

AN ASSESSMENT OF URBAN SERVICE DELIVERY IN IFE EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

Folaranmi Olufisayo AKINOSUN *

Ambrose Alli University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Public Administration,
Ekpoma (310006), Edo State Nigeria, e-mail: folaranmiakinosun@gmail.com

Olorunfemi Ayodeji OLOJEDE

Obafemi Awolowo University, Faculty of Environmental Design and Management, Department of Urban and Regional
Planning, Ile-Ife (220282), Nigeria, e-mail: olojede@oauife.edu.ng

Citation: Akinosun, F.O., & Olojede, O.A. (2022). An Assessment of Urban Service Delivery in Ife East Local Government Area of Osun State, Nigeria. *Revista Română de Geografie Politică*, 24(2), 61-73. <https://doi.org/10.30892/rrgp.242104-359>

Abstract: This study assessed urban service delivery in Ife East Local Government Area of Osun State, Nigeria. It found that not all residents were fully aware of the statutory duties of the local government. Markets and motor parks were the only urban services with an acceptable condition; all other urban services were adjudged poor. The local government scored low on statutory responsibilities; however, residents identified corruption, lack of autonomy, and other problems adversely affecting the performance of the local government. Recommendations are proffered towards improved urban service delivery in the local government area and others in Nigeria.

Key words: urban services, local government, service delivery, Relative Importance Index (RII), Ile-Ife

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION

Background and problem definition

All over the world, local administrations, local governments or local councils exist primarily to ensure the promotion of effective governance. This is not to say that national (federal) and state (regional) governments are dispensable, but to make a case for the imperativeness of the local government as an essential complementary administrative appendage. The importance of local administrations is irrespective of whether the country is a developed or a developing one. However, the effects of local governments are usually emphasized in Nigeria and many other developing countries owing to the deplorable state of the countries' urban services. Evidences abound that one of

* Corresponding Author

the fundamental reasons for the establishment of local governments as the third tier of government in Nigeria was the need to ensure adequate delivery of infrastructure, utilities and services, especially for the benefit of the grassroots (Bolaito and Ibrahim, 2014; Boris, 2015; Olojede et al., 2019).

In Nigeria, the rationale for the continued existence of local governments is their proven indispensability in service delivery. They are important because they make governance at the local level possible by playing the critical role of providing public goods to the people. Their service delivery system also affects the everyday livelihoods and total life of citizens (Ibok, 2014; Olojede et al., 2019). Thus, it could be safely said that local governments have a vital role in the overall development of any country. Their proximity to the grassroots also makes them essentially crucial in tackling socioeconomic problems in the local contexts; hence, the recognition accorded them in grassroots development planning. Consequently, it is convenient to regard them as the true engine and generator of national integration, administration and development (Adebayo, 2014; Lawal, 2014; Wunsch, 2001).

As provided for in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, local governments are expected to provide a number of basic services. Among other services, they are to establish and maintain cemeteries. They are also to house the destitute and infirm. In addition, they are to establish, maintain and regulate slaughterhouses, markets, public transport facilities as well as public conveniences. Moreover, local governments are to deliver roads along with such associated infrastructure as streetlights, and drains; they are to construct parks and gardens, open spaces and other public facilities prescribed by the state's house of assembly from time to time. Other functions expected of them include road/street naming, house numbering, refuse and sewage disposal, pet-keeping regulations, regulations of outdoor advertising and various commercial service outlets as well as the licensing of liquor sales.

Moreover, in Nigeria, local governments have the responsibility of performing some functions alongside state governments. These are otherwise known as concurrent functions; they include providing and maintaining the facilities for primary, adult and vocational education. Local governments are also to develop agricultural and natural resources; however, they are not empowered by the constitution to embark on mineral exploitation; the provision and maintenance of health services; and such other functions as may be conferred on them by the state's House of Assembly (Akinyetun and Oke, 2021; Majekodunmi, 2012). An adequate provision of these and other essential services brings the presence of the government to the doorstep of the grassroots. However, in Nigeria, the poor condition of basic infrastructure and services reveals that the third tier of government is not living up to expectations in service delivery. This has resulted in the citizens losing faith in the local government system over the years.

