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The Geographical Distribution of Water Supply in Ekiti State (Pp. 71-79)

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Abstract

The provision of potable water to every nock and crannies of the state must be pursued vigorously. To achieve this task in Ekiti State, the problems militating against the supply of clean water need to be tackled effectively. For this reason, the rehabilitation of existing dams provision of funds, completion of the 132 KVA involvement of communities in monitoring and further collaboration of the state government with the existing donor agencies are all necessary steps at bringing about adequate water supply both in terms of quantity and quality.

Introduction

Water is an important resource to man as it determines this shows the importance of water to man for the survival of both plants and animals. At creation in the book of Genesis 11:10 God created all water bodies in the whole universe. This shows the paramount importance of water to man. The bulk of the entire surface of the earth is made up of water. Ayoade and Oyebade (1987) affirmed that 97.3% of the world 1.4 billion Cubic km of water is ocean water.

Inspite of the fact that 70% of the earth is made up of water a lot of people still find it increasingly difficult to get adequate water for consumption, cooking washing, agriculture and manufacturing. The provision of water supply in Ekiti State has been the responsibilities of three major stake-

holders: the government the donor agencies and the people in their respective communities. The picture of water distribution in the state is a replica of what is obtainable in developing countries. The quantities and qualities of supply therefore vary from one community to another. The various sources available to the inhabitants of the state ranges from brooks, wells, springs, ponds, rivers bore holes, rain water to pipe bore water.

Statement of the Problem

The information on water supply in Ekiti State does not run contrary to what is found in other parts of the country in particular and developing world as a whole. World Bank (1997) stressed that less than half of the Sub-Sahara Africa have access to safe drinking water. In the same vein, Schiffler (2002) lamented that one billion of the world population lack access to safe drinking water. Also, in a related development, Stewart (1986) submitted that the supply of water to both rural and urban centres of Nigeria is extremely poor with reference to quantity and quality and access. A brief survey round the state eptomises provision of water that skewed in favours insome areas, at the expense of others.

The Study Area

Ekiti state is located in the tropical climate with distinct wet and dry season, (Adebayo, 1993). Geographically, it is located between longitude 4⁰45' to 5⁰45' East of Greenwich Meridian and on latitude 7⁰15' to 8⁰5 North of the equator. It shares boundaries with Kwara State in the north, Kogi State in the north-east Osun State in the south and south-east. The state enjoys 2 distinct wet and dry seasons with a population of 1.628, 762m (NPC 1991).

Historical Background of Water Supply in Ekiti State

The provision of water to the state dated back to 1953 at Efon Alaaye, Okemesi in 1960 and Ado-Ekiti water scheme in 1961. Apart from these three aforementioned set of schemes other 6 schemes have been added at various time to supply water to both the rural and urban centres of the state under the supervision of the state water corporation. The distribution of this facility is given in table 1 below.

Methodology

The three senatorial districts of Ekiti North, central and South were used for the study. Based on the variation in the population figures of the senatorial districts, Ekiti North has 705,971, Ekiti central 826,109 and Ekiti South 692,646. A total of 900 questionnaire were used for the study with the

northern district having 350 copies, while 300 was allocated to the central district and the rest 250 copies was administered in the southern senatorial district. The contents of the questionnaire were to obtain information on the time spent for water collection, the rating of water supply, and problems associated with water supply. Random and purposive sampling techniques were used to collect data in view of the nature of the study.

Time Spent for Water Collection

The people were asked to indicate how long it would take them to get good quality water for consumption and the result of their responses are presented on table 2.

Information obtained from table 2 revealed that from the Northern Senatorial region, 130 or 37.1% responses indicated that they spent with in 30 minutes to obtain water for domestic uses while in the central senatorial zone, 96 or 32% responses spent the same number of minutes and another 53 or 21.3% responses answered in affirmative for the number of minutes spent from the south senatorial district. The inference drawn from this shows that those who spent between 30 minutes were those who have access to pipe borne water, bore holes and well close to their homes.

The next group of respondents that spent up to an hour from the north was 56 or 16% responses, 103 or 34.3% opinions from the central and 87 or 34% responses opinions for the southern district. This group of respondents was those that had to journey to near by wells, streams, rivers and brooks in their domains.

Furthermore, a total 67 or 19% responses from the north district indicated they spent between 2 to 3 hrs to search for water on daily basis. Another set of respondents totaling 31 or 10.3% opinions came with similar complaints from the central district while a total of 60 or 24% responses also attest to this fact from the south. This group of respondents was those that would woke up very early in the morning to trek long distances to fetch water for domestic chores.

