

A HISTORY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
ADMINISTRATION IN DELTA STATE, 1991-2011

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# CERTIFICATION

NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA, SCHOOL OF  
POSTGRADUATE STUDIES.

A HISTORY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN  
DELTA STATE, 1991-2011

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This is an original work done by me and has not been published anywhere. This dissertation is accepted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

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## APPROVAL

This dissertation has been approved, having satisfied the conditions for the award of Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in History and International Studies of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria.

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the GLORY OF GOD,  
ALMIGHTY.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Despite all shortcomings and personal negligence, I constantly hear the gentle voice of MOTHER MARY, urging me on. Even at time of despair and hopelessness which was almost regular, MOTTHER MARY did not abandon me. Her Gentle voice has always says; yes you can. In view of this, my soul glorifies the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY and will never forget his faithfulness.

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December 5, 2016

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AG	Auditor-General
AG	Action Group
CENCOD	Centre for Constitutionalism and Demilitarisation
CLGARDS	Centre for Local Government and Rural Development Studies
DA	Development Area
DT	Democracy Theory
DT	Decentralisation Theory
DESIEC	Delta State Independent Electoral Commission
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FEDECO	Federal Electoral Commission
IEF	Ijaw Elders Forum
IYC	Ijaw Youth Congress
INC	Ijaw National Congress
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
LGA	Local Government Area
NA	Native Authority
NC	Native Court
NCNC	National Council of Nigerian Citizens
NCC	National Constitutional Conference
NPC	Northern People's Congress
NYSC	National Youth Service Corps
SLGJA	State/Local Government Joint Account
UN	United Nations
UNO	United Nations Organisation

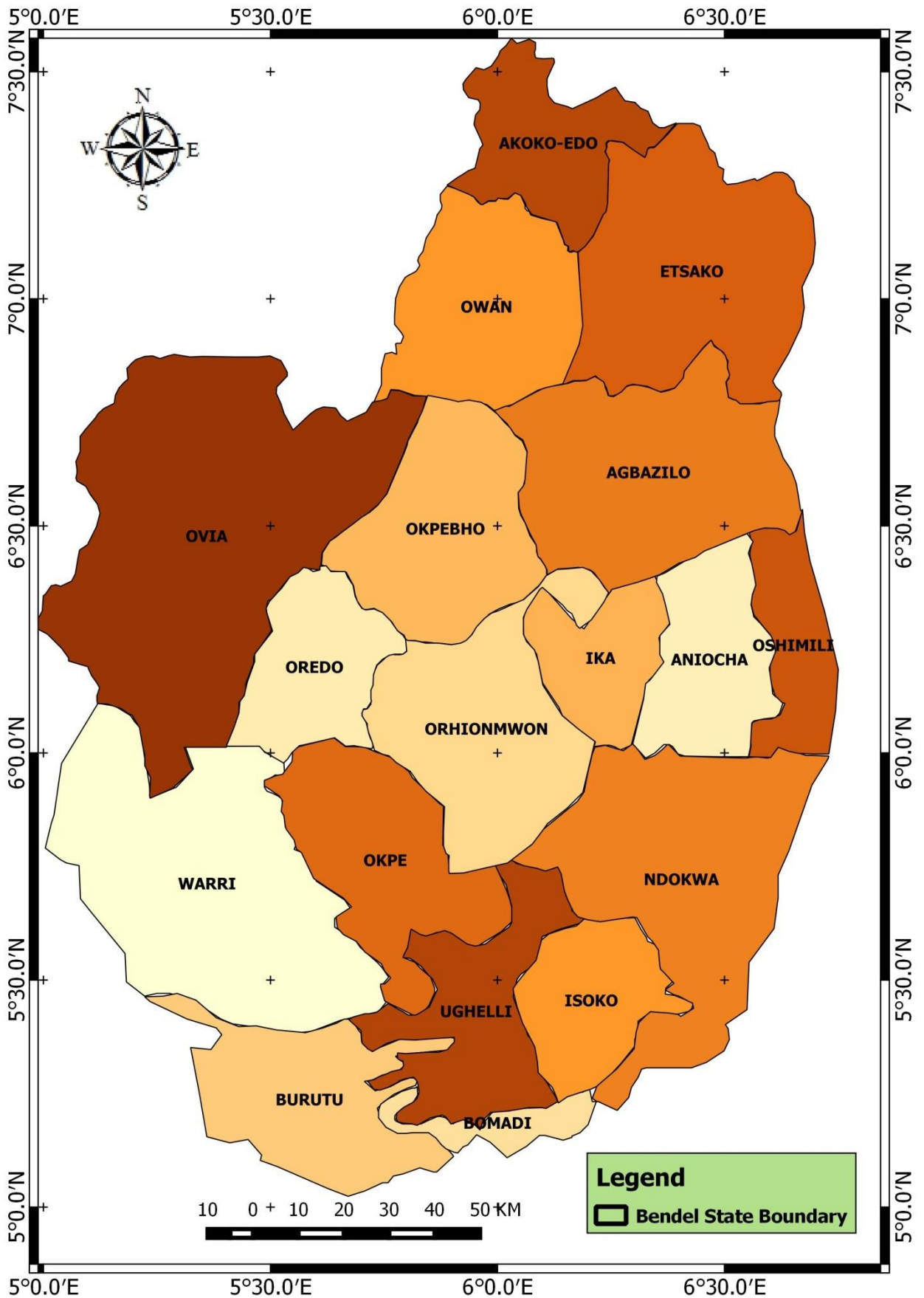
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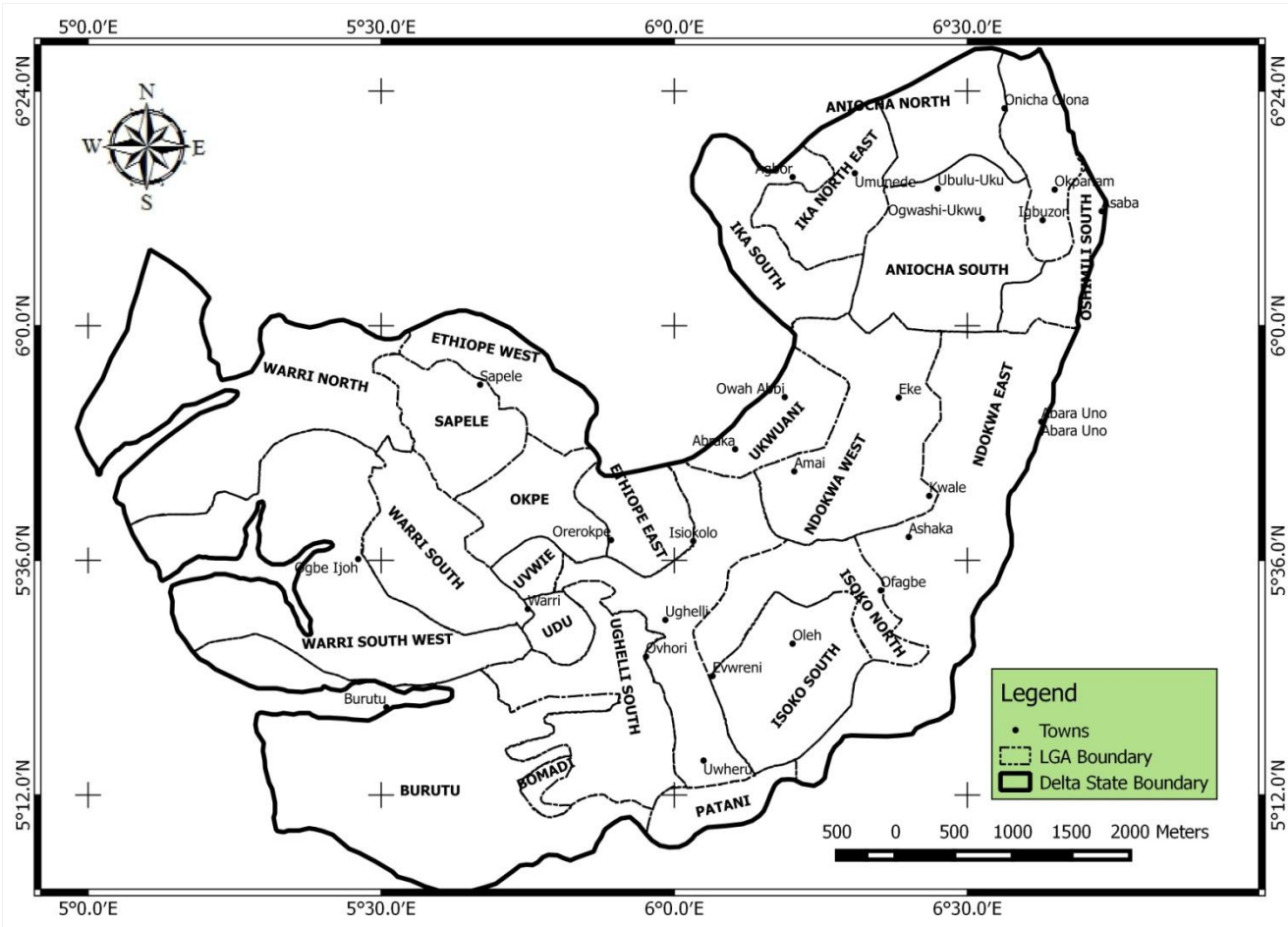
## **ABSTRACT**

*Local government administration in Delta State is an embodiment of local government administration in Nigeria. Local government administration in Nigeria could be said to have evolved out the interface between the various local administrative structures, existing among the numerous ethnic communities in Nigeria and the British colonial administrative officers, before 1900. Beginning with the passage of the Native Council Ordinance, in 1901, local government administration in Nigeria evolved through different processes of reforms. Remarkable among these reforms, was the 1976 Local Government Reform. This reform is remarkable for unifying the structures and functions of local government in the country and also, made local government in Nigeria, a constitutional issue. The history of Local government administration in Delta State, began in 1991, when the state was created. Local government administration in Delta State appears to have taken off on a wrong footing, in the light of the protests that heralded the creation of Warri South local government in 1991. The creation of yet another local government in Warri, in 1996, sparked the worst inter-ethnic crisis in Warri, which is often referred to as "The Warri Crisis". Local government administration in the state within the period under review, is grappling with certain challenges which militate against the development of the rural areas of the state. These includes agitations for the creation of additional local government areas, lack of local government autonomy, corruption and over-bloated personnel, at the various local governments in the state. The study, therefore, evaluates local government administration in Delta State, within the period under review, against the backdrop of the objectives for the establishment of the local government system. It also examines the degree of local government service delivery in the state and the agitations for the creation of additional ones. The study adopts a thematic approach in this study. It also adopts both the qualitative and quantitative means of data collection and analysis, drawn from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources constitute a higher percentage of the research data, which involves interviews, granted by reliable informants. Secondary sources were also used to compliment the primary sources. The study observes that, following a cue from the protests that led to the Warri crisis, several communities and groups in Delta State, continued to agitate for the creation of additional local governments in their areas. Again, the study also observes that local, government administration in Delta state is burdened by a lot of challenges, prominent among which are lack of autonomy, corruption and over-staffing. The study concludes that until local government administrators in Delta State tackles the problems of corruption and over-staffing among others, local governments in the state may, perhaps, find it difficult to develop the rural areas of the state, which is the main objective for the establishment of the local government Councils.*

# POLITICAL MAP OF FORMER BENDEL STATE



# POLITICAL MAP OF DELTA STATE, SHOWING THE TWENTY FIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS.





## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

There is ample evidence that Nigerian communities had practised strong and integrated traditional local administration before the advent of colonial rule in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These traditional administrative institutions provided the medium through which the British missionaries, traders and colonial officers interacted with the local people. They also formed the foundation for the establishment of local government administrative system in its modern form.<sup>1</sup>

Local government administration in Nigeria has gone through various evolutionary stages, beginning with the Native Authority. The horizon for the Native Authority was broadened with the inclusion of educated elements of the then Nigerian society at the end of World War II. This is known as the Local Government Reform of 1951.<sup>2</sup>

Another remarkable reform in the local government system took place in 1976 during the administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo. According to Jumare, this reform was most remarkable for enshrining local government administration into the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and also for introducing uniformity in the system. Since 1976, local

governments in Nigeria have continued to record tremendous improvements in terms of funding and manpower.<sup>3</sup>

In line with the above, Jumare noted that local government service delivery has improved. Furthermore the author notes that local governments have over the years, graduated from providing services such as cutting grass along the shoulders of local roads, to actual road construction and maintenance. Its health care services have also been elevated from mere dispensary services to primary health care and some other health care delivery services.<sup>4</sup>

The study begins with the origin of local government administration in Nigeria and the various reforms introduced into the system. It notes, as stated earlier, that the 1976 Local Government Reform was the most remarkable and fundamental in the series of reforms in local government administration in Nigeria.

The number of local governments in Nigeria began to increase after 1979, for some obvious reasons. The enshrining of the local government into the 1979 constitution as a third tier of government, and the listing of the names of the existing 301 local councils in the same constitution is known to have re-assured the citizens that the system has come to stay. This assurance is also known to have re-kindled the agitations for the creation of more local councils. Secondly, the agitations for the creation of more local government councils were heightened in the Second Republic, because of the perceived political benefits

accruable from the system. For instance, according to Ukiwo, the federal and state electoral constituencies were delineated based on the number of local governments, among other factors.<sup>5</sup> Ukiwo further notes that the creation of new local governments has always been associated with high level politics and political intrigues, which assumed deadly dimensions in Warri, Delta state, after the creation of Warri-south-west local government in 1996. Furthermore, the relocation of the headquarters of this new local government from Ogbe-Ijo to Ogidigben sparked communal crisis in Warri between 1996 and 2003.

The fledgling democracy in Nigeria since the inception of the Fourth Republic has opened up local government administration in Nigeria to the prying eyes and interest of the public. As a consequence, certain challenges are noted in the administration of the system. These challenges will be examined in chapter five of the study.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The administration of local government councils in Nigeria has over the years, attracted the attention of several scholars and commentators. The attention was initially kindled, more than anything else, by the 1976 Local Government Reform which made local government in Nigeria, a third tier of government. The other levels of governments are federal and state governments. Themes such as democracy, accountability, autonomy and corruption, among

others, have featured prominently in every discourse on local government administration in Nigeria.

According to Ugoo, the essence of the local government system, as was outlined in the Guideline for the 1976 reform is to bring government and development to the local communities through participatory democracy. Perhaps, the best way to appreciate the significance of the 1976 local government reform is to note that three years later, the reform was incorporated into the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. However, despite the fact that the local government system became a constitutional issue, the constitution failed to guarantee its autonomy. By this action, local governments in Nigeria are left at the mercy of state governments.

The litmus test for the 1976 Local Government Reform was the re-introduction of partisan politics in the Second Republic. The local government was, thus, at the time, exposed to all forms of official manipulations by the state governments. Within this period too, agitations for the creation of additional local governments became rife, perhaps as a result of the perceived political benefits derivable from the creation of additional local governments.<sup>6</sup> However, the issues of autonomy, corruption and accountability are not limited to the Second Republic alone; these problems persisted even on a higher scale during the subsequent years. For instance, former president Obasanjo observed thus:

What we have witnessed is the abysmal failure of the local government system. It is on record that at no time in the history of the country has there been the current level of funding accruing to the local government from the

federation account, yet the hope for rapid and sustainable development has been a mirage as successful councils have grossly under-performed in almost all the areas of their mandate ... The number of local government areas (LGA) had risen steadily from 301 in 1976 to 774.... yet the clamour for the creation of more LGAs has not abated....<sup>7</sup>

Continuing, he remarked thus:

...In fact, there is clear evidence that the creation of local government has been for reasons that not only negate the objectives and principles of 1976 reform, but in some cases are clear expressions of patronage by revenue distribution to favoured areas or interest groups.<sup>8</sup>

By this speech, president Obasanjo appeared to have summarised local government administration in Nigeria at large. This is so because scholars have over the years, been pre-occupied by the issues raised by the former President. However, despite the numerous studies in local government administration in Nigeria, scholars are yet to study local government administration in Delta State within the period, 1991 and 2011.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

Local government as an instrument of development at the local level is statutorily expected to bring governance close to the people at the rural communities. It is also expected that this would help to ensure that the people participate in the process of governance so as to enhance equitable distribution of infrastructural facilities among the rural communities.<sup>9</sup>

However, in Nigeria, particularly in Delta State, infrastructural facilities are often concentrated in the local government headquarters, at the expense of other communities in the area. There is also lack of fairness and equity in the

delineation of electoral wards.<sup>10</sup> This has resulted in very stiff competition and agitation for the creation of additional local governments, among the various groups in the state. These agitations, sometimes, resulted in open conflicts, such as the Warri crisis, between 1996 and 2003, which occurred as a result of the relocation of a local government headquarters.

In all these and behind-the-scene actions and activities, there are always high levels of political and economic interests, which are exhibited through different form of intrigues. The force that propels these intrigues, perhaps, lies in the reward that accrues to its success. In turn, these intrigues manifest through different forms of agitation for the creation of additional local governments.

The purpose of the study, therefore, is to examine local government administration in Delta State within the period under review. This examination is based on the back-drop of the objectives for the establishment of the local government system in Nigeria.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The objective for the establishment of the local government as pointed out earlier is to bring governance closer to the grassroots areas and to act as a catalyst for both rural and national development.<sup>11</sup> The 1976 Local Government Reform aroused the consciousness of the people regarding the local government system and the functions expected of it. This consciousness could be said to be

indirectly responsible for the rapid multiplication of local councils during the Second Republic, without strict adherence to the laid down criteria for the establishment of new local governments.<sup>12</sup> It is important to note that this trend continued till the last military administration of General Abdulsalami Abubakar, between 1998 and 1999.

As noted earlier, scholars have shown interest in a wide range of themes concerning local government administration in Nigeria. However, none of these scholars have actually studied the theme of this study in Delta State, between 1991 and 2011. The significance of this study, therefore, lies in the fact that it would add a new perspective in the rich and numerous literatures in local government administration in Nigeria, particularly in Delta State. Again, the study would help Delta State government in organising its development plan for the local governments particularly and the entire state at large.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The creation of new local government councils in Nigeria has generated interests and reactions from scholars and the public over time. The base lines of these reactions are of two folds. First, it is the issue of the political intrigues that play out before and after the creation of local government councils. Most importantly, is the geographical area that constitutes the new local government and the location of its headquarters. Secondly, scholars and non-scholars are known to have shown interest in finding out the extent or otherwise, of the

judicious application of the funds available to the local governments for the overall development of the council areas.<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, to be able to grapple with the theme of this study, it is important that it is situated within a determined scope or time frame. The scope of the study, therefore, is between 1991 and 2011. This period is important for some reasons. Delta State was created in 1991 and between 1991 and 2011, the state witnessed both military and civil administrations. The difference or differences as the case may be, in the style of local government administration, adopted by these two types of administrations, is important to the study. Again, in 1996, a bloody inter-ethnic crisis broke out in the Warri area of Delta State. This crisis is noted to have been remotely caused by violent agitations for the creation of additional local governments. On the other hand, the crisis was immediately triggered by the relocation of Warri- south-west local government, from Ogbe-Ijo to Ogidigben, by the then military government, in 1996.

Furthermore, 2011, which is the terminal date of the study, is significant to the extent that it marked the end of two decades after the creation of Delta State and it is expected that a period of twenty years is enough for the government of a state (such as Delta), to be seen to have sufficiently grapple with certain challenges, confronting local government administration in the state.

## **1.6 Theoretical Frame-work**

It is necessary to situate a research work in a sound theoretical framework, which is capable of explaining wide varieties of themes and relationships in the



study. The importance of theoretical framework in a study also lies in the fact that since different researchers view a particular subject from different perspectives, depending on their persuasions, it is then necessary that every research would be contextualised so that the point of view of the research is made clear from the beginning.

Different schools of thought have postulated various theoretical frameworks for the establishment of the local government system. A proper knowledge of some of these theories is essential for understanding the basis for the local government and functions expected of it. This understanding would in turn, form the basis of a detailed appraisal of the performance or otherwise of the system over time. This study begins with Democracy Theory.

The proponents of Democracy Theory (DT) believe that the practice of democratic principles affords citizens in the rural areas the opportunity to participate in their own government and therefore, it serves as a training ground for future political leaders. According to this school, the local government is an avenue where democratic and political culture, principles and processes are imbibed from the cradle.<sup>14</sup> Though, it is believed that any political leader who passes through the local government apprenticeship would become a more versatile political leader, the participation of the local citizen in their own government is the basic ingredient of this theory. According to Cunningham, scholars such as Arnold Kaufman, Joseph Zimmerman, Benjamin Barber and Pateman, among others, initiated the word, “Participatory democracy”.<sup>15</sup> Participatory democracy, according to him, was first used by Arnold Kaufman

in 1960 during a period of protests by students at the University of Michigan, United States of America, over their exclusion in the decision- making process and government of their university. The protests spread to other universities in the United States of America. These students had demanded participation in the governance of their universities. The students' demands were set out in a document popularly called the "Port Huron Statement".<sup>16</sup>

To drive the point home, Alexander Love observes that participation in grassroots organisations could give people experience in democracy and empowerment, which, in turn, could be a foundation for democratic life in their society as a whole.<sup>17</sup> In line with this, Ademola Adebisi, while quoting Kunle Ajayi, notes that the local government is an institution that provides political education for the local citizenry, for the benefit of the general society. According to Ademola Adebisi, this is done through the instrumentality of local administrative institutions.<sup>18</sup>

In their contribution, Ugoo Abba and Vincent Nwanne, note that the local government is not only a training ground for future political leaders at the national stage, but it is also a platform for the local people to take interest in their own affairs. According to them, as a result of this interest and subsequent participation, local needs are better met than if they were handled by either the state or central government.<sup>19</sup>

However, the foregoing notwithstanding, democracy could not completely account for a theoretical foundation or rationale for the establishment of the

local government system in Nigeria. This is because according to Adams Komoniso, the populace is not particularly concerned about or interested in democracy or any other form of government<sup>20</sup>. Rather, the local people are actually interested in having a fair share of government presence and equitable development in their areas.