The literature is replete with studies on the statutory duties' performance of local governments in Nigeria. For example, Alao et al. (2015) revealed that the challenges inhibiting efficient service range from undue intervention by the state governments, the structure, corruption, as well as the over-politicization of administration and staffing. These claims were corroborated by Olojede et al. (2019). In addition, Alao et al. (2015) argued that local governments in Nigeria generally manifest ordinarily as a subordinate subsystem or subunit of higher tiers of government which is only empowered by a statutory concession to perform mere residual legislative, administrative and quasi-judicial functions for

the grassroots. This partly explains the characteristic low-level performance of local government administrations in Nigeria over the years.

Many other works have exhaustively examined the challenges and problems of the local government as the third tier of government in Nigeria. However, only few of them are empirical. Particularly, studies that document case studies of how residents perceive performance of local government administrations in terms of their constitutionally defined statutory duties are hard to come by. This study is an attempt to bridge this gap. It investigates the general perception of residents on the urban service delivery performance of the Ife East Local Government in Osun State, Nigeria. The state and functionality of selected urban services in the local council area were assessed, and the factors responsible for the present situation were examined with a view to evolving a policy framework for the general overhauling of local governance in Osun State and Nigeria in general.

LITERATURE UNDERPINNING

What constitutes a local government varies from one country to another. In Britain, for instance, it is a creation of the parliament. Its sources of revenue include tax receipts, income from sales, fees and charges, and capital receipts. Local governments in Germany are called municipal councils; they see to the planning, water management and social welfare, among other things. They are funded at both the federal and state levels, and have elected mayors and councillors who serve for four to nine years and four to six years respectively. The form of local government in New Zealand is a unique model loosely based on the British system where local authorities have traditionally been given the role of service delivery agents on behalf of the state. However, unlike Britain, New Zealand does not have an upper house of parliament; also, unlike most other western democracies, New Zealand has neither a written constitution nor the balancing influence of semi-autonomous states or provinces. For these latter functions, in most countries of the world, local government was essentially an agent of the state and was largely accountable to the state for the funding that the state provided (Cheyne, 2008).

Local government system in France has three tiers of local authority: the regions, departments, and communes. In India, the 73rd and the 74th Constitution Amendment Acts 1992 made all the local government tiers to be state affairs and given powers to enable them function independently. The country has 645,000 local governments as self-sufficient and self-enabled units (Alao et al., 2015). Although the local bodies provide certain services required by law, they can also provide other services on their own discretion. In Australia, local government has been less powerful in time past. The two other tiers of government (federal and state) have control over its activities. However, things are already changing. Local government system in United States, called municipal councils, have multiple tiers that are below the federal and state levels. The Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution makes local government a matter of state, rather than federal law, with special cases for territories and the District of Columbia. Although the state government has authority over them, they have their own autonomous powers such that both the government and citizenry believe that without it, government would have no vitality.

Generally, some countries recognize their local government constitutionally while others do not. Constitutional recognition of local government as an order of government in a federal system is a modern phenomenon. For instance, just like the 1787 Constitution of the United States of America, the 1848 Constitution of Switzerland did not say anything on the issue. Similarly, as provided for in the 1867 Constitution of Canada, local government was within the purview of provincial competence. According to the 1901 Constitution of Australia, local government was made subject to state power. However, the post-World War II period witnessed an increase in the featuring of local self-government in the federal constitutions of many countries. Incidentally, this was at a time many countries were returning to civil rule. The Federal Republic of Germany pioneered this trend with its 1949 Constitution. With focus on the establishment of what were known as autonomous communities, the 1978 Constitution of Spain also featured local autonomy. In addition, the coming back of Brazil to democracy was characterised by its all-encompassing protection of autonomous local government system. In the case of South Africa, with the country's achievement of democratic and developmental goals, a similar provision was made for the protection of autonomous local government in the country's 1996 Constitution. Nigeria also flowed in this tide along with other countries as the local government was implanted in its 1999 Constitution (Steytler, 2005).

The most important point to note is that irrespective of the country or how it is operated, the local government's primary role is directly meeting the immediate needs of the citizens; hence, its reputation as the closest level of government to the people (Chukwuemeka et al., 2014; Eboh and Diejomaoh, 2010). Consequently, generally, according to Olojede et al. (2019), the most important features of the local government, especially in Nigeria, include operating within a defined geographical area; having a certain population living within the confines of a defined territory; operating at the local or grassroots level; having a range of constitutionally delineated functions to perform; having relative autonomy or independence; being a legal entity that can sue and can be sued; having its council composed of elected representatives; and being the lowest level of government wherever it exists.

