

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AS A VEHICLE FOR RURAL
DEVELOPMENT:**

A CASE STUDY OF WUSHISHI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF NIGER STATE

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been written by me and to the best of my knowledge it has never been submitted to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria or any other institution of higher learning for the award of any degree.

The various sources to which the author is indebted are clearly and duly acknowledged in the bibliography.

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CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled: “**Local Government as a Vehicle for Rural Development: A Case Study of Wushishi Local Government Area of Niger State**”, written by Murtala Bello Mustapha meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Masters in Public Administration (MPA), Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents, Alhaji Mustapha Bello and Mallama Wasilat Mustapha who gave me so many things out of nothing.

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I first of all acknowledge Almighty Allah who has kept me up till this day and has given me the privilege to successfully complete this programme.

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out with the aim of assessing local government as a vehicle for rural development in Nigeria. The study focussed on the activities of Wushishi local government area of Niger state.

In doing this, both primary and secondary data were collected. The primary data were sourced through questionnaire drawn and interview conducted on some randomly selected residents and staff of the local government. The data obtained were analysed using tables, percentages and frequencies. Two hypotheses were postulated to help in gathering and analysing the data collected.

From the analysis of the data, findings revealed that the local government has not been able to perform this role as a result of ineffective and inefficient manpower, inadequate, misapplication and misappropriation of financial resources and excessive political interference and control from the higher tiers of government, especially the state government most especially through the instrumentality of state/local joint account.

Based on these findings, the study recommended that the local government service should motivate qualified and highly skilled personnel to join the service. The workforce should be trained to improve on its proficiency, the local government should improve on the internally generated revenue and areas of waste/corrupt practices should be checked. Also the state/local government joint account be scrapped and in its place, there should be direct allocation to the local governments, while the latter be made to render proper accounts on how financial allocations made were spent.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

All over the World, various approaches and strategies have been adopted or used by governments for the purpose of governance or management of its rural areas. But there has not been any consensus on the most appropriate strategy to be adopted in the administration of the rural areas.

The problem of governance, particularly at the local level has been a recurring decimal in the political history of Nigeria. The history or genesis of local government in Nigeria can be traced back to the pre-colonial era and the formative period of large-scale kingdoms and powerful empires in the country. The existence of provincial systems, which operated in Borno and Oyo empires, as well as the Emirate system of Sokoto Caliphate “exhibited rudimentary conception of Local Administration” (Minna: 1993). In these areas, there were smaller districts, villages and wards that were subject to the Kingdom and Emirate government. These smaller or subordinate levels of government could be seen or described as local governments (Ugwu: 2000:5).

The local government system in Nigeria started during the colonial era when it was vested in traditional rulers. The basis for local government in Nigeria became the indirect Rule System. Historically, Local Government system in Nigeria, as it is today,

metamorphosed through many reforms or re-organization. From 1950, no decade passed without a major reform or re-organization of the system. The Local Government system has witnessed more reforms and reorganization when compared with the core civil service (Obas: 2000:1).

Before 1950, the Local Government was known as Native Authority or Native Administration System. According to Gboyega (1987), Local Administration system comprised of four main interdependent parts, namely:

- i) The Resident, who provided direction and control;
- ii) The Native Authority, usually headed by a Chief who enjoyed legitimacy under the indigenous political system;
- iii) The Native Treasurer; and
- iv) The Native Court.

The whole process or system was hinged on the principles of indirect rule.

The major function of Native Administration system then was the maintenance of law and order and the collection of taxes within their territory. According to Obas (2000), the Native Administration System was identified with the following strength. First, it provided organization suitable for maintaining contact with the people. Secondly, it maintained law and order successfully. Third, they provided social services such as education and dispensaries. Fourth, they preserved the long-standing tradition of the people from

collapse and decay. These virtues were highly visible in the then Northern Nigeria where Indirect Rule succeeded more than in the South.

The System, however, had its shortcomings. According to Gboyega, the foremost shortcoming was that it was unrepresentative. Aliyu (2000) opined that the procedures adopted were often irreconcilable with democratic norms. It did not show total responsibility in the management of public funds and with few exception, the system failed to attract qualified staff.

Ugwu (2003:3) put it more succinctly:

This system of indirect rule, as it was popularly known, degenerated into direct rule through indirect means because the traditional rulers became mere local agents of colonial officers. The Emirs in the North, the Obas in the West and the Warrant Chiefs in the East became Sole Native Authorities in their domains. This made them swollen headed, dictatorial and autocratic to the extent that seldom were the views of the populace sought in evolving and executing any policy or project.

According to him, avalanche of accusations were leveled against the operators of indirect rule. Some of these allegations include: abuse of political office, extortion, embezzlement, coercion of labour for production and commerce and nepotism.

It was on the basis of these shortcomings that the Native Authority System was subjected to reforms in the early 50's. The overriding aim was to introduce representative system of government

at the local level. The reform first started in the Eastern Region and then in the Western Region in 1952 with the 1952 Western Region Local Government Law. In the Northern Region of Nigeria, the Native Administration System survived and remained strong, until the collapse of the first republic 1966, as the structural basis of local administration.

The federal system of government came into operation in 1951 with the Macpherson Constitution in which the country was divided into three regions. The multinational composition of the federation impacted on the local government system. Each of the region had its own separate system of local government reflect their regional elite perception of the appropriate pattern of decentralization of political authority. Also, the rich cultural diversity of the people grouped together in a region for administrative convenience by the colonial authorities shaped the local government system through the tiered structure which enabled the regional government to link differential levels of development of the traditional political system with the administrative organization required and the level of authority devolved to the units of local government. The regional systems of local government so established prevailed with various refinements until the collapse of the First Republic in 1966.

The overthrow of the civilian regime by the Military had severe repercussions for the local government systems which were radically changed to accommodate not only the hierarchical military

command structure but also to redress the abuses that the systems had been subjected to. They had to be re-structured to meet the aspirations of the people for greater political participation and empowerment in local government. The period of military rule from 1966 to 1975 therefore witnessed extensive experimentation with different theories and patterns of local government with quite mixed results. From the colonial era to 1975 there was no uniform system of local government in the country.

The 1976 Local Government Reforms introduced radical measures. This was a result of the failure of the various reforms adopted before. The reform established a comprehensive standardization of a system of local government within a national framework. The adoption of a common national local government system followed extensive consultations at all levels of the federal structure and among various stakeholders and experts. The reform designated local government as a third-tier of government empowered through representative councils established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas.

Election to the Councils could be direct or indirect. Two committees, namely, Finance and General Purpose Committee and Education Committee were established. The councils exercised political authority over their departments through supervisory councilors. A unified local government service Board was set up to employ, post and discipline staff from grade level 06 and above. The

Federal Government Guidelines specified also the aims and functions of Local Government. Another major provision of the reform was that the Local Governments were given statutory allocation from the Federation Account, in order to make them financially viable.

The 1979 Constitution, which ushered in the Second Republic, further guaranteed the major provisions of the 1976 Reforms especially in the area of preserving the democratic character of the Local Government and the statutory allocation from the Federation Account. This period was a testing period for the Federal and State Governments as they contested control of Local Government policy with each other. Attempts by the State to re-establish their primacy in local government policy formulation created conflict with the Federal Government but also weakened the Local Government. State Governments voided aspects of the 1976 reforms that they were displeased with and distorted these that were merely inconveniences. Such behaviour pointed the states as villains and provoked demands for a greater federal role in local government policy-making.

The re-emergence of the military on the political scene in 1984 provided the opportunity for complete take over of local government policy-making by the Federal Government. The period between 1987 and 1993 witnessed a series of sequential reforms. The Federal Government radically transformed the status of local governments in

the federal system. The Federal Governments' scheme of decentralization deliberately and consciously focused on transferring greater powers and resources to local governments rather than to state governments. The devolution can be deemed to have been made at the expense of states. This provoked negative reactions from the states and suspicion about federal motives in promoting the reforms. Ugwu (2000:30) observed that:

There are some shortcomings in the reforms. First, staff of the local governments were not prepared for the reforms, as there were no induction courses to familiarize them with the new system. Secondly, most local governments lacked financial base to sustain the autonomy, as many of them could not generate more than 5% – 10% of their needed money from local revenue sources.

There was too much dependence on the direct subvention from the federal government for their financial survival (Minna, 1993:50).

When Abacha seized power in 1993, he dismissed all the elected governments and appointed management committees. However, the 1994 constitutional conference summoned by the regime decided to restore state competence and control over local governments. Thus, it granted states the exclusive power to create new local governments. It also provided for the establishment of a state electoral commission in each state to conduct local government elections. According to Ugwu (2000:31) the reform provided for a democratically elected local government, which has the duty within

the state to participate in economic planning and development of the local government area.

This was the setting before the hand over of power from the military in May, 1999 to the democratically elected civilian administration of President Obasanjo. The period between 1999 and 2003 witnessed another turbulent time for local government in Nigeria. The 1999 constitution created a lot of confusion in the running of local government administration. Firstly, the constitution promised for a democratically elected local government council but it did not make provision for the tenure of local government office holders. Secondly, the constitution in the concurrent legislative list gave the National Assembly the power to make laws with respect to election to a local government council. The same constitution also gave state Houses of Assembly the same power. The confusion created by the constitution later became a source of controversy between the National Assembly and State Governors, which became a subject of litigation at the supreme court in which the supreme court held that “no law by the National Assembly can increase or alter the tenure of elected officers of local government.

The confusion led to the setting up of a technical committee on the review of the structure of local government in Nigeria in 2003. The committee was headed by Alhaji Umar Sanda Ndayako, a traditional ruler, the Etsu Nupe. The reasons for the setting up of the committee included the non-performance or gross under

performance of the local government councils, the high cost of government, and near prohibitive costs of electioneering campaigns to individual political contestants in Nigeria and atomization and continual fragmentation of local government councils including impractical division of towns and cities into unworkable mini-local governments. Because of these fragmentation, the federal government refused to recognize all newly created local governments by state governments. Some states like Lagos and Niger were denied their monthly financial allocation from the federation Account because of this problem.

The essence of all these problems is to ensure that local government is made responsive to developmental needs of the rural people. This is because in most emerging states of the world, Nigeria inclusive, local government administration has been adopted as the main fundamental instrument for the acceleration and sustenance of rural development. So we can see from the historical review so far, that from the colonial era to date, the local government has been so recognized as a vital instrument to enhance rural development in Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

It is not in doubt that the local government system is widely acknowledged as a viable instrument for rural transformation. The strategic importance of local government in the socio-economic and political developments of local communities is reflected in diverse

functions they are assigned under the schedules of various reforms and constitution. Top among these functions are health, i.e. Preventive health, infrastructural development, roads and drainage, sanitation, education, etc.

Local Governments are strategically placed to carry out these functions for two basic reasons: Firstly, their proximity to the people. This, not only removes the physical and psychological distance between the officials and the governed, but also helps in articulating and aggregating their demands of the people. Secondly, the provisions in the reforms and constitution empowered the local government to take full responsibility for rural development within their area of authority.

However, this has not been the case in many local government in Nigeria, including Wushishi Local Government Area of Niger State. Instead, the rural areas have witnessed depression, degradation, poverty and deprivation. In most local government areas, including Wushishi Local Government Area, the basic infrastructure, that is if they exist, are too inadequate for any meaningful development.

According to Obiangwe:

Rural dwellers often depend on shallow wells and untreated water. The villagers, most of who are farmers work on the land from sunrise to sunset, only to produce food for the uncontrollably teeming city population.

Ugwu (2000:135) painted the picture of the situation in the rural area this way:

In and around the villages, one readily comes across children with distended tummies and spindly legs who are found wanting of a complete diet, formal education and a technical sense of belonging.

The above statements aptly capture the situation in Wushishi Local Government Area of Niger State. It is scenario of underdevelopment, poverty and outright negligence despite the resources allocated to it.

The concern of this study is to examine the factors that have impaired or constituted constraint to the effective functioning of the local government system in the transformation or development of the rural areas.

1.3 **Objective of the Study**

The study is aimed at assessing the activities of Wushishi Local Government in performing its role as an instrument/agent of rural development. Specifically, the objectives of this study are to:

- i) Examine the material and human resources of the local government in performing this role.
- ii) Examine the effectiveness of these resources (i.e. finance, manpower, etc).
- iii) Within the framework above, analyze its contribution to the development of the area.
- iv) Examine the major factors that militate or stand as constraint to the local government in performing this role.

- v) Recommend ways for improving the performance of the local government.

1.4 **Significance of the Study**

Among the three tiers of government in Nigeria, i.e. Federal State and Local Governments, Local Government provides the greatest scope of grassroots development. Local governments are supposed to be closer and greatly felt by the people. Its importance or relevance in transforming the rural areas and people cannot be overemphasized. Considering the fact that 70% of Nigeria populace lived in the rural areas and that the development of these areas is development of the nation as a whole. Local Governments are supposed to be agent of growth and development. As such any study of local government is equally relevant to the nation.

This study is imperative because of the confusion that trails the local government system in Nigeria. Various reforms have been undertaken by successive government of Nigeria, yet, the performance of the local government system as an agent of rural development has been that of disappointment. As the government strives to find a lasting solution to the problems of local government, the findings of the study will provide information for the government of Niger State and Nigeria as a whole so that appropriate step can be taken.

The study will also fill the gap in knowledge in the various studies carried out on local government, which emphasized on the

problem of local government in relation to structural problem, resources allocation and state or federal government intervention. This study will examine the activities or operation of local government in relation to the above stated problems.

Also the study will be of great benefits to other researchers or studies on local government development, students of Development Administration and Local Government Studies, Research Institute etc.

