

An Evaluation of the Relevance of Traditional Rulership Institution in the Nigerian State: A Case Study of Edo State

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Abstract: The major problem of political participation and governance at the local level of administration in Nigeria, revolves round the delicate issue of redefining the roles of traditional rulers, who before the colonization of Nigeria, had sovereign authority over affairs in their areas of jurisdiction. The usurpation of the power of traditional rulers in public administration, which commenced, during colonial rule in Nigeria, culminated in post colonial Nigerian administrators, rendering the institution irrelevant in public administration. Despite the reduction of the power of traditional rulers in public administration by all post colonial administrators in Nigeria, argues this study, the institution remains the epitome and custodian of the mystical, religious and symbol of identity of their local people. Thus, an integration of the institution is advocated in the public administration of Nigeria so as to adequately enhance efficient and effective service delivery to Nigerians. It is, however, suggested that some modifications be made to the traditional rulership institution, to enable it cope with the complexities associated with modern public administration. This will enable it contribute meaningfully to nation building and national development.

Key words: Evaluation, relevance, traditional rulership institution, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The question of fashioning definite roles for traditional rulers in the public administration of the Nigerian state has attracted the attention of scholars, administrators and members of the public for quite some time. Conferences and symposia have also been held to examine the various roles the traditional rulers can play in modern government especially in local administration. However, there seems to be no consensus of opinion on what specific function should be assigned to traditional rulers in the present local administration in Nigeria.

Traditional rulers before the advent of colonial rule in Nigeria were the political, cultural, economic and social administrators and lords of their various domains. The status of traditional rulers changed with the advent of colonial rule as the colonialist who imposed their hegemony on the traditional rulers usurped their sovereign authority. This development was meant to enable the colonialist perfect their exploitation and domination of the colonial territory of Nigeria.

Prior to the advent of colonial rule in what is now known as the present day Nigeria, the territory

constituted, not just a multiplicity of "pagan tribes, but also a number of great kingdoms that had developed independently without contact with Europe (Crowther, 1978). In kingdoms like the Oyo, Binis and Fulani Emirates, the traditional rulers were the repository of authority and rules. By and large, the domineering roles of traditional rulers became weakened due to the influence of colonial rule especially towards the Second half of the 19th century. These downward trends of reduction of powers of traditional rulers have remained from the colonial era to the postcolonial Nigerian state. Hence, the controversy over the relevance of the traditional rulership institution in the administration of the Nigerian state.

This dwindling powers of traditional rulers in the public administration of the Nigerian state has led to Tsatsaku (1984) arguing that the traditional rulership institution has never worked for the progress of Nigeria. He further stated that right from the slave trade era to the present day, traditional rulers have continued to be self centred individuals, parochial and clannish. Emodibe (1984) also asserted that 'traditional rulers, even though they wear the toga of feudalism, some of the new breed of traditional rulers are capitalists and by conclusion

exploiters, their activities and interest are at variance with those of the masses they proffer to represent. Emodibe (1985) viewed many absurd roles played by traditional rulers and their surrogates in history as too grave for a recollection. Hence, he stated that during the presidential era of 1979-1983, traditional rulers did constitute themselves into cliques aimed at influencing governmental policies for personal aggrandisement. He is of the view that traditional rulers from time immemorial are cankerworms in the flesh of their people. Sylvester (1984) on his part, holds the view that traditional rulers are not our friends either. He further stated that 'how dare the all powerful and influential sultan of Sokoto late Abubakar (the second) and others constitute themselves into a pressure group of lobbyists for the fair treatment and release of ex President Shehu Shagari, whom the Nigerian populace see as unmitigated disaster which befell Nigeria in 1984 (Okojie, 1984).

Some protagonists of the traditional rulership institution in Nigeria are of the view that the traditional rulership institution has contributed immensely in the promotion of progress, peace and contributed immensely in bringing government nearer to the people and thus act as the bridge between the grass roots and the government. Hence Isekhure (1984) opined that:

Traditional rulers in their own human disposition have remained royal and seriously concerned about the problems of this nation all along in spite of mudslinging by transient celebrity who are opportune to hold one form of political power or the other despite their belligerent attitudes and self professed protector of the common man's interest, it is they who finally end up paying for their vagaries and deceitful patriotism.