The exact role of the local government in Nigeria has evolved over the decades. However, the most fundamental reforms in local government administration in Nigeria was heralded by the 1976 Local Government Reform. It was this reform that gave a formal recognition to the local government as the third tier of government in Nigeria. Thus, it empowered the local government politically, administratively and financially; practically, it provided both the foundation and platform for the current structure of the local government system in Nigeria (Olojede et al., 2019; Oviasuyi et al., 2010). Basically, the statutory functions of local governments in Nigeria are collection of rates (including tenement rates) radio, television and non-mechanically propelled vehicle licences (bicycles and trucks); establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds, homes for destitute and infirm, market, motor parks, public conveniences, roads, drawn and recreation facilities (including playgrounds and parks); construction and maintenance of roads, streetlighting, drains and other public highways, parks, gardens, open spaces or such facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the State House of Assembly.

Other statutory functions of local governments in Nigeria are the assessment of privately-owned house or tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the house of Assembly of State; naming of roads and streets and numbering of houses; licensing, regulation and control of the sale of liquor; control and regulation of outdoor advertising and hoardings, pots, shops, kiosks, restaurants and laundries; registration of all births, deaths and marriages; making of bye-laws. In addition, local governments in Nigeria are expected to participate in state economic planning and development; provision and maintenance of primary education services, adult and vocational education; development of agriculture and natural resources (other than the exploitation of minerals); provision and maintenance of health services; and other functions as may be conferred on them by the House of Assembly of the State.

For quite a long time, local governments in Nigeria have been undergoing unsparring scrutiny in terms of their statutory performance. On many occasions, there have been calls for the scrapping of this critical tier of government because its service delivery has been dwindling almost to the point of moribundity (Agba et al., 2013). Many pertinent issues have been raised and many germane questions have been asked. In response, studies have been conducted that revealed some of the reasons behind the service delivery failure of the local government system in Nigeria. Among the major factors found to be behind the failure of local government system in Nigeria are the lack of commitment of the staff, financial constraints owing to inadequate statutory allocations from the federal government, as well as the unending deductions made by state governments from the monthly allocations of local governments (Ibok, 2014).

Moreover, a notorious monster persistently dogging the local government administration in Nigeria is the pervasive and unacceptably high level of corruption which is often said to have eaten deep into the very fabric of the local government system in the country (Alao et al., 2015; Bolatito and Ibrahim, 2014; Olojede et al., 2019). Also, a high level of overbearing interference of many state governors, which markedly undermines the autonomy of local governments, is another major problem (Adeyemi, 2013; Eboh and Diejomaoh, 2010). This has on many occasions manifested in various forms such as the refusal of state governors to conduct local government polls but rather appoint subservient lapdogs from among their party loyalists, friends or relatives as local council administrators. This has ridiculed the local government system in the country very badly and has led to confusions, absurdities and uncertainties such that there is hardly any state that is without one form of illegality or the other (Adeyemi, 2013). An apparent manifestation of this is poor-quality staff who exhibit bad and unethical work attitude. Many local government employees are at best barely qualified; worse still, many of the qualified minority are not committed (Maduabum, 1990; Odiaka, 1991; Ogunrin and Erhijakpor, 2009).

Given the many problems plaguing the local government system in Nigeria, its service delivery has been adversely affected. Many times, Nigerians have taken it upon themselves to provide for themselves many of the services that the local governments should be providing for them. Thus, ordinarily, it would be quite difficult for most Nigerians to score their respective local governments high on service delivery performance. This is consistent with the findings of Olojede et al. (2019) and many other works that suggest a generally unacceptable level of the performance of the local government service delivery in Nigeria in its capacity as the lowest level of government in the country.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Area

Ife East Local Government Area is one of the 30 local government areas in Osun State, Nigeria. It has its headquarters at Oke-Ogbo in Ile-Ife and an area office at Oke-DO in Modakeke. The local government area covers 172 km² and has a population of 188,614, according to the 2006 population and housing census. The 2011 estimate was put at 221,340. There are 10 political wards in Ife East Local Government Area: Okerewe I, II and III, Ilode I and II, Moore, Modakeke I, II and III, and Yekemi. Whereas the first nine wards are in urban centres, Yekemi is a predominantly rural ward.