1.5 Statement OF Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were employed for the purpose of this study:

- i) That the level of performance of Wushishi Local Government Council in terms of rural development is determined by the human, financial and material resources available.
- ii) That political interference by other tiers of governments is a constraint to rural development efforts of Wushishi Local Government Area.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study examined the role of local government as an agent of rural transformation in Nigeria, but its major focus was on Wushishi Local Government area of Niger State. The study will cover all the

activities of the local government geared towards this transformation of the area for the benefit of the people from 1999 to 2003.

One of the limitations of this study is the dearth of data, especially on the revenue accruing to the local government from the Federation Account, as well as internally generated revenue in the Local Government. This might constitute a barrier in making accurate assessment of the Local Government performance.

1.7 **Research Methodology**

The following techniques are adopted for the purpose of collection and analysis of data:

1.7.1 **Sources of Data**

Both the primary and secondary data are derived for the purpose of his study

- i) Secondary Data:** Secondary data were obtained through the examination of official documents of Wushishi Local Government (i.e. Financial Memoranda, Gazettes, Personnel records, etc), books, journal, articles and papers, presented, Newspapers and magazines, official documents etc, publication from both local and international bodies or agencies and research institutes.
- ii) Primary Data:** The primary data were obtained through the administration of questionnaire on some selected respondents. Both the open and close-ended questions were utilized in eliciting responses from the respondents. Some principal staff

of the local government as well as prominent residents of the area were also interviewed.

1.7.2 **Population and Sample Size**

The population of this study constitutes the entire people of Wushishi Local Government Area. It also involves the entire staff of the local government area.

In a study of this nature in which the population is relatively large and the people have their different unique identities, to ensure a wider representation, sampling is inevitably, since it would be very difficult to reach the entire population. Even if it is possible it will be arduous expensive, and time consuming (Asika: 1991:40). Osula (1982:58) define sampling as the procedure by which we take any portion of a population or universe. A sample is precisely a part of the population (Asika: 1991:39).

In selecting the sample for this study, Random and stratified sampling methods were adopted. Since the population of the local government comprise five ethnic groups, the population was stratified based on these five ethnic groups and respondents randomly selected from each stratum. 120 respondents were randomly selected from each of the five strata, making the total sample size of the people to be 600.

Also the staff strength of Wushishi Local Government is put at 300, including both senior and junior staff. In selecting respondents, the staff were stratified into two – junior and senior staff and 10% of

the staff were picked from each stratum. As such, a sample of 80 from junior cadre and 30 from senior cadre: making the total sample size for the staff to be 110. thus, the total size for the study is 710: comprising 600 representing residents and 110 representing staff of the local government area.

Table 1.1.a: The summary of the sample size.

Community Respondents According to Ethnic Group

RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO ETHNIC GROUP	SAMPLE SIZE
Nupe	120
Hausa/Fulani	120
Gbagyi	120
Kamuku	120
Pangu	120
Total	600

Source: Researcher's survey

1.1.b: Staff Respondents

STAFF ACCORDING TO CADRE	SAMPLE SIZE
Junior Staff	80
Senior Staff	30
Total	110

Source: Researcher's survey

Total: 710

The researcher is of the opinion that the sample size is considered representative of the entire population for making of inferences and achieving validity from the information obtained and enough to make generalization on the total population of study. 710 questionnaires were drawn and distributed to both residents and staff of Wushishi Local Government, but only 685 questionnaires were duly filled and returned.

Method of Data Analysis

Tables, frequency and percentages were used as statistical tools for the analysis of data collected in this study.

1.8 Operational Definition of key Concepts

- i. Development:** Development is said to have taken place when there is positive change in a country resulting in improvement in the living conditions of the people. Development entails the pursuit by societies of the three core values of life-sustenance, self-esteem and freedom.
- ii. Rural Development:** A strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people – the rural poor.
- iii. Local Government:** Government at local level exercised through representative councils established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas.

- iv. **Social Infrastructures:-** These basic amenities aimed at improving the general living standard of the local people through the provision of water, electricity, construction, reconstruction and maintenance of local and other access roads, bridges and culverts to further improve the mobility of the local people in terms of facilitating the evacuation of farm produce.
- v. **Community Effort:-** Any attempt by the community to better their living standard through the provision of social amenities e.g. roads, water supply, hospitals, schools etc.
- vi. **Human Resources: -** These are employees both skilled and unskilled that facilitate in the provision and delivery of goods and services
- vii. **Financial Resources: -** This refers to statutory allocation and internally generated revenue that accrue to the local government.
- viii. **Political Interference:** Excessive control or undue influence in the policy-making and execution exercised by higher-level governments, especially the state government, over the local governments.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This study is predominantly based on rural development or transformation. In this chapter, various literature on rural development would be reviewed. Works carried out by previous researchers, whether as an individual, group or institution would be examined. Also writings by scholars on rural development would be reviewed. This review covers different aspects of rural transformation. They include, the definition, perspective, programmes initiated by or efforts made by the government towards rural transformation in Nigeria, problems encountered, among others.

This study also looks at the various structural adjustment or the reforms of local government geared towards rural transformation.

The last section of the chapter contains the theoretical framework of the study. Various approaches or theories of rural development were reviewed and the modernization approach was found more appropriate for the purposes of this study.

2.2 Concept of Rural Development

There are different views about the definition of rural development. World Bank (1975:3) defined rural development as:

A strategy to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people – the rural poor. It involves extending the benefit of development to the poorest, among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas. These groups include small-scale farmers, tenants, the landless women...

Mabogunje (1960) defined rural development as the total improvements of the living standard of the low-income population in rural areas on a self-sustaining basis through transforming the socio-spatial structures of their productive activities.

Orewa (1977) defined rural development as a programme, which has objectives, and strategy - which are aimed at transforming the citizens in the rural areas from the victim of poverty, ignorance and disease into a contented human being, able to earn an income capable of sustaining a reasonable standard of living for himself and his family.

For yet another group specially students of Development Administration, the term is viewed as new form of administration or fundamental departure from the maintenance of law and order to the areas of greater concern by government with the provision of essential services in the field of agriculture, Medicare and education.

Mba and Ogazi (1995) further stated that rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of rural dwellers. They argued that it is a conscious effort to focus on improving standard of living of the masses especially the low-income

population residing in the rural areas and a self-sustaining process that involves the mobilization of the activities of the rural dwellers and their socio-economic potentials. It is regarded as an effort geared towards achieving the following:

- i) Increased production and diversification of economic activities.
- ii) Development and utilization of the available resources.
- iii) Provision of facilities and services;
- iv) Change of attitude of rural dwellers.

According to DFFRI (1991), the components of rural development includes:

- a) the enhancement of the people's productive capacities and of the economic opportunities.
- b) the expansion of physical infrastructures and facilities.
- c) the improvement of human resources quality through interactions in education, health, etc.
- d) the improvement of the quality of life of the rural masses (household, groups, individual).
- e) the strengthening of rural organizational and institutional capacities for democratic development.

Azizi (1978:114) asserted that the following conditions are necessary for rural development:

- a) Fair equitable distribution of land and other rural resources in order to give greater opportunities to the poorest segment of the rural population to meet their basic needs.

- b) Organization of rural producers and rural economic activities on cooperative or communal basis in order to ensure a fuller utilization of available physical and human resources.
- c) Diversification of the rural economy to provide additional employment opportunities and to improve the quality of life.
- d) An effective policy of social services and the improvement of social relations.
- e) Political and administrative capacity for the planning and implementation of community development strategy to provide linkages with the rest of the economy and protect the legitimate interest of the rural population.

Adelemo (1989) also opined what rural development is all about this way:

The basic objective of rural development is to organize, develop and utilize available resources (both human and material) in such a manner that the inhabitants of rural areas have the opportunity to meet at least their basic needs (food, shelter, clothing) including the provisions for education and health without despoiling or degrading the environment.

The position of relating rural development to the basic needs approach, equity, the environment and sustained ability is shared by other scholars like William (1981) and Ajayi (1987).

The process of rural development was also described by some scholars as development from below. Development from below strategy is basic need oriented, labour intensive, small-scale regional

resources based, rural – centred form of development (Stohr and Taylor, 1980). The essential components of development from below, according to Ujo (1996:112–113) are as follows:

- a) A fundamental restructuring of rural space and settlement so as to improve the physical and social access of producers to vital resources.
- b) The creation of new rural structures that would facilitate substantial reinvestment of financial resources in the rural sectors.
- c) Mobilization of farmers through effective organizational framework that would promote mass involvement in the development process.
- d) Provision of appropriate technology for raising rural productivity and efficient utilization of resources.
- e) Equalitarian provision of basic need, such as food, housing, water supply, health services, etc.
- f) Creation of efficient transport network for rural and urban areas.
- g) Agricultural transformation to ensure massive food production and the supply of individual raw materials.
- h) Creation of progressive social system in rural areas.

There has been argument as to when the concept of rural development actually started. While some scholars argued that it emerged during the colonial era, other scholars, like Okunola,

believed it started during the traditional societies when people engaged themselves in self-help projects and provided social amenities such as roads, village halls/squares, constructing bridges across streams, building market squares, etc. This made Okunola to assert that “self-help needed for rural development had existed in the traditional societies before the concept of rural development was introduced by the Western World”. (1974).

Ugwu (2000:134) however upheld that rural development received a greater impetus during the colonial era through the following ways:

- a) With the introduction of indirect Rule, the District officers used the warrants chiefs, Obas and Emirs extensively to mobilize the people for self-help projects.
- b) In the 1930s, taxation was introduced which led to the refusal of the rural communities from providing communal labour for public works. The people expected the government to provide them with the social amenities since they paid tax to the government.

The 1955 local government law thus empowered the local government to take full responsibility for rural development within the area of authority. This provision in the law enabled the District officers to champion rural development efforts in their districts. Government provided matching grants and technical aids to communities, which embarked on self-help projects. Since then,

rural development has become a shared responsibility between the people and the government Okeke: 1998:3).

The rural sector plays an important role in the entire economy of any nation; therefore, a sound rural development policy will enhance a balanced national economic development. According to Rogers and Whiting (1976:3) rural development refers to not only providing jobs and increased incomes to rural people but also improving the quality of rural living through increased and improved community services. In the words of Olayide et al, (1979:246), rural development is

a process whereby concerted efforts are made in order to facilitate significant increases in rural resource productivity with the overall objectives of enhancing rural income and increasing employment opportunities in rural communities.

From the review of the concept of rural development, it is clear that rural development is all encompassing. It cuts across all spheres of national development. It involves the economy, political, social and cultural systems. Rural development involves more than the promotion of agriculture, raising productivity level and income in the rural areas. It includes an organic integration of land economy and society and the establishment of the enabling conditions for effective participation in both the decision-making process and the implementation of rural development programmes. It is a process, which is structurally linked with support both from individual,

group and organization and is supported by the entire national development efforts. It is the corner stone of national development and constitutes the basis for social integration and national cohesion in any country of the world.

The position of rural development in Nigeria is that of disappointment. The main features of the rural areas are depression, degradation, poverty and deprivation. In most rural areas in Nigeria, like other rural setting in developing nations, basic infrastructure where they exist at all, are too inadequate for any meaningful development.

Etaghene (1987) in his research into the rural areas on the effects of the recession and the government's austerity measures stated, "there was a feeling of desertion, loneliness and deprivation clearly written on the faces of rural dwellers". According to him, the "villagers are thinly populated with old people and children. The rush to urban centers brought about by the oil boom of the 1970s had attracted young men and women away from home". For years many rural areas have been in a state of neglect with most of them having no motorable roads, pipe-bone water, electricity, health care centers, industries, schools, etc.

Ikwochegh (1987) stressed the importance of rural development thus "it is the only way we can focus on the welfare of the majority of our people". As such, rural development is essential because majority of the people live in the rural areas. Also

agriculture, which is the rural economy remain the key factor in national economy development. Also rural area is the source of food and raw material for the growing population of the nation. Apart from developing rural areas on humanitarian consideration for the benefit of the rural dwellers, it will also bridge the sharp social differences between rural and urban centers thereby curbing rural-urban migration.

Adamu (1994) pointed out that rural development was first understood as achieving rural economy and that is equated with agricultural production, especially in the developing countries like Nigeria, where agricultural growth is seen as a condition for national growth and industrial development.

According to her, rural development means modernizing and improving the condition of rural life through programmes, policies and study of the institutional, social, legal and organizational structures and likes of the rural people. This is in form of provision of social services for the basic needs, such as health, education, water supply, etc. with the belief that these services will trickle down the other sectors of rural areas.

2.3 Past Governments' Efforts at Rural Development

Past government efforts at rural development started in the 1940s but it gained impetus in the 1950s. According to Adelemo (1989) government involvement started after the Second World War

when efforts were made to encourage settlement schemes in the then relatively empty areas of the middle belt.

These schemes included the Kontagora land Development Scheme, Bamenda – Cross River Calabar Schemes and the Niger Agricultural scheme. All these came into being in the 1940s but have become moribund by the mid-50s without producing desired result (Ajayi, 1987).

From the late fifties, various attempts were made to develop peasant agriculture by the colonial government through several schemes in order to promote rural development. The western region first introduced the farm settlement scheme between 1959 and 1960 and other regions followed suit immediately. The objective was to settle young men on farm holdings, which were to develop under the direction of officials of ministries of agriculture in the region (Obaitan 1997).

According to Odiba (1999), the nature of rural development in pre-civil war Nigeria was largely a colonial legacy. The developmental institutions, that were seen by the first crop of nationalists as exploitative and extortive during the colonial days have now become structural imperative that served the pre-civil war economies of the various regions to greater heights. Some glaring examples were the cocoa plantation in Ibadan, the Bendel oil Palm and Rubber Farm Settlements in Abia State and the Biakpan Rubber Estate in Cross-River State among others. These developments became glaring later

in the regions. While oil palm blossomed in the Eastern Region, Cocoa was in the West, Groundnut in the North and Rubber in the Midwest. Encouraged by the agriculture boom of the time, the indigenes of the various regions formed cooperative societies to further enhance greater production.