Omo N' Oba (1984) quoting Partridge concluded that the roles of traditional rulers in Nigeria have been on the down ward trend since 1950 with all subsequent governments in Nigeria. He came to the conclusion that the roles of traditional rulers in spite of attempts to fizzle the institution out of existence, border on kingly, religious, legislative, judicial and executive or administrative functions. The main thrust of this study is to reconcile these opposing views as regards their perception of the relevance of traditional rulership institution to the Nigeria state through an empirical study.

Statement of the problem: Debates have been generated in recent times over the relevance of the traditional rulership institution to nation building and national development. Thus, Ademolekun *et al.* (1983) has argued that the major question of political participation at the local level is the delicate problem of redefining the roles of traditional rulers, who some times in the past, presided over the management of local affairs. He further opined that on the African continent different countries notably Guinea and Mali radically abolished the traditional institutions, which they considered as feudal and undemocratic. He further stated that in Ivory Coast and Senegal, the traditional rulership institution are regarded as major participants in the management of local affairs.

Ademolekun's (1983) view better expresses the dilemma faced by Nigerian's with regard what to do with the traditional rulership institution. This has attracted comments and contributions from Nigerians, some of who have advocated the scrapping of traditional rulership institution. Other Nigerians on the other hand, are agitating for befitting roles for the traditional rulership institution in the modern public administration of the Nigerian state.

Arising from the argument of the two schools of thought, (the protagonist and the antagonist school) on traditional rulership institutions, are the following questions:

- Of what relevance has the traditional rulership institution been to the political system of pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial Nigerian state?
- Do the traditional rulers have any role to play in the present political arrangement of the post independent Nigerian state?

This study has empirically assessed the relevance of traditional rulership institution and concluded that it plays a complementary role in the public administration of the Nigerian state.

Objectives of the study: The main objective of this study is to examine the relevance of the traditional rulership institution to the Nigerian state. Other specific objectives of this study are:

- To assess the roles played by traditional rulers in complementing the efforts of government in the public administration of the Nigerian state.

- To investigate the degree that traditional rulership institution remains the repository of the custom, tradition and culture of their communities.
- To make recommendations on the best ways to reposition traditional rulership institution in order to make it more relevant to modern public administration of the Nigerian state.

Research Hypotheses: To achieve the objectives of this study, the following hypotheses have been tested to give validity to the study:

- Traditional rulers will gain legitimacy and support from subjects if their ascension to rulership position is in consonance with the customs and traditions of the community in which they rule.
- The more a society is traditional, the more relevant the traditional rulership institution.
- The more the traditional rulership institution is integrated with modern government the higher the capacity of the traditional institution to execute their roles.

Relevance and significance of the study: Most literature that exist on the subject matter, centre primarily on the relevance or irrelevance of the traditional rulership institution to the Nigerian state from the apriori position. Thus, the finding of such studies lacked the conclusiveness, exhaustive analytical efforts, encompassing characteristics and coverage. This clearly and indisputably demonstrate that sufficient intellectual gap exist which this study has cover.

Delimitation of the study: This study examined the relevance of the traditional rulership institution in Nigeria from 1999 to date. The central focus of the study is Edo State, which is an integral part of Nigeria. The assumption of the researcher is that results of the study carried out in Edo State could serve as the basis of generalization to other states in Nigeria. This will assist in assessing the relevance of traditional rulers in the public administration of the Nigerian state.

Operational definition of concepts: Some concepts used in the course of this study have been operationally defined as follows:

Traditional rulership institution: For the purpose of this study, traditional rulership institution refers to person(s) or group of persons who occupy rulership position as

dictated by the norms, values, traditions and customs of the community in which they rule. It includes traditional rulers and chiefs. The right to rule by such person(s) is ascribed and not achieved.

