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# ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY PROJECT INITIATIVE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN URUAGU AND AKABO COMMUNITIES IN NNEWI NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ANAMBRA STATE (2016-2021).

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## Abstract

This paper investigated community project initiative and community development: A study of Uruagu and Akabo communities in Nnewi North local government area of Anambra state (2016-2021)". The study was anchored on Endogenous theory of development. The study adopted survey research design. The study was carried out in Uruagu and Akabo communities in Nnewi North local government area of Anambra state and the two communities have estimated population of 30,000 out of 196,300 that is the population of Nnewi North local government area. The hypotheses formulated earlier in this study were tested using Pearson's Chi-square. The study found out that Community project initiative has impacted on the provision of infrastructure/social amenities in Uruagu and Akabo communities in Nnewi North local government area of Anambra state. The study recommends among others that efforts should be made to encourage people to participate more in community development project and training.

*Keywords*: community, project initiative, community, development, local government, infrastructure.

## Introduction

In Nigeria and Anambra State in particular, there have been cases of lack of development which has narrowed down to Nnewi North local government area of Anambra State. This is seen where some children are seen hawking on the road, not going to school due to lack of fund, feeding in an unclean environment etc. This led to the introduction of Anambra Integrated Development Strategy (ANIDS) which was introduced by Governor Peter Obi.

Anambra State is one of the few States in Nigeria whose leaders have been making conscious, concerted efforts at bringing home the "dividends of genuine democracy" to her people. The preceding administration of Governor Peter Obi introduced a development initiative called (ANIDS) Anambra Integrated Development Strategy. This development program, with a mission to achieving the Millennium Development Goals by the target year 2015, was conceptualized to bring about simultaneous development of all sectors of the economy – infrastructure, education, healthcare, industrialization, poverty eradication, agriculture, skill acquisition and creation of jobs (Chukwuemeka & Chukwujindu, 2013).

Peter Obi's ANIDS was developed in line with the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) espoused by the United Nations as a development roadmap for developing nations such as Nigeria. A multi-sectorial model, "ANIDS aimed to achieve visible and sustainable development that will touch all sectors of the state's economy ANIDS mainly sought to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Anambra" (Omenugha & Dunu, 2016). While we may

acclaim the developmental strides brought by ANIDS in the lives of Ndi Anambra, it is the focus of this chapter to proffer insights into the new development paradigm envisioned by Willie Obiano's administration in continuing and deepening the change process and strategic plan for the Anambra people. As earlier noted, development should not only be recurrent and sustained, it should be improved upon. Thus, when Willie Obiano propounded the 4 Cs of continuity, completion, commissioning and commencement, it inadvertently fits into the persistence, dynamism, sustainability and improvement qualities of any genuine development.

ANIDS came to fill in the gap of development but was not duly satisfied and thus the introduction of community project initiative (CCYPI). The community project initiative was introduced in 2014 by the Anambra State Government under the incumbency of His Excellency, Willie Obiano during his first tenure as the state governor. This programme was introduced with the aim of helping every community in Anambra State develop evenly and also allow people choose the interest of their project while its financed by the government .This development strategy is designed in a manner that communities led by the President-Generals and the traditional rulers have a voice in deciding their pressing need within the community – one that needs government intervention. This is a bottom—top approach to development, and thus participatory in nature. It is an effort geared towards achieving the solution of community problems and raising their standard of living. The community project initiative was rolled out for the 181 communities in Anambra State, 21 Local Governments which Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State happens to be one of the beneficiaries.

Under this initiative, each community in the state is at liberty to select a development project of her choice, which the State Government would execute with a sum not exceeding 20 Million Naira. Each community has the sole responsibility of deciding what is best for her, where to site the respective projects, and the labor that would execute it. The State Government merely provides the specification and ensures the strictest compliance to standards and commitment to the contractual terms of each project.

Against this backdrop therefore, the community project Initiative is a unique and new development paradigm in governance. Under this scheme, different communities under various Local Governments in Anambra State opted for different projects according to their scale of preference. Some of these communities under their various Local government areas have already started putting these facilities to use while many of these projects are in advance stages of completion; Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State is not an exception. Where

there is a delay, it is mostly due to either indecision, or lack of agreement on what to choose by some communities, or lack of consensus on where to site the projects (Nwankwo, 2017).

Community project initiative has led to renovation of town halls, building of schools hostels, infrastructural development, digging of boreholes, skill acquisition, and many more. The introduction of community project initiative has provided jobs for the youth, security (building of police station for instance) in some communities. It has equally helped to address the challenges of community development, with an objective to uplift the living conditions of people who live in various communities. The strategic objectives of community development include empowering local communities developing effective partnerships, working as multi-agencies, becoming learning organizations and improving the life and well-being of the communities and of course making them sustainable. Be it as it may, community development is embodied in the government's attempt to engage in social engineering communities with a goal of reducing poverty and increasing well-being.