Agriculture, apart from being the major source of income in the country then, served as a springboard for other self-help projects. The monies realized by farmers at individual and cooperative levels were used to pay tax or any other levy, as well as other developmental purpose like construction of road, schools, market, town hall, etc.

In 1976, eleven River Basin Development Authorities were created to focus on the exploitation and development of water resources. These Basin Authorities were established along hydro-geological lines to cover the major River Basins in the country. Later the Authority was increased to reflect state boundary lines. To also highlight their added responsibility for rural development, the name River Basin Development Authority, was changed to River Basin and Rural Development Authority, without apparent changes in structure. In Obaitan, this change was made for only administrative convenience. Highlighting the problems faced by the River Basin and Rural development Authorities nationwide, Obaitan identified the high cost of imported contents of some of the large irrigation schemes, socio-economic problems of misplaced communities, the

heavy capital – intensive nature of the programme and financial mismanagement.

Also in 1976, considering the skyrocketing national import bill, the Operation Feed the National (OFN) was launched. The major aim of OFN is to mobilize the people toward self-sufficiency and self-reliance in food production. Obaitan observed that the problem with the initiative was that the implementation of the programme was limited to the temporary activities of students in the rural areas and despite high cost of the programme, no effective increase was achieved in food production. The lack of effectiveness according to him, was due, among others to the high bureaucratic structure, over representation of various interests and lack of coordination between the council and the committees set up to implement the programme.

The Green Revolution programme was later launched in 1980. It was a resensitization of OFN and it was conceived to boost agricultural production as well as ensure rural development through agro-industries, the construction of feeder roads, the provision of housing and educational infrastructures and the provision of water. The national council on Green Revolution was created as the institutional structure to coordinate and monitor the various activities of the programme. The Green Revolution was not able to create the egalitarian society envisaged because among other factors, the peasants were not organized and therefore not mobilized for production (Obaitan: 1997).

Another attempt was the Back-to-Land scheme, which was popularized by the Buhari –Idiagbon regime in 1984. Other efforts of the government at that time included the Agricultural and Rural Development Projects and integrated Rural Development Project. The Agricultural Development Project – ADP as was popularly known was aimed at increasing food production to meet the food need of the country, so as to reduce the foreign exchange expenditure on food imports. It was also aimed at raising rural incomes and thereby the standards of living by enabling rural people to supply their needs as well as the needs of the urban sector, thus reducing rural – urban drifts.

The most visible of all government rural development efforts is the inauguration in 1987 of the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRFI).

DFRFI was established to correct major lapses in the earlier rural development programmes. The programme initiated a community-based programme, bearing in mind the long history of communal living of the people. Against this background, the programme through cooperative societies, age grade groups, trade and crafts association, women organizations, youth organizations, sports and recreational organizations, local security organizations and any other popular and voluntary organizations, the people can be effectively mobilized for their own development. The second objective of the Directorate, which constituted its main activities,

was infrastructural development. These include, the construction of feeder roads, provision of potable water, electrification and rural housing. Also productive activities were intensified in the area of agriculture such as storage and processing of agricultural produce and promotion of local technological capabilities to design and fabricate wide ranging processing machines and equipment.

The Better life for Rural Women initiated by the then wife of former Military President Ibrahim Babangida was another strategy intended at reaching the rural women for developmental purposes. The major target of the programme, which was the rural women, could not be reached, as the programme's activities were concentrated in the urban areas, especially state capitals. According to Obaitan (1987) the rural women who were the targets of the programme were not in the mainstream of policy formulation. Most of the glamorous and exhibitive activities were featured in national and state capitals and at the center of these activities the urban women were more conspicuous than the rural women.

Another strategy of rural development was the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) established by the government in 1997. The primary objective of the programme was to reduce poverty in the nation by stimulating activities in various wards of each of the local government area in the country with a view of raising the productivity of the people. Just like other

programmes, FEAP was full of pomp and pageantry activities in the state and national capitals.

The National Poverty Eradication Programme was established in 1999 and it is still on. However, it is yet to be seen if NAPEP has achieved meaningfully in terms of rural development.

From the above analysis, it is clear that attempts have been made in the past towards rural development, but the obvious fact is that these effects have failed due to so many factors. Nagya (2001) summarized the reasons for the failure of past government effort at rural development thus: (i) Lack of proper understanding of our rural setting (ii) Misconception of rural problems (iii) Lack of comprehensive planning/plan, thus leading to improper implementation of the programme. According to him, past government efforts aimed at achieving development in the rural areas were externally induced. Most of these ideas were generated from the urban areas and worse still from the federal government. This approach has not been too effective because the federal government has not gotten and can never have the personnel in the state to create an effective impact. This can also be said of the state in relation to local government.

In terms of agricultural development, the strategy never involved the farmers who were the stakeholders both in the planning, design and implementation stage. This affects the rate of adoption of some of the strategies by the peasant farmers. Also, the

programme was too expensive. Government spent a lot of money in acquiring land, building houses for settlers, buying input, etc. Farmers were removed from their traditional environment and placed under the advice of experts and domination of government officials. This made the farmers to regard themselves as labourers working in government farms. Also conflicts often arise between the government officials and farmers.

At the implementation level, certain essential input such as improved seed, fertilizer are inadequately provided. The extension services needed for creating awareness and the use of such inputs are inadequate. The inputs are bought over by 'middle farmers' who in turn sell them at exorbitant rates, besides the fact that these inputs would not be realized as required and when needed.

Provision of infrastructure by various agents such as Better Life for Rural Women, DFFRI, FEAP, etc were inadequately provided and when provided, they become non-functional soon after installation, as no provision was made for the maintenance of these equipment. In some instances, the equipments would not be appropriate for such environment.

In the case of road construction, some were not completed and having disturbed the soil system, soil erosion crept in by destroying farmlands and displacement of rural dwellers.

Bureaucratic bottleneck coupled with diversion of resources was another constraint of past efforts of rural development. Under

the credit scheme, there was diversion of public fund to the pockets of few such that only the few benefited from the loan. Furthermore, only very few repaid the loan. Also related to the above was that the cost of administering the scheme exceeded the total sum of money given out as loan.

Oyotoye (1981) rightly summarized the problem of past government efforts at rural development to be: “wrong or misguided choice of enterprise, lack of clarity of goals sought to be achieved, dichotomy in policies, shoddy project execution and of course, corruption and political adventurism”.

2.4 Role of Local Government in Rural Development

In the emerging countries like Nigeria, Local Government has been adopted as the major instrument for the acceleration and sustenance of rural development. The importance of local government to rural and national development cannot be overemphasized. Local government, as constituted in the constitution is created as a vital instrument for rural development and for the delivery of social services to the people. It is obvious that the third tier of government is strategically placed to fulfill these functions because of its proximity to the rural people, which enables it to easily articulate and aggregate the demands of the people.

From the colonial era to date, the local government has been so recognized as a vital instrument to enhance and promote rural development in Nigeria. The 1971 East Central State Divisional

Administration Edict No. 18 and the 1976 Local Government Reforms are serious efforts towards using local government as vehicle for rural development. The 1976 Local Government Reform in particular was aimed at decentralizing some significant functions of the state government to local levels in order to harness local resources for refined development. It therefore recognized local government as the third-tier of government activity at the grassroots. The 1985 Local Government Reforms contained in Dasuki Plan of 1986 –1990, under Babangida administration further emphasized this.

According to Ugwu (2001: 139 – 145), the Local Government can facilitate rural development in the following ways:

1) *Economic Sector*

The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria bestows on the Local Government the powers to be involved in planning and execution of the economic development. This involvement, it is argued will enable the local government to develop programmes, have direction and purpose. It will afford it opportunity to identify particular economic problems of a particular local government.

It can also mobilize human and material resources through the involvement of the members of the public in their economic development. This is because the objectives of the local government are to render services and encourage rural development activities.

Some other ways the local government can enhance economic development in the rural areas include: market development, implementation of national economic policies, etc. increased economic opportunities can be provided through the assistance of the local government in form of credit, land and other productive capital for both agricultural and non-agricultural production (Onyishi 2000:101).

2) *Transportation and Communication*

These are vital for smooth working and development of rural areas. Local government plays important role in constructing and maintaining rural roads. In local government, there is a works department responsible for maintenance of local roads, building bridges to link up communities to the headquarters. For instance Uzo Local Government Council has built Ihenyi–Abonyi Bridge linking Umualor to Ehan–Amufu and the Local government headquarters at Ikem. Also the local government built another bridge at Mgbede linking Isi-Uzo in Enugu State with Ado Local Government area of Benue State.

Local government can also facilitate the development of rural areas by embarking on mass transit programme. Fleet of buses could be purchased and sustained to assist rural people transport their agricultural materials to urban centers at subsidized rates. Telephone services can also be made available to the rural areas for easy dissemination of information and messages. This is a very vital social amenity that is lacking in most rural areas. But it can be done to facilitate dissemination of information across the country.

3) *Agricultural Sector*

This is another area that the local government can make an impact. Agriculture is the mainstay of our national economy. It is also the second most important sector after oil, contributing up to 20 percent of our national income. At least 80 percent of the working population are engaged in agricultural activities.

Local government can be made more active in the implementation of agricultural policies. For instance, to educate and help the local farmers to understand the mechanism and appreciate modern techniques of production through the use of quick maturing high yielding varieties of seeds, chemical fertilizers, mechanization of agricultural operation and crop protection measures like the use of pesticides (Njoku: 1996:10). This increases productivity as local governments make available agricultural inputs to local farmers at moderate prices.

4) *Provision of Essential Amenities*

Lack of social amenities such as water, and electricity contribute greatly to the dichotomy between rural and urban areas. It is lack of the above that is responsible for the wide-gap between the two settings. But the local government can ameliorate this problem by engaging on rural electrification of the rural areas. Rural electrification is a necessity for economic development of a rural area. By virtue of bringing electricity to the villages for domestic purposes and for pumping water from wells, cost can be reduced.

For instance, the cost of pumping water for irrigation by electricity is much lower than the cost of lifting it with diesel engine. As has been explained above, the local government is in a unique place to assist in rural electrification efforts for the development of rural area.

In the case of portable drinking water, the local government needs to increase its efforts, in order to reduce the rate of waterborne diseases such as guinea worm, typhoid and other related diseases.

5) Industrialization

Local Government can contribute to rural development through industrialization. They can do this by encouraging small scale industries such as Gari processing industry, palm oil processing, rice mill, bag making, fishing industry, livestock, etc. Local government can provide encouragement through provision of credit facilities, provision of land for permanent site, allowing them to enjoy tax freedom for some years, etc. communities or villages that want to embark on such small scale industry can also be provided with embarking facilities for the take-off.

Industrialization plays a vital role in the economic development because it brings about improvement in per capital income, employment opportunities and makes for self-reliance. It equally reduces rural-urban immigration.

6) *Housing Estate*

There is need for decent housing estate in the rural areas. Many rural dwellers have houses that are poorly built and lack proper ventilation. Local government can help in this aspect especially now that the federal financial allocation to local government has appreciated, by providing decent housing estates for their staff and other citizens living in the local area.

With availability of houses, more people will be encouraged to live there and this will promote commercial activities in the area. This will in turn increase revenue generation to the local councils and the people.

7) *Encouraging Town Unions and Voluntary Agencies*

Local governments have been encouraging and supporting these agencies to participate in community efforts in their areas of jurisdiction. This is because the local government appreciates that they cannot do it alone and require the support of these agencies to engender community development. Thus, the local governments do by supporting community development project by the provision of grants-in-aid, technical expertise, and necessary building and construction materials and machinery (Ofuebe: 1996:48).

With these enabling conditions made available by the government, the development of the rural communities is facilitated and enhanced. It makes the agencies such as own unions, voluntary

agencies, age grades, etc to be more enthusiastic in engaging in self-help and development projects.

8) Health Sector

The health sector is another area that should receive the attention of local governments. This is because across the spread of unfunctional government health institutions, available private medicine stores are characterized by the sale of expired drugs and at exorbitant prices/charges. The local government should embrace the Bamako initiative and provide health facilities to the rural people.

9) Education

This is another area that requires urgent attention of local government. It behoves on local government to build and maintain schools. They are also expected to equip these schools with infrastructural facilities such as tables and chairs for both teachers and pupils. Relevant books should also be made available in the Libraries to inculcate readership habit in the pupils. Nowadays, leaking roofs, sandy floors and unsecured premises are evident in most rural schools. Local government can help to ameliorate this situation.

It has been observed that since the establishment of the National Primary Education Board (NPEB) and State Primary Education Board (SPEB) at the national and states respectively, the local governments apparently appear to have hands off their direct responsibilities to these boards. The expectation is that the Board

and the local government should work hand in hand in the provision of adequate educational facilities to the rural people. The local government should help in providing some essential infrastructure such as computer, modern reading materials, classrooms, office accommodation, etc.

Generally, the importance of a meaningful positive role for local government in rural development process cannot be overemphasized. This has been amplified by Maddock (1963) when he stated that:

to achieve social and general economic growth required spreading efforts so that local communities and individuals can participate to bring under ideal conditions, energy, enthusiasm, and most important of all local development activities. Local authorities provide the opportunity for local people to participate in local decision and local schemes within the general national policies and to act, above all, as local centers of initiative and activities conducive to development (Maddock: 1963: 226).

It is pertinent to state that community development through the instrumentality of the local government is essential for a sustained development process. The local government system is the surest way to get to the grassroot through planning and sustenance of implementation strategies if adequately funded under a corrupt free system.