Data sources and sampling procedure

The data for this study were obtained with the aid of questionnaire administration. The questionnaires were administered on sampled residents in the study area using multistage sampling technique. First, Yekemi, the only predominantly rural ward, was purposively dropped since the focus of the study was urban services. Following this, four (two-thirds) of the six wards in Ile-Ife were randomly selected while two (two-thirds) of the three wards in Modakeke were also selected. This gave a total of five wards (50% of the 10 wards in the study area). The selected wards were Okerewe II, Ilode I, Moore, Modakeke I and Modakeke III. In each ward, 60 respondents were sampled using convenience sampling. Thus, a total of 300 respondents, none of whom was a minor under the age of 18, were sampled.

Data analysis

Since the convenience sampling employed is a non-probability technique, only descriptive statistics were used in the analysis of data. These included frequency distribution, simple percentages and the Relative Importance Index (RII). For a successful employment of the RII, respondents were guided through the rating of the variables of interest using the Likert psychometric scale (Likert, 1932). The scale was from 5 through 1 in a descending order of significance (Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, and Poor). The total weight value (TWV) for each variable was obtained through the summation of the product of the number of responses for each rating of the variable and the respective weight value. The mathematical expression for this is:

$$TWV = \sum (N_i * W_i) \dots\dots\dots \text{eq. 1}$$

where N_i = the number of respondents rating the variable, and W_i = the average weight value assigned to the variable by the respondents. Thus, the RII was computed by dividing the summation of all the responses to each of the five ratings on it by the total number of respondents who rated the variable of interest (N). The mathematical expression for this is:

$$RICI = TWV/N \dots\dots\dots \text{eq. 2}$$

The closer the RII is to 5, the higher the residents' rating of the variable of interest; the farther it is from 5, the weaker the rating of respondents of such a variable. Following this principle, the Relative Awareness Index (RAI) was also computed. Similar uses in literature include Akinosun (2022), Olojede (2019), Olojede and Owolabi (2022), Olojede et al. (2017a, 2017b, 2019), and Sambasivan and Soon (2007).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Socioeconomic profile of respondents

Socioeconomic characteristics are important in such a study that hinges on psychometric analyses as this. This is because the socioeconomic profile of people significantly influences their perception. The summary of the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents are hereby presented (table 1).

Table 1. Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents
(Data source: Authors' field survey, 2022)

Variable	Category	%	Variable	Category	%
Gender	Male	45.3	Marital status	Single	9.0
	Female	54.7		Married	73.0
Age	≤25	13.7		Divorced/Widowed	18.0
	26 – 35	15.3	Religious affiliation	Christianity	58.7
	36 – 45	25.7		Islam	34.3
	46 – 55	29.7		Traditional	6.3
	≥56	15.7		Other	0.7
Highest education	None	1.0	Household income	Low	58.0
	Elementary	2.3		Middle	25.7
	Junior Secondary	8.3		High	13.3
	Senior Secondary	33.0	Place of origin	Ile-Ife or Modakeke	57.0
	ND/NCE	22.7		Other part of the state	17.0
	HND/First Degree	24.0		Other state in Nigeria	21.0
	Postgraduate	8.7		Outside Nigerian	5.0
Occupation	Unemployed	1.3	Length of stay in the study area	≤5	15.7
	Schooling	22.3		6 – 10	23.7
	Primary	10.7		>10	60.7
	Secondary	32.0	Political affiliation	None	21.0
	Tertiary	15.0		APC	44.0
	Retired	11.7		PDP	31.3
	Uncategorised	7.0		Other	3.7

According to Table 1, 45.3% of the respondents were male while 54.7% were female. The age distribution shows that 13.7% were 25 years old and under; 15.3%, 25.7% and 29.7% were in the 26-35, 36-45 and 46-55 age brackets respectively while the remaining 15.7% were at least 56 years old. This distribution of the respondents' ages is even, to a large extent. Also, that all the respondents were adult is an indication that they should be aware of the variables being measured by the study and thus were able to give valid responses. Furthermore, in terms of education, the respondents were found to be mostly literate: only 1.0% had no formal education while 2.3% did not go beyond the elementary level of education. However, 8.3%, 33.0%, 22.7%, 24.0% and 8.7% had junior secondary, senior secondary, ordinary national diploma or national certificate in education, higher national diploma or first degree, and postgraduate qualifications respectively. The occupation distribution of the respondents shows that a good proportion (22.3%) were in school; however, this was not disaggregated. Also, 1.3% were unemployed, 10.7%, 32.0% and 15.0% were engaged in primary, secondary and tertiary production activities respectively while 11.7% had retired. The remaining 7.0% did not have an occupation that could be easily categorised.