Nigerian state: The Nigerian state for the purpose of this study refers to the geo-political entity North and South of the rivers Niger and Benue, forcibly amalgamated by the British government in 1914. It was subjected to British colonial tutelage and acquired political independence in 1960 and is under a sovereign government.

Edo state: Within the context of this study, Edo state refers to that part of Bendel state which was divided into Edo state and Delta states in August 27, 1991 by the administration of General Ibrahim Babangida. It consists of three dominant ethnic groups-Bini, Ishan and Afenmai.

A study on traditional institution and modern governance obviously suggests a kind of comparison between traditionalism and modernity, a sort of quality movement from traditionalism to modernity. Thus, theories of, or orientation on modernization is germane to this study. This study is thus anchored on the modernization theory as its theoretical base.

Modernization is a process based upon the rational utilization of resources technology and aimed at the establishment of a modern society (Welch, 1967). A modern society has been defined as a society characterized by the application of, by extensive social inter-dependence by urbanization, literacy, social mobility and a number of other such factors (Varma, 1980). It involves a breakdown of the traditional society and the rise of a society of completely different order-a society based on advanced technology and the spirit of science, on a rational view of life, a secular approach to social relations, a feeling for justice in public affairs above all else, on the acceptance in the political realm of the belief that the prime unit of the polity should be the nation state (Sanai, 1964).

Modernization is a multi-faceted process involving change in all areas of human thought and activity (Huntington, 1965). At the psychological level, modernization involves a fundamental shift in values, attitudes and expectations. The modern man or woman believes that change in nature and society is not only possible and desirable but can be brought about by him or her, that man or woman adjusts himself or herself to change in his or her environment by the broadening of loyalties and identification from concrete and immediate groups such as family, clan and village to larger and more

important groupings as class and nation state. At the intellectual level, modernization involves a tremendous expansion of man's knowledge about his environment and the diffusion of this knowledge throughout society, through increased literacy, mass communication and education. Demographically, modernization implies a change in the pattern of life, a marked increase in health and life expectancy, greater occupational and geographical mobility and a shift of population from rural based to urban-based areas. At the social level, it has a tendency to replace the focus of individual's loyalty to family and other primary groups to voluntarily organized secondary associations. In the sphere of economics, subsistence agriculture is replaced with market agriculture and other non-agricultural activities.

Modernization, politically situated, thus implies a complete dichotomy between tradition and modernity. It is only after the breakdown of the traditional, social and economic institutions and a basic change in the values and expectations of the people that the way is opened for the beginning of modernization.

Viewed from the perspective of modernization school of thought, the transformation witnessed by the traditional rulership institution in Nigeria from the colonial to the post colonial era in Nigeria is an attempt by the Nigerian State to open up its people, its structure of administration and all social and economic institution to the forces of modernization and political development (Pye, 1965).

To Pye (1965) the evidence of political development occasioned by modernization could be traced to three different levels namely:

with respect to the population as a whole; with respect to level of the governmental and general systematic performance; And with respect to the organization of the polity.

The basic change in the character of the population is that the citizen behaves, no longer like a subject passively receiving orders from the higher authorities and carrying them out but, as an active participant who contributes to the shaping and sharing of political decisions, leading to a greater sensibility on the part of the people to the principles of equality and wider acceptance by them of universalistic laws. Secondly, with political development, there develops a great capacity in the political system to manage public affairs, control controversy, or cope with popular demands; thus enhancing the creative and participatory support of the masses in the governing process.

Finally, with regards to the organization of the political system, a developing political system implies greater structural differentiation, functional specificity and integration of the participating institution (Uzor, 1982). These qualities associated with a developed political system are not manifest in the traditional rulership institutions. Thus, it becomes necessary for the traditional institution to embrace these fundamental elements of modern governance, or gets fizzled out in an ever changing and dynamic society since traditional rulership connotes governance legitimized by claims to traditional privileges, which is at variance with modernization and political development.