The set of respondents that spent above 3hrs in the three districts as shown on the table complained bitterly on the problem confronting them on daily basis. The implication of this is that the young boys, girls and women have to spend the early hours of the day searching for water most especially during the dry seasons. Infact, some of the school children would get late to schools tired, and lose concentration in their studies.

Rating of Water Supply

The opinions of people were sought on the quality of water supply in their communities. Their observations were sieved as shown in table 3.

Based on the investigated conducted as seen in table 3, 46 or 13.1% of the respondents come from the northern senatorial district, 78 or 36% from the central and another 91 or 36% opinions from the southern senatorial area lamented on the poor quality of water that is available to them. Majority of the respondents were from the central and southern senatorial areas. The reason for this comment is because pipe borne water is not easy to come by in these two zones on like the northern part with the presence of river Ero that serves the bulk of the entire towns and villages in its area of coverage.

Moreover, the information available to us in table 3 suggests that 86 or 24.6% responses in the north, 83 or 27.7% in the central and 72 or 28.8% from the south gave the available water fair commendations. The inference drawn from the table also indicated that the central and southern parts of the state are worse off in water supply inadequacies.

The third set of group was the respondents that gave a good report of this facility. For instance, a total of 109 or 31.4% opinions fell into this category from the northern district. From the central district however, 56 or 18.7% responses came from the central while 21 or 8.4% opinions were residents in the south. Again, the presence of river Ero contributed immensely to the availability of water in quantity supplied and access. However, 61 or 17.4% responses came from the north, 54 or 9.7% of the interview were located in the central electoral region of the state and other 17 or 6.8% responses came from the southern district. The constant power supply, to the state made Ero dam has abundant supply to its inhabitants in the coverage area. Infact, on the basis of personal interview conducted revealed the significant roles played by river Ero for regular water supply.

Problems of Water Supply

A lot of predicaments are militating against the supply of water to the inhabitants of Ekiti State. These problems however vary from one community to another. The residents were interviewed and came up with the under listed complaints as seen in table 4

Information obtained from the table shows that 82 or 33.7% responses were from the northern district, 97 or 36.1% opinions came from central while another set of respondents totaling 108 or 33% responses were from the

south. All these respondents indicated they traveled long distances to collect water. The implication of this is that substantial hours of early part of the day were wasted away in search of water.

Furthermore, another set of respondents from all the three senatorial districts complained bitterly on lost of time as they spent between 1 to 3 hours on daily basis. From the table 96 or 39.5% responses came from the north, 113 or 42% opinions were inhabitants of central district while 96 or 29.6% responses were those from the south senatorial district. The inference drawn from this is that majority of the respondents would have very little time to engage themselves in any meaningful ventures.

The consumption of unhygienic water throws a lot of challenges on the health status of the inhabitants as some of them that drink directly from the wells, brooks, stream and ponds complained of typhoid, stomach pains and stooling. On this, 21 or 8.6% responses were from the north, 38 or 14.1% opinions were from the central while 63 or 19.5% responses were residents of the southern senatorial zone. It can be deduced that these group of people lack access to safe clean water. The last group of respondents of which 14 or 8.1% of the sampled opinions were from the north, 21 or 7.8% responses were living in the central district and 57 or 17% responses, were from the southern senatorial district. These set of respondents were those that had complaints ranging from broken pipes, irregular water supply and erratic nature of the rainfall that affect people that depended solely on rain water. The general inference drawn from the table shows that there are problem as regards water supply in the three senatorial districts of the state.

Recommendations

Based on the inferences drawn from the analysis on tables 1,2,3, 4 and the reconnaissance survey conducted round the state, the following recommendation are being made in order to improve the level of water supply and distribution in the study area.

First, the existing dams across the state need overhauling and rehabilitation as only Ero and Ureje dams are managing to perform. These are reasons for this range from poor funding, epileptic power supply to the use of obsolete equipment. All these put together led to ineffectiveness in the management of the dams.

Two, the power supply to the state is to be tacked decisively. The completion of the 132 KVA transformer is long over due as power supply from

neighbouring states of Ondo, Kogi, Kwara and Osun axis are not enough for the whole state. The administrators are to show more commitment to get this project completed within the shortest time possible.

Third, the energy efficiency of water points is to be critically assessed in order for the inhabitants to have direct access to the facility. For example, any water project given to any community such as, wells bore holes and public taps are to be strategically located within the walking radius for the beneficiary areas. The reason for this is not far fetched as a lot of time will be minimized in search of water.