2.5 **Theoretical Framework**

There are many theories of Rural Developments. They include modernization theory, transformation theory, mobilization theory, integrated theory among others. But for the purpose of this study, modernization approach to rural development would be adopted.

Modernization approach assumes that modern technology and scientific methods of production are the main pre-requisites for rapid rural development and sustainable development in general. The strategy lays emphasis on gradual adoption of the new methods so that they can be learnt, imbibed and finally accepted by the uninitiated, that is the rural poor.

The basic elements of this strategy include:

- i) Introduction of modern agricultural methods and machines among small and medium scale farmers;
- ii) Provision of farm planning and modern management services to rural/subsistent farmers.
- iii) Provision of Credit facilities through banks, transportation, marketing, store facilities, fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides.
- iv) Creation of off-farm job opportunities in agro-allied industries, markets and in-service industries established in rural area.
- v) Spreading urban amenities into the countryside to arrest the rural – urban drift of young and able-bodied manpower. These

include electricity, water, health institutions, schools, motorable roads and recreational facilities.

Application of Modernisation Approach to the Study

The adoption of this approach is justified if one considers the functions and schedules of Local Government under the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Furthermore in the emerging countries like Nigeria, Local Government has been adopted as the major instrument for the acceleration and sustenance of rural transformation. Local Government, as constituted in the constitution is created as a vital instrument for rural development and for the delivery of social services to the people.

Modernization approach assumes that modern technology and scientific methods of production are the main pre-requisites for rapid rural development and sustainable development in general and since it aims at gradual adoption of the new methods, this approach is most appropriate. In the Agricultural Sector, for instance, Local Government can be made more active in the implementation of agricultural policies especially in the area of educating farmers to appreciate modern techniques of production through the use of quick maturing high yielding varieties of seeds, chemical fertilizers mechanization of agricultural operation etc which is one of the basic elements of modernization strategy.

Another basic element of this strategy is spreading urban amenities into the countryside to arrest rural – urban drift of young

and able-bodied manpower. These include, electricity, water, health institutions, schools, motorable roads recreational facilities. It is believed that the Local Government can ameliorate this problem by engaging in provision of rural electricity, primary and vocational schools, dispensaries and health posts, and all other essential amenities.

In view of this, modernization approach to rural development shall be adopted to assess the role of local government in rural transformation efforts in the areas of improved agricultural methods, provision of tractor or other equipments to enhance, agricultural productivity, provision of extension services knowledge to the rural people, provision of credit facilities, markets, rural electricity, motorable roads, health institutions, recreational facilities, etc. The performance of the local government within the period under review/study will testify whether the local government can justifiably be an agent for rural development. The study will extend further to study the constraints, if any that hinder the local government from fulfilling this role.

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CHAPTER THREE

OPERATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF WUSHISHI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the historical background of the local government under study is given i.e. how and when it was created. The chapter further discusses its functions, operation and the organizational structure of the local government council.

3.2 Historical Background of Wushishi Local Government Area

The Federal Military Government of General Ibrahim Babangida while celebrating sixth year anniversary in office created additional states and local Government areas on 27th August, 1991. Among these local governments was Wushishi Local Government Area carved out of then Mariga Local Government area with Headquarters at Kontagora. The Local Government then shared boundaries with Mariga, Bosso, Gbako and Rafi Local Government Areas of Niger State. It comprised of three districts, Mashegu, Zugurma and Wushishi.

The present Wushishi Local Government is part of what remained after the creation of more states and local government areas on 1st October, 1996 when Mashegu District was made a Local Government Area. The present Wushishi Local Government is

bounded in the West by Bosso, in the south by Rafi, in the east by Mashegu and in the North by Mariga Local Government areas respectively.

According to history, the people of Wushishi are the remnants of those who migrated from Kontagora with the legendary, Umaru Nagwamatse, the founder of the Emirate.

- i) Population:** The Local Government area has a projected population of about 134,480 people. Wushishi Local Government is now divided into two main districts – Kaduna and Wushishi. Languages spoken in the area are Nupe, Hausa/Fulani, Gbagyi, Kamuku and Pangu. The major occupations of the people are farming and fishing. Crops grown mostly in the area are rice, guinea corn, millet, yam, cassava, cocoa and groundnut. Those who lived along River Kaduna in Kaduna District engaged in fishing.
- ii) Mineral Resources:** The lower valley at Zungeru and a hill at Ragada called “Tsaunin-Cire-Hulanka’ are said to contain gold deposits. It is also rumoured that there are deposits of crude oil at the Kwandara Hills, while larger quantity of quarry deposits are scattered in almost every part of the local government.
- iii) Tourist Attractions:** Wushishi Local Government, is endowed with a lot of tourist potentials. These tourist Centres spread

across the local government area. The first president (Governor-General of this country, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was born at Zungeru. His father was a railway worker at Zungeru. Former Military President Ibrahim Babangida was equally born in Wushishi.

Among these tourist Centres is the first Northern Nigeria colonial Headquarters and the first West African Frontier Force-Headquarters of the Royal Niger Company (RNC) at Gwarjiko, with the first tramway line constructed from the village to Zungeru. The locomotive engine is still intact at the Minna Railway Station with the inscription “Wushishi I Tramway” on it.

Another place of interest is the Lord Lugard’s colonial secretariat at Zungeru, which conveniently served as the first Nigerian Capital. Also located at this same place is the cemetery of about one hundred graves of white colonial aides to Lord Lugard. An example of this is the grave of Dr. A. A. Smith who died on 4th January 1903. He was the founder of Scout and West African Frontier Force. Other places of interest is the yet-to-be completed Zik Centre, Tsaunn-Cire-Lulanka that resembled the Zuma rock along Abuja.

iv) Economic Activities: The economy activities of this area is vested in the production of agricultural products such as corn, groundnut, maize, rice, beans, cassava, etc. These food

products grow well because of the good climatic condition that is enjoyed in the area. Another important economic area is fishing because of the proximity to the River. The local government derives a greater part of the internally generated revenue from these agricultural products.

- v) **Industry:** For the mere fact that there is no single functional industry in the local government Area, the authorities are not resting on their oars, in making sure that investors come over to the Local Government to invest in anyway they deem profitably. The joint venture, Niger Fertilizer Company, Zungeru has collapsed due to poor management and vision. The hindrance to the clarion call by Local Authorities for investors to come and invest would be poor infrastructural facilities such as road, electricity supply and water.
- vi) **Socio-Cultural Activities:** The socio-cultural activities of the people in the Local Government Area are embodied in Wedding Ceremony, songs, dances and mythology.

In Kanko village, the people are believed to be perfect in making WASA medicine – a medicine which is used to cure snake bite or prevent snake from biting one or leaving a particular place where the medicine is kept. The medicine is believed to be effectively prepared only when rain dizzle and it is pounded continuously from morning till evening.

Dabogi people in the Local Government Area are believed to be powerful enough to turn to Buffalo when angered.

vii) Education: The Local Government Area has fifty three Primary Schools, two Post-primary Schools and one Polytechnic.

viii) Health: The Local Government has a General Hospital at Wushishi, one Rural Health Centre at Zungeru, five dispensaries and health Posts scattered over the area.

ix) Source of Revenue: The major source of income of Wushishi Local Council is the financial allocation from the Federation Account. The Local Government generates its internal revenue from the taxes rates, interest from the Local Government business enterprises.

3.3 Functions of Local Government Councils

As provided in the Fourth Schedule of the 1999 constitution, Wushishi Local Government performs the following functions:

- i) Collection of rates, radio and television licenses.
- ii) Establishment and maintenance of Cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for destitute and infirm.
- iii) Administration of markets, and motor vehicle parts.
- iv) Licensing of bicycles, trucks, other mechanically propelled trucks, canoes, while barrows and carts.

- v) Establishment of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs, markets, motor parks and public conveniences.
- vi) Construction and maintenance of road, streets, drainages, and parks.
- vii) Naming of roads, streets and numbering of houses.
- viii) Provision and maintenance of public convenience sewage and refuse disposal.
- ix) Registration of births, deaths and marriages,
- x) Control and regulation of:
 - a) Outdoor advertising and hoarding,
 - b) Movement and keeping of pots of description
 - c) Shops and kiosks

 - d) Restaurants, bakeries and other places for sale of food to the public

 - e) Laundries,

 - f) Licensing, regulation and control of the sale of liquor.

These functions as enumerated above constitute the items that the Wushishi area council can exclusively legislate on. Other functions which the area council exercise concurrently, with the state government includes:

- i) Assessment of privately owned houses or tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of the State.
- ii) The provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocational education.
- iii) The development of agriculture and natural resources, other than the exploitation of minerals.
- iv) The provision and maintenance of health services.
- v) Any other function as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly.
- vi) Maintenance of law and order within their area of jurisdiction.
- vii) Mobilization of the people for rapid rural development of the grassroots with special reference to:
 - a) Self-help projects, farm production
 - b) Conflict resolution among warring communities, clans, etc.
 - c) Provision of housing and urban layouts
 - d) Provision of electricity,
 - e) Enlightenment services.

3.4 Organizational Structure of Wushishi Local Government Council

The organizational structure of Wushishi Local Government Council is not different from any other local Council in Nigeria. The structure as provided in the 1999 Federal Constitution was widely regarded as conforming to the democratic model of local representative government which was a product of 1976 Reform.

Constitutionally, the Local Government has a shared responsibility among three branches of government. There is the Council – which is the legislative body made up of all elected Councilors. The Executive Arm, which comprised of elected Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Supervisors, Secretary to the Local Government and the career civil servants. The judiciary whose status in Local Government consists of the customary courts system but is controlled by the State Government.

The office of the Secretary to the Local Government is now a political appointment and not held by a career civil servant. Thus, there is the Executive Council, the legislative council, office of the chairman, office of the Secretary, Departments with the personnel department exalted among the rest because of additional functions give to it.

1. The Chairman: The Chairman of Wushishi Local Government Area is the Chief Executive and in some cases, the Accounting Officer as well as the Chief Security Officer of the Local Government. He is assisted by the Secretary to the Local Government, the Treasurer, Personal Assistants and Political Adviser. The chairman performs the following functions:

- i) He observes and apply with financial regulations governing receipt and disbursement of public funds and assets entrusted to his care and shall be liable for any breach thereof.
- ii) Ensure that all instructions relating to expenditure of public funds by him are written.
- iii) Be accountable to the public accounts Committee of the House of Assembly for all monies voted for each department and shall be financially liable.
- iv) Render monthly statement of income and expenditure and annual report to the Local Government Council.
- v) Render quarterly returns of the actual income and expenditure of the Local Government to the State Government.
- vi) Ensure that there is strict compliance with the spending limits of all concerned.
- vii) Convene and preside over the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Local Government.

- viii) Comply with the provisions of the financial memoranda regarding his fiscal responsibilities.
- ix) The chairman is the approving officer of the local government.
- x) He shall hold regular meetings with the Vice Chairman and all the supervisors of the Local Government for the purpose of:
 - a. Determining the general direction of the politics of the Local Government Council.
 - b. Coordinating the activities of the Council, and
 - c. Generally discharging the Executive functions of the Council.
- xi) Direct the affairs of the Local Government and allocates specific responsibilities to the Vice-Chairman, superiors and Secretary to the Local Government.

The Chairman leads the Local Government cabinet which comprises the Supervisory Councilors.

2. The Vice-Chairman: The Vice-Chairman exercises his power through the delegated process of the Chairman. He deputizes for the Chairman. He is assigned duties as willing by the Chairman.

3. Supervisors: Supervisors are appointed members of the Executive Council of the Local Government. They are assigned the duty of overseeing the activities of the four local government financial departments. These departments are:

- i) Agricultural and Natural Resources,
- ii) Works, Housing, Land and survey,
- iii) Medical and Primary health.
- iv) Education, Youth and Social Development.

The Supervisors perform the following functions:

- i) Serving as political leaders of the respective departments,
- ii) Serving as members of the Executive Committee,
- iii) Giving directives to the professional leaders of their departments on general policy issues.
- iv) Carrying out such other functions as may be assigned to them from time to time by the Chairman.

4. Secretary to the Local Government: The Secretary will serve as the Secretary to the Local Government in an executive capacity. He services the meeting of the Finance and General Purpose Committee and keeps records thereof. He shall also:

- i) Serve as Secretary to the meetings of the Executive Council and other committees charged with the responsibility of policy formulation and decision making.
- ii) Keep all records and minutes of all the policy bodies.
- iii) Formulates policies.
- iv) Handles all litigation of the local government,

- v) Liases with the Secretary to the State Government and other Necessary State functionaries in State/Local relations with regards to administrative matters.
- vi) Performs such other functions as may be assigned to him from time to time by the Council and Chairman.

5. Personnel Management Department: The department is headed by the Head of Personnel Management. He is the accounting officer of the Local Government. The personnel management department handles the human resources aspect of the Local Government. His other activities include:

- i) Coordinating the activities of all the departments in the Local Government.
- ii) Reporting the activities of all the departments to the Secretary to the Local Government.
- iii) Keeping of up to date records of all local government employees.
- iv) Processing of documents and files for promotion, training, discipline, annual and casual leave.
- v) Conducting in-house and on-the-job training for staff.
- vi) Day-to-day running, supervision and management of the department.
- vii) Policy execution,

- viii) The appointment,, promotion, discipline and posting of officers on grade level 01 – 06.
- ix) Handling of all staff matters in conformity with existing rules and regulation.
- x) Seeing to the general welfare of all members of staff and officials of the local government.

The Head of Personnel Management is directly answerable to the Chairman, unlike other heads of Departments that are answerable to the Supervisory Councilors.