In addition, the marital status of the respondents shows that 9.0% were single, 73.0% were married while 18.0% were either divorced or widowed. This implies that most of them had a family, a pointer to the likelihood of household political discussion no matter how passive. Further analysis shows that 58.7% of the respondents were Christians, 34.3% were Muslims, 6.3% worshipped traditional deities while the rest (0.7%) of the respondents did not belong to any prominent religious group. Religion is a relevant variable in political assessment as even religious organisations are also agents of socialisation. The largest percentage (58.0) of the respondents came from low-income families. A low-income family in the operational context of this study is a family whose combined/household monthly income was less than 100,000 naira (as of the time of this survey, 30,000 naira was the national [monthly] minimum wage). The middle-income family group (families earning between N100,000 and N200,000) accounted for 25.7% of the respondents while the remaining 13.3% of the respondents came from high-income families, operationally defined in this study as a family with a combined income of over N200,000 a month.

Another important consideration in this study was the place of origin of the respondents. According to Table 1, 57.0% of the respondents were from the study area (Ile-Ife or Modakeke), 17.0% were from other parts of Osun State, 21.0% were from other states in Nigeria while the remaining 5.0% were from countries other than Nigeria. Of these people, 15.7% had been living in the study area for at most 5 years, 23.7% had been living there for between 6 and 10 years while 60.7% had been living there for over 10 years. Thus, it is apparent that the largest proportion of the respondents had lived for a long time in the study area.

The political affiliation of the respondents was also examined as it influences how residents perceive the activities and achievements of the government. According to Table 1, 21.0% of the respondents did not belong to any political party. The All Progressives Congress (APC), the ruling party in the state as at the time of the survey, accounted for the largest proportion (44.0%) of the respondents while 31.3% belonged to the main opposition party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The remaining 3.7% of the respondents identified with some other political parties.

Residents' awareness of local government's role in urban services provision

In measuring the residents' perception of what the local government provides, it is pertinent to examine the respondents' awareness of the role of local governments in the provision of such urban services. Table 2 presents the summary of the findings of this study in this regard.

According to Table 2, generally, most of the respondents were not aware that it was the duty of the local government to provide such urban services as cemeteries and burial grounds (RAI = 1.7 or 34%), homes for the destitute or infirm (RAI = 1.4 or 28%), slaughterhouses and slaughter slabs (RAI = 2.0 or 40%), parks, gardens and open spaces (RAI = 1.8 or 36%), and control and regulation of keeping pets (RAI = 2.0 or 40%). However, the respondents were generally aware that such urban services as markets (RAI = 3.7 or 74%), motor parks (RAI = 3.6 or 72%), public conveniences (RAI = 3.5 or 70%), roads, streets, streets lightings and drains (RAI = 4.5 or 90%), naming of roads/streets, and house numbering (RAI = 2.6 or 52%), sewage and refuse disposal (RAI = 3.5 or 70%), as well as primary, adult, and vocational education (RAI = 3.3 or 66%)

were to be statutorily provided by the local government. This finding is significance because it would be quite difficult for anyone to objectively assess the performance of the local government on the provision of an urban service if such a person does not know the services should statutorily be provided by the local government.