The government is to work assiduously towards the implementation of the MDGS water programme billed for the state. Some of the water points constructed are mere decorations. Efforts are to be geared towards full implementation of the programme to make these water points functional by linking up the water points to the existing pipes and where necessary bore holes, and wells are to be sunk very close to these MDGS water points.

Closely related to the above recommendation is for the state to embark on aggressive water supply programmes by way of providing handdig dry wells, bore holes and extension of the existing water pipes to neighbouring towns and villages. This programme is to be repackaged as “water for all”. The provision of safe drinking water to all nocks and crannies will reduce the incidence of water borne diseases.

More funds are to be allocated to the state water corporation. The money disbursed will be used for the refurbishment of ailing equipments, treatment plants and procurement of chemicals for water treatment.

Furthermore, maintenance committees are to be set up at local government, level to allow communities to participate in the repair of broken pipes and taps. They are also to monitor and report any lapses or inadequacies to the local government. It has been observed that the participation of public in projects that concern them usually succeed as they see it as their own babies.

Finally, the state government should not relent in further collaboration with the existing donor agencies, and other non-governmental organizations in a bid to provide affordable and accessible water for the various communities of the state.

Conclusion

The state is richly blessed with water resource that is capable of supplying potable and affordable water for the generality of the inhabitants if well harnessed. The onus rests on the government to use the political will to provide safe drinking water to reduce incidenc of water borne diseases. This is a task that must be accomplished to bringing about an healthy population that would be an assets to the state in particular and the nation in general.

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Table 1: Location of Water Schemes In Ekiti State

| Name | Capacity per day | Date commissioned | Location | LGA | Senatorial district | Remarks |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Ado Ureje water scheme | 4,930 | 1961 | Ado | Ado | ECSD | Medium dam |
| Efon Alaaye water scheme | 675 | 1953 | Efo | Efon-Alaaye | ESSD | Mini Scheme |
| Ero water scheme | 104,500 | 1985 | Ikun | Moba | ENSD | High graded amy |
| Igbara odo-water scheme | 6,000 | 1999 | Igbaraodo | ESW | ESSD | Medium |
| Ikere Artesian water | 225 | 1984 | Ikere | Ikere Ekiti | ESSD | Artesian borehole |
| Ido Ajinare scheme | 200 | 1986 | Ido Ajinare | EW | ECSD | Mini scheme |
| Itapaji water scheme | 5175 | 1975 | Itapaji | Ikole | ENSD | Medium |
| Okemesi water scheme | 225 | 1960 | Okemesi | EW Ekiti State | ECSD | Mini scheme |
| Little Osse Scheme | 66,000 | 1989 | Egbe | Gbonyin | ESSD | High grade |

Source: Ekiti State water corporation, 2000 and Bankole, 2006.

Table 2: Time spent for water collection

| Time | Ekiti North | | Ekiti central | | Ekiti South | |
|----------------------|-------------|------|---------------|------|-------------|------|
| | | % | | % | | |
| Less than 30 minutes | 130 | 37 | 96 | 32.0 | 53 | 21.3 |
| 31 minutes 1hr | 56 | 16.0 | 103 | 34.3 | 87 | 34.8 |
| 61 minutes to 3hrs | 67 | 19.0 | 131 | 10.3 | 60 | 24.0 |
| 90 minutes and above | 10 | 2.9 | 05 | 1.7 | 25 | 10.0 |

Source: Field work, 2006.

Table 3: Rating of water supply

| Rating | Ekiti North | % | Ekiti Central | % | Ekiti South | % |
|-----------|-------------|------|---------------|------|-------------|------|
| Poor | 46 | 13.1 | 78 | 26.0 | 91 | 36.0 |
| Fair | 86 | 24.6 | 83 | 27.7 | 72 | 28.8 |
| Good | 109 | 31.4 | 56 | 18.7 | 21 | 8.4 |
| Excellent | 61 | 17.4 | 54 | 9.7 | 17 | 6.8 |

Source: Field work, 2006

Table 4: Problems of water supply

| Nature of problem | Ekiti North | % | Ekiti Central | % | Ekiti South | % |
|-------------------|-------------|------|---------------|------|-------------|------|
| Long distances | 82 | 33.7 | 97 | 36.1 | 108 | 33.3 |
| Lost of time | 96 | 39.5 | 113 | 42.0 | 96 | 29.6 |
| Health Hazards | 21 | 8.6 | 38 | 14.1 | 63 | 19.5 |
| Others | 14 | 8.1 | 21 | 7.8 | 57 | 17.6 |

Source: Fieldwork, 2006