The concept 'traditional institution' is synonymous with rulership or governance legitimized by claims to traditional privileges. However, as the local people, owing to active influence of urbanization and the state system, begin to shift allegiance from traditional values and privileges to embracing the inevitable pervasive influence of modernity, allegiance to traditional institutions of governance becomes gradually transformed. The present political system in Nigeria is synonymous with modern governance. Modern governance in contrast to traditional mode of governance is the active institutionalization of a culture of the citizenry participation, devoid of special privileges in taking collective decisions that can transform their political, socio-economic lives, as individuals, in desirable ways. This bottom line is the freedom to actively participate in collective decisions unfettered by unproductive traditional loyalties and sanctions. This participatory dimension to this study has attracted the following comments:

Whatever role traditional rulers are called upon to play in this country should depend on the future type of government, Nigerians eventually adopt for themselves--In a country like Nigeria, where key government functionaries are supposed to serve at the pleasure of the people, there is hardly any room for persons who acquired their current social status by hereditary rather than merit (Price, 1997).

Undoubtedly, since traditional rulership institution derives its legitimacy from limited privileges, whereas 'modern' governance undermines such privileges to promote the self actualization potentials of individuals through active citizenry participation in state matters and hence self determination, governance problem becomes increasingly manifest in the total governing process of the Nigerian state. The obvious problem is how the Nigerian people institute a popular government among themselves that is capable of enhancing human and social welfare, devoid of multiple and conflictual mass mobilization of

allegiance and loyalty to competing authorities, traditional versus rational-legal authority levels. National ideals, are in the circumstances, sacrificed at the altar of traditional privileges. How do we, with the least resistance, channel seemingly conflicting interest with the mainstream of national development?

This governance problem has, from the colonial era, been at the centre of the relationship between the government at the centre and the competing local loyalties in efforts to mass mobilize for national ideals.

Every citizen of a state has a local loyalty as well as a national one. The central government cannot possibly attend to every details of local administration, giving full weight to local preferences and prejudices in every issue; if it tends to, it would probably cause a great deal of resentment and unpopularity. It therefore attempts to make use of its citizens' local administrative, with clearly defined powers of the central government (Ojiako, 1981).

This governance problem, taking the traditional institution and modern governance in perspective, has its historical foundation for meaningful probing. This is demonstrated in the transformational process of the hitherto existing distinct political groupings into the Nigerian state by the colonial regime. It is written that:

The first attempt to build a nation by---British colonial masters started in 1906 when the colony and protectorate of Lagos and the protectorate of southern Nigeria were amalgamated into the colony and protectorate of southern Nigeria. The second attempt was made in 1914 when the two administration of Northern and Southern Nigeria were amalgamated and named the colony and protectorate of Nigeria. The third attempt was in 1954 when a federal when a federal constitution was introduced---from 1954 to 1960, Nigerian leaders negotiated soberly for federal constitution based on parliamentary system of government (Egwurube, 1988).

It is noteworthy that the privileged Nigerian leaders that negotiated federalism and parliamentarianism for the country took for granted the tension inherent in such combination in an emergent nation with entrenched conflictual loyalties derived from a traditional political institutional order, to formally constituted authorities. John Egwurube (1988) sees traditional institution in the following words:

Traditional rulers can be described as individuals or groups of individuals Who occupy communal political leadership positions by immorality and Are through the consent of community members granted authority and Legitimacy to direct the affairs of particular ethno-cultural or linguistic groups in an ordered manner. The basis for such authority is traditional rather than charismatic or legal-rational.

The Dasuki committee report (1988) shares the essence of this above definition when the committee regards a traditional ruler as 'the person who by virtue of his ancestry, occupies the throne or stool of an area and who has been appointed to it in accordance with the custom and tradition of the area. Specifically, traditional institutions, has been summed up as:

---the agencies and custodian of traditional practices---the customary regulatory bodies that moderates the ordinary business of life in an ethnic community. They include among others: traditional rulers and chiefs; the lineage; the extended family system; the nuclear family, the age grade, professional guides, administration of justice and official court historians, grotto and praise singers (Obasanjo and Mabogunje, 1992).