6. Department of Finance Supplies and Statistics: The Department is headed by the Local Government Treasurer. Like the Head of Personnel Management, he Treasurer is directly answerable to the Chairman. The Treasurer of the Local Government discharges his functions in accordance with the approved scheme of service of Local Government employees and the financial memorandum. He advises al the Local Government functionaries on proper financial management and controls their decisions both at planning and at the operational stages. His other duties include:

- i) Having responsibility for the administrative control of the financial department of the Local Government.
- ii) Serves as the Chief Accounts Officer of the receipts and payments of the Local Government.

- iii) Ensuring that the accounting system as laid down in the financial memorandum is complied with by all the departments of the Local Government
- iv) Budgetary Control and supervision of the accounts of all departments of the Local Government.
- v) Preparing and publishing of monthly and annual financial statements of the local government.
- vi) Signatory of the Local Government Cheques and Vouchers.
- vii) Ensuring that account officers are responsible to the Public Accounts Committees for monies voted to each department.
- viii) Such other lawful duties as may be assigned by the Council and the Chairman.

7. Primary Healthcare Department: The Department is headed by the Head of Health Department He is answerable to the political head of the department who is the supervisory councilor. The Department is divided into six divisions to reflect the primary healthcare components and to ensure the effective coordination and implementation of its entire activities. The major duties are:

- a) Monitoring and evaluating of primary healthcare.
- b) Immunization
- c) Control of communicable diseases.
- d) Health education
- e) Maternity/child health and nutrition
- f) Water supply

- g) Endemic diseases
- h) Sanitary matter
- i) Essential drug supplies
- j) Minor ailments.

8) Agricultural And Natural Resources Department: The Department is also headed by a Head of Department. He is answerable to the Political Head of the Department who is the supervisory councilor.

The department is constituted into four divisions, which handles all the activities of the department. They are: Agricultural Division, which handles the extension services to the farmers, procures and distributes fertilizers and other farm inputs. The Forestry Division deals with Nurseries and gardens. The Home Economics division conducts extension services by organizing training programmes for women in the local government areas on various domestic services – e.g. weaving, tailoring, knitting, child health and personal hygiene and cooking. The fourth division is the Veterinary division, which performs the inspection of rearing edible domestic animals for meat production, maintains rabbit and poultry services for eggs and meat production. It also conducts clinical services for general control of animal diseases.

9) Works, Transport And Housing Department: *The department is also headed by a Head of Department who is a career*

officer. He is answerable to the Political head of the Department who is the supervisory Councilor.

The department has four divisions, namely: Building, Mechanical, Civil Engineering and lands. The building division undertakes the function of preparing and execution of working drawings for buildings carries out site surveys and leveling, preparation of schedules of materials and carryout supervision of standard buildings and structural calculations. It also conducts inspection and supervision of buildings and other structure against designed specification tracing and preparing work drawings from sketches for buildings.

The Mechanical Division inspects maintains and repairs vehicles, plants and equipment of the council. It supervises the activities of mechanical stores, organizes and controls workshops. Civil engineering division supervises the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, preparation of estimates for all types of road works and bridges, carrying out of site measuring for interim valuation and final accounts, supervises the construction of culverts and any other related duties.

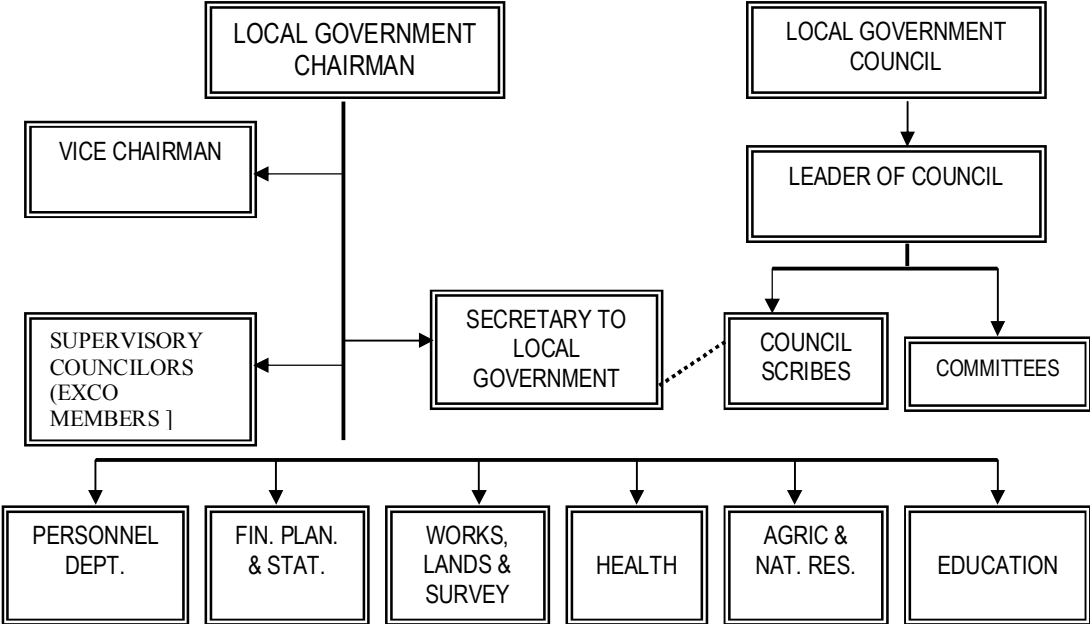
The lands division enumerates and values economic trees and structures on land, compulsorily acquired maintain land records, inspect and maintain the local government lands, represents the local government area in law courts on routine land matters.

10) Education Department: The Department is headed by the Head of Department and he is answerable to the Supervisory Councilor in charge of education. The department performs the following functions:

- a) Carries out education planning of the local government area.
- b) Coordinates the research activities aimed at accelerating the rate of educational development of the local government area.
- c) It is in charge of primary school education within the local government area. They include, recruitment, and promotion of primary school teachers.

11) Internal Auditor: The internal auditor provides a complete and continuous audit of the accounts and records of the revenue, expenditure, allocated and unallocated stores and assets of the local government. He liaises with the state Auditor-General for local government on all matters relating to the audit programmes and audit finances and imposes sanctions. The auditor also draws the attention to the audit alarm committee the treasurer, the chairman or the legislative body as regards any irregularities or apparent departure from any earlier internal audit observation or recommendations.

STRUCTURE OF WUSHISHI LOCAL GOVERNMENT



SOURCE: Niger State Local Government Digest 1st edition

ENDNOTES

Federal Government of Nigeria: Guidelines for 1976 Local Government Reforms, Kaduna Government Printer.

Niger State Local Government Digest 1st Edition.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This study is out to assess Wushishi Local Government as a vehicle for rural development between 1999 and 2003. In doing this, the various resources available to the local government would be examined, since the failure or success of any organization depends on the resources available to it.

In appraising the role of Wushishi Local Government as a vehicle for rural transformation, the researcher examined the manpower effectiveness of the local government in terms of adequacy of staff, qualification, experience and manpower training and development.

Another area to be examined is the funds made available to the local government. This is in terms of statutory allocation and internally generated revenue.

The third aspect to be examined is the rural development efforts of Wushishi Local Government in the area of agriculture, development, employment opportunities, education, healthcare delivery, water, sanitation and other infrastructural facilities.

Another area of constraint to be examined is the relationship existing between Wushishi Local Government with the state government, especially in the area of control or interference by the state government.

All the variables enumerated above would be examined to ensure that a proper judgment is made on the subject matter of the study. Two hypotheses were postulated and would be tested in order to give the study more focus.

Data from both primary and secondary sources were generated to test the hypotheses. To generate the primary data, a total sample size of 710 respondents consisting of 600 beneficiaries and 110 staff of Wushishi Local Government were taken. Out of the 710 questionnaires drawn and distributed, only 685 were duly filled and returned. 10 and 15 questionnaires were not returned from the staff and beneficiaries of the local government respectively. Relevant data obtained were presented and analysed using Tables, Frequency and Percentage. The chapter also contained summary of the findings from the data analysed.

4.2 Test of Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis for this study is stated thus: “The level of performance of Wushishi Local Government in terms of rural development is determined by the human financial and material resources available.”

The importance of the availability and the effective utilization of resources in achieving organizational goal or objective cannot be overemphasized. The effectiveness of both human and material resources goes along way in determining organizational effectiveness. No matter how effective or available the material

resources, if there is no effective manpower to coordinate it, it will result to waste of resources and vice-versa.

In testing the first hypothesis, data were presented and analysed in the area of manpower or staff strength of the local government, their qualification and experience and training and development.

4.2.1 Staff Strength

The researcher in obtaining the data on the staff strength examined the nominal roll of the local government. The result is tabulated below:

Table 4.1: Staff Strength and the Cadres

DEPARTMENT	JUNIOR CADRE	SENIOR CADRE	TOTAL
Personnel	62	33	
Agriculture	23	15	
Health	72	12	
Works	78	10	
Finance	17	25	
	252	95	347

Source: Personnel Dept. Staff Nominal Roll

Table 4.1 shows the number of staff per department in the local government area. The table shows that personnel department

has the highest number of staff, the staff strength constitute 27.3% of the local government total staff strength. This is followed by Works Department, Health, Finance and Agriculture.

Also from the table we could see the breakdown of the percentage of each cadre for each department. From the grand total, the junior staff constitutes 72.6% of the staff strength. This is not good for the local government in terms of manpower effectiveness. The implication of this is that the local government has refused to inject new qualified personnel. In this technological/computer age, the administrative activities of the local government are still done manually. This is not good for the local government, if it really wants to forge ahead in its developmental efforts.

The next table gives a picture of the qualification of the staff of Wushishi Local Government.

Table 4.2: Educational Qualification of Staff of Wushishi Local Government

QUALIFICATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Illiterates/Primary School	35	10
Secondary school	230	66.3
OND	55	15.8
HND	27	7.8
Higher Degrees	-	-
TOTAL	347	100

Source: Wushishi Local Government Staff Normal Roll.

Table 4.2 shows the various qualifications of the staff of Wushishi Local Government area. From the analysis on the table, it can be seen that majority of the staff of the local government are not adequately skilled. This inadequacy could be a constraint to the local government's development effort, since the bulk of the staff lack the necessary skill and experience to co-ordinate and manage the resources towards developing the area.

This development brought us to the issue of training of the staff of the local government to equip them for development purpose. The staff were asked the following question

Table 4.3: Does the Local Government have any manpower training development Programme?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	78	78
No	22	22
TOTAL	100	100

Source: Researchers Survey 2004

The responses in Table 4.3 indicate that there is manpower training programme in the local government. But the problems is that it is one thing to have manpower training programme written on paper, another is to implement it. This led to the second question:

Table 4.4: Have you been sent for any manpower training for the past two years?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	33	33
No	67	67
TOTAL	100	100

Source: Researchers Survey 2004

The Table above indicates that 33 respondents represented by 33% of the sample had attended training programme for the past two years. This situation is not favourable. Frequent and effective manpower training programme will not only increase staff experience at work, it would also serve as a motivating factor for increased productivity.

From the analysis made so far on manpower resources, it would be accurate to suggest that there is inadequate manpower effectiveness.

4.2.2 **Financial Resources**

Financial resource is another important element in assessing the effectiveness of an organization. No matter how qualified and experienced the manpower, without fund, they cannot do anything.

As such, the financial resources available to the local government, both statutory allocations and internally generated would be examined. This is because the performance of any local

government is subject to the availability of adequate fund to be used to finance its ever increasing responsibilities.

The summary of the funds accrued to Wushishi local government council between 1999 – 2003 is as tabulated in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: Summary of revenue accrued to Wushishi local government from 1999 - 2003

YEAR	INTERNAL REVENUE	STATUTORY ALLOCATION
1999	₦2.6M	₦90M
2000	₦2.71M	₦240M
2001	₦2.2M	₦420M
2002	₦2.8M	₦94M
2003	₦1.5M	₦96M
		₦940M
TOTAL	₦11.81M	₦940M

Source: The Finance Department, Wushishi Local Government, 2004.

The Table above shows the summary of distribution of revenue sources of Wushishi local government. An in-depth analysis of the table shows the over dependence of Wushishi local government area on externally generated revenue i.e. statutory allocations. From 1999 – 2003 we can see that statutory allocation is the highest taking 98% of the total revenue, while internally generated revenue of the local government is about 1.2%. The revenue is not even

enough to meet recurrent expenditure of the local government. This continuous dependence can affect the performance of the local government and it can also lead to excessive control from the federal and state levels of government since ‘he who pays the piper dictates the tune’. For a local government like Wushishi local government to perform effectively, it has to improve its internally generated revenue. Most local governments in Lagos state were able to perform effectively because of the enormous fund accrued to it through internally generated revenue.

The researcher went on to seek the opinion of the staff respondents on the four major reasons for the low internally generated revenue by the local government area. Their responses are tabulated below.

Table 4.6: Reasons for Low Internally Generated Revenue

S/N	RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Problem of obtaining necessary	13	13
2	enabling law	22	22
3	Technical problem of valuation and assessment	25	25
4	Technical problem of exploiting the revenue bases	40	40
	Corruption		
	TOTAL	100	100

Source: The Researcher’s Survey, 2004.

The table shows the four major pressing militating factors hindering the local government in generating substantial amount internally. The first most pressing problem among the four identified was the problem of corruption. The second is the problem of exploiting the numerous revenue bases available to the local government. It was realized through interview that out of the statutorily assigned internal revenue sources, only the combination of rates, rents, fines, fees, local licenses and earnings from commercial activities account for over 70% of the amount internally generated revenue. Other sources that are considered high yielding revenue sources like property taxes and tenant rates are not adequately and effectively exploited.