Another theoretical foundation for the creation of local government is The Efficient Service Theory. Proponents of this theory such as R.P Nathan believe that because of the proximity of the local government to the people at the grassroots, it is the only government that could guarantee efficiency in the provision of basic amenities in the rural communities. In the views of Nathan, in this arrangement the local people have the opportunity to choose, directly from among themselves, those who govern them and also set target for the government. Local needs are commonly articulated and presented to the government for action. The state and central governments, which are seen to be far from the local people, are not considered to be in a good position to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of the local people. This is because these two levels of government are not expected to fully understand and appreciate the minute details or dynamics of the needs of the local people.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, another theoretical foundation for the establishment of the local government is the Decentralisation Theory, which explains the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from

the central government to the state or local government. Decentralisation is particularly concerned with how the authority, functions and responsibilities of a country are given to different levels of government for better and effective performance. Lawal and Oladunjoye, while referring to Olowu, note that two major forms of decentralisation are discernible.<sup>22</sup> These are de-concentration and devolution. De-concentration refers to the transfer of state responsibilities and resources from the centre to government agencies within the same administrative structure. It is an internal form of delegation of responsibilities among officials of government or an organisation. On the other hand, devolution entails the transfer of specified authority, responsibilities and resources, to a specified community, who is usually represented by their elected representatives, for example, a local government. It is also created by law.

Unarguably, domination and discrimination by the majority ethnic groups over the minority groups are common features of Nigeria's political history. Thus, the main argument advanced for the creation of more states in Nigeria, centres on the issue of equity with regard to socio-economic development and the need to decentralise the powers and structures of government.<sup>23</sup> In the same manner, the establishment of the local governments is seen as a sort of ethno-political and economic strategy, aimed at duplicating the structures of government and thus, bring governance closer to the people.

Furthermore, it is a common feature that, due to ethnicity and nepotism, many political leaders tend to favour a particular section of the community more

than the other, in the provision of basic amenities. It is natural that aggrieved communities would continue to agitate for the creation of their desired local governments, thereby leading to further decentralisation. In the light of the foregoing, this study is hinged on the Decentralisation Theory.

### **1.7 Methodology and Sources of Materials**

The methodology of this study is based on the inter-disciplinary approach or methodology, which involves the methodologies of the arts and social sciences.<sup>24</sup> As such, both quantitative and qualitative mechanisms such as tables and historical narrative are used in the presentation and analysis of available data. This becomes imperative since only historical narrative could not sufficiently interpret or illustrate certain data or information.

Furthermore, materials for the study were sourced from both primary and secondary sources as a result of the benefits derivable from both. Firstly, it is very important to have first hand information from the field, regarding the theme of the study. Secondly, it is also important that primary sources of data collection are sufficiently harnessed because it enhances originality in data presentation and analysis. On the other hand, secondary sources of data collection is important in order to expose the researcher to the views of scholars and the general public, relating to the theme of the study

Finally, and as noted earlier, presentation and analysis of data is through an inter-play between historical narrative and statistical presentation of data for

analysis. This seeming confluence between historical narrative and statistical quantification has earlier been referred to as the inter-disciplinary method.

## **1.8 Conceptual Clarifications**

This sub-title attempts to conceptualise certain key terms as they are used in the study. The idea is to localise these terms to suit the concept, which the study intends to portray through the use of the terms. However, there is no intension to alter the universal meaning of these terms.

### **(a) Local Government**

For the purpose of the study, the term, “local government” is seen from the point of view of the United Nation Organisation (UNO), as enunciated by Abubakar;

...a political sub-division of a nation or state (in a federal system), which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the power to impose taxes or to exact labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such entity is elected or other-wise, locally selected.<sup>25</sup>

According to Fatile and Adejuwon, another definition of the concept of local government, which is more encompassing, is that offered by the National Guideline for the 1976 Local Government Reform in Nigeria. This Guideline defines local government as:

..... government at the local level, exercised through representative Council, established by law to exercise specific power within defined areas. These powers should give the council, substantial control over local affairs as well as the staff and the institutional and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of essential services, and to determine and implement projects so as to complement the activities of the state and federal governments in their areas....<sup>26</sup>

From the foregoing, certain distinct features of the local government are discernible. Firstly, the local government is created by law and its existence is guaranteed under the 1999 Constitution of The Federal Republic of Nigeria.<sup>27</sup> Thus, the local government is a legal person that could sue and be sued. It exercises some level of autonomy from other levels of government and has the legal authority to levy taxes and collect same for the development of the areas within its jurisdiction.

Another distinct feature of the local government is that it is situated within a defined geographical area. By its nature, the geographical area of the local government is usually small and within the rural areas. However, some local government could be found within the cities.<sup>28</sup> This feature of the local government is vital to the study because it emphasises a geographical location. Agitations for the creation of additional local governments are noted to be within a particular geographical area.

## **(b) Agitations**

The term “agitation” is used in the study to denote the advocacy by either political or ethnic nationalities for the creation of additional local governments

in their localities.<sup>29</sup> These advocacies have been noted to be largely persuasive in nature but in some cases, incidents such as violent demonstrations have also been noted

### **(c) Corruption**

For the purpose of this study, corruption is conceptualised as any action or group of actions, which amount to abuse of entrusted power, particularly for private or group gains. To corroborate this concept of corruption, Waziri notes that etymologically, the word “corruption” comes from the Greek word “Corruptus”, meaning an aberration or misnomer.<sup>30</sup> The United Nations Global Programme Against Corruption (GPAC) and Transparency International (TI) agree that corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.<sup>31</sup>

## **1.9 Literature Review**

As has been noted earlier, various scholars have studied local government administration in Nigeria, and discussed themes such as the evolution of local government administration in Nigeria, structure and functions. Some others also discussed performance, corruption and viability of the local governments in Nigeria. Some of these works are reviewed one after the other.

In his book, *The Need for Prudent Financial Management in the Local Governments*, Oviomo gives an overview of local government administration in Nigeria.<sup>32</sup> The author also discusses its organisational structure and main sources of revenue, which he notes, are from statutory allocations from both the federal and state



governments. He stresses the need for strict budgetary and financial controls as the prerequisites for prudent financial management in the local councils.

Furthermore, in the area of performance, Oviomo notes that there are some remarkable achievements in some local governments, but went further to state that majority of them performed below expectation. He gives reasons for this poor performance as inadequate funding, very low internally generated revenue and political manipulations.

However, this author, who uses local governments in Delta State as a case study, fails to note that the perceived failure of the local governments to equitably provide services to the people at the grass-roots, is one of the reasons for the agitations for the creation of additional local government areas.

Orewa and Adewunmi, in their book, *Local Governments in Nigeria: The Changing Scenes*, observe that local government administration in Nigeria has improved in the areas of constitutional foundations, structure and staffing. They also note that the system was yet to be fully democratised. They made particular reference to military regimes. The authors believe that the local government is becoming responsive in the development of the rural communities.<sup>33</sup>

In their book, *Local Government Administration in Nigeria: Issues and Practice*, Abba and Nwanne, also trace the origin of local government administration in Nigeria up to the present. Their work dealt with the basic routine procedures for local government administration and highlighted the

functions, structure, staffing and general procedure for the day to day running of the system.<sup>34</sup>

In his article, “Local Government Administration Under The 1999 Constitution in Nigeria”, Awotokun, discusses the constitutional foundations of local government administration in Nigeria. He notes that though, the 1976 Local Government Reform brought far reaching changes in the system, the 1979 constitution failed to drive the reform home by way of autonomy for local governments, which the author notes as the reason for the incessant manipulations of the state government and its agencies.<sup>35</sup> Again, he notes that the provisions of the 1999 Constitution, regarding the local governments were adapted from the 1979 constitution.

He points out that state governments take advantage of the failure of the constitution to grant autonomy to the local governments to manipulate the system. He notes further, that the problem was compounded by lack of independent source of funding for local governments. Federal Allocations due to the local governments are paid into state/local government Joint Account which stands the risk of being diverted at any time by the state governments. The author haps on autonomy and financial freedom for the local government system but fails to note that many local governments across the country have failed to harness their internally generated revenue so as to boost their financial base and increase efficiency.

In their article, “Local Government Autonomy and Development of Localities in Nigeria: Issues, Problems and Suggestions”, Imhanlahimi and Ikeanyibe, discuss issues relating to local government autonomy. They observe that the improper handling of some of these issues is at the centre of the poor performance on the part of the local governments.<sup>36</sup>

These authors like Awotokun, fail to appreciate the implications of the principles of federalism in their examination of local government autonomy in Nigeria. They also hap on the issue of autonomy as if it were the only dominant factor, responsible for the failure of local government system in Nigeria. They fail to note that the failure of the local governments to deliver equitably on expected services breed discontent and agitations for the creation of more local governments.

Writing on the subject, “Local Government Tax Mobilisation and Utilisation in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects”, Adedokun observes that the federal system of government in Nigeria hinders the effort of the local governments to mobilise and use revenue for the development of areas within their jurisdiction<sup>37</sup>. The author notes that the federal and state governments control almost all the major sources of revenue while the local governments are allowed to collect taxes and rates that are not lucrative. According to Adedokun, since local government is essential to overall national development, procedure for public revenue mobilisation and utilisation should be restructured to give

room for additional tax powers and bases to the local government. He also advocates special grant, to enable local governments execute more projects.

The author went further to discuss some impediments to local government tax mobilisation and utilisation. These include: lack of efficient and well trained personnel, state budgetary control, political manipulations and insincerity of council chairmen and staff. Adedokun emphasises corruption and illegal appropriation of council funds, which according to him, runs like a chain, linking the different levels of authority in local government administration.

Ade Akinbosade in his book, *Management and Practice of Local Government Administration in Nigeria*, looks at the concept and principles of local government administration in Nigeria. He traces the origin of the local government system in Nigeria and the developmental stages the system has passed through, especially the 1976 Local Government Reform<sup>38</sup>.

The author takes into account, the various legal documents that are in place to make the local government a tier of government. The author also discusses the relationship between the local government and the traditional institutions, represented by the traditional rulers. Further emphasis was made on the good management of the local government, through a synergy between local government staff and the political authority.

In “Local Government and Constitutional Elasticity”, Ikeanyibe, takes a different look at the issue of local government autonomy in Nigeria. The paper

notes that the constitutional stipulations of the structure, number and functions of local government are limiting factors to the growth of the system in Nigeria<sup>39</sup>. It also notes that this dye-in-the-wool kind of constitutional stipulations make it impossible for timely and necessary changes in the system, according to the needs and peculiarities of a given area. The paper further argues that this rigidity in the constitutional provisions for the local government is the foundation for its poor performance. This rigidity according to the author is also responsible for the constant and regular rift between the federal and state governments over issues relating to local government.

In his article, “Expenditure Pattern of Local Governments”, Bello-Imam notes that the size of expenditure of each local government is dependent on its revenue which is largely derived from statutory allocation from the Federation Account<sup>40</sup>. The author notes that almost all the local governments studied, spent more funds on recurrent expenditure at the expense of capital expenditure. He also notes that a large percentage of the recurrent expenditure of most local councils, is spent on personnel cost and general administration. He points out that with the exception of local governments in the Northern states, majority of local governments in Nigeria spend little or nothing on agriculture.

In “The Third Tier of Government and Democratic Governance”, Ighodalo, shares his views on the issues of autonomy for local government and the practices of democracy at that level. The author argues that lack of autonomy

for the local government and the centralised nature of the structures of governance in Nigeria, are at the heart of the low level of performance by local governments in the country<sup>41</sup>. He notes that this is the reason why the local governments are over dependent on the federal and state government and subject to their constant manipulations. The author concludes that “unless democracy is institutionalised as provided for in the constitution, the fight against corruption and other vices in the local government will not be won”.

Writing in a paper titled, “Evolving a Pragmatic Formula for Popular Participation in Local Government in Nigeria”, Oladoyin argues that the institutionalisation of a pragmatic formula for popular participation in local government is essential for the growth of the system<sup>42</sup>. The author views popular participation as the involvement of the people at the rural communities, through their local social structures, in the articulation, planning and execution of policies affecting the political system.

In his book, *Theory and Practice of Local Government: An Introduction*, Adebisi, gives an over view of the evolutionary processes which local government administration in Nigeria had undergone. The author discusses the various models of local government with reference to the British, French and American models<sup>43</sup>. He notes that these three models have become reference points for other countries of the world. The author notes further, that among other challenges, the diversion of council funds by the state governments,

corruption and over staffing are the major challenges facing local governments in Nigeria.

In their paper, “Institutionalising The Culture of Accountability in Local Government Administration in Nigeria”, Adeyemi, Akindele, Aluko and Agesin, share their views on the issue of accountability and transparency in local government administration in Nigeria. They observe that the lack of the culture of accountability and transparency is at the centre of lack of performance by local governments in the country<sup>44</sup>. This is viewed against the backdrop of factors militating against the performance of local governments in Nigeria. They suggest that local communities, civil society organizations and anti-corruption agencies should constitute themselves into effective watchdog and constantly demand transparency and accountability from local government’s civil and political officials.

Writing in a paper titled, “Corruption in Local Government Administration: An Historical Summary”, Ekiyor, advances evidence to show that corruption in local government administration in Nigeria, has colonial origin. The author observes that corruption weighs high among the challenges facing local governments in Nigeria<sup>45</sup>. The author suggests a number of ways through which the challenges facing the local government would be tackled.

In “Constraints to Local Government Administration in Nigeria”, Oviasuyi and others discuss the origin of local government administration in Nigeria, the

reasons for its establishment and its functions. They also discuss some of the factors militating against the attainment of goals for the establishment of the local governments in Nigeria. Among other factors, the authors believe in very strong terms, that corruption is a principal reason for the lack of development of the rural areas, by the local governments<sup>46</sup>.

Furthermore, in his contribution to the discourse on local government administration in Nigeria, Ukiwo believes that the initial rationale for the creation of new states and local governments in Nigeria was the intention to correct the imbalance in the polity and allay the fears of minority groups. Unfortunately according to him, the exercise is now used as a means of duplicating a locality's share of allocation from the federation account as well as enhancing or increasing the total number of representatives from such locality, in the national or state assemblies or the local councils<sup>47</sup>. To support their claims, the authors cited the example of Lagos and old Kano States. The authors note that during the First Republic, Lagos State had four political divisions while old Kano State had two. Presently, as it is contained in the 1999 Constitution, Lagos State has twenty local councils while old Kano State has seventy one ( Kano 44 and Jigawa 27). The authors argue that the unending clamour for the creation of additional local governments in Lagos state is as a result of the imbalance, occasioned by favouritism and corruption in the creation of local governments in Nigeria.



Therefore, the study intends to carefully examine local government administration in Delta State, between 1991 and 2011, bearing in mind that the aim of establishing the local governments is to aid the rapid development of the rural areas. This study is concluded with suggestions that point the ways that could improve the service delivery capacity of the local governments, which is a precursor to equitable and sustainable development at the grassroots.

#### **1.10. Organisation of the Study**

The study is arranged into six chapters. This arrangement becomes necessary as a result of the equally different sub-titles into which the chapters are divided. Chapter one presents a general introduction of the topic and situates it within a theoretical framework and methodology. This chapter also reviews some literatures that deal with the same theme.

Chapter two presents Delta State in historical perspective, beginning with an overview of the history of state creation in Nigeria and eventually, the creation of Delta State. In order to fully present Delta state in historical perspective, a brief history of some ethnic nationalities in the state is presented.

Chapter three presents the history of the creation of local government in Nigeria and reforms in the system over time. The objectives for the establishment of the local government, its functions and structure are also examined.

Chapter four examines the history of local government creation in Delta State and the agitations for the creation of additional ones. The chapter also examines sources of funding for the local government and how the funds are used by local governments in the state. It also seeks to assess the level of attainment of the objectives for the establishment of the local governments.

Chapter five examines some of the challenges facing local government administration in Delta State. The chapter identifies lack of autonomy for the local government system in Nigeria, corruption and over staffing, among others, as the major challenges confronting local governments in the state.

Chapter six is a re-cap of the entire study. It is expected that this would refresh the salient points from the various chapters, with a view to drawing conclusion at this point. Recommendations are also made to point the way forward for local government administration in Delta State in particular and Nigeria in general.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### DELTA STATE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

#### 2.1 History of the Creation of States in Nigeria and the Creation of Delta State

To properly present Delta State in historical perspective, and at the same time trace the origin of the state, it would be important to first of all, have an overview of the history of state creation in Nigeria, as a pre-cursor to the creation of Delta State. This is because the creation of Delta State did occur out of the blues. Before the creation of Delta State on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1991, the Nigerian state had already been restructured into 21 states.<sup>1</sup>

Undoubtedly, the history of state creation in Nigeria reflects the insatiable pressures by Nigeria's numerous ethnic groups for easy access to central (federal) distributable revenues. In fact, it is only in Nigeria's federalism that the component units are geometrically expanding without the impetus of additional geographic territory.<sup>2</sup> Nigeria ranks among the few federal states that have had to re-organise her federal structure for up to six times in less than a century. Rotimi Suberu notes that "a strikingly yet sobering feature of Nigerian politics has been the instability in internal territorial configuration of the country's federal system. Since her independence from Britain in 1960, the federation's internal composition has been altered six times".<sup>3</sup>

Tracing the history of state creation in Nigeria amounts to studying the political history of the country, especially in the light of her multifarious ethnic



composition. This perhaps explains why Okeke and Osuagwu elect to study the agitations for state creation in Nigeria, in line with Nigeria's ethnicity question.<sup>4</sup> What is more, Suberu maintains that "the original impetus for agitations and creation of states derived from ethnic minorities' opposition to the British-instituted three-region federal structure, which procured autonomy and hegemony for the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo majority nationalities in the northern, western and eastern regions respectively".<sup>5</sup> According to Omotosho, while quoting Larry Diamond:

Ethnic minority fears and grievances centred around obtaining a fair share of the rewards and resources of an expanding economy... Minority demands for separate states were based on the belief, actively promoted by their leaders, that minorities were being cheated in the distribution of these resources by the majority dominated regional government ....<sup>6</sup>

Reasonably, the history of state creation in Nigeria might have begun in 1939 with the division of the protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria into Northern, Western and Eastern Regions. From available evidence, the major reason advanced for the division of Southern Nigeria into two while the North was left intact, was probably because of ethnographic and communications problems.<sup>7</sup> However, it may be recalled that Northern Nigeria was never monolithic and in the light of this, Subaru notes that:

The southern nationalist political class acquiesced in the retention of the three region structure and ultimately in its own political marginalisation, when it allowed itself to be balkanised by the British.<sup>8</sup>

Consequent upon the fears expressed by ethnic minority groups in the years preceding Nigeria's political independence, the British colonial authorities appointed a Commission of Enquiry to look into the plights of the minority groups in Nigeria. The commission, put in place in 1957, was headed by Sir Henry. The commission, according to Evaristus Ezeugwu, was to look into the fears of the minorities and ways of allaying them.<sup>9</sup> Part of the Commission's terms of reference was to advise the government on the necessity or otherwise, for the creation of additional regions. Furthermore, Ezeugwu notes that additional states were not created as a result of the report of this commission.<sup>10</sup> With this situation, the colonial government consequently passed on the baton as well as the problems of state creations to Nigerian leaders in 1960, at political independence.

As noted earlier, Nigeria at independence in 1960 was comprised of three regions. Agitations for the creation of more states also continued in post-independence Nigeria, by minority ethnic groups. According to Adeyemi, the most serious areas of intense agitations for new states were the Middle-Belt in the North, the Mid-West in the West and Calabar, Ogoja and Rivers in the East.<sup>11</sup> Continuing, Adeyemi, while quoting Omotosho, notes that agitation in the Middle Belt for the creation of Middle- Belt State out of the Northern Region was perhaps the most celebrated and most violent during this period.<sup>12</sup>

However, agitation in the North was successfully suppressed by the Northern People's Congress (NPC)- led government headed by Abubakar Tafawa Bewawa. The leaders of the NPC, like other regional leaders, resisted the agitation for the creation of the Middle- Belt State because the core Northern oligarchy wanted to perpetuate its political control of the Middle Belt.<sup>13</sup>

The Eastern Region was also able to contain agitations for state creation within the period under review. The Igbo-controlled National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) regarded agitation for state creation within its area of jurisdiction, as anti Igbo sentiments. However, the government introduced some palliative policies that granted concessions in the form of the creation of Regional House of Chiefs and increase in the functions of local governments<sup>14</sup>. In the Western Region, the actions or in-actions of the Action Group (AG, the party in charge of the West) and its leaders, laid the initial foundation for the creation of Delta state, via the creation of Mid-Western Region.<sup>15</sup>

Agitation for the creation of the Mid-West Region, as has been pointed out earlier, was championed by Mid-West State Movement. The creation of the Mid-Western Region was fast tracked by the political crisis that had engulfed Western Region, especially between 1961 and 1963. This political crisis led to the suspension of the constitution and the imposition of state of emergency in the region.<sup>16</sup>

The Action Group (AG), led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo was the official opposition party at the centre, against the coalition of the (NPC) and the NCNC. This coalition feared the rising influence of the Action Group and applied every available means to contain it. According to Tambwal, this political crisis in the Western Region, afforded NCNC and NPC, the greatest opportunity to curb the growing powers of Chief Awolowo, by splitting western region into two. To further the interests of the NPC and NCNC in the west, the motion to split the region into two was moved when the region was administered by Moses Majekodunmi, an appointed administrator. The motion was passed by the Federal Legislature and subsequently ratified by the legislature of the Eastern and Northern Regions. This ratification officially created the Mid-Western Region in 1963 and laid the indelible foundation for the creation of Delta State. According to Adejuge, it has been argued in many fora that the creation of Mid-Western Region was not out of a genuine concern for the interests of minority groups in the region, but that it was created as a political manipulation by the NCNC and the NPC coalition against the Action Group.<sup>17</sup> Another event that heralded the creation of Delta State, was the events that took place between January 15, 1966 and May of the same year.

It is well known that on January 15, 1966, a military *coup d'état* terminated the life of Nigeria's First Republic and ushered in the administration of General Ironsi. As a consequence of the January 1966 coup, the Ironsi administration, was toppled on July 29, 1966. During the coup, General Ironsi and his host, Lt

Col. Adekunle Fajuyi, the military administrator of western region, were killed. The ethnic colouration of this coup and the subsequent wanton killing of easterners in the north prompted the government of the Eastern Region, to advise that Igbos resident in other parts of the country, especially in the north, return back to the east<sup>18</sup>.