Table 2. Awareness of Local Government's Role in Providing Urban Services
(Data source: Authors' field survey, 2022)

Urban service provision by local government	Level of awareness						
	EA	MA	SmA	SIA	NA	RAI	%
Cemeteries and burial grounds	12	14	23	67	181	1.7	34
Homes for the destitute or infirm	5	12	11	33	234	1.4	28
Slaughterhouses/slaughter slabs	5	21	53	98	112	2.0	40
Markets	88	99	65	35	12	3.7	74
Motor parks	101	56	89	31	19	3.6	72
Public conveniences	76	77	54	46	28	3.5	70
Roads, streets, streetslightings and drains	182	102	5	7	4	4.5	90
Parks, gardens and open spaces	11	13	9	95	124	1.8	36
Naming of roads/streets, and house numbering	43	54	21	97	73	2.6	52
Sewage and refuse disposal	71	81	74	45	21	3.5	70
Control and regulation of keeping pets	21	16	28	104	126	2.0	40
Primary, adult, and vocational education	67	83	67	32	49	3.3	66

Key: EA = Extremely Aware, MA = Moderately Aware, SmA = Somewhat Aware, SIA = Slightly Aware, NA = Not At All Aware, RAI = Relative Awareness Index

Residents' assessment of the condition of local government-provided urban services

Presented in Table 3 are the residents' assessment of the condition of the urban services provided by the Ife East Local Government. With RII scores of 3.4 (68%) and 2.6 (52%) only markets and motor parks respectively were the two urban services with an acceptable condition to the people. The condition of all the other urban services were, according to the respondents, poor. The duo of public convenience and the control as well as regulation of movement and keeping of pets were the statutory roles of the local government that were scored the least (RAI = 1.0 or 20% in each case). This indicates that residents did not feel the impact of the local government as far as these services were concerned. The perception of the respondents must have been influenced by how domestic animals and pets freely roam the streets and how open spaces and drains are often desecrated with excreta in the study area.

According to Table 3, other important urban services were also scored poorly in terms of condition. Parks, gardens and open spaces scored 1.1 or 22%; homes for the destitute or infirm scored 1.2 or 24%; cemeteries and burial grounds scored 1.3 or 26% while road/street naming and house numbering scored 1.4 or 28%. The condition of other urban service was also poorly rated: roads, streets, streets lightings and drains (RAI = 1.7 or 34%), primary, adult,

and vocational education (RAI = 2.3 or 46%), sewage and refuse disposal (RAI = 2.4 or 48%), and slaughterhouses and slaughter slabs (RAI = 2.4 or 48%).

Table 3. Urban Service Condition Assessment
(Data source: Authors' field survey, 2022)

Element	Condition/State							
	E	VG	G	F	P/N	RII	%	Rank
Cemeteries and burial grounds	0	0	4	53	181	1.3	26	8
Homes for the destitute or infirm	0	1	0	43	192	1.2	24	9
Slaughterhouse/slaughter slabs	32	43	21	87	102	2.4	48	3
Markets	78	51	87	54	13	3.4	68	1
Motor parks	21	38	112	56	63	2.6	52	2
Public conveniences (toilets)	0	0	0	4	245	1.0	20	11
Roads, streets, streetlightings and drains	13	11	15	98	163	1.7	34	6
Parks, gardens and open spaces	0	2	1	12	227	1.1	22	10
Naming of roads and streets, and numbering of houses	2	5	4	19	87	1.4	28	7
Sewage and refuse disposal	32	46	21	68	93	2.4	48	3
Control and regulation of movement and keeping of pets	0	0	0	4	81	1.0	20	11
Primary, adult, and vocational education	12	24	20	127	45	2.3	46	5

Key: E = Excellent, VG = Very Good, G = Good, F = Fair, P/N = Poor/Non- Existing

Residents' assessment of local government urban service delivery responsiveness

Table 4 summarises residents' assessment of the local government's urban service delivery responsiveness. Using seven operative indicators of responsiveness, the respondents scored the local government generally low in its responsiveness to its statutory responsibilities.

Table 4. Local Government Urban Service Delivery Responsiveness Assessment
(Data source: Authors' field survey, 2022)

Responsibility	Responsiveness Assessment							
	E	VG	G	F	P/N	RII	%	Rank
Provision/Financing	13	4	11	97	173	1.6	32	4
Maintenance	2	0	6	102	181	1.4	28	5
Protection	0	1	0	95	201	1.3	26	6
Replacement	4	11	32	91	139	1.7	34	3
Upgrading/Retrofitting	0	0	1	12	274	1.0	20	7
Service Quality	32	21	43	87	111	2.2	44	2
Coverage/Adequacy	43	19	21	75	87	2.4	48	1

Key: E = Excellent, VG = Very Good, G = Good, F = Fair, P/N = Poor/Non-Existing

The respondents scored the local government 2.4 (48%) on coverage or adequacy of urban service delivery. This implies that urban services in the study area were, to a large extent, inaccessible. Service quality was scored 2.2 (44%); replacement of damaged urban services and provision/financing were scored 1.7 (34%) and 1.6 (32%) respectively. Maintenance and protection were scored 1.4 (28%) and 1.3 (26%) respectively while upgrading or retrofitting was scored 1.0

(20%). Thus, generally, the respondents felt that the local government was not responsive to its statutory responsibility of urban service provision in the study area.