The third is the problem of evaluation and assessment. This problem is technical in nature and it has been used by corrupt local government revenue officers to perpetuate their acts. Many properties are under valued by corrupt officials in connivance with property owners.

The fourth is the problem of obtaining necessary enabling bye-law especially in the area of determining the property and the amount to be taxed. The local government is yet to make a new bye-law to accommodate new levies and rates proposed.

Table 4.7: Is your local government finance adequate to carry out its statutory responsibilities?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	30	30
NO	70	70
	100	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2004.

The respondents were asked if the total finances of the local government both statutory allocation and internally generated revenues were adequate to carry out the role of transforming the rural area. Most of the respondents, representing about 70% agreed that the revenue was quite inadequate. Those who agreed that the disbursement was okay argued that if the revenue realized had been judiciously used, meaningful development would have been noticed, but for corrupt practices and mismanagement by the managers of the local government.

4.2.3 Rural Development Efforts of Wushishi Local Government

The researcher further examined the efforts of the local government in developing the rural community within the period under review. This is done by assessing areas in which it can facilitate rural development. These areas include agriculture, education, health and other social amenities such as water supply, roads, communication, power and other infrastructural facilities, industry, economic activities and employment opportunities.

(a) **Agriculture:** Agricultural sector is the mainstay of the economy of the local government area. It is the most important sector in the rural area. About 80% of the populations in the local government area are engaged in agricultural activity. As such, improving agricultural activities, apart from gearing up economic activities in the area, it will also reduce the rate of unemployment in the area.

In an interview with the Head of department Agriculture Department on the availability of skilled manpower and the modern agricultural machines and implements, he opined that much is still desired. He asserted that the department had only three tractors and out of which only one was serviceable. Therefore the only serviceable tractor was quite inadequate to carry out meaningful work.

The total expenditure on Agriculture in the period under review as contained in a publication of the state government on “The accounts of local government administration from 1999 – 2003” is shown in the table below:

Table 4.8: Total Expenditure on Agriculture 1999 – 2003

	ITEMS	AMOUNT
	Repairs of Tractors	₦926,500
	Supply of agro-chemical	₦249,600
	Supply of hooks of net	₦28,000
	Kettles and broom	₦15,000
	Purchase of 2 tractor implements	₦266,450
	Repair of fertilizer store at Wushishi	₦55,440
	Purchase of grinding machine at Gbasakun	₦100,000
	TOTAL	₦1,640,990

Source: Account of Local Government Administration and Council since 1999.

From the table above, we can deduce that much has not been done by the local government in terms of helping farmers with modern tools for farming.

The respondents from the community were asked if they had access to farm implements like tractor, to do their work. Their reaction is as tabulated in table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9: Access to Farm implements

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Have Access	180	30.8
Don't have access	405	69.2
TOTAL	585	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2004.

The table shows that about 69.2% of the rural people in the local government area have no access to farm implements from the local government. This fact is not farfetched as only tractor is serviceable out of the three owned by the local government. This one tractor cannot really go round substantial number of the farmers. Further interview revealed that few farmers who could afford it hire farm implements like tractors from private owners at a very costly price. Majority of farmers who could not afford it rely on the local tools.

The rural people were asked if they had access to fertilizer and improved seedlings supplied by the local government at subsidized rates. Their reaction is tabulated below:

Table 4.10: Access to fertilizer and improved seedlings

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Have Access	123	21
Don't have access	462	78.9
TOTAL	585	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2004.

The responses in Table 4.10 shows that majority of the rural people have no access to fertilizer and improved seedlings from the local government. Most of the farmers complained that these bags of fertilizer were sold to businessmen through collaboration with corrupt officials of the department. These businessmen in turn sold the fertilizer to the local farmers at exorbitant prices. On the issue

of improved seedlings, it was confirmed that only very few were aware of the availability. Besides, the local government complained that it has not been able to procure enough as a result of inadequate funds. Also in the area of fishery which constitute the second largest occupation of the rural people of the local government area, much as not been done to assist the fishermen/reverine people. The local government supplied three canoes at Angwan Galadima, four canoes at Pangu and one at Pakara which cost the sum of ₦344,925. Relief materials worth ₦45,000 were also provided to disaster areas in 2003. Considering the importance of Agriculture as the major occupation of the rural people of the local government, the council has not done much to transport that sector.

(b) **Infrastructural Facilities:** The importance of infrastructural facilities to rural development cannot be overemphasized. These facilities include water, communication, road, electricity, etc. The lack of these facilities in rural area marks the difference between rural and urban settings and widely attributed for rural – urban drift.

Road and Transport

Good road network is very essential for the economic development of any society, since goods and services produced need to be transported to where they would be sold. Also people need to move from one place to the other to carry out daily activities with an

effective road network in the rural areas, goods produced can be transported to the markets nearby and far-off to be sold. As such the local government plays an important role in constructing and maintaining rural roads and bridges. The works department is responsible for this. The following expenditures were made in the construction and maintenance of rural roads during the period under review.

Table 4.11: Expenditure on construction of roads and bridges in Wushishi Local Government 1999 – 2003

	ITEM	AMOUNT
1	Construction Of Semi-Bridge With Hardwood,	279,450
2	Decking At Akare	
	Bulldozing/Grading Of 12km Road Within Maito,	4,600,000
3	Gwarji-Dabin road, chakwa-Chakwa	206,000
4	Semi-bridge of hardwood timber at Faji sayin,	
	Wushishi	226,250
	Filling and rehabilitation of Kodo-Makusidi road	
	TOTAL	5,311,700

Source: An Account of Local Government Administration and Councils since 1999

The table above shows the total expenditure of Wushishi local government on roads and bridges. The table indicates that the local government spent ₦5,311,700. Details of the expenditure shows

that ₦484,450 was used to construct two semi-bridges with hardwood and ₦4,600,000 for grading of 12km road and ₦226,250 for fitting and rehabilitation of road. These amounts sound outrageous. If ₦4.6m could be used to grade a 12km road, then how much would be required to construct a tarred road?

The table shows that a patry sum of ₦5.3m was spent on roads for a period of 5 years. This is not good for the development of a good rural road network. Furthermore only 4 roads were worked on. This development is unsatisfactory and it would be impossible to achieve any meaningful development like this. Because of the strategic location of the local government headquarters and Zungeru along Federal and state roads, and maintained by these higher levels of government one would have expected the local government to work more on interior rural roads and not allow them to suffer.

The researcher went further to find out if the construction and maintenance of roads were executed through direct labour or contract. It was gathered that the execution was contracted out as the local government lacked both the skilled manpower and necessary equipment to undertake such projects.

Another area related to road in which local government can facilitate rural development is the area of embarking on mass transit programme. This can be done by raising fleet of cars and buses and sustaining them. The following expenditure was made on mass transit in Wushishi local government within the period under review.

Table 4.12: Expenditure on Mass Transit Programme

	ITEM	AMOUNT
1.	Purchase of 5 Mass Transit buses	2,100,000
2.	Purchase of one 18 Seater	950,000
3.	4 Engine for Commercial Buses	360,000
4.	Mass Transit Vehicle	950,000

Source: An Account of Local Government Administration and Councils since 1999

The table above shows the total expenditure made on mass transit programme stood at ₦4.13 million. A detailed analysis of the expenditure shows a total of ₦4 million was spent on purchasing new vehicles while ₦360,000 was spent on purchasing 4 new engines for their old commercial buses. The expenditure appears okay but the researcher went on to seek the opinion of the rural people on the impact of the mass transit programme on the rural people. Their responses are tabulated below:

Table 4.13: Awareness of Wushishi Mass Transit Programme

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Aware	359	61.4
Not aware	225	38.6
	585	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2004.

The responses on Table 4.13 indicate that majority of the respondent represented by 61.4% are aware of the Wushishi mass transit programme. Since it has been confirmed that the majority of the people are aware of the mass transit programme, the next question is how far has it impacted on their life, or in other words, do they benefit from the programme?

The success of this type of programme depends on how beneficial it is to the targeted population. Since Wushishi local government mass transit programme was meant to assist the rural people transport their goods at subsidized rate, the researcher sought to find out the accessibility to the programme/vehicles.

Table 4.14: Accessibility to Mass Transit

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Have access	200	34
Do not have access	385	66
	585	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2004.

The table shows that the majority of the respondents have no access to the mass transit vehicles. The researcher went on to ask the respondents the reasons for this development. The following reasons were given as tabulated in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Reasons for Inaccessibility

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Inadequate vehicles	220	37.6
Vehicles do not ply their routes	365	62.4
	585	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2004.

As shown on Table 4.15 the reasons adduced by the respondents for the problem of not getting the services of the mass transit vehicles include, lack of enough vehicles to carry intending passengers to their different destinations and that the vehicles do not ply most of the rural roads, except Wushishi – Zungeru – Minna and Wushishi – Maito – Bida.

The general complain was that instead of the vehicles to ply through many villages in the local government, they ply towns like Minna, Zungeru Bida and on-hire to Kontagora and outside the states. Only villages en-route these towns enjoy the services of the programme. On this issue raised by the respondents, the researcher confirmed through interview with the Co-ordinator of the programme and his argument was that most of the rural villages have no accessible roads. He further added that since the programme was more welfarist and not profit-driven, not much has been realized

from ticket sales. This accounted for inadequate number of vehicles and not being able to expand the network.

After assessing the road network and the transport system of Wushishi local government area, our finding reveals that many villages in the local government area are not accessible. Also the local government has not done much in the construction and maintenance of road network. The few roads, which are tarred, are either state roads or federal roads. The local government enjoys this privilege because it is located along federal and state strategic routes to other states of the federation.

(c) **Health:** Healthcare services are another important elements in developing the local government. Health is a very important social service that every local government needs to provide for her populace. The Bamako Initiative (BI) was endorsed and adopted by Nigeria in 1988 as a model for the provision of primary healthcare at the grassroots level. It was designed to reach the majority of the population through the provision of affordable drugs through a revolving drug scheme. This initiative has been adopted by many local governments in Nigeria. The constitution also gave the provision of primary healthcare services to that tier of government.

In assessing the health situation of Wushishi local government area, the researcher went to find out the number of Health

establishment, personnel in the area, and the accessibility of the services to the people.

On the number of healthcare establishments in the local government, the PHC department confirmed that there are: one – modern comprehensive hospital at Wushishi (built by the federal government), 2 Rural health centers at Zungeru and Maito, 5 dispensaries and many health posts.

According to the National Policy on Health, the local government is expected to provide healthcare service. This type of healthcare services emphasized more on preventive rather than curative. The functions according to NPH, include:

- (i) treatment and administration of drugs to patients who are infected or about to be infected
- (ii) to educate people about family planning exercise
- (iii) to administer oral dehydration therapy popularly known as ORT
- (iv) to keep environmental sanitation and refuse disposal
- (v) undertaking immunizations against the six killer diseases i.e. whooping cough, tetanus, polio, tuberculosis, diarrhea, and measles.
- (vi) Enlightenment of the people by conducting workshops, and seminar on health education and personal hygiene
- (vii) Co-ordination and improvement of the welfare of the blind, handicapped, motherless babies, abandoned children, etc.

(viii) To liaise with government and non-government organizations to ensure the success of health programme.

It is pertinent from the above that the local government has array of functions to perform to sustain healthcare delivery. To do this effectively depends on number of factors, among which include: the number of health establishment, adequacy of skilled personnel, equipment, materials and funding.

Below is the expenditure made on health by Wushishi local government area during the period under review:

Table 4.16: Expenditure on Health 1999 – 2003

	ITEM	AMOUNT
1.	Repair and renovation of Tashan Jirgi,	44,500
2.	Dispensary, Zungeru	55,442
3.	Repair and renovation of Dispensary Kaliko	106,820
4.	Repair and renovation of Dispensary Kodo	44,510
5.	Partitioning of staff clinic at the Secretariat,	82,772
6.	Wushishi	51,315
7.	Repair of Makusidi dispensary	81,690
8.	Painting/electrical work at Kanko FSP clinic	177,480
9.	Repaid/renovation of staff quarters RHC	155,22.25
10.	Zungeru	124,130
11.	Repaid/renovation of OPD block at RHC	44,248
12.	Zungeru	171,660

13.	Construction of Pit latrine at RHC Zungeru	49,248
14.	Renovation of students' hostel at RHC Zungeru	550,000
15.	Veterinary office	71,950
16.	Repair of Wards	128,000
17.	Repair of NYSC Quarters at RCH	36,240
18.	Renovation of pavilion (ante-natal)	29,064
19.	Renovation of maternity ward	95,513
20.	Renovration of Yelwa Dispensary	76,140
21.	Renovration of Maito Dispensary	241,155
22.	Veterinary clinic Wushishi	276,631
23.	Contruction of 2 slaughter slabs, Zungeru	261,334
24.	Installing electricity and wiring veterinary office	277,055
25.	Wushishi	591,772
26.	Construction of Staff Quarters at FSP clinic	344,196
27.	Kanko	344,196
28.	Construction of 1 dispensary, pakara station	170,000
29.	1 minim dispensary, Saminaka	345,587
30.	Construction of 10 pit latrines at Zungeru	283,984
31.	Construction of 10 pit latrines at Zungeru	203,024
32.	Mini-dispensary at Fugangi	300,000
33.	Mini-dispensary at Batandaba	2,400,000
34.	Furnishing of Makusidi dispensary	1,200,222
35.	Renovation of Akare dispensary	1,000,000

36.	Renovation of Akare dispensary	100,000
37.	Renovation of Akare dispensary	600,000
38.	Purchase of emergency drugs	325,800
39.	Purchase of NID for the yer 2000	227,055
40.	Purchase of NID for the year 2001	70,000
41.	Purchase of Dispensary equipment and drugs	139,000
	Supply of vet Uniforms	
	Supply of vet drugs	
	Supply of agro-chemicals	
	Construction of pit latrines	
	Furnishing of Makisibi Dispensary	
	Repair and renovation of clinics at Batandaba	
	TOTAL	11,767,033.25

Source: An Account of Local Government Administration and Councils since 1999

The items and total expenditure are quite revealing. From the table the sum of ₦5.1m was spent on purchase of drugs for the various health establishments managed by the local government while about ₦2.4m was spent on various repair/renovation and construction to ensure healthcare delivery. The expenditure of the local government on health may not give us a picture of how effective the healthcare delivery has been. In order to assess the impact on the target beneficiaries, the respondents were asked their opinion on

their level of access to healthcare facilities provided by the local government.