The political system is seen, essentially, from the perspective of the basic elements that are germane to its essence. Firstly, it is generic system of the citizenry in which there exists a reciprocal relationship of participation and distribution between the structures of administration and the citizens, the purpose being to enhance collective welfare. Secondly, modern governance is operationally open and visible, thus accommodating the principles of accessibility, accountability, public criticisms and responsive meaningful change in the direction of the populist welfare path. Thirdly, and as a corollary, the formal separation of governmental powers and the concomitant institutionalization of checks and balances assume lack of arbitrariness of governance which the traditional institution seem to undermine in a rapidly transitory society.

In examining governance in Nigeria based on the essence of modern democratic administration, we can sum up the essence of governance as 'a systematic process based on the values of democracy' (Obasanjo and Mabogunje, 1992).

Thus modern governance in a democratic phenomenon is the rapid upliftment of the living standards of the people, particularly in regard to the freedom of the people to actually participate in taking crucial decisions in matters that affect their daily living. Therefore, 'democracy must improve our system of governance as a means of fostering the upliftment of the living standards of the people---Nigeria must be erected on the ideals of social justice, democracy, fundamental human rights and respect for the rule of law' (Obansajo and Mabogunje, 1992).

Consequently, there has been a culture in Nigeria of a conflictual relationship between traditional institutional order of governance and modern governance. This noticeable conflict between 'traditional' and 'modernity' had before now been more pronounced at the local government areas (Adamolekun, 1988). It is further reasoned that the conflict has always emanated from the interference of traditional rulers in the operations of the modern local government with particular reference to 'the extent to which traditional rulers are prepared to allow virile and efficient institutions of local government, outside their control and patronage, to assume dynamics of their own' (Adamolekun, 1988).

An overview of Edo State: Following a referendum at which over 89% of the people in the then Mid West voted in favour of having the area constituted into a separate region, conducted in August 9th 1963, Mid west state was created. The former mid-western region before its creation was part of the Western region. It was made up of two provinces-Benin and Delta provinces. Within these provinces were ten administrative divisions-Aboh, Afenmai, Akoko-Edo, Asaba, Benin, Ishan, Isoko, Urhobo, Warri and Western Ijaw.

The nomenclature 'Mid-West region' was changed to Mid-Western state in 1967. In 1976 the name Mid-west state was changed to Bendel state. On August 27, 1991, the administration of President Ibrahim Babangida divided the former Bendel state into 2 states Edo and Delta states. The defunct Bendel State was part of the protectorate of Southern Nigeria between 1910 and 1954 and Western region between 1955 to 1963. Edo state occupies a land mass of 19, 281.93 km² and is bordered by Kogi state to the North, Ondo state to the west, Delta state to the south, and Anambra state to the East. It is made up of 18 local government areas. The heartland of the Edos revolves round Benin-city on which the famous old Benin empire, held sway for over 2000 years. The Oba of Benin, dominate the traditional rulership institution in the Bini area of the State. In the Ishan area of the State, the Enigies head the traditional rulership institution. In the Muslim dominated areas of Etsako and Akoko Edo areas

of the State, the Otaru head the traditional council of chiefs. Ascension to the position of Obaship in Bini and Ishan areas of Edo state is base on primogeniture. Whereas in the Etsako and Akoko Edo area of Edo State, ascension to position of Otaruship is through selection by council of king makers. In other parts of Edo State, outside the Ishan and Benin areas, ascension to traditional rulership position is through selection by council of king makers.

R.E. Bradbury indicated three important characteristics of social organisations that distinguish all communities, whether small or large in Edo state as:

The village settlement is everywhere the basic political unit, within the village the male population is organised into age grades-usually three in number which represent the fundamental pattern of authority; and in the kinship and lineage organisation, there is a marked patrilineal bias and an emphasis upon primogeniture. In all likelihood, agriculture and political organisations characterised early Edo settlement; and such compact communities, largely autonomous in their political and economic life, still exist among them especially in the North-western areas (Eweka, 1992).