In order to politically incapacitate Eastern Region's secession bid, Col. Yakubu Gowon, the then Head of State and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces, announced the creation of twelve states, on May 27, 1967. This exercise, renamed Mid-Western Region as Mid-Western State, the grand parent of Delta State. Speaking on the issue, on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1967, Col. Yakubu Gowon averred that:

The country has a long history of well articulated demands for the creation of new states. The fears of minorities were explained in great detail and set out in the report of the Willink Commission appointed by the British in 1958. More recently there has been extensive discussion in Regional Consultative Committees and leaders-of-thought Conferences and resolutions have been adopted demanding the creation of states in the North, East and Lagos.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, Gowon insinuated that:

...while the present circumstances regrettably do not allow for consultations through plebiscites, I am satisfied that the creation of new states is the only possible basis for stability and equality which is the overwhelming desire of vast majority of Nigerians. To ensure justice, these states are being created simultaneously. To this end, therefore, I am promulgating a Decree which will divide Nigeria into Twelve states. The twelve states will be six in the present northern Region, three in the present Eastern Region, the mid-West will remain as it is, the colony province

of western region and Lagos will form a new Lagos state and the western region will otherwise remain as it is.<sup>20</sup>

The creation of the twelve state structure, seemingly appeared to have met the aspirations of the “vast majority” of Nigerians. According to Suberu, this exercise ended the structural imbalance engendered by the disproportionate size of the north. He added that it also created a federal structure in which the interest of minority ethnic groups and “indeed, the nation at large, could no longer be abused by one ethnic group”<sup>21</sup>

It is important to observe that before the ouster of General Gowon, most Nigerians were already disaffected with the general trends and patterns of his administration. The emergence of General Murtala Mohammed as a new head of state, following the July 1975 coup, became a relief to most Nigerians. The new administration, inaugurated a panel to investigate minority claims of marginalisation and agitations for the creation of additional states in Nigeria. The panel was headed by Justice Ayo Irikefe. The panel which swung into action in August 1975 was *inter-alia* charged with the task of examining the question of creation of more states, and in the event that creation of more states becomes operable, the committee was empowered to:

- a. advise on the delimitation of such states;
- b. advise on the economic viability of such states
- c. advise on the location of the administrative capitals of such states, and

d. examine and advise on all other factors that may appear to the committee to be relevant so as to enable the government to take a decision which will ensure a balanced stable federation.<sup>22</sup>

Furthermore, the Ayo Irikefe panel was also to receive and examine representations from individuals, groups, organisations or associations who may have views on the desirability or otherwise of creating more states in particular areas.

Eventually, the 1976 state creation exercise restructured Nigeria into nineteen states. The logic of structural balance between the north and south, said to have been introduced by Gowon's state creation exercise, was upturned as this present exercise created ten states in the north and nine in the south. In this arrangement, Mid-Western State was renamed Bendel state, denoting Benin and Delta and it also passed as the direct parent of Delta State. It is important to add that apart from the Mid-West region which was created during a civilian administration, all other states in Nigeria were created during military regimes. This is not to assume that agitations for state creation were uncommon during civilian rule.

The General Babangida administration which came into office in August 1985, established a political bureau under the headship of S.J Cookey. The Political Bureau was mandated to coordinate debate on the political future of Nigeria. According to Adeyemi, the Samuel Cookey Political Bureau received numerous memoranda from various interest groups, agitating for the creation of

new states. Agitations for the creation of new states were extensively discussed in the report of the Bureau as one of the contentious issues in Nigeria's political debate. The Bureau in its final report, recommended the creation of six additional states which it said was in the interest of fair play and justice.<sup>23</sup>

General Babangida announced the creation of Akwa-Ibom and Kastina states on September 23, 1987. Again, in 27<sup>th</sup> August, 1991, Babangida also announced the creation of nine additional states. In this exercise, Bendel State was split into Edo and Delta states. The other new states included Abia, Enugu, Osun, Jigawa, Kogi Kebi, Taraba, and Yobe States. Nevertheless, state creation in Nigeria did not end with the creation of Delta State and others in 1991.

Finally, the last episode in the series of state creation exercises in Nigeria, was during the administration of General Sani Abacha. General Sani Abacha came into office in 1993, following the political crisis that attended to the annulment of the June 12, 1993, presidential election in Nigeria. As a way of resolving the problems in the country at the time, the administration set up the National Constitutional Conference (NCC). State creation was one of the issues that dominated debate at the conference.

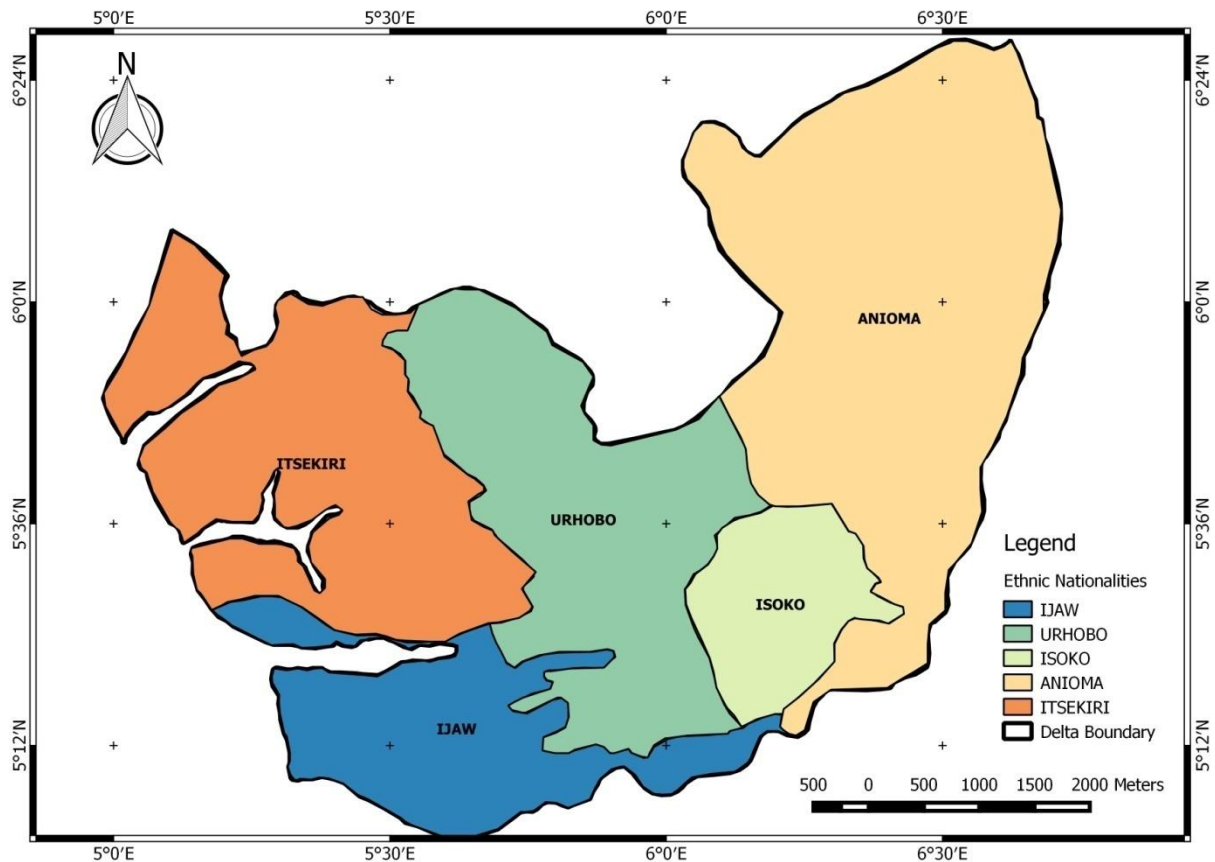
However, as a result of the conflicting interests of the members of the conference, it could not successfully resolve the issues bordering on the creation of additional states. Consequently, the administration set up the Arthur Mbanefo Committee on the creation of new states and local governments. According to Omotosho, the committee received 2,369 demands for the creation of new local



governments and 72 requests for the creation of new states. Although, the report of the committee was not made public, General Abacha announced the creation of six new states, namely: Bayelsa, Ebonyi, Ekiti, Gombe, Nassarawa and Zamfara States, on October 1, 1996. This exercise brought the number of states in Nigeria to 36, with a Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in Abuja.<sup>24</sup> The foregoing is an attempt to recap the historical background of the creation of Delta State.

Delta State is one of the states in the Nigeria's south-south geo-political zone. The state is an oil producing state and according to the 2006 National Population Census figures, it has an estimated population of about 4.5 million people.<sup>25</sup>

## MAP SHOWING ETHNIC NATIONALITIES IN DELTA STATE



### 2.2 Ethnic Nationalities in Delta State

Delta State could be likened to a rainbow, because of its diverse ethnic nationalities, different languages and dialects. There are five major ethnic groups comprising Anioma, Ijaw, Itsekiri, Isoko and Urhobo. Among these groups there are noticeable sub-groups. For instance, Anioma ethnic group whose language has its foundation in the Igbo language has different sub group and four of which are prominent, namely: Aniocha, Oshimili, Ika and Ukwuani. These sub groups have different dialects which is not easily intelligible to the other sub groups.<sup>26</sup> For administrative purposes, Delta State is divided into three senatorial districts, viz: Delta South, Delta North and Delta Central.

The 2006 national population census puts the population figures of the three districts as follows: South 1,304, 747, North 1,236,840, and Central 1,570,809 respectively.<sup>27</sup> The next sub-title will briefly outline the histories of the five ethnic nationalities in the following order, viz: Ijaw, Urhobo, Itsekiri, Anioma and Isoko respectively.

### **Ijaw Ethnic Nationality**

The Ijaw, Ijo or Izon, is a collection of indigenous people, sub-divided into clans, and who live along the swamp forest of the Niger delta. The Ijaw people who are predominantly fishermen could be found in Bayelsa, Delta, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Edo and Ondo States. Many Ijaw fishermen could also be found in fishing camps and settlements along the coast of West Africa especially in Liberia, Sierra-Leone and Gabon.

The Ijaw society is traditionally organised into clans comprising loose clusters of villages who trace their origin to a common ancestor. In the modern times, the Ijaw, notwithstanding the difference in clan or state they belong, see themselves as a single coherent nation, bound together by ties of a common language and culture.<sup>28</sup> To a very large extent, this state of affairs is as a result of the awareness created, unintentionally, by oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta. Multinational oil companies operating in the Niger Delta region have been repeatedly accused of fostering environmental degradation on the region as result of oil exploration and exploitation. On the other hand, the

federal government is also accused of unfair treatment of the Niger Delta region, for using the revenue from the region to develop other regions at the expense of the Niger Delta.

The above situation laid the foundation for the agitations for resources control, militancy and kidnapping in the Niger Delta. It also encouraged the Ijaw to integrate across state boundaries. Through this process, several Ijaw organisations were formed, drawing membership from Ijaw communities across state borders. Among others, the following organisations are remarkable, viz: Ijaw National Congress, Ijaw Youth Council, Ijaw Youth Congress and Ijaw Elders Forum. Through these organisations and other organised bodies representing the interests of other ethnic nationalities within the Niger Delta region, agitations for the development of the region was commonly aggregated. Unfortunately, some of these groups directly or indirectly metamorphosed into militia groups who, in the guise of Niger Delta struggle, carried out extensive criminal activities, particularly in the Niger Delta.

In Delta State, the Ijaw is found in six local government areas namely, Bomadi, Burutu, Patani, Warri South, Warri South West and Warri North. Among these, Bomadi, Burutu and Patani local governments are mainly constituted by the Ijaw while in Warri North, Warri South West and Warri South, the Ijaw co-habit with the Urhobo and Itsekiri. As will be examined later, the *Warri Crisis*, which began in 1996, was remotely triggered by the Ijaw

feeling of marginalisation by the Itsekiri in Warri. However, the immediate cause of the crisis was the relocation of the head quarters of a newly created local government from Ogbe-Ijo to Agidigben.<sup>29</sup> When the creation of the local government was announced in 1996, Ogbe-Ijo was announced as its headquarters. However, when government official gazette came out, the headquarters was changed to Agidigben. This change sparked the Warri Crisis.

### **Urhobo Ethnic Nationality**

The Urhobo ethnic nationality in Delta State is one of the ethnic nationalities in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. In Delta State, the Urhobo ethnic nationality constitutes the Delta-Central Senatorial district. The neighbours of the Urhobo are the Isoko to the south east, the Itsekiri to the west, the Benin of Edo State to the north, the Ijaw to the south and the Ndokwa to the north east.<sup>30</sup>

The Urhobo, classified as one of the ten major ethnic groups in Nigeria, is estimated to be about 1.5 million people by the 2006 population census in Nigeria.<sup>31</sup> According to Onigu Otite, the Urhobo are Edo- speaking people, a linguistic classification first used by Northcote Thomas in 1910 which has stuck on with implications not only for social and cultural affinity but also for problems of group origin and historical identity.<sup>32</sup> Otite further observes that despite the classification of the Urhobo as Edo-speaking people, there is no further historical or scientific evidence to support this claim.<sup>33</sup>

At this point, it is important to look at a few government policies in Urhobo land that have helped to influence the thrust of ethnic politics in Delta State, in the light of the political relations between Urhobo and other ethnic groups in the state. In this regard, it is important to start from the period of colonial rule.

The actions and inaction of the Nigerian colonial state and certain policies of independent Nigeria, more than anything else, shaped and are still shaping ethnic politics in Delta State and in Nigeria at large. When European traders came to the coast of the Niger Delta, they conducted their businesses through middlemen, who were sometimes referred to as ‘Agents’. These agents served as link between them and the communities or groups, in the hinterland. The introduction of the system of Indirect Rule by Lord Lugard, changed the status of influential agents, who were subsequently recognised as Warrant Chiefs. Chief Dore Numa<sup>34</sup>, an Itsekiri, was initially appointed as an “Agent” in 1894 by the British authorities, to cover the areas of the Benin River through to the Escravos. His status changed to that of a “Warrant Chief” with the formal introduction of Indirect Rule.

Omodoghogbone Numa<sup>35</sup> (Chief Dore Numa, “Dore” being the British rendition of Dogho, the shortened form of Omodoghogbone), became a wealthy and influential merchant through working for and trading with the Europeans at the coast. As a Warrant Chief, he was superior to other such chiefs in the Warri Province. Chief Numa was also appointed the Permanent President of the

Native Court of Appeal established for Warri Province. The Urhobo, Ijaw and Isoko resented the superior status granted Chief Numa (an Itsekiri) over their own chiefs in the province.

Again, government policies during the period between 1950-1960 are also important here. This was the period when the British granted limited self-rule to Nigeria. In 1952, the Action Group-led government of Western Nigeria as it were, patronised the Itsekiri, who had been its ardent supporter, by changing the title of *OLU OF ITSEKIRI*, to the *OLU OF WARRI*. For emphasis, the appointment of Dore Numa as a Warrant Chief and the changing of the status of the Olu of Itsekiri, was the foundation of the ethnic rivalry between Urhobo and the Ijaw on one hand and the Itsekiri on the other hand.<sup>36</sup>

### **Itsekiri Ethnic Nationality**

The Itsekiri ethnic nationality is also one of the ethnic nationalities in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The Itsekiri home land is located in Western area of the Niger Delta and the estuary of the Benin River. Itsekiri communities are located along the landward margins of the mangrove swamps, where they have the Urhobo and the Ijaw as their neighbours. These three groups are culturally different but their economies are interdependent.

The Itsekiri had early contact with European who came to the coast for commercial and missionary activities. The early development of the Itsekiri over and above other ethnic groups in the region is believed to owe much to this

contact with the Europeans. The development of the palm oil trade in the second half of the nineteenth century opened a new vista in their status. This new status enhanced the commercial relations between them and the Europeans at the coast and also granted superior status to their chiefs over those of their neighbours, especially the Urhobo.<sup>37</sup> Many Itsekiri traders became wealthy merchants through the provision of services as the middlemen between European traders at the coast and palm oil producers in the interior. Notable Itsekiri merchants during this period include Chief Nana Olomu and Chief Dore Numa, among others.

According to Oghene, Warri was noted as a cosmopolitan town of about 20,000 people in 1952 and only one sixth of this population were Itsekiri.<sup>39</sup> Warri became a commercial centre and Port for trade between Europeans and Africans and for some decades now, it has become one of the centres for oil and gas exploration and exploitation in Nigeria. The traditional settlement of the Itsekiri is in Ode-Itsekiri which is about six kilometres from the Warri township. When the British came, they built their own settlement towards the landward part of the mangrove swamps. As a result of commercial activities between the Europeans and the pre-existing Itsekiri, Ijaw and Urhobo communities, this European settlement grew to become modern day Warri.<sup>40</sup>

As has been noted earlier, many Itsekiri merchants became wealthy as a result of their early contacts with the Europeans and their activities as middle



men in the palm oil trade. Group relations in Warri began to falter with the establishment of Indirect Rule and the appointment of Warrant Chiefs. During the period under review, Chief Dore Numa was appointed as warrant chief in Warri, between 1918 and 1932. Chief Numa maximised his new position by applying the secrets of his success as a trader in the palm oil trade.

Again, according to Oghene, the British elevated chief Numa to the position of a Paramount Ruler in the Warri Province, Presiding Officer of the Warri Divisional Native Court and also the Presiding Officer of the Warri Provincial Native Court of Appeal.<sup>41</sup> Oghene notes further that the Urhobo, Ijaw and Isoko felt betrayed by the British since there has never been any history of domination, by any of the ethnic groups in Warri. Therefore, the perceived elevation of the Itsekiri was resisted at every opportunity.

### **Anioma Ethnic Nationality**

The Anioma is located in the south-south region of Nigeria and more precisely, in the northern region of Delta State. Anioma is bounded to the north by the Esan people of Edo State; to the east by Anambra State and to the south, by its Urhobo, Ijaw, Itsekiri and Isoko neighbours. It has a population of about 1,229,074.<sup>42</sup> Apart from Anioma people in Delta State, there are some Anioma communities that could also be identified in some states bordering Delta State. For instance, the Ndoni of River State, and Igbanke of Edo State. The Igbanke belong to the Ika stock. During colonial rule, most of Anioma were in the

Benin Province while Ukwuani which is part of Anioma was in the Delta Province.

### **Isoko Ethnic Nationality**

The Isoko ethnic nationality is one of the ethnic groups in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The Isoko is located within the south east region of Delta State, and according to the 2006 population census, Isoko has an estimated population of about 500,000 people. Isoko is bounded by the Urhobo to the west, Kwale to the north, Ijaw to the south and Aboh to the east. Fishing and farming constitute the major occupation in this region. However this has been altered to a very large extent, by industrialisation occasioned by oil exploration and exploitation.

During British colonial administration in Nigeria, the Urhobo and Isoko were grouped together in the Urhobo Division. This political arrangement did not go down well with the Isoko who felt that they were marginalised by the Urhobo. According to Ikime, the Isoko argued that the Urhobo conducted the business of the Division as if it were her private property.<sup>43</sup>

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**CHAPTER THREE**  
**HISTORY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN**  
**NIGERIA, UP TO 1991**

**3.1 Evolution of Local Government Administration in Nigeria, up to 1991**

In this section, local government administration in Nigeria is examined in phases. The first phase began with the introduction of the Native Authority System which terminated in 1960, following the attainment of Nigeria's political independence. The second phase began from 1960 and also terminated in the 1976 Local Government Reform. Finally, the third phase commenced with the 1976 reform, and terminated at the eve of the creation of Delta State in 1991. Indeed, the third phase constitutes the centre of this study.

**(i) Phase One (1901-1960)**

Prior to the advent of colonial rule, pre-colonial societies within Nigeria's geo-political environment, at the time, established very unique systems of local administration in their different localities. For instance, the Hausa-Fulani societies were ruled by the Habe kings. Each king ruled over a kingdom, which comprised the 'capital city', the centre of government and other numerous villages presided over by village heads.

The Yoruba societies of Western Nigeria also established similar systems of administration where the Oba or Bale, as the case may be, was at the helm of

affairs while local administration was left in the hands of village heads and community elders and leaders.

British colonial officers at the time appreciated the effectiveness and workability of these traditional local administrative arrangements and promptly keyed into them, to serve the interest of colonial administration. The synergy between traditional administrative institutions and the British colonial administration's idea of local government, resulted to what has been termed as the "Native Authority".<sup>1</sup>

The Native Authority system was initiated for the first time in the Lagos colony<sup>2</sup>, following the enactment in 1901, of the Native Council Ordinance, by Governor Macgregor. The success of the system led to its implementation in the rest of the Yoruba hinterland and other territories that later came to be known as Nigeria.

The Eastern Provinces appeared to be the last to witness the introduction of the Native Authority and Courts. According to A.E. Afigbo, in contrast to the well established local administrative systems practised by the Hausa-Fulani and the Yoruba societies, the interior of the Eastern Province between 1891 and 1912, did not possess well established and discernible traditional village heads or village groups. As a consequence, British colonial authority imposed agents who later became Warrant Chiefs.<sup>3</sup>

The use of warrant chiefs, obis and emirs in the Native Authority administration persisted till the end of World War II in 1945. At the end of the



war, educated elite began to protest their exclusion in the running of the local affairs of the colonial administration. This was as a result of the political consciousness elicited all over the world by the war.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, Afigbo, notes that this protest yielded substantial benefit as the colonial policy towards membership of the Native Authority and Courts was changed. The “Best Man Policy”, which was later adopted and known as the 1951 Local Government Reform, allowed each community within the appropriate jurisdiction to nominate whoever they considered best to represent them in the Native Authority.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps, this reform marked a turning point in the Native Authority system and the beginning of the history of reform in local government administration in Nigeria. The standards introduced by the 1951 reform continued to form the basis of local government administration till Nigeria’s independence in 1960.

**(ii) Phase Two (1960-1976)**

During Nigeria’s first republic, local government administration suffered a serious setback as the regional governments at the time, did not consider local government as a level of government that should have the right to operate on its own. These regional governments failed to continue with the democratic process and popular participation which was introduced by the 1951 reform. Sole Administrators or care-taker Committees, which comprised party loyalists and political stooges, were at the helm of affairs in the local governments.

Council staffs were of the lowest calibre, probably owing to the unattractiveness of local government service. Above all, the condition of the local government administration at this period was deplorable.<sup>6</sup>

However, following the military intervention in 1966, it was expected that the local government system would be reformed and strengthened, to bring development closer to the people at the rural areas. But this was not to be. The military administration at the centre, sought to weaken the power and authority of the regional governments which it considered as corrupt. This was effected through the Repeal and Restoration Decree No.13 of 1967, which consolidated the legislative and executive powers of the government of the federation in the office of the Head of the Federal Military Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.<sup>7</sup>

It may be imperative to note that this decree and other measures and policies enhanced the jurisdiction, authority and resource base of the federal military government at the expense of the states and local governments. In like manner, the regional or state governments, as the case may be, also descended on the jurisdiction and resource base of the local government in their areas of jurisdiction.<sup>8</sup> Finally, dwindling fortunes, low public esteem and failure on the part of the local government to impact on the lives of the local people and achieve its set objectives, led to the 1976 local government reform.