The respondents were asked the following question:

Table 4.17:What is the distance between your house and the nearest health center? The under mentioned options were given and their responses tabulated:

DISTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1-5km	88	15
5-10km	106	18
10-15km	176	30
15-20km	158	27
20- upward	57	10
TOTAL	585	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2004.

57% of the residents live between 10 – 20km to the nearest health facility/institution. In case of emergency situations, coupled with the bad state of roads, it becomes a serious constraint in the enjoyment of health facilities available.

On the issue of general performance on health care delivery, the opinion of the residents is indicated in table 4.18.

Table 4.18: Assessment of Healthcare Delivery System

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Very good	58.55	10
Good	134.55	23
Average	321	55
Bad	58.55	10
Very bad	11.7	2
TOTAL	585	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2004.

As indicated on the table above, about 55% of the respondent agreed that the local government in the area of healthcare delivery has performed averagely well. 23% agreed that its performance was good. While 10% believed it was bad. 8% said it was very good while 4% upheld that it performed badly. None rated the performance of the local government in this sector very badly.

The analysis above shows that Wushishi local government has performed averagely well in this sector. The success could be as a result of many factors which might include, the commitment of the personnel, judicious use of fund released and effective use of drug-revolving fund scheme.

Sanitation

Another area which is considered as part of healthy environment is sanitation. This is understood to mean disposal of refuse (solid or liquid), drainage and ensuring a clean environment.

Without a clean and hygienic environment, there cannot be good health. When people live in an unhygienic, polluted and dirty environment, it can be hazardous and it leads to bad health.

Below is the expenditure of the local government on the construction of culvert/drainage during the period under review.

Table 4.19: Expenditure on Culvert/Drainage/Road 1999 – 2003

	ITEM	AMOUNT
	Construction of 1 double box culvert along Kodo road	146,412.13
	1 triple box culvert at Gwarji-Maito road	180,000
	Rehabilitation of side drainages at Angwar-Magaji Aska	36,530
	2 single box culverts at Bankogi	185,976
	1 culvert at Yelwa	97,416
	120m long and concrete slabs at Angwar Naibi	170,216.13
	Work on Lokogoma water works engine room	43,772.68
	Reactivation of side drainage along Kura road	60,270
	Construction of 1 single box culvert of 32m long Kwata	153,463.60
	2 single box culvert at Dukusaku	183,463.60
	Siderange of 300m long at Angwar Malam Barau	435,995.03
		984,074.73
		256,889
		144,970
		620,362.05

1 single box culvert Kanko	94,232.05
1 number of 7.2m x 3.6m x 1.5m box culvert Butu-Iskao road	430,056 1,048,008.25
1 single box culvert drainage 10.5m along Bankogi road	161,696.25 38,946
Single drainage of 580m long at Tashan Mota	129,517
1 single box culvert, Rogota	100,000
4 single box culverts at Cheji	38,946
Side drainage of 438m long and 30 precast concretes	400,000
Double box culvert Gbasakun	
Drainage at Angwar Sarki, Zungeru	
Gravite Filling/Construction of Drainage yartawa	
1 single box culvert, Yarbawa Wushishi	
Drainage at Angwar sarki	
Construction of 400m long side drainage, Wushishi	
	61,414,212.27

Source: Account of Local Government Administration and Councils since 1999.

Sanitation is about hygienic behaviour, that is, the proper disposal of refuse and excreta. Studies carried out shows that there

is considerable awareness of what constitute proper sanitation (UNICEF, 1995). However, more comprehensive evidence shows that trends in hygienic behaviour are not reassuring especially in the rural areas.

In Wushishi local government area, the study went to assess the level of awareness of the people on what is proper sanitation. They were asked the type of toilet used for disposal and the result is tabulated below:

Table 4.20: The Level of Sanitation Awareness

	TYPE OF TOILETS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1.	Ventilated improved pit	20	3
2.	Traditional pit latrine	180	31
3.	Bush/open filed	202	35
4.	Ponds, streams or river	183	31
		585	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2005.

The study shows that only 3% of the respondents used the conventional type of toilet, which is most hygienic, while 97% still use the unconventional type of toilet. A detailed analysis of the table shows that 66% of the residents have no toilet facilities. They either excrete in the open fields or bush, or in the ponds, steams or rivers

around them. This unhygienic practice might be the cause of cholera, typhoid, toilet diseases, etc.

On the effort of the local government in educating and creating awareness on the danger of this unhygienic practice, the HOD said some traditional latrines were constructed in some areas, but as a result of the low economic condition, construction of toilet was not taken as their priority.

On refuse disposal, the interview with HOD health revealed that the local government has no much facilities for refuse disposal. Apart from Wushishi and Zungeru where four dumpsites were constructed, there is no other dumpsite in the whole of the local government area. The researcher went on to ask the residents which methods of refuse disposal they use in their household. Their responses were tabulated below:

Table 4.21: Method of refuse disposal

	TYPE OF TOILETS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1.	Dump site	99	17
2.	Open dum	198	34
3.	Bush or dunghill	164	28
4.	Ponds, steams, reviers	125	21
		585	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2005.

The responses clearly show that the majority of the resident used an unsatisfactory method of refuse disposal. 34% of the respondents dispose their refuse in the open fields around their house; 28% dump their refuse in their bush or dunghills while 21% dump their refuse in ponds, streams and rivers. The unconventional methods are hazardous and it causes environmental problems. Most dump refuse at roadside, thereby, obstructing traffic flow and worsened the problem of flooding due to the blockage of drainage. The open dumping also provide a breeding place for mosquitoes, flies, rats, snakes, etc. which are dangerous to human life. The refuse dumped at ponds and rivers also obstruct their flow and as well pollute the water. It can be gathered from the analysis that the local government health department has not done much in the area of enlightenment on the hazards of unhygienic environment.

Water Supply

Although water abounds almost everywhere in Nigeria, access to safe water is still a major problem. Only 39.1 percent of the rural population have access to safe water (FOS, 1995). The provisions of safe and good drinking water by the local government councils to the rural dwellers is very essential. This will reduce the rate of water borne diseases such as guinea worm and other water related diseases prevalent in the rural areas.

In assessing the performance of Wushishi local government area in the supply of water to the community, we would examine the

expenditure made in the provision of safe water. This is tabulated below:

Table 4.22: Expenditure on Water Supply 1999 – 2003

	ITEM	AMOUNT
	Connection of pipe-borne water to area 'A' Niger Poly, Zungeru	30,680
	Water installation at Emiwooro	249,854
	Extension of pipe-borne water, Madegi	186,250
	Extension of water supply to Gidan Gwari	510,000
	Supply of waterboard materials	100,000
	4 boreholes at Pasa, Kodo, Makusidi	450,000
	construction of motorized borehole at Marto	500,000
	solar powered water supply at Kanko	600,000
	Kwakwara wells at pakara and Kasokogi	150,000
	Repairs of borehole at Zungeru	41,000
	Repairs of borehole at Maito	39,000
	Repairs of borehole at Wushishi	41,000
	Repairs of borehole at Tungan Kaw	2,700,000
	Drilling boreholes	
		60,977,84

Source: An Account of Local Government Administration and Councils since 1999

The table shows that the sum above ₦60m was spent in the provision of safe water within the period under review. But the researcher went further to confirm how it has impacted on the life of the rural people. Table below shows the various sources of water supply available to the people.

Table 4.23:

	SOURCE OF WATER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1.	Pipe borne water	53	9
2.	Boreholes	70	12
3.	Well	281	48
4.	Streams, ponds and river	181	31
		585	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2005.

An analysis of the table shows that about 21% of the people have access to what might be referred to as potable water (i.e. pipe borne and borehole). 48% of the people have access to well water. It has also been confirmed that not all the well water are safe for drinking. Through observation of the households visited, some of the wells are not covered, as such, all sorts of reptiles can accidentally fall into the wells. This makes the water from such wells unsafe. The remaining 31% of the respondents collect water from streams, ponds and rivers. This places this people at high risk of water-borne diseases. Furthermore, some trek 1 – 3 km distance before getting to this source of water.

Electricity

Power supply is another important element in the development of the rural areas. Rural electrification is a guarantee for economic development of the rural area. With electricity in the rural area, the

industries can be established, since it is lack of the electricity supply constitute the major reasons for the congestion of industries in the urban centers. With stable power supply in the rural areas, various economic activities will thrive, more people will be employed and income will increase. The total effect is that the rural area will develop. As such, the local government is in a unique place in rural electrification for economic development. For Wushishi local government area only 2 towns (Zungeru and Wushishi) and those villages that happen to be on the grid line from Wushishi to Bida. Other villages have no electricity. Although it is not the direct responsibility of local council to provide electricity, but it can at least facilitate rural electrification.

Education

Educating the rural populace is another element in transforming the rural areas. The local governments are expected to take charge of primary education, adult and vocational education. With the primary education Board in place to take care of training and payment of teachers, it behoves on local government to build and maintain schools. They are also expected to equip these schools with infrastructural facilities such as tables and chairs, working materials like chalk, books, recording materials, etc.

Record shows that Wushishi local government has about 53 primary schools scattered across the local government. Personal observation during the course of study showed that most of these

schools lack enough classrooms to accommodate the pupils and chairs and tables for staff and pupils. Teaching and learning are still conducted on bare floors and under trees. For those pupils who are fortunate to have classrooms, one major feature observed is overcrowding of the classrooms. The registers show more than 50 registered pupils contrary to the standard provision of 40 pupils per class. In the area of enrolment, data shows that the local government has witnessed tremendous growth or increment in enrolment figure. This has further overstressed the inadequate facilities. Record equally shows that two new classrooms were under construction at Yelwa/Ekanyi and Akare including renovation of Kotonko primary school. The bulk of renovation work has been done through donor organizations like UBE (Universal Basic Education) and ETF (Education Tax Fund) interventions.

From the analysis made so far, we can vividly agree with the first hypothesis that the level of performance of Wushishi local government area in terms of rural development is determined by the human financial and material resources available. Our findings show that:

- (a) In terms of qualified manpower, the local government is still lacking. The study reveals that qualified manpower are lacking in all departments of the council. Majority of the staff have no adequate paper qualification and experience to meet up with the challenging needs of the rural people.

- (b) In the area of manpower training, the local government has good policies on manpower training but this has not been turned to reality as most of the workers have not undergone any training programme for more than two years nor has the local government organized any in-house workshops.
- (c) The study also reveals that the over dependence of the local government on external funding. From the total revenue or fund accruable to the local government during the period under review, 90% are funds allocated to it from the statutory allocation by the federal government. Only 10% of the fund is internally generated. This makes the local government to be wholly dependent on statutory allocation even for payment of salaries. The operation of the state/local government joint account has become avenue for the state government to 'divert' even funds meant for the local governments.
- (d) On the problem of generating revenue internally, four constraints were highlighted. Corruption practices by revenue officials and inability to exploit other sources by the local government account for major poor revenue base.
- (e) In all, the total revenue generated is inadequate to carry out the general functions they are expected to perform.
- (f) In the area of agriculture, majority of the people could not get access to modern agricultural implement to boost their efforts. Out of the three factors available, only one was serviceable.

The local government too has not helped majority of farmers to get fertilizer at subsidized rates. Farmers had to buy from middlemen who sold it at very exorbitant prices. On improved seedling, the finding reveals that farmers were not educated on the advantages and therefore could not utilize the high-breed seedlings to improve their productivity. in the area of fishing, the fishermen too could not get much needed assistance to ease their work.

- (g) The local government expended about ₦5.3m on road rehabilitation during the period under review. This is quite inadequate. Apart from Zungeru – Wushishi – Bida major road, maintained by the federal government, most of the rural roads are bad. The roads graded by the local governments are not improved on and when the rains come, they are washed away by erosion.
- (h) In the area of transportation, the local government area established a mass transit scheme to ease transportation problem. Findings show that (7) seven vehicles were purchased during this period but the scheme has not impacted on the life of the rural people meaningfully because the vehicles plied mostly towns and only marginally villages along such towns benefit from the scheme. Thus, vehicles are not enough and rural roads need to be rehabilitated to enable these vehicles ply these roads.

- (i) The local government is responsible for providing primary health care for their people. It provides and administers drugs to patients who are infected or about to be infected, educate the rural people on health and provide immunization in partnership with National Programme on Immunization and provide other preventive services.

The findings show that Wushishi local government has 2 modern hospitals located in the area, i.e. Zungeru and Wushishi, dispensaries and health posts. Findings also proved that about ₦5.1m was spent on health within the period under review. The study also proved that majority of the people did not have adequate access to healthcare facilities, as the money spent was quite inadequate.

- (j) On sanitation, finding shows that the effort made by the local government was the digging of 20 pit latrines at the cost of ₦1,145,882. This amount seems outrageous for construction of ordinary pit latrines. One the whole about 97% of the people use non-sanitary toilet facilities. On refuse disposal, the findings show that Wushishi local government has no facilities for refuse disposal. Only 8% of the population dump their refuse at dump site. About 50% dispose their refuse in open field near the house, 28% dump their refuse in the bush and dunghill, while 21% dump their refuse in the streams, ponds and rivers around them. The analysis shows that about

92% of the people use unsatisfactory methods of refuse disposal.