In most places, however within Edo state, this relative simple pattern of organisation has been over laid by the development of kinship, title systems and more complex political units and most advanced of these is the Benin kingdom which has been renowned to the Edo people. The present Edo state is composed of many ethnic groups with the dominant being the Bini, the Ishan and the Afenmai. These 3 dominant ethnic groups in Edo state is constituted in three senatorial districts in which this study has been carried out. The Binis are constituted into the Edo South senatorial district; the Ishan ethnic group into the Edo central senatorial district and Afenmais into the Edo North senatorial district.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Design: Since, the research did not want to manipulate any of the variable but only observed the influence of and the relevance of traditional rulership institution to the Nigerian state, the survey research method was adopted.

Population: A total of 202 respondents from the three senatorial districts in Edo state (Edo south, central and north senatorial districts) participated in this study. Three hundred respondents were targeted to participate in the study using the simple random sampling technique but only 202 completed and returned their questionnaire.

A total of 156 males representing 77.2% of the total population, participated in the exercise, while 46 females representing 22.8% of the total population also participated in the exercise. About 74 respondents representing 36.6% of the population were single. One hundred and 118 respondents representing 58.4% of the population were married, while 5 respondents, representing 2.5% of the population were separated. A total of 3 respondents representing 1.5% of the total population have no education. A total of 14 respondents representing 6.9% of the population obtained only primary six certificate 47 respondents representing 23.3% of the population had secondary school education, 14 respondents representing 6.9% of the population had polytechnic education, while 36 respondents representing 17.8% of the population have university diploma certificate. A total of 88 respondents representing 43.6% of the population had university degrees.

One hundred and eighty-four respondents, representing 91.1% of the population, were Christians, while 7 representing 3.5% of the population, are Muslims. A total of 7 representing 3.5% of the respondents are practising African traditional religion, while 4 respondents representing 2.0% of the population are free thinkers. 139 respondents representing 68.8% of the total population are public/civil servants, while 16 respondents representing 7.9% of the population are businessmen/women, 35 respondents representing 17.3% of the population are farmers, while only 1 respondent, representing .5% of the population did not indicate their occupation.

Forty-three respondents, representing 21% of the population are on salary grade level 01-05, 108 respondents, representing 53.5% of the population are on salary grade level 06-09. A total of 38 respondents representing 18.8% of the population are on salary grade level 10-14, while 8 respondents representing 4.0% of the population are on salary grade level 15 and above.

Five respondents, representing 2.5% of the population, did not indicate their salary grade level.

A total of 31 respondents representing 15.3% of the population had resided in their locality for between 1-10 years, while 70 respondents representing 34.7% of the population had stayed in the locality for between 21-30

years. Sixty seven respondents representing 33.2% of population have stayed in the locality for 31 years and above. Details of this are shown on the tables in the section dealing with data presentation in this work.

Data Collection: Data for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The survey method was utilized in collecting the primary data through questionnaire administered. Section A of the questionnaire, tapped information on demographic variables, while section B which contained thirteen items tapped information from areas such as the relationship between the traditional institutions and the people's custom and culture. In view of the diversity of issues touched by the items on the questionnaire, question 9 was scored on a straight forward response while item 10 was scored on a Yes (2) No (1) and I do not know (0) response format. Item 11-21 were measured on a 5 point strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1) likert type response format. The secondary data were sourced from books, journal and newspaper.

Procedure: One hundred questionnaires were distributed in each of the senatorial district of Edo State using the simple random sampling technique. Respondents were given one week within which to complete the questionnaire, after which the questionnaire were collected.

Data analysis: The chi-square (X^2) formulae was used in the analysis, interpretation and presentation of the data collected. The aim of using the statistics was to enhance simplicity, accuracy and clarity of data.

RESULTS

Testing the Hypothesis: The following hypotheses were empirically tested for this study.