The military administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo, between 1976 and 1979, may have gone down in the history of local government administration as the one, which brought about the most fundamental changes in the system of local government administration in Nigeria. It was the first time a concerted effort was made to make the local government a third tier of government in Nigeria. This was done through the introduction of the much talked about 1976 Local Government Reform. The reform had *inter-alia*, introduced a uniform system of local government administration throughout the country. This uniformity was well marked in the relationship between the local governments and the state governments, traditional institutions and law enforcement agencies. The reform created some uniformity of functions, structure and responsibilities for all the local governments in the country and enshrined same in the 1979 Constitution of Nigeria.<sup>9</sup> To ensure a smooth take-off of these Local Governments at the time, R. F. Ola notes that a total sum of One Hundred million Naira (N100 million) was released as grant to the local governments, in the 1976/77 financial year.<sup>10</sup>

Under this reform, state ministries of local government were created and charged with only the responsibility to advise, guide and assist the local governments in their areas of jurisdiction, rather than control them. The reform also barred traditional rulers from partisan politics, as was the case in the past. It was believed that this would engender the much needed respect for traditional institutions. Furthermore, a unit of the Nigerian police was established in all

local government headquarters to ensure that peaceful co-existence, law and order were maintained.<sup>11</sup>

**(iii) Phase Three (1976-1991)**

The third phase of local government administration in Nigeria within the period under review was between 1976 and 1991. According to M.O. Maduabuchukwu, the 1976 local government reform, actually re-invented local government administration in Nigeria.<sup>12</sup> However, despite the above, the author also notes that the fortunes of local government administration in Nigeria began to dwindle during Nigeria's second republic, between 1979 and 1983. In line with this, it may be safe to assert that the politicians of the Second Republic did not share the values expressed by the erstwhile military administration about the local government. State governments during the period under review, exploited and dramatised the lack of sufficient autonomy granted the local government by the 1979 Constitution.<sup>13</sup>

Although, the 1979 Constitution provided for the local government as a third tier of government, guaranteed its constitutional existence and went further to provide for a democratically elected council, state governments treated local governments as ministerial departments under the state.<sup>14</sup> So many local councils, which were democratically elected, were dissolved before the expiration of their tenure. Furthermore, instead of conducting elections for the local governments, caretakers committees or sole administrators were

appointed.<sup>15</sup> However, state governments blamed their failure to conduct elections into the local government on the inability of the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) to provide them with up to date and valid voters' register.<sup>16</sup>

In spite of this claim and the position of some of the state governments, Maduabuchukwu observes that the state governments did not recourse to constitutional provisions when they unilaterally created new councils in their domains. It was expected that since state governments hinged their failure to conduct local government elections on the constitutional failure of the Federal Electoral Commission to provide them with valid voters' register, they should have also respected constitutional provisions on the creation of new local government.<sup>17</sup>

When the Second Republic was inaugurated in 1979, Nigeria had a total of 301 local governments. By 1982, the number of the local governments had increased to 684. Ukoha Ukiwo observes that the realisation by the Second Republic politicians and their political parties that additional electoral wards and federal constituencies could enhance their electoral fortunes, they embarked on the creation of more council without strict adherence to constitutional provisions. Ukiwo further observes that the creation of additional local governments was in the interest of, and gratification for party stooges and local party supporters.<sup>18</sup> Finally, it appears to be a common believe that local

government administration during this period, failed to achieve the objectives for its establishment. Perhaps, this was the reason for further reforms in the system by subsequent administrations.

In 1984, the Mohammadu Buhari military administration also set up a local government Reform committee. Its basic task was to identify ways of correcting the decay and lack of uniformity in the structure of local government administration as intended by the 1976 reform. According to the committee's report, which was submitted in 1985, the problems inherent in the implementation of the 1976 reform and the general lack lustre in local government administration during this period, were operational lapses rather than structural.<sup>19</sup> Among others, the committee recommended the abolition of all the local governments created during the Second Republic and the payment of statutory allocation directly to the local government instead of the prevailing practice whereby statutory allocations due to the local governments were paid to them through the state-local government joint account.<sup>20</sup>

With the replacement of the Buhari military regime by the Ibrahim Babangida administration in 1985, local government reforms were also pursued by the new regime. This administration is credited with the introduction of the Presidential System in Local Government Administration in Nigeria; direct payment of federal statutory allocation to the local governments without passing through the state governments, and the increase in local governments' share of

statutory allocation, from 15% to 20%. These reforms were contained in the Basic Constitutional and Transitional Provision Amendment Decree, 1991.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps, this seems to be the last major reform in the local government system in Nigeria.

The last attempt at reform in the system and operation of local governments in Nigeria was in 2003, during the civilian administration of President Obasanjo. Here, a Technical Committee headed by Alhaji Umaru Ndayako was appointed to review the structure of local governments in the country. The committee was mandated through its terms of reference, to examine the problems of inefficiency and high cost of governance at the local level.<sup>22</sup> The committee proceeded with its assignment and eventually submitted its report to the government. However, the report was neither made public nor be seen to have been implemented by government.<sup>23</sup>

According to Omotola, the idea of another local government reform at this time witnessed a lot debate and criticisms from the general public, particularly, politicians. It was a general consensus at the time, that the reform was ill-timed. This is in view of the fact that local government elections were scheduled to hold throughout the country, three days from the time of the announcement of the proposed reform.<sup>24</sup> The announcement of the proposed reform came on June 18, 2003, while the national electoral body had earlier scheduled local government elections for June 21, 2003.

According to Emelue, observers have argued that the proposed reform was a ploy by the federal government, intended to delay the scheduled local government elections, in order to give room to newly inaugurated state governors (majority of the state governors were from the then ruling party the PDP) to re-strategise before the elections were conducted.<sup>25</sup> Another argument against the reform is the view that it was also a ploy to divert public attention from the clamour for a sovereign national conference. In the views of *Afenifere*, a Yoruba socio-political organisation, as cited by Omotola, the government used the proposed reform to divert public attention from the agitations for a sovereign national conference. In addition, Omotola further notes that the group commented thus:

The misguided local government reform being enacted is undemocratic in precepts, processes and assumptions. It is rooted on a defective foundation and must be rebuffed. Fullest consultation at a constitutional conference that will be all inclusive ... must not be allowed to be by-passed by mere panel considerations.<sup>26</sup>

### **3.2 Objectives, Functions and Organisational Structure of Local Governments in Nigeria**

#### **(a) Objectives for the Creation of Local Government system**

The objectives for the establishment of the local government system in Nigeria could be gleaned from the 1976 Local Government Reform. The main objectives include the following:



- (i) to bring governance and government close to the local people and to initiate development programmes that will directly serve the needs of the local people:
- (ii) to encourage the democratisation of the third tier of government and bring out the leadership potentials in the local people;
- (iii) to mobilise both human and material resources of the rural communities for overall national development; and
- (iv) to provide a two way mechanism or a feedback structure of communication between the local communities and the national government.<sup>27</sup>

These objectives emphasise five key points namely: decentralisation of government, participation of the local people in the government of the local areas, democratisation, resource mobilisation, and a two way information system between the local people and the government. In another section of this study, we will try to find out if these objectives for the creation of local government have been achieved and to what extent.

## **(b) Functions of the Local Government**

As has been noted earlier, the 1976 Local Government Reform was very explicit in upholding the notion that the local government is the machinery through which the local people take interest and eventually participate in the

governance of the grassroots areas. According to Emelue, the reform emphasises that when people of a particular locality come together to articulate their common need and give effect to same through the powers of a government, it serves as a counter measure against the short comings of uniformity that is inherent in a centralised government.<sup>28</sup>

In view of this, it will be necessary to recap the functions of local governments as contained in the 1976 and 1999 Constitutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and view these functions against the backdrop of additional functions with which the local governments are at present saddled. Among others, functions of local government include the following:

- a. collection of rates, radio and television licences;
- b. establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and home for the destitute;
- c. licensing of bicycles, wheel barrows, canoes and carts;
- d. establishment and maintenance of slaughter houses, markets, motor parks and public conveniences;
- e. naming of streets, roads, and numbering of houses;
- f. movement and keeping of domestic animals and pets;
- g. licensing, regulation and control of sale of liquor;
- h. participation in the provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocational education; and
- i. participation in the provision of health services.<sup>29</sup>

This reform was given the full compliments of legality and force when it was enshrined in the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The period between 1979 and 1983, which is always referred to as the period of the Second Republic in Nigeria, did not witness any remarkable changes in local government administration in Nigeria. Rather, the period was noted for indiscriminate creation of additional local governments.<sup>30</sup> These constitutionally provided functions of the local government remained until the emergence of the Babangida military administration in 1985.

Unequivocally, the functions of the local government gradually began to appreciate and this became noticeable with the promulgation of Decree No.3 of 1991, by the Babangida administration, which transferred the sole responsibility for primary education to the local government.<sup>31</sup> This policy has been the most controversial. It generated a lot of discontent from the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT), which pressed for a reversal of the policy. On its part, however, the government responded by increasing the percentage of funding of the local government from the federation account and eventually left the payment of the primary school teachers' salaries to the local government. According to Bello – Imam, this accounts for the principal reason why the recurrent expenditure of councils is in very many instances, higher than the capital expenditure.<sup>32</sup>

Other areas of increase in the functions of the local government are in the areas of health services and the provision of rural infrastructure. Initially, local governments were noted for the provision of dispensary services but it is now

fashionably for local governments to operate comprehensive health centres with qualified medical personnel.<sup>33</sup>

In line with the increase in the functions, local government funding and revenue profile has also continued to appreciate. According to Jumare, allocation from the Federation Account shows that the share of local governments increased from 10% in 1981 to 15% in 1990 and 20% in 1992.<sup>34</sup> This increase in the percentage of local government share of allocation from the Federation Account might have been responsible for the general view that huge amounts of money have been transferred to the local governments, within the period under review.

### **(C) Organisational Structure of Local Government**

The organisational structure of local governments in Nigeria is a constitutional affair. The Constitution since 1999 provided for a unified structure in local government administration. Specifically, local governments in Nigeria practice the presidential system of government with distinct executive and legislative arms.<sup>35</sup> Apart from these two arms, the local government is also structured into various departments and units as the case may be. Some of these departments include the following: administration, finance and treasury, health and environment and education, among others. At this point, it will be necessary to further discuss some of the key organs and officers of the local government.

## **The Executive Arm of Local Government**

The executive arm of the local government is the political arm of the local government and its major responsibility is to formulate the policy direction of the government. The executive arm which is headed by the chairman, consists of the chairman, vice-chairman, supervisors and the secretary. The chairman is the chief executive and accounting officer of the local government. However, notwithstanding this designation as the chief accounting officer, the chairman does not sign cheques and vouchers. Although the chairman authorises all payment. Again, the chairman directs the affairs of the local government, and allocates responsibilities to the vice-chairman, supervisors and the secretary at least once a week. Furthermore, the chairman liaises with the legislative arm of the local government and at the beginning of the year, presents an annual estimate (budget) to the legislative arm of the local government for consideration and approval.<sup>36</sup>

## **The Executive Committee of the Local Government**

The executive committee (EXCO) of the local government consist of the chairman, a vice-chairman, the supervisory councillors and the secretary, appointed by the chairman. The committee, which meets at least once a week, is presided over by the chairman. The committee considers memoranda from the various departments and any other matter that may be brought before it for consideration.<sup>37</sup>

## **Vice-Chairman**

The vice-chairman is elected along with the chairman and in other words, the vice-chairman is the chairman's deputy. The vice-chairman has no constitutional function apart from that, which is delegated to his office by the chairman. Sometimes, the chairman may assign a supervisory position to the vice-chairman.

## **The Secretary to the Local Government**

The secretary is appointed by the chairman, on assumption of office. The secretary is the political head of the administration department. The secretary is also the secretary of the executive committee and is responsible for keeping the records of the proceedings of the meetings of the committee.

## **Supervisors**

Supervisors are political appointees, who are appointed by the chairman of the local government. The supervisors are the political heads of the departments and in this capacity, they represent their various departments in the executive committee of the local government. The supervisors, acting through the professional heads of the various departments, assist the chairman in the implementation and execution of the policies and programmes of the local government and carry out such other duties or functions that may be assigned to them by the chairman from time to time.

Furthermore, in running the affairs of the local government, the executive arm is also assisted by other key support staff, including the Director of the Personnel Management (DPM) and the Treasurer of the local government.

### **Director of Personnel Management.**

The Director of Personnel Management is the Head of General Administration of the local government. The Director of Personnel Management is the equivalent of the Head of Service of the state civil service. The function of the DPM includes the following:

- a. signing of all cheques, contractual agreements, local purchase order forms and other documents relating to contracts, supplies etc subject to the prior approval of the approving authority;
- b. assisting the Secretary in the formulation, execution and review of local government policies and execution; and
- c. performing such other duties as may be assigned to the office of the DPM from time to time by the chairman or secretary to the local government.

### **The Local Government Treasurer (Director of Finance)**

The Treasurer or the Director of Finance of the local government, is the chief financial officer, adviser, or controller of the local government. Every matter bothering on finance must pass through the Treasurer for professional

financial advice. The functions of the Treasurer, among others, include the following:

- a. serving as Chief Financial Adviser to the local government;
- b. ensure that all the departments of the local government comply with all Accounting system as set in the Financial Memorandum;
- c. Responsibility for budgetary control and supervision of the accounts of all the department of the local government; and
- d. Performing such other related duties as may be assigned by the chairman of the local government council.<sup>37</sup>

Having seen the structural framework of the local government and some important offices and officers who superintended over these offices, it will be proper to look at the aims for the establishment of the local government system and the functions expected of it.

### **3.3 Distribution of Local Government Areas According to the Six Geo-Political Zones**

The present restructuring of Nigeria into six geo-political zones was introduced into the polity in substitution for the post-colonial regional government. The geo-political zones, which are yet to be captured in the Nigerian Federal Constitution, include the South-South, South-East and South-West in the southern part of Nigeria, and the North-West, North-Central and North- East in the Northern part of the country. However, the Federal Capital



Territory (FCT) has always been loosely grouped with the geo-political zones in the northern part of Nigeria.<sup>38</sup>

The essence of this zoning system is believed to be necessitated by the need to achieve easy identification of geographical areas, easy access to political permutations, regional balancing and promote equality among the zones especially among the various tribes that make up the federation.<sup>39</sup>

The situation in Nigeria (relating to political permutation and calculation) is that the number of local governments in a particular geo-political zone is a determining factor for the distribution of federal political appointments, development projects and the sharing of revenue accruable from the federation account.<sup>40</sup> This is the major reason or base for the agitations for the creation of additional states and local governments. In view of the above, it is a common perception among the southern elite that successive military administrators of Nigeria of northern extraction negatively maximised their military and political power and position, so as to benefit their localities during the various states and local government creation exercises in the country.<sup>41</sup> This deliberate misuse of power to alter the political structure of Nigeria was particularly evident between 1985 and 1998 when Babangida and Abacha were in power. According to Adeyemi, the two administrations created 473 new local government areas, thereby bringing the total number of local government areas in Nigeria, to 774,

as contained in the 1999 constitution, as amended.<sup>42</sup> Most of these local governments were probably created to satisfy parochial political interests.<sup>43</sup>

For instance, Lagos State at the end of the First Republic, had four political divisions while the old Kano State had two. Today, while Lagos State has only 20 local government areas, old Kano State has 71 local government areas (Kano 44 and Jigawa 27).<sup>44</sup> The case of Lagos has been a topical issue among southern elite, who have since the 1990s, agitated against northern domination in the political affairs of Nigeria.<sup>45</sup> Table 1 shows the distribution of local government area according to the six geo-political zones in Nigeria.

**Table 1. DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS BY GEOGRAPHICAL ZONES**

Zones	No.Of LGA	% of LGA	Population in millions(Based on the 1991 census figures)	% in National population
North-Central, including Abuja	120	15.5	12.5	14
North- East	111	14.3	11.9	13.4
North West	186	24	22.9	25.8
South- East	95	12.2	10.8	12.1
South-South	123	16	13.3	15.1
South- West	139	18	17.4	19.6
Total	774	100	88.8	100

Source: 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for the number of local governments and National Population Commission, for the population figures of the various local governments.

From the table, the North West Zone has about one quarter of the total number of local governments in the country while the remaining five zones have between 12% and 18%. In the same manner, the table also shows that the North West Zone also has one quarter of the total population of Nigeria. However, if viewed against the backdrop of the total population of North West Zone, it would appear that those who superintended over the creation of more local governments in the zone are justified, since population is one of the criteria for the creation of local government. However, it is a known fact in Nigeria that census figures are often manipulated for political and economic reasons such as the delineation of electoral constituencies and the creation of more local governments.

Furthermore, aside from the fact that the total number of local government in a state determines the size of its allocation from the federation account, it also determines the size or number of federal electoral constituencies in a state. In turn, a state or group of states such as a geo-political zone that has the highest number of federal constituencies would be able to influence decisions at the National Assembly.<sup>46</sup> Though, the debate over the disparity in the total number of local governments between the northern and southern parts of Nigeria is not the subject of this study, table 2 below is necessary to illustrate the reasons for

the unending agitations for the creation of additional local governments in Nigeria.

### **Distribution of Federal Electoral Constituencies According to Geo-political Zones**

ZONE	STATE	NUMBER OF LGA	NUMBER OF HOUSE REP.	NUMBER OF SENATE
North West	Kano	44	24	3
	Jigawa	27	11	3
	Kaduna	23	16	3
	Kastina	33	15	3
	Kebi	21	8	3
	Sokoto	23	11	3
	Zamfara	14	7	3
		185	92	21
South West	Ekiti	16	6	3
	Lagos	20	24	3
	Ogun	20	9	3
	Oyo	33	14	3
	Ondo	18	9	3
	Osun	30	9	3
		137	71	18
South South	Akwa Ibom	31	10	3
	Cross River	18	8	3
	Rivers	23	12	3
	Bayelsa	9	6	3
	Delta	25	10	3
	Edo	18	9	3
		124	55	18
North Central And FCT	Benue	23	11	3
	Kogi	21	9	3
	Kwara	16	6	3
	Nasarawa	13	5	3
	Niger	25	10	3
	Plateau	17	8	3
	FTC	6	2	1
		121	51	19
North East	Adamawa	21	8	3
	Bauchi	20	12	3
	Borono	28	10	3
	Gombe	11	6	3
	Taraba	16	6	3
	Yobe	17	6	3
		113	48	18
South East	Abia	17	8	3
	Anambra	21	11	3
	Ebonyi	13	6	3
	Enugu	17	8	3
	Imo	27	10	3
		94	43	15
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		774	360	109

Source:<http://www.nigerianmuse.com>

From the table, the three geo-political zones in the Northern part of Nigeria (including FCT) have 249 (two hundred and nine) members in the National Assembly in the following order: North -West; senate 21, House of Representatives 92, North- Central and FCT; Senate 19, House of Representatives 51 and North -East; senate 18, House of Representation 48. While the three geo-political zones in the South have 220 (Two Hundred and Twenty) members in the National Assembly, in the following order: South- West; Senate 18, House of Representative 71, South- South; Senate 18, House of Representatives 55 and South- East; Senate 15, House of Representatives 43.<sup>47</sup>

Earlier in this study, Lagos state and old Kano state (Kano and Jigawa states) have been used to explain a very major disparity in the country over time, regarding the creation of local government areas. In this present instance, the South East geo-political zone is particularly piqued and is seriously agitating for equality among the six geo-political zones particularly the creation of another state in the zone so as to bring it at par with other zones that have not less than six states each.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### HISTORY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CREATION IN DELTA STATE

#### 4.1 Creation of Local Government in Delta State, 1991-1996

On the eve of the creation of Delta and Edo States out of the former Bendel State in August 1991, Bendel State had Nineteen (19) local government areas as could be seen in the table below. Bendel is an acronym denoting Benin and Delta provinces. When Delta was created, it inherited eleven (11) Local Government Areas from Bendel.

Table 1 below shows Local government areas in the former Bendel state, split between Delta and Edo, as contained in the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Table 1 Local Government Areas in defunct Bendel State

S/N	LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	STATE	
1.	OSHIMILI	DELTA	
2.	OREDO		EDO
3.	OKPEBHO		EDO
4.	ISOKO	DELTA	
5.	ETHIOPE	DELTA	
6.	BOMADI	DELTA	
7.	BURUTU	DELTA	

8.	OKPE	DELTA	
9.	WARRI	DELTA	
10.	ORHIONMWON		EDO
11.	OVI		EDO
12.	ETSAKO		EDO
13.	IKA	DELTA	
14.	AGBAZILO		EDO
15.	OWAN		EDO
16.	UGHELLI	DELTA	
17.	ANIOCHA	DELTA	
18.	AKOKO-EDO		EDO
19.	NDOKWA	DELTA	

Source: 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

As mentioned earlier, which could be seen from Table 1 above, Delta State inherited eleven (11) out of the nineteen local government areas in the former Bendel State. These local governments are Oshimili, Isoko, Ethiope, Bomadi, Burutu and Okpe. Others are Warri, Ika, Ughelli, Aniocha and Ndokwa.

The first local government creation exercise in Delta State occurred the same time when the state was created by the General Babangida administration in August, 1991. In that year, additional local government areas were created out of the eleven inherited from the old Bendel State. This gave the newly created Delta State, a total of twenty four (24) local government areas, namely:

Aniocha-North, Aniocha-South, Bomadi, Burutu, Ethiope-East, Ethiope-West, Ika-North-East, Ika-South, Isoko-North and Isoko-South. Others are Ndokwa-East, Ndokwa-West, Oshimili-North, Oshimili-South, Okpe, Patani, Sapele, Ukwuani, Udu, Ugheli-North, Ugheli-South, Uvwie, Warri-North and Warri-South.