- (k) On water supply, the study reveals that access to safe water in the local government is still a problem. About 31% get their water from the rivers, streams and ponds, while 48% depend on well water and 12% enjoy borehole water. All these sources are untreated. Some rural people who depend on rivers, streams and ponds often trek long distances to these sources.
- (l) Education – the local government area is saddled with the responsibility of providing and maintaining primary, adult, and vocational education. Towards this end, there are about 35 primary schools in the area, but findings show that the require materials, equipment renovation of classrooms and construction of more classes and offices/stores. There is glaring evidence of under funding of this sector.

The analysis of the findings shows that Wushishi local government, within the period under review lack adequate skilled manpower, financial resources and infrastructural development to effect meaningful transportation of the rural area. By this revealing fact, we can agree with the first hypothesis that “the level of performance of Wushishi local government area is determined by the human, financial and material resources available”.

Test of Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis formulated for this study is “that political interference by other tier of government is a constraint to rural development efforts of Wushishi local government area”.

One remarkable landmark in the development of local government system in Nigeria was the 1976 local government reform. It introduced a uniform single tier structure nationally and set criteria for creating new ones. This reform led to the recognition of the local government as the third tier of government in the 1979 and 1999 constitutions respectively. The major highlights of the reform with particular focus on the area of interest includes:

- The complete democratization of local government system. This system tactically removed the control of local government from traditional rulers who had been a major force in local government since colonial times.
- The abolishing of provincial and divisional administrations which in essence means the removal of the control of local governments from state governments. The guidelines (FRN, 1976) stated that “membership of local government councils should be predominantly elected or selected or by indirect elections from local communities”
- The establishment of Local Government Service Board, which is charged with the responsibility for recruitment, posting, promotion and discipline of the senior staff in the local

government. This would guarantee their payment of salaries and ensure that they were protected from being arbitrarily terminated or discipline.

- The most important aspect of the reform, and the first in the history of local government in Nigeria, was the provision for statutory allocation of public revenue to the local government by federal and state governments.

These important changes were entrenched in the 1979 constitution and consequently in the 1999 constitution. Remarkable as the reforms were, some of the provisions were flagrantly abused by the higher tiers of government.

The 1999 constitution empowered the state government to create additional local governments as deemed fit as long as the constitutional provisions and guidelines were adhered to. However, the section 8, subsections (5) and (6) of the 1999 constitution indicate that the creation of additional local government scan be termed conclusive only when it has received the blessing of the National Assembly through approval. While some states had adhered to the criteria of establishment of local governments in their areas, the National Assembly has refused to consider their requests as required by subsections (5) and (6) of section 8 of the constitution. The case of Lagos State and the federal government over the non-release of statutory allocation to local councils in Lagos state is still pending in court. It seems obvious that the carrot of

statutory allocation of revenue from the Federation Account was the thin end of a wedge and it is been used as a means of federal interference in local government administration. This has been a major constraint to rural development efforts of the local government.

In Niger state, the state government, in order to beat the federal government wedge took advantage of the state/local joint Account to divert a lot of funds meant for local governments for other purposes and to maintain its new (unrecognized) additional local governments created in 2002. This development has negatively affected the revenue accrued to these local governments. As evidence by the findings in the test of hypothesis one, the local government has not faired well in the provision of social amenities to the rural populace and one of the major constraints was inadequate funding. Evidence shows that grants and statutory allocations were not released in full to these local councils. The over-dependence of local government on the financial allocations from the federal government is a major means of exercise political interference as the state government via the instrumentality of the joint account used this to its advantage.

Furthermore, the officials who manage the joint account often forced the local governments, Wushishi local government to undertake certain expenditure or projects that might not be of any or immediate benefit to the rural people. For instance the state

government went ahead, despite the opposition of the chairmen of local governments, to award contract for the supply of Peugeot 406 vehicles and ensured that the money was deducted at source. In short, through the Joint Account, many local governments, Wushishi local government area inclusive had been short-changed.

Another area through which the state exercises excessive political influence is through the appointment of Secretary to each local government. Incompetent and unqualified persons have been imposed on local governments especially where the party that controls the state shows interest. Even in the area of fertilizer distribution in the local governments, the officials of the agricultural extension were bypassed. Favoured party members were made heads of fertilizer distribution exercises. This made the real needy not to benefit from the welfare package.

When the opinion of the staff was sought on how the relationship of the state with the local government has facilitated or hindered the delivery of social services by the local government to its communities, the table below shows the responses:

Table: In what ways does the relationship of the state with the local government facilitate or hinder the delivery of social services by the local government to its communities?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Facilitated Social Services Delivery	08	8
Hindered Social Service Delivery	92	92
	100	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2005.

Their response shows that majority of the staff are quite aware of the excessive control of the local government by the state and uphold that it hinders the delivery of social services. On the question that what type of authority or leadership promote more service delivery in local government, the respondents reacted this way:

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Democratically elected Council	84	84
Transition Committee appointed by state Govt.	16	16
	100	100

Source: The Researcher's Survey, 2005.

The 1999 constitution recognized the existence of democratically elected government at the local government, but the

controversy surrounding the tenure of local government council elected in 1999 and subsequent dissolution of the local councils led to the appointment of transition committees solely appointed by the state governors. This was the case with Wushishi local government during the period under study. A transition committee headed by chairman had been in place since 2002. About 8% of the respondents preferred the present adhoc arrangement while majority represented by 92% wanted a democratically elected council.

Another area in which the state exercises excessive control over the local government is through the Ministry for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs. The Ministry was expected to monitor, supervise and evaluate the activities of the local councils in the state. But this ministry exerts undue influence on the local governments thereby controlling from the state. Most initiated programmes of the local government must be cleared by the agency of the state before they can be implemented. Also this ministry forced some projects on the local government even if the project is not viable. For instance, the local government was forced to contribute to state projects like proposed state university.

The analysis so far shows that excessive control or interference by other tiers of government is a constraint to rural development efforts of the local government. The summary of the findings include:

- The 1976 local government reforms and subsequently the provisions of the 1999 constitution on local government were meant to strengthen the third tier of government through; direct financial/statutory allocation from federation account, guidelines for the creation of additional local governments, etc.
- The deficiency created by sections 7 and 8 of the 1999 constitution also gave room for excessive control of the local government by the state.
- The Niger State government abused the provision of the constitution that created state/local Joint Account by diverting funds meant for local government for other purposes. Through the operation of the state/local Joint Account, most of the local governments, including Wushishi local government have been deprived of adequate fund to carry out its activities. Most a time, the fund released from the Joint Account was only enough to pay salaries.
- The over dependence of the local government on financial allocation by the federal government made some of the autonomy granted the local government to be eroded.

From the analysis so far, the second hypothesis that “the political interference and control by other tiers of government is a constraint to rural development effort of Wushishi local government” is hereby accepted.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

Local government because of its proximity to a large majority of the rural people is no doubt a center of development. Local Government is closer and as such should be felt by the people in the rural areas. Issues relating to rural development touch more on people in the rural area. Rural development is not only about agricultural, infrastructural development or provision of social amenities, it is also about articulating the strength, skill, and aspirations of the rural people. It is about inspiring the people to help them to achieve and reach the peak of their expectations in life. The local government, because of its nearness to the rural people is respected to play this important role.

This study is has been an attempt to examine and assess the role of local government as a vehicle for rural development with special focus on Wushishi local government area of Niger state.

In chapter one, an in-depth analysis of the background of study was undertaken by identifying the various stage of local government administration in Nigeria from pre-colonial to conical and post -colonial Nigeria. Various problems were identified which formed the problem of the study. Based on thee problems the objective of the study was stated which was identify the reasons behind the problems highlighted and solutions proffered. In line

with this, hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The chapter, also contain the methodology adopted to gather and analyze data. Finally, operational definitions of important terms were included in the chapter.

Chapter two was devoted to the review of related literature and theoretical framework of the study. Literature review on the definition and concept of rural development, past rural development efforts of the government and ways in which local government could perform the role of rural development was carried out. Also in the chapter, the foundation of the study was built by adopting the modernization theory of rural development.

In chapter three, a historical perspective of Wushishi Local Government was undertaken. Thus from historical perspective Wushishi Local Government was created in 1991 by the military government of Ibrahim Babangida. The chapter further identified the functions of the Local Government, its sources of revenue as well as the operational and structural organization.

Chapter four was devoted to presentation and analysis of data using tables, percentages and frequencies. The data was gotten from questionnaire drawn for staff and beneficiaries and interview granted by the heads of department/ sections in the local government. Information from other secondary sources also formed part of the data presented.

After the analysis of data, findings revealed that due to ineffective and inefficient manpower, financial and social amenities have been constraints to the development of the Wushishi Local Government Area. It was also gathered that excessive political interference and control from other tiers of government has hindered the performance of the Local Government Area.

5.2 Conclusions

From the study we can conclude that the Local Government has not been able to perform its role as a vehicle for rural development due to inefficient manpower, financial and material resources. The study further shows that excessive political interference and control by other tier of government has affected the performance of the Local Government.

The findings reveal that majority of the staff necessary qualification and experience for work. This study shows that despite this inadequacy, the Local Government has not undertaken any training of the staff to improve their efficiency at work.

Inadequate financial and material resources is another problem of Wushishi Local Government Area. The study shows that the total fund accrued to the Local Government is too small. Also the internally generated revenue is too low and this leads to over dependence on statutory allocation. This low revenue base in every respect has hindered the local government from achieving its

objective of rural transformation through provision of social amenities and infrastructural facilities.

The study also shows that excessive control and political interference has greatly affected its effectiveness. There are so many reasons added for this. One, the local government's over dependence on statutory allocation discussed extensively in previous chapters; two, the powers given to the state house of assembly over the local governments are excessive. According to Ugwu (200:62)

The Local Government system extant in 1979 and 1999, and for which the constitutions provided guarantee was widely regarded as conforming to the democratic model of local representative government. It was the product of the reforms of 1976 which the reformers thought would stimulate "democratic self government" at the local level and ensure autonomous participation of local people in the development of their communities.

But the state government by the same provision of section 7 of the constitution exercise authority over the local government. This section gave the state government the power to ensure the existence of democratically elected local government councils under a law which provides for their establishment, structure composition, finance and functions. This power has been grossly abused. Niger state government dissolved all the local councils and appointed a transition committee headed by a chairman. Another implication of the exercise of section 7 is that local government council cannot

exercise its constitutional function unless empowered to do so by the State house of Assembly.

Nwabueze (1983: 129) argued that the constitutional power to established local governments, to define its structure; composition and functions belong to the state government. He went further to advance that if the state government exercise such enormous powers over the local government, then the latter is mere agency or creation of the stage government. It is therefore enormous to see it as an independent third tier of government.

In furtherance of the excessive control of local affairs in Niger State is the flagrant abuse of the operation of state/local government authorities. The state government used this to short charge and divert local government fund. The local government in spite of its enormous responsibilities has not been given enough fund. The findings show that only fund to settle recurrent expenditures were released to the local government for over two years.

In such situation, the local government has been rendered ineffective in carrying out its constitutional responsibilities.

5.3 Recommendations

The study so far has shown the inability of Wushishi Local Government Area to play its role as a vehicle for rural development. This is as a result of certain identified constraints, which include inadequate skilled manpower, financial and material resources and

excessive control and political interference by other tiers of government, especially the state government.

In view of this, the researcher would recommend the following:

- The local government service should try to motivate qualified and highly skilled personnel/ profession as to join its service.
- The workforce on the ground should be trained to improve their proficiency for greater performance.
- The higher level governments should set up a board where farmers could purchase fertilizer, improved seedling, other agro chemicals as subsidize rate all year round.
- The federal government should help the local government prove equipments like graders, tippers etc to enhance road construction in rural areas.
- The federal government should make it compulsory for each local government to engaged in a least one water and one road project every year. T is assumed that within a ten- year period almost every rural area would be linked and enjoys portable water.
- In terms of revenue generation, the local government should endeavour to improve on the internally generated revenue. Areas like property tax tenement rates which has been neglected could yield much revenue. This will reduce over dependence on statutory allocation form federal government. Furthermore, the state government should be made to always

release the 10% internally generated in the state meant for local governments.

- Dishonest or corrupt revenue collectors should be adequately disciplined to deter others. Their activities of revenue officials should be closely monitored supervised and evaluated. They should be given a target, which they're expected to meet. They should equally be motivated.
- Other forms of raising revenue should be exploited by the local government e.g engaging in further commercial ventures to make profit, buying of shares, farming activities etc. commercial banks should be encouraged to give loans to local government with favourable conditions. These conditions should nature a low interest rte and longer time for repayment. These institutions and the guarantor should ensure that their loans are judiciously used for the purpose it is taken.
- There is also need to computerize the account or finance department. Billing and tax records, property valuation method, cost analysis, payroll and accounting system should be computerized to meet with contemporary accounting standards and to facilitate easy auditing and inspection.
- All the loopholes and deficiencies in the 1999 constitution which are grossly abused by other tiers of government to suppers the local governments should be amended.

- The state/ local joint account should be scrapped and it's place the federal government should make direct financial allocation to the local governments and such monies located by the local government should be properly accounted for through sound returns.

According to Samuel et al (1976):

The independence of local government depends not only on the political relationship that links them to the center, but just as importantly on their level of economic activity and on the resources available to finance activities.

In support of this assertion above, the researcher recommends that any law that is detrimental to the local government in performing its role efficiency and effectively should be amended or abrogated.

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