Hypothesis1: Hypothesis 1, states that traditional rulers will gain legitimacy and support from their subjects if their ascension to rulership positions is in consonance with the customs and traditions of the communities in which they live. This was tested using the chi-square statistics (Table 1).

Table 1: The attitude of respondents of traditional rulers whose ascension is in consonance with the customs and traditions of the community

| Respondent | Observed N (oil) | Expected N (Eii) | Residual | X^2 | Df | p |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|----------|--------|----|--------|
| Strongly Agree | 4 | 40.4 | -36.4 | 278.94 | 4 | 100.00 |
| Agree | 5 | 40.4 | -35.4 | | | |
| Strongly Disagree | 4 | 40.4 | -36.4 | | | |
| Disagree | 67 | 40.4 | -26.6 | | | |
| Uncertain | 122 | 40.4 | 81.6 | | | |
| Total | 202 | | | | | |

Table 2: The relationship between political development and the traditional institution

| Respondent | Observed N (oil) | Expected N (Eii) | Residual (oil-Eii) | X ² | Df | p |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|----|--------|
| Strongly Agree | 4 | 40.4 | -36.4 | 256.56 | 4 | <0.001 |
| Agree | 9 | 40.4 | -31.4 | | | |
| Strongly Disagree | 4 | 40.4 | -36.4 | | | |
| Disagree | 118 | 40.4 | -97.6 | | | |
| Uncertain | 67 | 40.4 | 26.6 | | | |
| Total | 202 | | | | | |

The researcher sought to know from the respondents their acceptance of traditional rules whose ascension is in consonance with the customs and traditions of the community. Below is the analysis of response of the respondents.

Analysis:

Null Hypothesis : Ho
 Alternative Hypothesis : Hi

Ho: Traditional rulers will gain legitimacy and support from the subject if their ascension to rulership position is in consonance with the customs and traditions of the community.

Hi: Traditional rulers will not gain legitimacy and support from the subjects if their ascension to rulership position is in consonance with the customs and tradition of the community.

$$x^2 = \frac{\xi(o_{oil} - E_{ii})^2}{E_{ii}}$$

Degree of freedom (Df) = n-1

Where,

n = 5
 Df = 4
 Level of significance = 0.001

$$X_c^2 = \frac{(-36.4)^2}{40.4} + \frac{(-31.4)^2}{40.4} + \frac{(-36.4)^2}{40.4} + \frac{(26.6)^2}{40.4} + \frac{(81.6)^2}{40.4}$$

$$X_c^2 = 32.079 + 31.019 + 32.796 + 17.514 + 164.816 = 278.224.$$

Decisions: Xc² Obtain is less than X (0.001)², 278.224 < 278.94, Then we accept the null hypothesis.

The results indicate that the legitimacy and support of traditional rulers is stronger in Edo State when their ascendancy to the throne is based on the customs and traditions of the community.

$$X^2 (4) = 278.94 \quad p < 0.001$$

Thus, this hypothesis was confirmed.

Hypothesis 2: Hypothesis 2, states that the more a society is traditional, the more relevant the traditional rulership institution was tested using the chi-square.

We sought to know from the respondents the relationship between political development and the traditional institution in Edo State. An analysis of the responses of our respondents is presented in Table 2.

Analysis:

Null Hypothesis : Ho
 Alternative Hypothesis : Hi

Ho: The more a society is traditional, the more relevant the traditional rulership institution.

Hi: The more a society is traditional, the more it is not relevant to the traditional rulership institution.

$$X_c^2 = \frac{(-36.4)^2}{40.4} + \frac{(-31.4)^2}{40.4} + \frac{(-36.4)^2}{40.4} + \frac{(76.6)^2}{40.4} + \frac{(26.6)^2}{40.4}$$

$$X_c^2 = \frac{10365.2}{40.4}$$

$$X_c^2 = 256.56$$

The result indicated that traditional ruler in Edo Sate are highly regarded in area with traditional setting than rural areas.

$$X^2 (4) = 256.56, \quad p < 0.001$$

Thus hypothesis 2 was confirmed.