In Akabo and Uruagu Communities in Nnewi North Local Government Area, the community project Initiative was deeply witnessed, therefore this study seeks to examine how community project initiative has helped to enhance community development in the areas.

# **Objectives of the Study**

The main objectives of this study is to assess the impact of community project Initiative on Community Development in Uruagu and Akabo communities in Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State (2016-2021). The specific objective is:

To determine how community project initiative has helped in the development of amenities in Uruagu and Akabo communities, Nnewi North Local Government Area, Anambra State.

# **Conceptual Review**

## **Community Project Initiative**

Community project initiative is an initiative derived from bottom up approach of Community Development. The Anambra government introduced "choose your community project" as a key model for participatory development. The project is significant in the ways in which it breeds in the Anambra State indigenes and residents a sense of belonging and participation in governance. Each community in the State – numbering 181 – was made to choose a 20 Million Naira worth of project of their choice. This development strategy is designed in a manner that communities led by the President-Generals and the traditional rulers have a voice in deciding their pressing

need within the community – one that needs government intervention. This is a bottom–top approach to development, and thus participatory in nature. Participatory Development has been defined as "a process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over development initiatives, and over the decisions and resources that affect themselves" (Asian Development Bank, 1996).

Finally we have active participation where the communities are fully integrated into the project design, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (Cooksey & Kikula 2005). Participation has continued to metamorphose as modernization comes and one thing that is certain and constant in life is change. Change can be in either directions (positive or negative). In the words of Robert Chambers, "participation has implications for power relations, personal interactions, and attitudes and behaviours and that participatory can apply to almost all social contexts and processes, not least in organizations, education, research, communities and the family" (Thomas, 2013).

# **Community Development.**

A comprehension of the concept of development will give a clearer picture of community development. Hornby (2013) defines development as the gradual growth of something so that it becomes more advanced, stronger, etc.; the process of producing or creating something new. This definition implies that development involves a gradual or advancement through progressive changes. Umebali (2016) sees the changes to be multi-dimensional involving changes in structures, attitude and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth; the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty. Umebali asserted that development involves economic growth components, equality or social justice's component and socio-economic transformational components which are all on a self-sustaining basis.

The main focus of the community development is on instituting those interactive processes that help communities to take autonomous decisions on meeting their needs and addressing issues that affect their life the most. It promotes collective action rather than an individualized approach and thus can be differentiated from approaches that focus on individual well-being. The International Federation for Social Workers regards social workers as change agents who bring change in the lives of individuals, groups and communities. Community development has the potential to transform society and thus bring change in the status quo.

The bottom line really is poverty alleviation consequent upon increase in community productivity, income and diversification of community economic, improvement in the supply of

community infrastructure (physical, social and institutional), enhancement of social participant and radical improvement of the quality of life of the community people. The concept of community development has been broadened in recent time to accommodate non-economic issues, this broadened community development concept, otherwise known as the sustained community development, takes a long term view of which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generation (Michener, 2018).

## Community project initiatives and provision of infrastructure/social amenities.

, infrastructure development has become a much-debated topic, since scholars from various countries have utilized the aspect of infrastructure development as a parameter and index to measure the ability of each country to complete globally (Opawole, Abio, Bababola & Babatunde 2012). This is mainly because, access to basic, adequate facilities is viewed as strongly related to the wellbeing of individual.

The advancement in the aspect of basic infrastructure for communities is seen as an accelerator for the growth of the rural communities' economy which in turn will give a positive impact for the quality of life for the community as a whole (Ale, Abisuwa, Olagunagba & Ijarotimi, 2011). At the same time, the development of the infrastructure such as road infrastructure is seen as the key for the development in the rural areas because by having these developments, basic amenities such as clean water, electricity and communication network will be brought into the rural areas as well (Straka & Tuzova, 2016). The Nnewi North local government area is committed to develop the community areas by establishing various relevant infrastructure such as the Pipe borne water, building of police stations building of town halls and lock up Shops, renovation of corps members hostels etc.

## Theoretical Framework.

## **Endogenous Theory of Development**

This research work is anchored on the Endogenous theory of development. Endogenous theory of development was propounded by Bassand (1998). It was developed in opposition to traditional understanding or in order words the 'modernist' notion of development. According to Bassand (1998) the new meaning of development, that is, qualitative and structural indicators, and not just qualitative and monetary measure, are used as a criteria but also cultural, social, political, and ecological value as well as social costs and long effects are combined for endogenous development.

# The Tenets of the Endogenous theory of development.

The major tenets to endogenous theory of development to community project initiatives include: With Government policy, community development will lead to intense growth and help stimulate project and process innovation. Development is conceptualized by focusing on the needs of local people meaning that local people should acquire the capacity to assume responsibilities in order to bring about development. The protection of property rights and patents is essential to providing incentives for community project initiatives and community development. Investment in human capital is a vital component of community project initiatives and community development. Government policy should encourage community project initiatives and community development as a means of creating new opportunities and ultimately as an important source of new jobs, investment, and further innovation.