However, as a result the controversies, which attended the first local government creation exercise in Delta State in 1991, which saw the division of Warri Local Government into Warri-South and Warri-North in 1991, the Abacha administration was prompted in 1996, to create one more local government in the area. This new local government, which is known as Warri-South-West Local Government, was the last to be created in the state till date. The headquarters of the newly created local government was initially announced as Ogbe-Ijoh, an Ijaw community.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, when the Federal Government Gazette, which legalised the newly created local governments in the country, was published, the headquarters of the new local government was announced as Ogidigben, an Itsekiri community. The Ijaw resented this action through large-scale protests which, resulted in the “Warri Crisis”, between 1996 and 2003.<sup>2</sup>

The foundation for the Warri Crisis was laid by the nature of ethnic rivalry between and among the ethnic nationalities that inhabit Warri. These ethnic communities or groups include: the Ijaw, the Itsekiri and the Urhobo. The

struggle among these three groups for the control of land and political power in Warri dates back to the colonial period. This struggle for supremacy has often resulted in open confrontations, but the most recent and bloodiest was the one that attended to the creation of a new local government in the area, in 1996.

According to Ukiwo, the nuclei of the town Warri were the Itsekiri settlement of Okere and the Urhobo settlement of Agbarha.<sup>3</sup> Lloyd also notes that modern Warri developed out of the commercial activities between the British colonial administration and the coastal communities during that period.<sup>4</sup>

As will be expected, Warri Division<sup>5</sup>, which had Warri as its headquarters, was made up of the Itsekiri, Urhobo and Ijaw communities. While the Itsekiri was found only in the Division, the Ijaw and the Urhobo were found both in the Division and Province. Furthermore while the Itsekiri were majority in the Division, it was minority in the Province, when compared to the Urhobo and Ijaw. As could be seen, Warri rested and is still rests on a tripod in which the Itsekiri, the Urhobo and the Ijaw are the major gladiators, jostling for power, control and influence.

The struggle for power and influence had its roots in the pattern of external contacts, which the three ethnic groups had with the Europeans and the roles played by these parties during the period of British colonial rule. While quoting Ikime, Ukiwo notes that the Itsekiri played the role of middle men in the slave and palm oil trade while the Urhobo supplied both the slaves and palm oil. The

Ijaw played the role of “pirates” as they were mainly fishermen, dwelling along the creeks.<sup>6</sup> Because the Itsekiri were strategically located to deal directly with the Europeans along the coast, Itsekiri Merchants were more influential and were mostly appointed as warrant Chiefs.

The introduction of universal adult suffrage encouraged the rise of political parties which were mostly ethnic based. Between 1950 and 1960 when Nigeria became independent, the three ethnic groups in Warri Division and even their kit and kin in the province at large, had successfully aligned themselves with the ethnic based political parties in Nigeria at the time.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, while most of the Urhobo and Ijaw elite supported the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC), which later became the National Council of Nigerian Citizens, Itsekiri elite supported the Action Group (AG). After the 1951 election, the AG, which was popular among the Yoruba of Western Nigeria, won the election in the region and formed the government of Western Region. The government later rewarded the Itsekiri with a ministerial position, by appointing Chief Arthur Prest, an Itsekiri, as the Central Minister of Communication.<sup>8</sup>

The resentment of the Urhobo and the Ijaw were further fired by the recognition of the Itsekiri monarch, as the *Olu* of Warri in 1952, by the Western Regional Government.<sup>9</sup> It will be recalled that prior to 1952, the Itsekiri monarch was designated as *Olu* of Itsekiri. Following the 1976 Local

Government Reform and the creation of new local governments, Warri was divided into thirteen wards. These wards were controlled by the three ethnic groups in the following order: Itsekiri 6; Urhobo 5; and Ijaw 2.<sup>10</sup>

With the passage of time, this rivalry continued to thicken. It was heightened in 1991 when the Babangida administration created state and local governments.<sup>11</sup> Warri local government was divided into two local government areas, namely, Warri North and Warri South. The expectation of the Ijaw that the headquarters of Warri South local government would be situated in an Ijaw town, such as Oporoma was dashed. The location of the headquarters of the new local government in Koko, an Itsekiri town, infuriated the Ijaw of Warri.<sup>12</sup>

Probably, the administration of General Sani Abacha attempted to address the issue of marginalisation of the Ijaw in 1996, with the creation of yet another local government in Warri. This time, Warri-South was split into two, to produce Warri-South and Warri-South-West. The headquarters of the newly created Warri South West Local Government was initially announced as Ogbeljo, an Ijaw community, but it was later changed to Ogidigben, an Itsekiri community. As it were, the relocation of the headquarters of the new local government prompted strong resentment from the Ijaw.<sup>13</sup> The Ijaw who were celebrating their new local government and their liberation from the discrimination and domination of the Itsekiri, were angered by this development and subsequently launched attacks on Itsekiri communities. The state of affairs

in Warri during this period of attacks and counter-attacks is known as the Warri crisis.

Expectedly, the tripod-like ethnic relationship in Warri played out in the crisis. The antagonism was initially between the Ijaw and Itsekiri but as would be expected, the Urhobo was eventually involved in the crisis, on the side of its traditional ally, the Ijaw.<sup>14</sup> Ijaw youths attacked and destroyed several Itsekiri villages. These attacks were also countered by Itsekiri youths who also attacked, and destroyed several Ijaw villages. The crisis, which lasted between 1996 and 2003, was complex.

Its complexity derived from two reasons. One, the issue was initially between the Ijaw and Itsekiri over the relocation of the headquarters of a newly created local government. The involvement of the Urhobo underscored the traditional and age long ethnic rivalry in Warri. Two, the sophistication in the planning and execution of attacks and also in the nature of weapons used during the crisis was a source of concern to the federal authorities. The federal government sent troops to bring the situation under control. Finally, apart from the loss of lives, commercial activities were seriously disrupted. Many multinational companies relocated their corporate headquarters out of Warri.<sup>15</sup> The Warri crisis is generally noted to have further widened the flood gate of agitations for the creation of more local government areas in Delta State and



also enkindled a new wave of ethnic nationalism and violent militancy in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria.

Furthermore, it could be observed that increased agitations for the creation of additional local governments in Delta State have since been blamed on the lack of development of the existing local government areas of the state by successive administrations in the state. The non-development of the rural areas of the state is, in turn, blamed on corruption, which is defined as any behaviour, action or in-action that is a deviant from a normal or acceptable norm.<sup>16</sup> The issues of corruption will form part of the challenges that faced local governments in Delta State, within the period under review. At this point, this study will briefly trace the history of the creation of three local governments areas in Delta State, one each, selected from each of the three senatorial districts of the state.

**a. Oshimili South Local Government**

Oshimili-South Local Government is one of the twenty five local Council areas in Delta State. It is situated in the Delta North Senatorial District. The history of the creation of Oshimili -South Local Government is said to have began in the defunct Bendel State where Oshimili Local Government was one of the nineteen local governments in Bendel State. The creation of Delta and Edo States out of the defunct Bendel State in August 1991 also saw the creation of Oshimili South Local Government out of the former Oshimili Local

Government in the same year. The Headquarters of Oshimili South Local Government is Asaba, which also doubles as the capital of Delta State.<sup>17</sup>

Oshimili-South is bounded on the North by Oshimili- North; on the south by Ndokwa East; on the West by Aniocha South and on the East, by the River Niger.<sup>18</sup> By the 2006 National Population census in Nigeria, Oshimili-South Local Government is estimated to have a population of about 150,000 people.<sup>19</sup> The local government is comprised of three major towns of Asaba, Okwe and the Oko communities. Asaba appears to account for as much as two-third ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of the population and total land mass of the local government.<sup>20</sup> The major occupation in the local government is farming. In the Oko communities that live mostly along the bank of the River Niger, fishing is a major source of livelihood. However, this has slightly changed over the years as a result of urbanisation and industrialisation.

Asaba, the headquarters of the local government, prides itself for being the first administrative headquarters of the area that later became modern day Nigeria. Reference is always made of Asaba, as the first administrative headquarters of the Royal Niger Company in 1886.<sup>21</sup>

#### **b. Ugheli South-Local Government**

Ughelli-South Local Government is located in the Central Senatorial District of Delta State and it is also one of the twenty five local government areas in the state. It has its headquarters at Otu-Jeremi.<sup>22</sup> Ughelli-South Local

Government was created in 1991 when Ugheli Local Government, which was carried over from the former Bendel State was split into two: Ughelli-North and Ughelli-South. Ughelli-South is located along the southward coastal creeks of the Niger Delta Region and is said to have an estimated population of about 200,000 people, according to the 2006 census figure.<sup>23</sup> The local government is bounded on the north by Ughelli-North; on the west by Udu; on the east by Bomadi and on the south by Burutu Local Governments. The indigenous ethnic group of the local government is Urhobo. Fishing and farming was initially the main- stay of the economy of Ugheli South Local Government. However, the advent of crude oil-based economy in Nigeria, has, to a very large extent, changed the occupation of the people. The petroleum based economy brought about industrialisation and urbanisation which are gradually replacing fishing and farming as the traditional occupation of the people.

### **c. Warri-South-West Local Government**

Warri-South-West Local Government is also one of the twenty five local governments in Delta State and is situated within the Delta South Senatorial District. According to the 2006 population census figure, the local government is estimated to have about 150,000 inhabitants.<sup>24</sup> The journey to the creation of Warri-South-West Local Government began with the creation of Delta State in 1991 and the splitting of the old Warri Local Government into Warri-North and Warri-South, in the same year. Further in 1996, Warri-South was again split into two, to make room for a new Warri-South and Warri-South-West.<sup>25</sup> The

headquarters of the local government is Ogbe-Ijo. Like other parts of Warri, Warri-South-West is located along the south-western part of the lower Niger Delta region. The major occupation of the people is fishing, besides industrial activities, occasioned by oil exploration and exploitation.<sup>26</sup> The indigenous groups in this local government are the Ijaw and the Itsekiri. The Ijaw are in the minority while the Itsekiri are in the majority.<sup>27</sup>

#### **4.2 Agitations for the Creation of Additional Local Governments in Delta State**

In Delta State, agitations for the creation of more local governments reflect the perception of Delta State in some quarters as mini – Nigeria, given the “ethnic multiplicity and cultural heterogeneity in the State”.<sup>28</sup> It is observed in the course of gathering data for this study, that several groups in the state, want new local government created for it so as to have political advantage and “more than a fair share” of the state’s resources, over the other sections. Agitation for the creation of additional local government areas in the state is examined mostly against the backdrop of certain government policies and actions which have directly or indirectly fuelled ethnic politics in the state. These could be summarised as follows:-

- (1) the location of the state capital in Asaba;
- (2) creation of additional electoral wards in 2005; and
- (3) creation of Delta State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission.<sup>29</sup>

One of the fundamental factors that have indirectly influenced agitations for the creation of additional local government areas in Delta State is the location of the state capital in Asaba. Asaba is in the Anioma area of the state which constitutes the Delta-North Senatorial district. The following would account for why the location of the state capital at Asaba has fuelled ethnic politics and in turn, agitations for the creation of additional local government areas.

According to Sam Oyovbaire, different community of interests featured in the agitations for the creation of states out of old Bendel State. For instance, there were agitations for the creation of Afenmai, Anioma and coast states, among others. Oyovbaire and Nosike Ikpo agree that the Babangida administration consulted and discussed with opinion leaders who spear-headed agitations for the creation of States out of the old Bendel State.<sup>30</sup>

The creation of Delta State in 1991 and the citing of the capital at Asaba have been controversial. Ethnic groups in the former Delta Province (Delta-South and Delta-Central) argue that Delta-North which was in the former Benin Province was not expected to be part of Delta State and that the location of the capital of the state at Asaba, which is in the northern fringes of the state, is an injustice against the “Core Delta” people.<sup>31</sup> Probably, agitations for the creation of additional local governments in the Delta-South and Delta-Central Senatorial Districts could be predicated on the need for the two districts to be at par with Delta North, in terms of political advantage.

A second factor that has also given an impetus to agitations for the creation of additional local governments in the state was the creation of additional electoral wards in 2005. In 2005, Delta State government, created additional electoral wards. According to Maduabuchukwu, this exercise smacks of political intrigues, calculated at giving the Delta Central, permanent political dominance in Delta State, and this has been noted as one of the major reasons for the agitations for the creation of more local governments in the state.<sup>32</sup> Table 2 below shows the total number of old and new electoral wards per local government in the state.

Table 2:

Electoral Wards in Delta State

Senatorial Districts	LGA	Old wards	New Wards	Total
Delta North Senatorial District	Aniocha North	10	4	14
	Aniocha South	11	3	14
	Ika North East	14	5	19
	Ika South	12	6	18
	Ndokwa East	10	10	20
	Ndokwa west	10	10	20
	Oshimili North	10	4	14
	Oshimili South	11	3	14

	Ukwuani	10	6	16
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>149</b>
Delta South Senatorial District	Bomadi	10	9	19
	Burutu	11	9	20
	Isoko North	13	7	20
	Isoko South	11	10	21
	Patani	10	9	19
	Warri North	10	10	20
	Warri South	12	7	19
	Warri south west	10	10	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>158</b>
Delta Central	Ethiope East	11	9	20
	Ethiope West	10	10	20
	Okpe	10	10	20
	Sapale	11	9	20
	Udu	10	10	20
	Ugheli North	11	9	20
	Ugheli South	11	9	20
	Uvwie	10	10	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>270</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>467</b>

Source: Delta State Independent Electoral Commission (DESIEC)

As a result of the creation of the new wards, shown in table 2 above, Delta State has two operational ward-structures. The first is the initial structure, known here as the 'Federal Ward Structure'. These are the wards that were originally delineated by the federal government and applied as the official electoral constituencies in the state, for all elections organised and conducted by Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). The second is the state ward-structure, which applies for local government elections, which is always organised and conducted by the state government appointed Delta State Independent Electoral Commission (DSIEC).

From table 2 above, the three senatorial districts in the state had the following electoral wards, before the creation of additional ones in 2005: Delta-North 98; Delta-South 87 and Delta-Central 85. After the creation of new wards in 2005, the three districts have the following figures: Delta-North 149, Delta-South 158 and Delta-Central 160.

It has been noted elsewhere in this study that the number of electoral constituencies and wards enhance the political rating of politicians and the group or party they represent. For instance, in party primaries to elect a gubernatorial candidate, certain elected officials are automatic delegates and this goes a long way to favour the candidate from the district that has the highest number of delegates. Perhaps, this was why a former senator and ardent



advocate for the creation of Aniom State, Nosike Ikpo, argued that governor Ibori created new electoral wards in the interest of his Urhobo nation.<sup>33</sup>

The creation of more wards in the central senatorial district has witness a lot of contrvercies. Nosike Ikpo notes that the population of any of the local government might not have been sufficiently applied as one of the criteria, according to the law, for determining the creation and delineation of the new wards. Continueing, Ikpo observes that all the local governments in the Central Senatorial District could not have and did not exhibit the same demographic characteristics at the time the new wards were created, to necessitate the creation of a uniform number of wards across board, in the district. He also believes that the population figures of the district were manipulated, with the creation of more electoral wards in mind.

Furthermore, it is observed that most probably, reasons for the agitations for the creation of additional local governments are also mostly recorded among the Delta-North people on account of the above factor. Consequently, Delta-North believes, that through the creation of additional local government in its territory, it could be able to double its share of the state revenue, to develop the area.<sup>34</sup> Table 3 below is the population figures of the three senatorial districts in Delta State, in the 1991 and 2006 population census. Here, the ward creation exercise in Delta State, in 2005, is examined, against the back-drop of the allegations of unfair play from the Delta-North.

**Table 3.****Census Figures of the Three Senatorial Districts in Delta State, in the 1991 and 2006 Population Census.**

Senatorial Districts	LGA	1991Pop. Census	2006 Pop. Census	%
DELTA NORTH	Aniocha North	60,998	104,062	
	Aniocha South	107,034	142,045	
	Ika North East	126,560	182,819	
	Ika South	109,204	167,060	
	Ndokwa East	75,578	103,224	
	Ndokwa west	.....	150,024	
	Oshimili North	.....	118,540	
	Oshimili South	.....	150,032	
	Ukwuani	.....	119,034	
Sub-Total		<b>479,374</b>	<b>1,236,840</b>	<b>30.2%</b>
DELTA SOUTH				
DELTA SOUTH	Bomadi	.....	86,016	
	Burutu	167,648	207,977	
	Isoko North	111,919	143,559	
	Isoko South	150,836	235,147	
	Patani	.....	67,391	
	Warri North	90,893	136,149	
	Warri South	235,750	311,970	
	Warri south west	.....	116,538	
	Sub-Total		<b>757,046</b>	<b>1,304,747</b>
DELTA CENTRAL				
DELTA CENTRAL	Ethiope East	113,929	200,942	
	Ethiope West	105,861	202,712	
	Okpe	.....	128,398	
	Sapale	142,652	174,273	
	Udu	.....	142,480	
	Ugheli North	166,029	320,638	
	Ugheli South	139,748	212,638	
	Uvwie	.....	188,728	
	Sub-Total		<b>668,219</b>	<b>1,570,809</b>
GRAND TOTAL		<b>1,904,639</b>	<b>4,112,396</b>	

Source: National Population Commission, Asaba.

Furthermore, in view of table 3 above, the study notes that the fundamental criterion for the creation of any or additional electoral wards in an area, is based on the population. Expectedly, a densely populated area should have more electoral wards, than a sparsely populated area. From table 3 above, the population figures of the three senatorial districts, expressed in percentages, are as follows: Delta-Central, 38.2%; Delta-South, 31.6% and Delta-North, 30.2%. Going by the above figures, it appears that it is justifiable for Delta Central, which has the highest population figures, to also have the highest number of electoral wards.

Related to the above is the fact that certain local government areas in Delta State are represented at the State House of Assembly by two Assembly members. Delta State has twenty five local government areas and twenty nine members of the State House of Assembly. For instance, Warri -South, Ugheli-North, Isoko -South and Burutu local government areas, are represented at the State House of Assembly by two members each while the rest of the local governments, are represented by one member each. Consequent upon the two ward structures explained above, communities or ethnic groups who were not favoured, agitate for the creation of their desired local government, believing that such action would further bring government closer to the people and increase their share of the state's revenue. On the other hand, these local governments who had two members at the House of Assembly want their local governments to be split into two, not only to justify their multiple representation

at the House of Assembly, but also to bring additional government structures to their area.<sup>35</sup>

Within the period under review, the third factor that kindled agitations for the creation of additional local governments was the establishment of Delta State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission (**DESOPADEC**). This commission was intended to co – ordinate the development of oil producing areas of the state at the expense of other areas. The commission was funded by the state government through its share of the 13% derivation fund from the federal government. The state government on monthly bases allocates 50% of its revenue from this source as funding for the commission.<sup>36</sup> As is always the case, non–oil producing areas of the state felt cheated by this arrangement and as usual, wanted additional local government areas as a way of duplicating their share of the state’s revenue.

Finally, it must be noted that requests or agitations for the creation of more local government areas were not only promoted by the policies or actions of government, either state or federal. Agitations for the creation of more local governments were also engendered by clan politics which is one of the basic ingredients of African politics at the local level.

In summary, it was obvious that all the agitations for the creation of more or additional local government areas, within the period under review, were principally prompted by the desire to have multiple accesses to the revenue of the state. It was strongly believed that as a result of political corruption, existing

local government were able to develop the rural areas of the state. Thus, people want government to be further decentralised through the creation of additional local governments, so that government and development would come closer to the people at the grass roots. However, agitations for the creation of local governments in Delta State seemed not to have taken into consideration, the final authority that had the power to create local government in Nigeria. This consideration becomes necessary when viewed on the backdrop of the creation of new local government areas in Lagos State and the resultant Supreme Court judgement in a case between Lagos State and the Federal Government of Nigeria.

#### **4.3 Local Government Finance and Appropriation in Delta State**

For the purpose of this study, local government finance and appropriation in Delta state have been categorised into three sub-sections. The significance of this categorisation lies in the fact that the subject matter here is highly procedural. In this procedure, local government finance comes first, followed by the actual appropriation of funds and, finally, expenditure pattern in the local government.

##### **(a) Local Government Finance in Delta State**

As noted earlier, local government finance in Nigeria is a constitutional issue. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979 through 1999 (as amended), provides in section 7 (6),<sup>37</sup> for statutory allocation of federal public revenue to the local governments in the federation and also the

allocation of a certain percentage of state internally generate revenue to the local governments within the states. This section of the constitution is domesticated or ratified in section 9 of the Delta State Local Government Law 2004, as amended. This section of the Delta State Law states that 10% of the internally generated revenue of the state shall from “time to time”, be allocated to the local government councils in the state.<sup>38</sup>

Like the state governments, local governments generate revenue in two ways namely, external and internal sources of revenue. In Delta State, external revenue sources for the Local government are allocation from the federation account as provided for in section 7 (6) of the constitution and 10% allocation from the internally generated revenue of the state. On the other hand, local governments generate revenue internally from the collection of rates and other local taxes.

Local governments’ internally generated revenue also comprises payments for certain services provided by the council and issuance of licences and permit. Among others, these services, and licences include the following: stallage fees from markets, hackney permit, abattoir fees, marriage registration fees and petty trader’s fee. On monthly basis, revenue from different sources are aggregated and appropriated for the provision of local services.

#### **(b) Appropriation of Local Government Funds in Delta State**

As stated earlier, there are laid down procedures for the appropriation of public funds. The most fundamental is the budget or the estimate as it is known

within the local government. In the local government, the budget or estimate is made mandatory by the Financial Memorandum (FM).<sup>39</sup> The financial memorandum is a document with a codified set of rules and regulations, which provides detail guideline and instructions on the financial, accounting and store keeping procedure for proper administration of the financial affairs of each local government in Nigeria.<sup>40</sup>

A budget is a financial plan of activities expressed in quantitative terms, particularly in a given country's money.<sup>41</sup> For instance, in Nigeria, a budget is always expressed in *naira* and *Kobo* and also contains a set of objectives to be attained within a period of time which is usually but not mandatorily a year. It is a means of ensuring effective and efficient resource mobilisation, proper management of expenditures, and effective control and coordination of economic activities.<sup>42</sup>

A budget or estimate, therefore, has three basic features among others.<sup>43</sup> First, an estimate consists of expected revenue, both internal and external. Secondly, the estimate is further predicated on the details of the revenue profile of the local government. Finally, another principal feature of the budget is expenditure which is divided into two parts namely, recurrent and capital expenditures.

Recurrent expenditure refers to all expenditure in respect of various services and expenditure heads that reoccurs, every fiscal or financial year. Items included in recurrent expenditure are normally incurred annually rather

than being a once and for all thing. They include personal emolument, travels, repairs, stationeries and other consumables etc. On the other hand, capital expenditure consists of expenditure on major and capital projects and programmes of government that are not expected to reoccur each fiscal or financial year.<sup>44</sup> To that extent, they constitute a one off event. Capital expenditure includes the provision of infrastructural facilities, health care and agricultural services, among others.