Problems militating against local governments

Presented in Table 5 is the perception of the respondents of the problems militating against the performance of Ife East Local Government and local governments in Nigeria generally.

Table 5. Problems Working against the Performance of Local Governments
(Data source: Authors’ field survey, 2022)

Issue	Perception as a problem: Level of agreement							
	SA	A	I	D	SD	RII	%	Rank
Lack of Autonomy	108	93	54	21	23	3.8	76	3
Poor Financing	121	97	23	17	18	4.0	80	2
Corruption	201	81	1	4	11	4.5	90	1
Inefficiency	98	63	65	43	21	3.6	72	4
Poor Staff Motivation	45	72	94	53	34	3.1	62	5
Tax Evasion	63	51	59	65	59	3.0	60	6
Poor Fund Mobilisation	53	28	56	71	63	2.8	56	7

Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, I = Indifferent, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree

According to Table 5, with an RII value of 4.5 (90%), corruption topped the list of the problems perceived to be dogging the local government. It was followed by poor financing (4.0 or 80%). Lack of autonomy, inefficiency, poor staff motivation, and tax evasion polled 3.8 (76%), 3.6 (72%), 3.1 (62%) and 3.0 (60%) respectively. Poor fund mobilisation scored 2.8 (56%) to be the least problematic issue working against the performance of the local government.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this study was to assess, from the residents’ point of view, urban service delivery in Ife East Local Government Area of Osun State, Nigeria. It was found that, most of the respondents were not fully aware of the statutory duties of the local government relating to the provision of certain urban services. Moreover, it was found that only markets and motor parks were the urban services with an acceptable condition in the study area; the condition of all the other urban services that should be statutorily provided by the local government was adjudged to be poor by the respondents. Furthermore, employing seven operative indicators of responsiveness, the local government was scored low in its responsiveness to its statutory responsibilities. However, residents also acknowledged that certain problems were adversely affecting the performance rating of the local government. The identified problems were corruption, poor funding, lack of autonomy, inefficiency, poor staff motivation, tax evasion, and poor fund mobilisation.

The findings of this study have several policy implications for both the study area and the generality of urban centres in Nigeria. No urban centre can function maximally without adequate urban services that are largely lacking in many Nigerian towns and cities. Meanwhile, an effective local government system is crucially indispensable to functional towns and cities. Thus, concerted and conscientious efforts should be made to make the Nigerian local government

system work. For effective urban service delivery by local governments in Nigeria, the following policy recommendations are proffered.

First, public enlightenment should be embarked on for the uninformed to know the statutory roles of local governments in the provision of urban services. People who do not know what to expect from their government cannot hold their government accountable for even palpable failures. Also, the state of all urban services should be overhauled for enhanced urban functions. Moreover, local governments in the country should be alive to their responsibilities. Towards this end, all the identified problems working against the performance of the local governments in the country should be tackled head on, especially corruption and inefficiency on the part of the operators of this tier of government.

More importantly, better funding of local governments should be prioritised in all sharing formulae as the tier of government closest to the grassroots. In addition, fund mobilisation should be worked on by the local governments themselves. The payment of all taxes and rates should be enforced, and tax evasion of all forms should be decisively confronted. With the right steps firmly taken, urban service delivery by local governments in Nigeria can be improved. The benefits will also cut across the two other tiers of government in the country.