Hypothesis 3: Hypothesis three states that the more the traditional institution is integrated with modern

Table 3: The effect of an integration of traditional rulership institution with modern public administration

| Responses | Observed N (oil) | Expected N(Eii) | Residual(oil-Eii) | X ² | Df | p |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|----|--------|
| Strongly agree | 20 | 50.5 | -30.5 | 127.86 | 3 | <0.001 |
| Agree | 39 | 50.5 | -11.5 | | | |
| Strongly disagree | 49 | 50.5 | 68.5 | | | |
| Disagree | 24 | 50.5 | -26.5 | | | |
| Uncertain | | | | | | |
| Total | 202 | | | | | |

government, the higher the capacity of the traditional rulers to execute their roles was tested using the chi-square analysis.

The respondents were asked the question as to the effect of an integration of traditional rulership institution on public administration in Edo state. The responses of our respondents are shown in Table 3.

Analysis:

- Null hypothesis : Ho
- Alternative hypothesis : Hi

Ho: Traditional rulership institution integrated with modern government has higher Capacity to execute their their roles.

Hi: Traditional rulership institutions integration with modern government does not have Higher capacity to execute their roles.

$$X_c^2 = \frac{(-30.5)^2}{50.5} + \frac{(-11.5)^2}{50.5} + \frac{(68.5)^2}{50.5} + \frac{(26.5)^2}{50.5} = 127.87$$

The result indicated that the null hypothesis, which stated that the observed N should be equal, does not hold. This implies that the people of Edo state believe that the traditional institution has a higher capacity to execute their roles when they are integrated with modern government in Edo state. Thus hypothesis 3 was confirmed.

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1, states that traditional rulers will gain legitimacy and support from subjects if their ascension to rulership position is in consonance with the customs and traditions of the community in which they rule (Table 1). The Table of summary of data already presented in this study, indicated that respondents in Edo state supported and accepted that traditional rulers in Edo state will enjoy higher support and legitimacy when their ascension to the throne is based on the customs and traditions of the community in which they rule and vice versa. This hypothesis was confirmed.

Also hypothesis 2 sought to find out if the more a society is traditional, the more relevant the traditional rulership institution (Table 2). Results of data collated in respect of the above hypothesis indicate that traditional rulers in Edo state are highly regarded in areas with traditional setting than urban areas. This hypothesis was also confirmed by this study.

Hypothesis 3 states that the more a society is integrated with modern government, the higher the capacity of traditional institution to execute their roles (Table 3) for analysis of data. The results of data collated in relation to the above hypothesis indicates that the people of Edo state believed that traditional rulers have a higher capacity to execute their roles better when integrated with modern government. This hypothesis was confirmed.

CONCLUSION

The relevance of traditional rulership institution to the Nigerian state has been confirmed by the result of this study. This study has shown that the people of Edo state will support traditional rulers whose ascension to the throne is based on the customs and traditions of the people over whom they rule. The people of Edo state as reflected in the result of this study are of the view that the traditional rulership institution will perform their roles better if integrated with modern public administration of the Nigerian state. It is the position of this study however, that constitutional responsibilities be assigned to traditional rulers in the administration of the Nigerian state. This is to make them more relevant as the custodians of our cultural past which in itself is crucial to the retention of our cultural identity and heritage. Based on the findings of this work, the followings recommendations are advocated:

That national and state assembly should initiate bills to assign constitutional responsibilities to traditional rulers in the administration of the Nigerian state different from the advisory roles assigned to them by the 1999 constitution. This is imperative because tax payers' money is utilize on the payment of stipend to traditional rulers. This act and the continued retention of the traditional rulership institution in Nigeria, by all post independent governments suggest the importance of the traditional rulership institution in Nigeria.

This study advocates that traditional rulers should be saddled with the responsibility of providing assistance to the local government in the monitoring and protection of government properties and projects, as such projects are always located within their domains. The decision of the president of the federal republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Umaru Yar-Adua to set up a national council of traditional rulers is an attestation of the institution's contribution to nation building and national development.

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