**(c) Expenditure Pattern in Selected Local Governments in Delta State**

For the purpose of this study, Aniocha-North, Oshimili-North and Oshimili-South local governments are used as a case study, for the study of expenditure patterns in local governments in Delta State.

Basically, local governments in Delta State have five departments, which are provided by the law. These are Health and Environment, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Education and Community Development, Finance and Treasury and works and Housing. Because the local government executes its functions through these departments and units, expenditure is arranged into Heads and Sub Heads, as presented in the annual financial statement. The annual financial statement is a comprehensive and codified record of all the financial activities of the local government, which is always prepared at the end of every financial year. In Nigeria, Financial year runs from January to December. Tables 4-18, show the annual financial statements of the three local governments, mentioned above, for the period 2006 - 2010.



**Annual Financial Statement of Selected Local Governments in Delta State**  
**(The data on these tables are expressed in Nigerian naira)**

**Table 4. Oshimili South (2006)**  
**Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>		<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	15,799,246.93	24,723,560.11	40,722,807.04
2.	Council (Staff)	1,597,451.22		1,597,451.81
3.	Office of the SLG	1,001, 945.81	985,546.00	1,987,491.81
4.	Council Legislators	20, 295, 300. 31	14,280,000.00	1,987,491.81
5.	Administration	82, 988, 430. 55	7,398,475.23	90,381,905.78
6.	Legal	805,960.38	390,000.00	1,195,960.38
7.	Finance & Treasury	49,370,840.41	8,936,340.31	58,307,180.72
8.	Education & Comm. Development	12,400,000.00	10,101,900.52	22,501,900.52
9.	Health	76,390,400.33	3,001,934.33	79,392,334.66
10.	Environment	34,946,400.33	1,500,000.00	36,446,230.49
11.	Agriculture & Nat. Resources	3,200,492.06	600,000.00	3,800,492.06
12.	Works & Housing	28,002,300.00	1,980,235.33	29,982,535.33
13.	Traditional Council	10,350,392.99		10,350,392.99
14.	Public Debt	31,945,200.10		31,954,200.10
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>443,196,184.00</b>

Total Expenditure

Capital Expenditure

98,654,950.77

Recurrent Expenditure

443,196,184.00

**Total Expenditure**

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**541,851,134.7**

(Source: Oshimili South Local Government)

**Table 5. Oshimili South (2007)****Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	17,922,491.22	27,247,900.29	45,170,391.51
2.	Council (Staff)	1,946,381.99		1,946,381.99
3.	Office of the SLG	1,198,347.23	1,390,851.02	2,589,198.25
4.	Council Legislators	11,980,479.47	5,300,000.000	17,280,479.47
5.	Administration	84,837,549.34	11,950,749.99	96,788,299.33
6.	Legal	977,846.96	632,006.91	1,609,847.87
7.	Finance & Treasury	51,950,222.01	10,300,000.00	62,250,222.01
8.	Education & Comm. Development	13,900,000.00	10,988,392.99	24,488,392.99
9.	Health	77,974,230.89	2,901,500.28	80,875,731.17
10.	Environment	36,439,900.38	1,820,200.95	38,310,101.33
11.	Agriculture & Nat. Resources	3,200,492.06	850,900.00	4,051,392.06
12.	Works & Housing	27,900,250.00	2,807,600.20	30,707,850.20
13.	Traditional Council	10,900,251.99		10,900,251.99
14.	Public Debt	37,270,951.28		37,270,951.28
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>454,239,491.45</b>

Total Expenditure

Capital Expenditure

120,311,241.90

Recurrent Expenditure

454,239,491.45

**Total Expenditure**

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**574,500,733.35**

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(Source: Oshimili South Local Government)

**Table 6. Oshimili South (2008)**  
**Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	19,546,205.21	31,916,932.00	51,463,137.21
2.	Council (Staff)	2,210,882.18	-	2,210,882.18
3.	Office of the SLG	1,720,322.57	1,409,882.18	3,129,522.57
4.	Council Legislators	21,199,299.96	16,143,000.00	37,342,299.96
5.	Administration	86,309,027.41	12,978,102.71	99,287,130.12
6.	Legal	1,451,705.09	750,000.00	2,201,705.09
7.	Finance & Treasury	51,150,154.11	11,902,100.00	63,052,254.11
8.	Education & Comm. Development	15,225,603.23	12,539,331.04	37,764,934.27
9	Community Development	-	6,529,751.20	6,529,751.20
10.	Health	90,380,009.14	4,478,000.00	94,858,009.14
11.	Environment	38,132,767.25	2,181,420.00	40,314,187.25
12.	Agriculture & Natural Resources	5,131,200.42	1,520,300.00	6,651,500.42
13.	Works and Housing	31,453,259.92	3,125,600.00	34,578,859.92
14.	Traditional Council	10,150,000.00	-	10,150,000.00
15.	Public Debt	52,407,026.73	-	52,407,026.73
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>436,467,463.22</b>	<b>105,473,736.95</b>	<b>541,941,200.17</b>

Total Expenditure

Capital Expenditure

143,461,248.11

Recurrent Expenditure

541,941,200.17

**Total Expenditure**

**685,402,448.28**

(Source: Oshimili South Local Government)

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**Table 7. Oshimili South (2009)**  
**Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	21,436,101.50	28,845,255.01	50,281,356.51
2.	Council (Staff)	3,056,735.77	-	3,056,735.77
3.	Office of the SLG	2,110,585.67	1,987,324.22	4,097,909.89
	Council Legislators	22,510,100.33	15,489,111.90	37,999,212.23
5.	Administration	85,761,240.10	13,941,024.00	99,702,264.10
6.	Legal	1,254,301.50	540,000.00	1,794,301.50
7.	Finance & Treasury	49,378,124.81	10,984,739.20	60,362,864.01
8.	Educa. & Comm. Development	15,965,490.00	13,046,128.11	29,011,618.11
9	Community Development	-	7,500,000.00	7,500,000.00
10.	Health	85,400,211.50	5,015,245.26	90,415,456.76
11.	Environment	36,950,350.78	3,101,350.00	40,051,700.78
12.	Agriculture & Nat. Resources	2,088,604.99	1,793,490.90	3,882,095.89
13.	Works & Housing	30,680,531.11	2,300,500.00	32,981,031.11
14.	Traditional Council	11,350,000.00	-	11,350,000.00
15.	Public Debt	49,510,002.00	-	49,510,002.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>521,996,546.66</b>

Total Expenditure

Capital Expenditure

136,634,950.99

Recurrent Expenditure

521,996,546.66

**Total Expenditure**

**658,631,497.65**

(Source: Oshimili South Local Government)

**Table 8 Oshimili South (2010)****Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	22,546,001.10	30,247,326.70	52,793,327.80
2.	Council (Staff)	2,439,640.81	-	2,439,640.81
3.	Office of the SLG	1,800,000.00	2,291,800.96	4,091,800.96
4.	Council Legislators	21,987,294.96	14,899,400.72	36,886,695.68
5.	Administration	87,222,949.66	12,826,900.65	100,049,850.31
6.	Legal	996,871.92	454,650.00	1,451,521.92
7.	Finance & Treasury	52,197,459.11	12,249,839.31	64,447,298.42
8.	Educa. & Comm. Development	14,237,001.91	13,653,901.46	27,890,903.37
9	Community Development	-	7,600,000.00	7,600,000.00
10.	Health	95,570,000.00	4,700,230.56	100,270,230.56
11.	Environment	37,347,280.75	2,986,540.46	40,333,821.21
12.	Agric. & Nat. Resources	4,976,294.87	1,965,496.00	6,941,790.83
13.	Works & Housing	30,453,259.81	4,225,600.00	34,638,859.81
14.	Traditional Council	10,150,000.00	-	10,150,000.00
15.	Public Debt	40,372,000.00	-	40,372,000.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>521,996,546.66</b>

Capital Expenditure

150,845,924.88

Recurrent Expenditure

530,397,741.72

**Total Expenditure**

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**681,243,666.50**

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(Source: Oshimili South Local Government)

**Table 9. Oshimili North (2006)**  
**Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	15,989,750.12	22,341,400.11	38,331,150.23
2.	Council (Staff)	2,101,300.56		2,101,300.56
3.	Office of the SLG	2,100,000.96	1,301,450.00	3,401,450.96
4.	Council Legislators	18,995,871.03	10,560,430.12	29,556,301.15
5.	Administration	76,924,515.66	11,450,900.09	88,375,415.75
6.	Legal	987,250.00	430,500.12	1,417,750.12
7.	Finance & Treasury	50,328,240.99	7,433,780.18	57,762,021.17
8.	Education & Comm. Development	10,400,981.11	6,400,001.55	16,800,982.66
9.	Health	85,300,950.55	3,421,311.41	88,722,261.96
10.	Environment	34,900,500.49	2,025,311.53	36,925,812.02
11.	Agriculture & resources	2,595,350.22	899,390.99	3,494,701.21
12.	Works & Housing	25,822,449.65	1,401,080.48	27,223,450.13
13.	Traditional Council	8,995,850.31		8,995,850.31
14.	Public Debt	38,900,411.28		38,900,411.28
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>433,912,859.51</b>

Capital Expenditure	105,391,280.42
Recurrent Expenditure	433,912,859.51
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>539,304,139.93</b>

(Source: Oshimili North Local Government)

**Table 10. Oshimili North (2007)**  
**Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	18,002,547.00	25,412,903.44	43,415,450.40
2.	Council (Staff)	2,250,300.00		2,250,300.00
3.	Office of the SLG	2,350,300.00	1,211,222.82	3,561,424.73
4.	Council Legislators	18,988,746.25	12,570,346.21	31,559,092.46
5.	Administration	75,973,541.33	11,301,478.66	87,275,019.99
6.	Legal	1,546,101.22	430,900.11	1,977,001.33
7.	Finance & Treasury	49,000,102.96	9,245,092.65	58,246,005.61
8.	Education & Comm. Development	13,104,000.52	5,926,811.90	19,030,812.42
9.	Health	85,022,478.00	2,021,222.44	87,043,700.44
10.	Environment	37,098,874.91	1,934,846.70	39,033,721.61
11.	Agriculture & resources	2,999,846.00	600,428.28	3,600,274.28
12.	Works & Housing	26,939,748.88	1,646,381.80	28,586,130.68
13.	Traditional Council	9,300,000.00		9,300,000.00
14.	Public Debt	36,942,380.61		36,942,380.61
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>451,821,314.56</b>

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

Capital Expenditure

98,874,554.26

Recurrent Expenditure

451,821,314.56

**Total expenditure**

**550,695,868.82**

(Source: Oshimili North Local Government)

**Table 11 Oshimili North (2008)  
Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	17,900,112.56	26,353,285.22	44,253,397.78
2.	Council (Staff)	2,150,000.99		2,150,000.99
3.	Office of the SLG	2,139,121.65	1,309,200.21	3,448,321.86
4.	Council Legislators	20,924,301.15	14,300,000.21	35,224,301.66
5.	Administration	80,309,027.43	11,989,102.71	92,298,130.14
6.	Legal	1,140,350.99	650,000.00	1,790,350.99
7.	Finance & Treasury	48,947,811.55	9,200,000.82	58,147,812.37
8.	Education & Comm. Development	13,900,150.62	8,350,000.12	22,250,150.74
9.	Health	85,900,150.62	2,533,222.00	88,520,552.00
10.	Environment	36,731,422.09	1,231,111.46	37,963,533.55
11.	Agriculture & resources	3,741,925.13	800,250.75	4,542,175.88
12.	Works & Housing	29,300.000	2,561,000.00	31,931,541.66
13.	Traditional Council	9,300,000.00		9,300,000.00
14.	Public Debt	40,012,600.11		40,012,600.11
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>471,831,839.73</b>

Total Expenditure

Capital Expenditure

110,230,460.87

Recurrent Expenditure

471,831,839.73

**Total Expenditure**

**582,062,300.60**

(Source: Oshimili North Local Government)



**Table 12. Oshimili North (2009)****Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	18,849,560.11	24,911,344.11	43,760,904.22
2.	Council (Staff)	2,845,375.30		2,845,375.30
3.	Office of the SLG	2,555,202.33	1,500,000.00	4,055,202.33
4.	Council Legislators	20,850,731.42	13,900,000.00	34,750,731.42
5.	Administration	78,491,350.93	10,531,450.12	89,022,801.05
6.	Legal	1,200,150.90	450,331.00	1,650,481.90
7.	Finance & Treasury	46,935,740.25	11,231,460.92	58,167,201.17
8.	Education & Community Development	14,201,556.50	6,934,150.33	21,135,706.83
9.	Health	85,987,300.00	2,950,340.94	88,937,640.94
10.	Environment	35,940,330.11	1,670,850.61	37,611,180.72
11.	Agriculture & resources	3,560,401.55	1,555,200.01	5,115,601.56
12.	Works & Housing	30,480,921.55	3,400,324.78	33,881,246.33
13.	Traditional Council	9,879,561.85		9,879,561.85
14.	Public Debt	41,204,311.96		41,204,311.96
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>472,017,947.58</b>

Total Expenditure

Capital Expenditure

170,294,301.92

Recurrent Expenditure

472,017,947.58

**Total Expenditure**642,312,249.50

(Source: Oshimili North Local Government)

**Table 13. Oshimili North (2010)**  
**Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	19,435,900.12	22,498,800.45	41,934,400.57
2.	Council (Staff)	2,756,842.33		2,756,842.33
3.	Office of the SLG	2,137,450.86	1,150,762.54	3,288,213.40
4.	Council Legislators	22,105,535.11	12,950,333.77	35,055,868.88
5.	Administration	76,950,133.49	11,100,340.66	88,050,474.10
6.	Legal	1,200,150.90	750,200.74	1,950,351.64
7.	Finance & Treasury	45,905,300.82	10,900,531.66	56,805,832.48
8.	Education & Comm. Development	15,751,344.11	7,211,400.00	22,962,744.11
9.	Health	85,849,772.42	1,987,850.88	87,837,623.30
10.	Environment	35,400,211.12	2,011,400.56	37,411,611.68
11.	Agriculture & resources	3,450,900.18	2,451,900.98	5,902,801.16
12.	Works & Housing	29,591,350.98	2,977,654.22	32,569,005.20
13.	Traditional Council	10,255,300.11		10,255,300.11
14.	Public Debt	31,908,500.92		31,908,500.92
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>458,689,569.85</b>

**Total Expenditure**

Capital Expenditure

105,985,300.92

Recurrent Expenditure

458,689,569.85

**Total Expenditure**

564,674,870.77

(Source: Oshimili North Local Government)

**Table 14. Aniocha North (2006)****Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	15,989,340.00	20,931,450.31	36,920,390.31
2.	Council (Staff)	998,334.98		998,334.98
3.	Office of the SLG	1,050,931.93	930,400.11	1,981,332.04
4.	Council Legislators	18,900,433.00	10,300,000.00	29,200,433.00
5.	Administration	80,339,847.11	10,933,894.25	91,273,741.36
6.	Legal	750,000.99	347,000.00	1,097,000.99
7.	Finance & Treasury	41,370.995.00	14,950,734.00	56,321,729.00
8.	Education & Community Development	12,491,350.29	9,300,000.44	21,791,350.73
9.	Health	90,931,425.22	3,997,000.00	94,928,425.22
10.	Environment	31,349,876.99	8,300.00	39,649,876.99
11.	Agriculture & Nat. Resources	2,500,000.00	900,000.00	3,400,000.00
12.	Works & Housing	30,390,500.00	5,000,300.00	35,390,800.00
13.	Traditional Council	14,340,000.00		14,340,000.00
14.	Public Debt	25,000,000.00		25,000,000.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>452,293,814.62</b>

**Total Expenditure**

Capital Expenditure

101,360,940.78

Recurrent Expenditure

452,293,814.62

**Total Expenditure**

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553,654,755.40

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(Source: Aniocha North Local Government)

**Table 15. Aniocha North (2007)****Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	16,949,581.39	21,342,549.44	38,292,130.83
2.	Council (Staff)	1,450,349.99		1,450,349.99
3.	Office of the SLG	950,933,490.81	1,002,400.00	1,953,355.81
4.	Council Legislators	17,333,450.31	9,300,000.00	26,633,450.31
5.	Administration	85,950,394.91	12,988,546.33	98,938,941.24
6.	Legal	814,300.99	352,900.00	1,167,200.99
7.	Finance & Treasury	43,995,850.45	13,900,000.43	57,895,850.88
8.	Education & Comm. Development	12,300,490.00	9,450,000.00	21,750,490.00
9.	Health	89,931,570.43	6,300,000.49	96,231,570.92
10.	Environment	30,909,492.99	2,981,738.01	33,891,231.00
11.	Agriculture & Nat. Resources	2,400,000.00	900,000.00	3,300,000.00
12.	Works & Housing	29,431,300.21	2,998,780.02	32,430,050.23
13.	Traditional Council	13,965,420.55		13,965,420.55
14.	Public Debt	40,935,498.52		40,935,498.52
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>468,835,521.2</b>

**Total Expenditure**

Capital Expenditure

88,659,700.60

Recurrent Expenditure

468,835,521.27

**Total Expenditure**

557,495,221.87

(Source: Aniocha North Local Government)

**Table 16. Aniocha North (2008)**  
**Recurrent Expenditure**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	18,984,350.00	29,857,300.91	48,841,650.91
2.	Council (Staff)	1,895,421.24		1,895,421.24
3.	Office of the SLG	1,501,956.33	1,350,900.94	2,852,852,857.27
4.	Council Legislators	20,994,856.49	14,933,494.11	35,928,350.60
5.	Administration	87,102,345.91	13,300,438.92	100,402,784.83
6.	Legal	950,300.21	750,000.00	1,700,300.21
7.	Finance & Treasury	52,998,554.11	12,101,524.11	65,100,078.21
8.	Education & Comm. Development	14,011,482.34	10,200,000.00	24,211,438.44
9.	Health	93,056,433.34	5,000,300.33	98,056,733.67
10.	Environment	39,992,438.44	4,301,000.00	44,293,438.44
11.	Agriculture & Nat. Resources	3,200,900.11	1,985,755.92	5,186,656.03
12.	Works & Housing	32,350,002.11	4,300,600.44	36,650,602.55
13.	Traditional Council	14,340,000.00		14,340,000.00
14.	Public Debt	48,800,500.00		148,800,500.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>528,260,856.30</b>

**Total Expenditure**

Capital Expenditure

98,421,246.35

Recurrent Expenditure

528,260,856.30

**Total Expenditure**

626,682,102.65

(Source: Aniocha North Local Government)

**Table 17. Aniocha North (2009)****RECURRENT EXPENDITURE**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	20,201,900.12	30,456,850.11	50,658,750.23
2.	Council (Staff)	2,011,487.54		2,011,487.54
3.	Office of the SLG	1,437,840.99	1,102,940.96	2,540,781.95
4.	Council Legislators	21,222,578.01	13,405,592.13	34,628,170.14
5.	Administration	78,905,250.51	14,231,450.01	93,136,700.52
6.	Legal	984,246.40	934,600.00	1,918,846.40
7.	Finance & Treasury	52,749,811.33	14,800,000.50	67,549,811.83
8.	Education & Community Development	13,900,670.67	8,998,850.24	22,899,520.91
9.	Health	84,874,555.30	3,871,300.00	88,145,855.30
10.	Environment	30,490,677.11	3,892,490.06	36,383,127.17
11.	Agriculture & Nat. Resources	3,498,231.99	946,000.00	4,44,231.99
12.	Works & Housing	34,020,350.00	3,981,423.12	380,001,773.12
13.	Traditional Council	14,340,000.00		14,340,000.00
14.	Public Debt	38,900,000.00		38,900,000.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>491,659,057.10</b>

**Total Expenditure**

Capital Expenditure

84,560,231.11

Recurrent Expenditure

491,659,057.10

**Total Expenditure**

576,219,288.21

(Source: Aniocha North Local Government)

**Table 18. Aniocha North (2010)****RECURRENT EXPENDITURE**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DISCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>OVER HEAD COST</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1.	Office of the Chairman	20,166,800.12	28,572,998.00	48,739,798.12
2.	Council (Staff)	2,011,925.39		2,011,925.39
3.	Office of the SLG	1,501,261.99	1,051,900.34	2,553,162.33
4.	Council Legislators	22,300,114.65	8,300,000.39	30,600,246.84
5.	Administration	80,989,740.99	15,390,400.24	96,380,141.23
6.	Legal	1,590,345.02	1,052,499.29	2,642,844.31
7.	Finance & Treasury	50,634,923.05	13,468,900.68	64,103,823.73
8.	Education & Community Development	13,900,670.67	6,946,590.05	20,847,260.72
9.	Health	93,246,590.81	5,292,333.90	98,538,924.71
10.	Environment	40,780,536.22	10,900,590.14	51,681,126.36
11.	Agriculture & Nat. Resources	2,947,800.00	850,700.00	3,798,500.00
12.	Works & Housing	31,300,000.00	2,350,490.29	33,650,490.29
13.	Traditional Council	14,340,000.00		14,340,000.00
14.	Public Debt	36,900,000.00		36,900,000.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>506,788,244.03</b>

**Total Expenditure**

Capital Expenditure

80,431,925.83

Recurrent Expenditure

506,788,244.03

**Total Expenditure****587,220,169.86**

(Source: Aniocha North Local Government)

As seen from the tables above, there is a particular trend in the expenditure pattern of the local governments under survey and within the period under review. This trend is aptly noticeable in the huge difference between the recurrent and capital expenditures and also the ever increasing cost of administration in the local governments. According to Bello–Imam<sup>45</sup>, in public finance, the ideal relationship or ratio between recurrent and capital expenditure is 70:30. Bello–Imam reasons that in a situation where the capital expenditure is lower than 30 per cent, the organisation or government may not be able to achieve development goals in relation to the accumulation of assets or infrastructural development. He identified several factors, responsible for these huge differences in the ration between recurrent and capital expenditures, which include:

- i the provision of primary health care and primary education were transferred to local government by the federal government in the 1980s. These two units are labour intensive and expenditure here, goes to increase the cost of administration;
- ii the huge cost of administration in the local government and by extension the disparity between the recurrent and capital expenditure, can be identified in the harmonisation or unification of local government service in Delta State and elsewhere in



- Nigeria. The implication is that individual local governments are not given the opportunity to engage for itself, the quantity and quality of personnel it requires. This can be explained by the large number of unprofessional and idle staff who in most cases do not have the required material and human resources to operate and meaningfully contribute to the output of the local governments;
- iii. the tendency of the state government, acting through the Local Government Service Commission, to reduce unemployment by employing more citizens. Politicians also use this to court for votes during general and local elections; and
  - iv. the neglect of agriculture, which is seen in the paltry and meagre expenditure in that unit. In Delta State, there is a government directive to the effect that 2% of monthly allocation of each local government, should be set aside for agriculture services. There is also a similar directive which makes it mandatory that 1% of the allocation of each local government must be paid into a special account for traditional rulers. Unfortunately, the directive relating to the traditional rulers is enforced religiously while that on agriculture is still gathering dust on the book shelves. It may also be interesting to note that agric officers in the local government are among the least motivated staff in the system.<sup>46</sup>

#### **4.4 Assessment of the Performance of Selected Local Governments in Delta State**

AS noted earlier, the essence of the local government is to bring governance and development closer to the people. In this regard, it is necessary to feel the pulse of the local people, regarding local service delivery in selected local governments in Delta State, particularly from the three different senatorial districts. However, the unwillingness of public officers to volunteer information on official documents made it difficult to sufficiently achieve this goal. Therefore, Aniocha-North, Oshimili-North and Oshimili-South local governments have been selected for the assessment of local government service delivery in Delta state. This assessment will be base on the following sub-titles; health care service, infrastructural development and education, women and community development. The time frame would be between 2008 and 2011.