REFERENCES

- Adebayo, A.S. (2014). Local Government and the Challenges of Rural Development in Nigeria (1999 to Date). *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(4), 98-107.
- Adeyemi, O. (2013). Local Government and the Challenges of Service Delivery: The Nigerian Experience. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 15(7), 84-98.
- Agba, M.S., Akwara, A.F., & Idu, A.Y. (2013). Local Government and Social Service Delivery in Nigeria: A Content Analysis. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2(2), 455-462.
- Akinosun, F. O. (2022). A Psychometric Assessment of the Osun Youth Empowerment Scheme (OYES) of the Osun State Government of Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 27(5), 22-31.
- Akinyetun, T.S., & Oke, S.J. (2021). Local Governments and the Conundrum of Service Delivery in Nigeria: What Policy Implications? *International Journal of Public Policy and Administration Research*, 8(2), 21-37.
- Alao, D.O., Osakede, KO., & Owolabi, T. Y. (2015). Challenges of local government administration in Nigeria: Lessons from comparative analysis. *International Journal of Development and Economic Sustainability*, 3(4), 61-79.
- Bolatito, S., & Ibrahim, B.S. (2014). Challenges of Local Government Administration in Nigeria: An Appraisal of Nigerian Experience. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 3(7), 562-568.
- Boris, O.H. (2015). Challenges Confronting Local Government Administration in Efficient and Effective Social Service Delivery: The Nigerian Experience. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research*, 2(5), 12-22.
- Cheyne, C. (2008). Empowerment of local government in New Zealand: A new model for contemporary local-central relations? *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance*, 1, 30-48.
- Chukwuemeka, E., Ugwuanyi, B.I., Okolo, P., & Onuoha, C.E. (2014). Nigeria Local Government: A Discourse on the Theoretical Imperatives in a Governmental System. *African Review: An International Multidisciplinary Journal*, 8(2), 305-324.
- Eboh, E., & Diejomaoh, I. (2010). Local Governments in Nigeria: Relevance and Effectiveness in Poverty Reduction and Economic Development. *Journal of Economic and Sustainable Development*, 1(1), 12-28.
- Ibok, E.E. (2014). Local Governance and Service Delivery in Nigeria. *Caribbean Journal of Science and Technology*, 2, 536-541.
- Lawal, T. (2014). Local government and rural infrastructural delivery in Nigeria. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 4, 4-12.
- Likert, R.A. (1932). Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*, 140, 1-55.
- Maduabum, C.P. (1990). Causes and Effects of Absenteeism in the Nigerian Civil Service. *Nigerian*

- Management Review*, 5(3 & 4), 359-366.
- Majekodunmi, A. (2012). The State of Local Government and Service Delivery in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects. *Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review*, 1(3), 84-98.
- Odiaka, B.I. (1991). Nigerian Workers' Attitude to Work. *Management in Nigeria*, 3, 8-11.
- Ogunrin, F.O., & Erhijakpor, A.E.O. (2009). SERVICOM Policy Intervention: Improving Service Quality in Nigerian Public Sector. *Global Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(1), 51-60.
- Olojede, O.A. (2019). Urban Transport Security: Analysis of Transit Crime in Osogbo, Nigeria. *Analele Universitii din Oradea, Seria Geografie*, 29(1), 9-18.
- Olojede, O.A., Agbola, S.B., & Samuel, K.J. (2019). Residents' Assessment of Local Government Road Infrastructure Delivery in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. *Local Economy*, 34(4), 346-363.
- Olojede, O., Daramola, O., & Olufemi, B. (2017a). Metropolitan Transport Safety and Security: An African Experience. *Journal of Transportation Safety and Security*, 9(4), 383-402.
- Olojede, O., Yoade, A., & Olufemi, B. (2017b). Determinants of Walking as an Active Travel Mode in a Nigerian City. *Journal of Transport and Health*, 6, 327-334.
- Olojede, O.A., & Owolabi, O.D. (2022). High School Students' Psychometric Assessment of Pedestrian Safety and Risk Factors in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. *International Journal of Architecture and Planning*, 2(2), 37-45.
- Oviasuyi, P.O., Idada, W., & Isiraojie, L. (2010). Constraints of Local Government Administration in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Science*, 24(2), 81-86.
- Sambasivan, M., & Soon, Y.W. (2007). Causes and Effects of Delays in Malaysian Construction Industry. *International Journal of Project Management*, 25, 517-526.
- Steytler, N. (2005). *The Place and Role of Local Government in Federal Systems*. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Johannesburg.
- Wunsch, J. (2001). Decentralization, Local Governance and Recentralization in Africa. *Public Administration and Development*, 21(4), 277-285.

Submitted:
November 10, 2022

Revised:
December 04, 2022

Accepted and published online:
December 13, 2022