as demonstrated in the role of the godfathers.

Beyond the poverty of the leadership is that of general poverty in the land. Alao (2013) revealed that poverty ration in Nigeria is 70% while this does not exclude the study area. The implication is that political patronage and dominance of political father is strengthened when there is mass

poverty and the political elites are only concerned about maintain the status quo like having only a godfather in the politics of the LGs for more than a decade..

#### **6.7. Corruption:**

The socio-political environment of Ede North and Ede South LGs are not devoid of general Corrupt practices that has been the bane of governance in Nigeria as noted by Nwabueze in Adeyemi (2012) that it is endemic and anomic, somewhat systemic. It was pointed out by Bolatito & Ibrahim (2014) that corruption has been canonically accommodated, entertained, and celebrated within the system. In the local government setting corruption is Misnomer labeled and euphemistically referred to as “Egunje” (a slogan which means “illegal offer” in Nigeria) and a major hindrance to good government. Otite (1986) further views corruption as the perversion of integrity or state of affair through bribery, favour or moral depravity. It involves the injection of additional but improper transaction aimed at changing the normal course of events and altering judgments and positions of trust. It consists in doers and receivers’ use of informal, extra-legal or illegal act to facilitate matter.

It is also along this line of thought that the former EFCC boss Farida Waziri in Adeyemi (2012) lamented that waste of government resources at the council level had reached monumental proportions and local governments in the country could not explain the mismanagement of over N3.313 trillion allocated to them for period of eight years and that LGs have been so far removed from the lives of the people to a point where some Chief Executives of local council no longer reside in the domains they were elected to administer. This was further confirmed as 54 percent the respondents noted corruption as one of the challenges influencing the environment of Ede North and South LGs. Also, the unscheduled interview among the cross section of the community revealed the incurable trend of corrupt practices in the LGs which they linked with less than satisfactory service delivery.

The implication is the criminal deprivation of the citizenry in terms basic amenities and a dangerous disconnection and disenchantment of the people with the three tiers of government, while the officials of the council celebrate their ill-gotten wealth. This was further exuberated by the lack of integrity, transparency and accountability at this level of governance. The spate of corruption at the state level known to council managers served as impetus for those at the local level. Furthermore, the undue expectations in terms of personal gains by the members of the public cannot but force the operators of the system develop inordinate urge for wealth accumulation in order to remain relevant. In addition, the shady deals in respect of the operation of Joint Allocation Account between the state and local government make the control of the council managers that play ball difficult. Hence institutional mechanisms to checkmate corruption become ineffective.

Base on the statistical findings on the question of funds and statutory allocations to carry out assigned responsibilities in the local government, 71.4% of the respondent responded negatively. This is corroborating the study carried out by Ibok (2014). This is further a reflection of the unpaid salaries and allowances as at when due as indicated by 80% of the respondent. The appointment of the caretaker chairman good for effective administration of the local government in Ede also received a negative response of 74% which also explains the undue political interference by either the godfather or the governor of the state that appointed the chairman as indicated by the 77.4% of the respondents, this is in agreement with the study carried out by Okeke (2014). On the issue that traditional institution in the person of the Timi of Ede land influences the local government administration, 57.1% disagrees to that which corroborates to a large extent the interview conducted with the Timi of Ede where he stated that the traditional

institution in Ede land has little or no interference in the local government administration. He also stated that the locals and the traditional leaders are not consulted before community projects are embarked on. This is as a result of the influence of colonialism in local government administration which the Timi alluded to.

### **6.8. Socio-Religious Environment**

The population of Ede North and South LGs is consisted largely of Yoruba while stranger elements in small quantity consisted Hausa, Fulani and Igbo trader. Crisis or conflict in respect of ethnic identity is uncommon as the traditional institution and the LGs were able to create a relatively level playing ground for people to relate without major incidents. What could have resulted into a religious conflict on account of a Christian crusade to hold at Ede was averted by the quick intervention of Timi of Ede and the local government councils in 2013. This explains why 50 percent of the respondents confirmed that religion had no negative influence in the administration of the two LGs though significant majority of the population were Muslims. This was further confirmed by the interview conducted covering the Timi of Ede and other community members that Yoruba as an ethnic group allows for religious freedom.

### **7. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The paper concluded that like any organization, the environment dictates to a large extent the socio-economic, political and the administrative setting. In addition, the understanding and accommodation of certain values within the environment dictate the extent of success or failure in achieving the goals as rightly applicable to Ede North and South Local government. It further concludes that the excessive domineering of the state government and the lack of the political will to make local government be democratic and viable are partly influencing the environment of the system. In addition, issues like godfatherism, staff challenges and corruption could be addressed if the administration is truly democratic and inclusive.

In order to make the environment more conducive for efficient service delivery, study recommended that:

- The amendment of Section 7 (6) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and other sections that empower undue domineering influences of the State government on Local government finances and management.
- The transfer of the power of State Electoral Commission to the Independent National Electoral Commission for a relatively credible election to be conducted at the Local Government levels in order to make it truly democratic.
- Godfatherism can not be eradicated particularly if they enjoy wider acceptability due to their financial muscle like in the case of the study area. However, political education is still recommended for electorates to be wiser with their votes as to make the godfather responsive to the preference of the citizenry in respect of feeding candidates for elective offices.
- The institutional mechanisms for checkmating corruption in line with the body language of President Buhari should be revamped while cases of corruption be prosecuted and the offenders punished accordingly.
- Establishment of people forum should be mandated in all Local Government areas in Nigeria on a quarterly basis to render their account of stewardship and to harvest the needs of the communities and to encourage inclusive government

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