##### **i. Health Care Service:**

Almost all communities in the three local governments under survey were provided with community health centres by the various local governments. Some of the health centres especially in the local government headquarters were standard and also manned by qualified health personnel. For some other Community

Health Centres, visiting doctors were attached on rotational basis. Conversely, some of them in the remote communities are mere shadows of what a health centre should be. For instance, in some of the Oko communities of Oshimili-South, the difficult swampy terrain make it difficult for staff of the health centres to report for duty on daily basis. According to Anthony Emeyese (Information Officer, attached to the State Directorate of Local Government), the three local governments under review, at one point or the other, refurbished health care centres and supplied hospital equipments to some health centres within their domain.<sup>47</sup>

However, the public was critical about the actual provision of health care service in these health centres provided by these local councils. This study observes that child-birth for example, which was supposed to be free in these health facilities, was not free. Health workers usually compelled expectant mothers to pay illegal and exorbitant charges, which ended up in the pockets of the health care staff. The implication of this is that no matter the good intension or policy of the local government administrators, health care service have not been well provided as expected and, perhaps, as intended.

## ii **Educational, Women and Community Development:**

In the area of education, Emeyese noted that these three local governments within the period under review, were noted to have supported and maintained local government owned-day care and nursery school in their respective local government area.<sup>48</sup> In other instances, according to him, new schools were built and equipped. For example, Aniocha-North established, equipped and staff four new nursery schools in Ezi, Onicha- Ugbo, Ugboodu and Ukwu- Nzu and also refurbished already existing ones at Issele-Azagba and Onicha-Uku, within the period under review. Oshimili-South refurbished and upgraded existing ones, particularly, the Day-Care and Nursery School at the Ogbe-Ogonogo area of Asaba.

Furthermore, in the area of youth, women and community development, the three local governments were noted to have embarked on training programmes for capacity building and entrepreneurial development, organised for women and youths in the various local government areas, within the period under review. Unfortunately these training programmes were not sustained and do not seem to have impacted positively on the beneficiaries.

### iii. **Infrastructural Development and Maintenance:**

This study observes that in the three local governments under survey, and within the period under review, infrastructural development and maintenance were merely observed in the area of the maintenance of rural earth roads. This was made convenient by the imposition by the state government, of two earth moving equipments, to each of twenty five local governments of the state. With this equipment, maintenance of earth roads became almost regular at a time.<sup>49</sup>

According to Adimabua, in Aniocha-North, aside from road maintenance, it was a novelty that portable drinking water was provided at the council area headquarters. According to him, this was a novelty on the grounds that the topography of the area makes it difficult to successfully sink boreholes in the area. However, he regretted that this facility did not deliver portable drinking water for more than one year before it packed up. This was because the successor Care-Taker- administration failed to adequately maintain the water scheme.

Finally, it is important to note here, that the commonly observable notion of the public is that the local governments in Delta state have performed below the expectations of the public. It is also commonly

believed that the local governments are very corrupt and inefficient. This is in view of the huge amounts of money available to the local governments from the federal and state statutory allocations. In view of this, the next chapter will examine the impediments to efficient service delivery in the local governments in Delta state.



Official Commissioning of The Renovated and Equipped Onicha-Uku Health Centre by Hon. Jaunty Mike Okwudi (Chairman, Aniocha North Local Government, 2008-2011)

Source: Aniocha North Local Government



Presentation of Hospital Equipment to Ugboodu Health Centre by Hon. Jaunty Mike Okwudi (Chairman, Aniocha North Local Government, 2008-2011)

Source: Aniocha North Local Government



Hospital Equipment Supplied to Okwe Health Care Centre, Asaba by Hon. Izuka Okolo Administration.(2010)

Source: Oshimili South Local Government.



Hospital Equipment Supplied to the Akwu-Ukwu Igbo Health Centre by the Hon. Peter Okonkwo Administration (2009).

Source: Oshimili North LGA



Comprehensive Water Project, Initiated and Completed by Hon. Jaunty Okwudi Administration and Commissioned by the Deputy Governor of Delta state, His Excellency, Prof. Amos Utuama, June 2010.

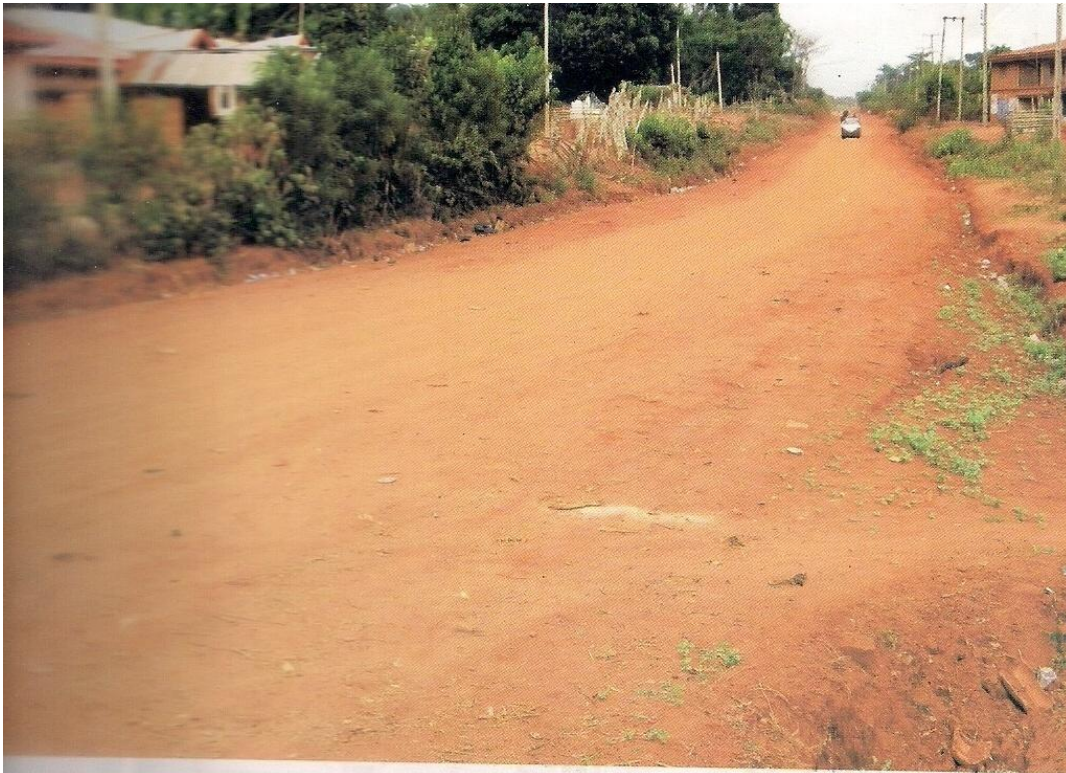
Source: Aniocha North LGA





Sample of the Earth Moving Equipment Bought by the Twenty Five Local Governments In Delta state in 2009.

Source: Aniocha North Local Government



Sample of Road Graded by the Oshimili North Local Government in Akwu-Ukwu Igbo, October 2010.

Source: Oshimili North Local Government



Ubulubu/Ogodo Road Graded by Aniocha North Local Government in 2009.

Source: Aniocha North Local Government.

## Notes

1. U. Ukiwo, "Creation of local government Areas and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria: A case of Warri, Delta State, from [www.linkinghubelseviiv.com](http://www.linkinghubelseviiv.com), 2007, p.26.
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## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CHALLENGES THAT FACED LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION, IN DELTA STATE**

Local governments in Delta state were bedevilled by numerous challenges. These challenges may be applicable to other local governments elsewhere in Nigeria, but this study is limited to Delta state. For this reason, emphasis and examples will be drawn from local governments in Delta State. For the purpose of this chapter, these challenges are summarised in three sub-headings, viz: lack of local government autonomy, financial corruption and over staffing. These challenges were paramount among the reasons why local governments in Delta State failed in their responsibilities to develop the rural areas of the state.

#### **5.1 Lack of Local Government Autonomy**

Local government autonomy or the lack of it, is a topical issue that features prominently in every political discourse in the Nigerian federal system. Different commentators have different views about the concept of federalism and local government autonomy. These different perspectives laid the foundation for this heated debate on local government autonomy.

In the views of J.O. Fatile and K.D. Adejuwon, federalism as a system of government is pragmatic and dynamic and can only thrive on consultation, compromise and agreement between the constituent units.<sup>1</sup> It grows under a system of mutuality and interdependence, probably because public policies are often implemented on different tiers of by governments. According to A. M. Ochuko, the question of autonomy in the local government in Nigeria, might have originated as a result of the weakness in inter-governmental relations in the Nigerian polity. This weakness in inter-government relations is traceable to the fact that the primary concern of politicians revolves around power and the advantage this weakness confers on them in a situation in which the state is practically everything.<sup>2</sup> It is pertinent to note once again, that the 1976 Local Government Reform constitutionalised the status and functions of the local government system but failed to deepen its autonomy and respect in the Nigeria federal structure.<sup>3</sup>

Inter-governmental relationship presupposes mutuality in the relationship between the levels of governments in a federal state and stresses that no government or level of government could confer on the other, functions or impose duties on the functionaries of the other without the consent of its chief executive. On the contrary, local governments in Nigeria continue to falter from undue interference from



both the federal and state governments, despite its constitutional recognition as the third tier of government.

Local governments in Nigeria have been effectively reduced to the appendages of two these levels of government, especially the state governments, which employ different tactics to muzzle the local governments so as to ensure their loyalty.<sup>4</sup> At this point, the study will attempt to examine the concept of federalism, which state governments in Nigeria hinge their relationship with the local governments.

The introduction of constitutional democracy in Nigeria, in 1979, meant that the functioning of local governments in the federation would be according to constitutional provisions within the federal system of government. In this regard, it is necessary to fully appreciate the concept of federalism.

Federalism is a common feature of contemporary nation states. According to K. Awotokun<sup>5</sup>, while quoting Wheare, federalism entails the division of the powers of government so that the central and regional governments are both independent and inter-dependent on each other. Federalism is usually viewed as a form of institutional structure, deliberately designed to cope with the difficult task of maintaining unity while also preserving diversity.<sup>6</sup> It is a form of government in which the

component units which make up the federation, participate in sharing the powers and functions of government. This sharing of the powers and function of government became necessary in consideration of ethnic pluralism and cultural diversity.

According to S. Oyovbaire, while referring to Peter Merkel, the term federalism is viewed as:

Characterised by a least two patterns of communities, one all inclusive and the other, composed of several mutually exclusive communities. The geographical nature of the community pattern and especially the location of boundaries among the sub-communities and around the whole community are crucial to a federal system.<sup>7</sup>

The key ingredient of federalism is the constitutional exercise of the powers of government in which each government is responsible for particular spheres of constitutionally prescribed function or exercise of political authority. B.O. Nwabueze expatiates on federalism when he observes that:

Federalism is an arrangement whereby powers of government within a country are shared between a national (nationwide) government and a number of regionalised (territorially localised) governments in such a way that each exist as a government separately and independently from the others, operating directly in persons and property within its territorial area, with a will of its own and its own apparatus for the conduct of its affairs and with an authority in some matters exclusive of all others.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, in examining the concept of autonomy under a federal system in Nigeria, Nwabueze states as follows:

... presupposes that each government enjoys a separate existence and independent form the control of other governments. It is the autonomy which requires not just the legal and physical existence of an apparatus of government like a legislative assembly, governor, courts, etc. but that each government must exist, not as an appendage of another government, but as autonomous entity in the sense of being able to exercise its own will in the conduct of its affairs, free from direction from another government.<sup>9</sup>

From the foregoing, it is very clear that federalism does not allow for local government autonomy since powers of government are only shared between the central government and the regional or state governments. In this regard, it is safe to argue that the appellation of local government system in Nigeria as a "third tier of government" is necessarily a myth and not a reality.<sup>10</sup> This state of affairs exposes the local government to an unbridled interference by the federal and especially the state governments.

While acknowledging B.J. Dudley, Nwanze observes that interference by a higher government in the local government has colonial antecedences when the author notes as follows:

The Resident was a higher order of men. He was in fact a god who descends from his Olympian heights periodically to survey his domain, master of all he saw. More than the District Officer, the Resident was not regarded as answerable to anyone. One could sometimes appeal from the district officer to the Resident, but with the latter, everything ended. The rulings of the gods are final and are questioned only at the dire personal and collective risk.<sup>11</sup>

In this example, the Resident had the authority to question the authority of the District Officer. In the same manner, the state governments have the authority to question the authority of the local governments within their jurisdiction.

We shall now examine the nature of state interference and negation of autonomy in the operations of local governments in Delta State. This examination shall be based on three broad platforms namely, the 1999 Constitution as Amended, the 2004 Delta State Local Government Law, as Amended and lastly, the actual practice of local government administration in the state.

Contrary to the federal-state relationship, the state/local government relationship is not one between autonomous governments. In spite of the concept of the third tier of government which the local government is supposed to be, according to constitutional provisions, the Delta State government is the "master of all the local governments in the state. While the constitution guarantees the existence of a democratically elected local government councils, it at the same time, confers on the state, the power to bring about the establishment of the local government, under a law to be passed by the state House of Assembly. According to section 7 (1) of the constitution,

The system of local government by democratically elected councils is under this constitution guaranteed and accordingly, the government of every state shall ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils.<sup>12</sup>

In analysis, the implication for a local government's "existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils" is grave. It follows that the local government would not exercise its functions as provided in the fourth schedule of the constitution until the state House of Assembly passes a law that would empowers it to perform such functions.

In the views of R.O. Imafidom, the fact that the state governments are constitutionally empowered to oversee the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of local governments means that the local governments exist only at the mercy of the state governments.<sup>13</sup> Therefore it would be erroneous to see the local government as an independent third tier of government. Rather, the local government, ostensibly created by the constitution as a tier of government, should be seen as an appendage, an agent or an extra-ministerial department of the state government. As shall be seen later, even a cursory look at the actual practice of local government administration in Delta State would reveal the above view of the local government as an appendage of the state government.

Having seen the local government from the point of view of the constitution, it would be appropriate to also see it in the light of the Delta State Local Government Law, 2004, as Amended. The law opens in section 3(1) with a provision, which states its supremacy above any other law, apart from the constitution. Continuing, in sub-section 2, the law provides as follows:

If any law is inconsistent with the provisions of this law, this law shall prevail and that other law shall to the extent of its inconsistency, be null and void.<sup>14</sup>

The significance of this section lies in the fact that any other law made at the local government level shall be subject to it. That means that the local government is subject to the state and its laws, without exception. Again, section 11 (1) states as follows:

For the purpose of enabling the House to expose corruption, inefficiency or waste in the administration or execution of this law or any other law affecting local government administration generally, the House shall have power to investigate the affairs of any person or local Government Council, any Department or Authority of the Council, charged with the duty or responsibility for executing or administering this law and any other law affecting local government council.<sup>15</sup>

The implication of this section is that the House of Assembly arrogates to itself, the power to investigate all the affairs of the local governments and its officers. Furthermore, section 12 gives the condition for the dissolution of a local government council. This section

states that the local government council shall stand dissolved at the expiration of a period of three years, beginning from the date of the first sitting of its council.

By way of commentary on the above situation, there is nothing wrong with investigation to "expose corruption and inefficiency in the local government." The point to note here is that the State House of Assembly arrogates to itself, the sole power of investigation over the local government, concerning corruption, not minding the fact that there are federal government agencies whose sole responsibility is to investigate corruption and prosecute offenders. Another point to note here is that the House of Assembly uses this power of investigation and threat of dissolution of local government councils to compel the loyalty of local government councils.

All the actions and inactions of local government councils are in almost all the cases geared towards satisfying the House of Assembly and the state government at the detriment of the individual needs of the various local councils. This is because no local government council would want to be dissolved by the House of Assembly before the expiration of its tenure of office.

Related to the above is the issue of tenure of office of an elected councils, particularly, the chairman of the council. Section 19 (1) of Delta State Local Government law 2004, As Amended states as that subject to the provisions of this law, a person shall hold the office of chairman until:

- a) his successor in office takes the oath of office; or
- b) he dies while holding the office; or
- c) the date his resignation from the office takes effect.<sup>16</sup>

Again, as noted by P. Ejiro, the Delta State government took advantage of lack of autonomy on the part of the local government to manipulate political succession at that level. The willingness of the government to appoint Care-Taker or Transition Committees to manage the affair of local governments in its domains, was an unholy development which runs counter to the spirit and provisions of the Constitution of The Federal Republic of Nigeria, which provides for a democratically elected councils at the local government level.<sup>17</sup> Further, the section quoted above provides the criteria for the tenure of office an elected council chairman. However, all these provisions appeared to be mere cosmetics, since the state government has never failed to wield overriding powers over the local government and as has been noted



earlier, the state government used these tactics to subordinate the local governments and therefore, compel their loyalty.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, the third platform for the examination of the inter-governmental relationship between Delta State government and the various local governments within its domain, is in the area of issuance of directives by the state government, the State House of Assembly, the Directorate of Local Government, Local Government Service Commission and other agencies of government. It has to be noted that constitutionally, it is expected that the inter governmental relationship between the state and local governments within its domain, shall be determined and guided by established laws. However, what applied in Delta State within the period under review, was that the state government and its agencies manipulated the local governments through the issuance of directives which are not necessarily or directly backed by any known law. Examples of these forms of manipulation will be seen in the next sub-heading.

## **5.2 Corruption in the Local Government System in Delta State**

One of the most topical issues that have attracted both local and international attention and elicited debate in almost all political and economic discourse in Nigeria, is corruption. Although, corruption is a

universal phenomenon, the prevalence of acts of corruption in Nigeria has aroused international attention and focus. This culture of corruption, which is also rampant at the local government level constitutes a threat to the development of the local communities, which is the jurisdiction of the local government. It is a significant factor leading to the perceived general failure of local governments to develop the rural areas of the state, as well as an excuse, for the state government to dissolve elected local government councils.

Corruption, which has been noted as a universal phenomenon and problem, is also problematic in terms of conceptualisation. This problem is largely connected with the perspective and ideological persuasion of the different scholars who defined or tried to give meaning to the concept. A review of some of these definitions of the concept of corruption would be necessary at this point and some of these definitions will be used to explain the roles played by the Delta State Government and its agencies, regarding their levels of involvement in corrupt practices in local government administration in the state.

In the words of F. Waziri, etymologically, the word "Corruption" comes from the Greek word "Corruptus", meaning an aberration or misnomer.<sup>19</sup> The United Nations Global Programme Against Corruption

(GPAC) and Transparency International (TI) agree that corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain.<sup>20</sup>

According to Egwemi, corruption entails any behaviour that deviates from accepted norm, especially in the public office. It is also a behaviour that confers undue or unmerited advantage for personal, group or family gain through the betrayal of public trust.<sup>21</sup> Again, F.A. Olasupo defines corruption as involving the giving and taking of bribe or illegal acquisition of wealth, using the resources of a public office, including the exercise of discretion.<sup>22</sup>

In his contribution, N. Nwabueze conceptualises corruption from a sociological point of view as "a form of social deviance, in some cases, of criminal deviance, the result of failure or lack of will to respect the norms of social interactions."<sup>23</sup>

In line with the views of Nwabueze, corruption does not necessarily mean stealing or embezzlement of public funds. It also means any form of behaviour that deviates from generally acceptable rules and, which is intended for personal or group gain. This also brings us to another aspect of this examination of the concept of corruption, which is, types of corruption.

According to T. Lawal and O.k. Victor, corruption could be classified into four categories, namely moral corruption, economic corruption, political corruption and electoral corruption.<sup>24</sup> For the purpose of this study, only two of these forms of corruption would apply. These are economic and political corruption.

Economic corruption is the form of corrupt practices that take place especially in the private sector, such as banks, trading, manufacturing and insurance companies, among others.<sup>25</sup> This is necessarily so because the assets or resources of these companies are not publicly owned. For instance, if an official of a bank dupes the bank or if a pharmaceutical company manufactures fake drugs, it is economic corruption.

On the other hand, political corruption becomes applicable when a person or group of persons who hold public offices in trust for the people, use these offices or powers of government, derivable from the offices they hold in trust, to appropriate public funds or assets for personal gains.<sup>26</sup> Power of government could be seen in executive, legislative and even judicial powers. For instance, when legislators issue legislations, which abnormally enhance their personal or group interest, it is an act of corruption. Political corruption is also applicable when there is

outright fraud, bribery nepotism and misappropriation by public officials who use their official positions for private gains.<sup>27</sup>

Local governments in Nigeria are also caught in the evil web of corruption and corrupt practices. In fact, corruption in the local government is also perceived to be as strong and pervasive as it is in the other levels of government in Nigeria. Former President Obasanjo lamented the inability of the local government to develop the rural areas of Nigeria, despite the huge amounts of money allocated to that sector. In view of this, Chief Obasanjo inaugurated a Technical Committee in 2003, to review the structure of the local government system in Nigeria.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, the report of this committee, if at all there was one, has not been made public till date.

In the same manner, Waziri, the former boss of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), did not mince words when she noted:

... waste of government resources at the council level has reached monumental proportions. The local government councils in the country could not explain the mismanagement of over N3.33 trillion allocated to them in the last eight years.<sup>29</sup>

Corruption in local governments in Nigeria has also attracted international attention. Ekiyor, as was noted in the last chapter, quoted Human Rights Watch as observing that the huge amounts of resources

at the disposal of local governments in River State, has not translated into efforts by the 23 local governments to develop the rural areas.<sup>30</sup>

In Delta State, the story is not different. What may be different could be the method through which corrupt practices are carried out here. According to Arinze, corruption in local governments in Delta State is systemic and methodical. At every level of authority in the local government system, there is a practiced and perfected process through which corrupt practices are carried out. That means that the processes vary according to the different levels of authority. There are three levels of authority in local government administration in Delta State. These are the State Government, State House of Assembly and the authorities of the local government.<sup>31</sup> Authority at the local government level could be broken down into three sub division. First is the council chairman. The next is the Director of Personnel Management and the Treasurer to the local government. Then the last is the council staff, the civil servants. This study will now attempt to examine the roles played by these different levels of authorities in the perceived corruption spree in local governments in Delta State. For the purpose of this study, incidence of corruption is regarded as political corruption.

## **(a) The Delta State Government**

The Delta State government, like any other state government in Nigeria is aware of the legal implication of illegal deductions from the statutory allocation due to the local governments. For this reason, Delta State government perfected other means through which local governments in the state are deprived of their finances, on monthly basis.

Firstly, constitutional provision requires that state government shall pay a certain percentage of states internally generated revenue to the local governments within its domain.<sup>32</sup> Again, the Delta State Local Government Law, 2004, as Amended, was explicit on the amount of percentage to be paid to the local government within the state and that is, ten per-cent (10%).<sup>33</sup>

However, since the Delta State government cannot make direct deductions from the statutory allocations of local governments in the state, it resorted to being insincere or discreet, regarding the actual value of internally generated revenue of the state.<sup>34</sup> By this, the Delta State government corruptly deprived local governments within the state, of funds that should have been beneficial for the development of the rural areas.

Secondly, the constitution also provides that the local government shall participate in the development of primary and non-formal education.<sup>35</sup> On the contrary, the Babangida administration in Nigeria transferred the payment of primary school teacher's salaries to the local government. The implication is that contrary to the constitutional provision, which states that the local government "shall participate", the local government is the sole financier of primary education in Delta State and Nigeria at large.

Worse still, despite the fact that the local government is the sole financier of primary education, it has no authority or control over the Local Education Authority that supervises primary education and primary schools in the local governments. Local government chairmen are only ceremonially empowered to appoint the chairmen of the various Local Education Authorities, without the power of supervising them afterwards.

To further buttress the fact that the Delta State government pushed its responsibilities regarding primary education to the local governments, the state government did not make any meaningful contribution to primary education in the state. Tables 1 and 2 below, are records of Delta State government's participation in the payment of primary school



teacher's salaries and total deductions from the statutory allocation, respectively, for Aniocha-North local government, for the year 2010.

**Table 1.**

**Aniocha North Local Government Payment of Primary School Teachers' Salaries for 2010**

MONTH	STATE CONTRIBUTION	LOCAL GOVT CONTRIBUTION	TOTAL
January	9,787,094.87	32,617,566.444	42,404,661.31
February	9,787,094.87	34,288,523.78	44,075,618.65
March	9,787,094.87	32,305,793.01	42,092,887.88
April	9,787,094.87	31,053,569.28	40,840,664.15
May	9,787,094.87	34,693,070.72	44,480,165.59
June	9,787,094.87	31,727,188.43	41,514,283.30
July	9,787,094.87	32,268,276.03	42,055,370.90
August	9,787,094.87	34,218,790.77	44,005,885.64
September	9,787,094.87	32,763,211.98	42,550,306.85
October	9,787,094.87	31,665,944.05	41,453,038.92
November	9,787,094.87	33,769,159.66	43,556,254.53
December	9,787,094.87	31,703,904.37	41,490,999.24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117,445,138.44</b> <b>23%</b>	<b>393,074,998.46</b> 77%	<b>507,520,136.96</b>

Source: Office of The Accountant General. Delta State Ministry of Finance.

**TABLE2**

**Deductions from the Statutory Allocation of Aniocha North Local Government for 2010.**

MONTH	SALARY OF PRI. SCH. TEACHER'S	15% PENSION FUND	1% TRAINING FUND	5% TRAD. RULERS FUND	TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	NET ALLOCATION
January	42,404,661.31	1,450,076.80	782,400.95	2,245,337.91	46,882,477.10	30,068,828.00
February	44,075,618.65	1,450,076.80	1,927,555.80	2,684,513.72	50,137,764.97	37,883,205.00
March	24,092,887.88	1,450,076.80	599,603.99	2,168,296.50	46,310,865.17	28,967,261.01
April	40,840,664.45	1,450,076.80	626,973.43	2,241,471.95	45,159,186.33	33,824,171.17
May	41,480,165.59	1,450,076.80	1,456,221.10	3,343,988.74	47,730,452.16	52,110,830.00
June	41,514,283.30	1,450,076.80	815,775.51	3,186,120.87	46,966,256.48	36,906,561.00
July	42,055,370.90	1,450,076.80	860,354.22	3,422,770.94	47,798,572.86	55,343,070.65
August	44,005,885.64	1,450,076.80	826,643.61	3,420,791.45	49,703,397.49	50,328,137.60

September	42,550,306.85	1,450,076.80	892,254.11	3,448,221.68	48,340,859.44	57,491,195.17
October	41,453,038.92	1,450,076.80	861,051.82	3,451,590.97	47,215,758.51	53,331,590.08
November	43,556,254.53	1,450,076.80	792,987.11	3,281,617.49	49,050,935.92	46,395,894.99
December	41,490,999.24	1,450,076.80	913,413.16	3,446,583.74	47,301,072.95	60,216,238.83
<b>Total</b>	<b>507,520,136.96</b>	<b>17,400,921.60</b>	<b>11,355,234.81</b>	<b>36,341,306.02</b>	<b>572,597,599.38</b>	<b>508,771,983.50</b>

Source: Aniocha North Local Government, Department of Finance and Treasury

In a similar manner, table 2 above shows total deductions from the statutory allocation of Aniocha North Local Government, for the year 2010. The state issued a directive in 2010, to the effect that 5% of every local government's total allocation for the month shall be paid to a special account for the servicing of traditional rulers and this shall be deducted at source. According to Ejiro, it is reasonable to argue that since it is illegal for the state government to make deductions from the monthly allocations due to the local governments, the 5% mandatory deduction for the servicing of traditional rulers within each local government could be a ploy to shift more of state responsibilities to the local governments.

### **(b) The Delta State House of Assembly**

The Delta State House of Assembly has over the years become a dominant factor in the day-to-day administration of local government in the state. This position was secured by the House of Assembly through the arrogation to itself, of the power to investigate the authority of the council and to scrutinise on quarterly basis, the income and expenditure account of the councils.<sup>37</sup>

There is nothing actually wrong with the State House of Assembly having to monitor the affairs of the councils; the truth of the matter was that within the period under review, the activities of the House of Assembly turned chairmen of local government councils into mere rubber stamps. Unfortunately, there was no council chairman that was willing to protest, for fear of intimidation.

In the course of this research and within the period under review, it was observed that the Delta State House of Assembly often issued directives, which were not necessarily backed by any known law but which the chairmen of councils must comply with. For instance, on regular basis, the House of Assembly, through the Clerk of the House, issued memoranda to chairmen of councils, to inform them of its intension, to organise seminars or workshops for any group of staff or department of the councils. These memoranda were always emphatic on course fees, which ran into millions of naira and which would be paid by all the local governments. There is no part of the law that gives the House the power to organise seminars for the councils. It is doing this because of its pecuniary interest in the money that will be paid as course fees.

For example, in three separate letters dated 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2009, 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2009 and 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2011, the Clerk of the Delta State

House of Assembly, directed every local government chairman in the state, to pay to the House of Assembly, the sums of N1,000,000.00, N2,000,000.00 and N5,000,000.00, respectively, for the conduct of one form of seminar-workshop or the other.<sup>38</sup>

Another area through which the State House of Assembly was allegedly involved in illegal appropriation of council finances was through the approval of certain entitlements to some past political office-holders, such as members of Care-Taker-Committees or Transition Committees, whose appointment contravened the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and seen to be purely based on patronage for political stooges. According to section 7 (1), of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as Amended, and section 4 (1), and section 19 (1a and 1d), of the Delta State Local Government Law, 2004, as Amended<sup>39</sup>, Care-Taker-Committees are unconstitutional. Worse still, approval of the payment of furniture and severance allowances to former members of these committees, even when they had left office, is a misnomer. This is because the law is by no means ambiguous, as was seen in the sections quoted above. Transition or Care-Taker Committees therefore, amounts to political corruption.

For example, in a radio message dated 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2009, and signed by the Clerk of the State House of Assembly, all local government

chairmen in the state were informed that the State House of Assembly had approved the payment of furniture and severance allowances, to the members of June 2003 batch of Transition Committees in the state. The chairmen were further directed to effect the payment of the "aforesaid allowances without delay"<sup>40</sup>. This committee served from June to December, 2003.

In a similar letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2010, the clerk of the State House of Assembly also notified the chairmen of all the local governments in the state, that the House of Assembly had approved the payment of furniture and severance allowances to all the members of the 2007 batch of Care-Taker-Committee, in the state. According to the clerk, the approval was based on the Remuneration, Salaries and Allowances, Gratuities and Pension of Certain Public Officers and Bodies (Amendment) law, 2009. The chairmen were further directed to comply.<sup>41</sup>

### **(c) Authorities of the Local Governments**

According to Ejiro, which was corroborated by Arinze, as soon as a new chairman assumes office, civil servants, particularly, the Director of Personnel Management and the Treasurer of the local government, take the chairman through a "Fresher's Course". The Chairman is therefore educated on some of the methods of corrupt appropriation of council

funds. In turn, the chairmen, who were the chief Executives of their various councils, connived with these civil servants to over value contracts, and give clean bill health to contractors who execute poor projects. Public tender for contracts, which is necessary by law, were always manipulated to favour or patronise “anointed contractors”, who do not have the professional skills to deliver on contracts awarded to them.<sup>42</sup>

Again, Arinze noted that supervising agencies such as the Ministry of Local Government, the Local Government Service Commission and the office of the Accountant General for Local Governments, got their commission on regular basis, out of the corruption in the local governments. Audit queries were mostly issued to those who fail to “play the game by the rules”.<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, according to Arinze, at the local government level, every job schedule has well practiced method through which public funds were illegally appropriated. The method applicable here was termed “PULL OUT”. Pull out had its procedure. First, a decision was taken about the amount that would be pulled out. Secondly, the money was either tied to an overvalued contract or a non-existing project. Thirdly, a payment voucher was prepared and later used as authority to pull-out

the funds. Finally, when the money was out, it was distributed to initially agreed agencies and or persons according to initially agreed ratio.<sup>44</sup>

It is observed for example, that the state House of Assembly was paid for organising seminars and workshops for local governments within the state, from these pull-outs. Since it is a well known fact that the state House of Assembly do not have the right to force training on local governments in the state and be paid for it, local government authorities in turn, concealed such transactions in the payments for non-existing projects.

“Pull out”, therefore, amounts to corrupt appropriation and embezzlement of council funds and most of the time, at the prompting of either state government agencies or the state House of Assembly. However, since most pull out are done for the benefit of higher authorities, local government authorities usually have no qualms of conscience when they steal council funds or better still, when they carry out more pull outs for their personal benefits. Thus, from the fore going it is obvious that corruption in the local government system in Delta State is systemic and methodical.

### **5.3 Over-staffing**

Another impediment to the development of the rural areas in Delta state, through the efforts of the various local governments, is overstaffing. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines overstaffing as a situation where a company or an office is having more workers than are needed.<sup>45</sup>

In the light of the above, the former chairman of Aniocha North Local Government, J. M. Okwudi, in November 2008, inaugurated a panel, for the purpose of ascertaining the total number of staff and verify salary due to the staff of the local government. According to the chairman, many council staff were seen loitering around council premises. He noted further that some of these staff of the council, did not have any specified or physical office or schedule of duty.<sup>46</sup>

The problem of over-staffing of local governments in Delta State is an extension of the problem of unemployment in Nigeria as a whole. Increasing population and a non commensurate increase in economic development, due to the non diversification of the Nigerian economy, led to a high rate of unemployment. Many young Nigerians, both those who are employable and those who are not employable, are



unemployed. The prevailing tendency, therefore, is for the three tiers of government to periodically engage some unemployed persons.

Perhaps, in Delta State, it could be argued that all the local governments have, over bloated staff strength. Some reasons can be adduced for this. The first as seen above is the desire of the different tiers of government to reduce unemployment. Thus, local governments in Delta State, could be said to have been reduced to charitable organisations, that give employment on humanitarian grounds.

Secondly, Delta State operates a unified local government system, where a local government staff could be transferred to another local government, other than the local government of his or her origin. The Local Government Service Commission is empowered by law to employ new staff on behalf of the local governments in the state. The Commission employs and transfers staff to the various local governments, without directly considering the immediate needs of the local governments.

Thirdly, management of the various local governments, within the period under review, misused their power to employ junior staff, between grade levels 1-4. In most cases, such opportunities were used

to favour family members while in other cases, some politicians used it to patronise their supporters.

For instance, according to a report of Staff-Salary Verification Committee, Aniocha North Local Government had 634 members of staff as at November, 2008, as indicated bellow.

Table 3. Staff Strength of Aniocha Local Government, November 2008

S/N	DEPARTMENTS	NUMBER OF STAFF
1.	AGRIC	20
2.	ENVIRONMENT	24
3.	EDUCATION & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	45
4.	WORKS	91
5.	PRIMARY HEALTH CARE	98
6.	FINANCE & SUPPLY	102
7.	LEGAL	1
8.	ADMINISTRATION	247
9.	COUNCIL (STAFF)	6
	TOTAL	634

Source: Aniocha North Local Government, Salary Verification Committee, 2008.

According to the estimation of the chairman who appointed the verification committee, only about one quarter of this total number of staff, would have been ideal for Aniocha North, during the period under review.<sup>42</sup> As has been noted earlier, a better part of local government

funds, went into the payment of staff salaries and other emoluments, during the period. It is also a well known fact, that on several occasions, some local governments found it difficult to pay staff salaries.

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38. In cases like this, local governments are not accorded their right to determine their local needs for training and retraining of staff and at what cost.
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## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Summary**

The foundation for the establishment of modern system of local government in Nigeria was laid by British colonial officials through the establishment of the Native Authority and Court. The system effectively began in 1901 with the enactment of the Native Court Ordinance by Governor Macgregor, in the Lagos colony. The success of the system led to its replication in the other parts of the territories which later became Nigeria.

The operational system of the Native Authority persisted till 1945, when World War II, ended. At the end of the war, educated elite began to protest their exclusion from the day-to-day running of the local affairs of the colonial administration generally and Native Authority in particular. This protest was as a result of the political consciousness elicited all over the world by the war. Educated elements in the Nigerian society formed town and village unions where they educated their fellow country men and women on their rights in the affairs of the Native Authority. According to A.E. Afigbo, this protest yielded substantial benefit as the colonial policy towards membership of the Native

Authority was charged. Changes in the system at this time were widely regarded as the first local government reform in Nigeria<sup>1</sup>.

During Nigeria's first republic and the subsequent military administrations that succeeded it, local government administration suffered serious setbacks as the Regional-State governments at the period did not consider local government as a level of government that should have the authority to operate on its own. These governments were not noted to have improved on the democratic process and popular participation which, were introduced by the 1951 reform, although at the rudimentary stage. Sole administrators, which comprised of party loyalists and political stooges, were regularly appointed to administer the local governments.

The fortune of local government administration in Nigeria appeared to have improved, during the military administration of General Obasanjo, between 1976 and 1979. This administration went down in the history of local government administration, as the one, which brought about the first and most fundamental changes in the system of local government administration in Nigeria. The changes were encapsulated in the 1976 Local Government Reform, which introduced a uniform system of local government administration in Nigeria and made the local government a third tier of government. As a result of this

reform, local government was subsequently enshrined into the 1979 constitution.

Another remarkable period in local government administration in Nigeria was the period between 1979 and 1983, which marked Nigeria's Second Republic. This period witnessed an unguided creation of more local governments in the country. This was the period of civilian administration which, provided an opportunity for politicians to resort to duplicating political structures and electoral constituencies, probably because of the advantage they afforded them and their political parties during elections. Perhaps, because politics in the country is ethnic based, politicians took advantage of multiple constituencies, to improve their electoral advantages and that of their political parties and also enhance the chances of increased government presence in their constituencies.

The military administrations of Generals Babangida and Abacha were remarkable for creating the highest numbers of local government in Nigeria than all other administration in Nigeria, put together. The disparity between the north and south of the country regarding the number of states and local government was also concretised within this period, to the advantage of the north. For instance, Lagos State at the close of the First Republic had four political divisions while old Kano

State had two. By 2011, while Lagos State had 20 local governments, old Kano State have 71 (Kano 44 and Jigawa 27).<sup>2</sup> Lagos State was therefore in the four front of states and individual who were agitating for the creation of additional local governments in their areas.

In Delta State, the first local government creation exercise occurred alongside the state creation in 1991. Delta State inherited eleven local governments from old Bendel State and subsequently, additional thirteen more were created to give the state a total of twenty four. In 1996, General Abacha administration, acceded to the agitations for the creation of more local governments in Warri with the creation of Warri-South-West Local Government. The relocation of the headquarters of this newly created local government from the previously announced town to another town, sparked the Warri crisis. The Warri Crisis was an ethnic war involving Ijaw and the Urhobo on one side and Itsekiri on the other side.

The Warri crisis has tremendous and far-reaching consequences on Nigeria as a whole and Delta State in particular. Aside from the loss of lives and properties, the crisis engendered a new wave of ethnic militancy in the Niger Delta region. It also enkindled the interest of several ethnic nationalities and groups in the state to agitate for the creation of their desired local government as a way of drawing

government and its apparatuses closer to their communities. It was a common belief that politicians and government officials use public funds at their disposals for personal and group gains, to the detriment of the overall development of the rural areas. Therefore, agitators for the creation of additional local governments believed that the creation of their desired local government would afford them the opportunity to have government and its apparatuses, close to the grass-roots, to enhance even development.

## **6.2 Conclusion**

It is noted from this study, that the history of local government administration in Delta State is as old as the state itself. Secondly, it is also noted that discontent based on ethnic considerations, has been one of the major reasons for the agitations for the creation of additional local governments in Delta State. Furthermore, it is observed that local government administration in the state was burdened by a number of challenges, which included lack of local government autonomy, corruption and over-staffing. These challenges have been variously indicated to be responsible for the non development of the rural areas of the state.

In view of the above, the study concludes that until local government administrators in Delta State tackle the problems of

corruption and over-staffing among others, local governments in the state may perhaps, find it difficult to develop the rural areas of the state, which is the main objective for the establishment of the local government system.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Having examined local government administration in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on Delta State between 1991 and 2011, certain recommendations on how to improve local government administration and effective service delivery, have become very necessary. These recommendations are against the back-drop of the perceived impediments to effective and efficient service delivery at the local government level, which were examined in the preceding chapter. Among others, these impediments included local government autonomy, democratisation of the tier of government, corruption, overstaffing and insufficient funding.

#### **(a) Local Government Autonomy**

The issue of local government autonomy has become a recurrent decimal in the history of local government administration in Nigeria, since the 1976 Local Government Reform and the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which enshrined the local government system into the constitution as a third tier of

government. The 1999 constitution is based on the federal system of government, which recognises the division of the powers of the government into two, that is, between the federal and the regional or component state governments.<sup>3</sup> In this regard, the constitution in Section 7 (1) provides that each state ensure the existence of the local government system, under a law which provides for its establishment, structure, corruption, finance and function of the local governments<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand, the Delta State Local Government Law, 2004, (As Amended), concretised the lack of autonomy on the part of local government in Section 3(1) and Section 11(1).<sup>5</sup> This section re-emphasises the supremacy of the state government, its laws and agencies over and above the local government.

Thus, it is therefore, recommended here, that efforts be made to have a constitutional review that would grant an appreciable degree of autonomy to the local government. Emphasis should be on paying local government share of allocation from the federation account, directly to the respective local government account. The local government should also be constitutional empowered to either agree or disagree with the state government over expenditure that the state may want to force on the local government.

## **(b) Democratisation of the Local Government**

Local governments in Delta State in particular and Nigeria in general have the basic structures required to sustain democracy and all its processes. Unfortunately, in Delta State as elsewhere in Nigeria, one of the major constraints against the local government system is the undemocratic practices of the state government during local government elections in the state. Local government elections in the state are organised by the Delta State Independent Electoral Commission (DESIEC) and always subjected to manipulations by the state government.

It is the recommendation of this study therefore, that democracy and democratic procedure and processes should be allowed to take root in the local government system in Delta State. This is the only way the benefit of popular participation could begin to impact on the development of the rural communities of the state. Voters would have the opportunity to vote from among themselves, those they could trust and recall those that fail to perform.



### **(c) Fighting Corruption**

There is no gain saying that corruption in the local government system in Delta State is rife. In fact, the state government and its agencies have been noted to be involved in and encouraged corruption through their actions and inactions. Here we wish to recommend that both state and federal anti – graft laws and agencies, (not the state House of Assembly), be strengthened and assisted to fight corruptions in the local government.

### **(d) Staffing Control**

Section 76 (1) of the Delta State Local Government Law, 2004, (As amended), provides for a unified local government system in Delta State.<sup>6</sup> This implies that the Local Government Service Commission, which is established by law is empowered to manage the affair of staff of the 25 local governments of the state, including employment and posting. Regrettably, most local governments do not have control over the number, quality and quantity of staff in its pay roll. It is hereby recommended that each local government in Delta State should be allowed to determine the quantity and nature of its staff so as to ensure increased productivity and curtail staff redundancy.

### **(e) Increased Funding for Local Governments**

Efforts should also be made to increase the funding of local governments since directly or indirectly its functions and responsibilities are increasing per day. A typical example is the transfer of the payment of primary school teachers' salaries to the local government. Again as shown in chapter five, the Delta State government has not shown any seriousness in compliance with the constitution, which requires that 10% of state internally generated revenue be paid on monthly basis to all the local governments in the state.

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