# **Application of this Theory to the Study**

The theory of endogenous development is applicable to this study in the sense that participatory approaches to community development have been known to ensure the efficient use of community as a means to bring about development and largely these have tended to provide scope for local domination of decision-making influence by powerful local actors.

## The Relevance of the theory to the study.

This theory provides an in-depth understanding especially in evaluating the relationship that exists between the community projects initiatives and community development which serves as a base of development in Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State. The theory is relevant because it embraces openness, participation, commitment, and promotes growth among community members in order to ensure efficient utilization of community resources to achieve community development.

# Methodology

In this paper, the research design adopted was a survey design, which aimed at finding out how community project initiatives affects community development in Nnewi North Local Government Area (2016- 2021). The population of the study is the entire Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State and has estimated population of 196,300 people ((2018 projected census). Athough, the residents of Uruagu and Akabo communities are estimated to

be thirty thousand (30,000) in number. The researcher used Taro Yamane's formula with 95% confidence level to determine the sample size from the population. This is because the population size is known. In justifying the use of 400 as the sample size, the population (30,000) was reduced to 400 because it may be impossible to study the entire population since the number is large according to Francis et al (2010). Hence, the researcher statistically reduced the population to a manageable size using Taro Yamane's formula for determination of sample size. The researcher used purposive sampling technique in selecting the sample from the two towns that make up Nnewi North Local Government Area. This enabled the researcher to select only those who have the requisite knowledge on the subject of study. Data were source through primary and secondary source of data. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was titled "Community Project initiatives and community development" A five point rating scale response options provided for the respondent to choose from are "Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), undecided (U), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). Quantitative method of data analysis was employed to analyze the data. Frequency stables and simple percentage was employed in analyzing the data while chi-square inferential statistics was used to test the hypotheses at varying degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 level of significance. This was done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. If the calculated Chi-square X<sup>2</sup> is greater than the critical value of X<sup>2</sup>, the null hypothesis will be rejected given room for the acceptability of the alternate but if the calculated chi square is less than the critical value, the null hypothesis will be accepted while the alternate will be rejected.

## **Data Presentation and Analysis**

In this section, the data generated from the People of Uruagu and Akabo communities, Nnewi North Local Government Area, Anambra State were presented, analyzed and interpreted. A total of four hundred copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents, out of which three hundred and fifty seven copies of the questionnaire were properly filled and found relevant to the study. Therefore, the analysis in this section was based on the relevant copies. The first section covers the demographic features of the respondents. The second section analyzed the data relevant to research questions while the final section tested the hypotheses earlier formulated.

# **Presentation of Demographic Data**

In this section, the demographic features of the respondents such as gender, marital status and age bracket are presented and analyzed.

**Table 1: Gender of the Respondents** 

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	147	41.2	41.2	41.2
	Male	210	58.8	58.8	100.0
	Total	357	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table above shows the distribution of respondent base on their gender. 147 respondents representing 41.2% are female while 210 respondents representing 58.8% are male. This indicates that there are more male than female in Uruagu and Akabo communities, Nnewi North Local Government Area, Anambra State.

**Table 2: Age Distribution of the Respondents** 

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18 - 30 years	62	17.4	17.4	17.6
	31 - 40 years	89	24.9	24.9	42.3
	41 - 50 years	170	46.6	46.6	88.9
	51 years and above	36	10.1	10.1	100.0
	Total	357	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table above shows the age distribution of the respondents. It revealed that 62 respondent representing 17.4% falls within the age bracket of 18 - 30 years. 89 respondents representing 24.9% fall within the age bracket of 31 to 40 years, 46.6% of the respondents fall within the age bracket of 41 to 50 years, while the remaining 10.1% fall within the age bracket of above 51 years and above. This implies that majority of the sampled members of people of Nnewi North local government area of Anambra falls within the age bracket of 41 - 50 years.

## **Analysis of Data Relevant to the Research Questions**

**Research Question:** What is the impact of Community Project Initiative on the provision of infrastructure/social amenities on Community Development in Nnewi North Local Government Area, Anambra State?

Table 3: Response on Infrastructural facilities and amenities are the large-scale public systems

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	26	7.3	7.3	7.3
	Disagree	10	2.8	2.8	10.1
	Undecided	68	19.0	19.0	29.2
	Agree	209	58.5	58.5	87.7
	Strongly Agree	44	12.3	12.3	100.0
	Total	357	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 above indicates that 12.3% of the respondents strongly agree that Infrastructural facilities and amenities are the large-scale public systems, 58.5% of the respondents agreed, 19.0% of the respondents were undecided, 2.8% of the respondents disagreed while 7.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that infrastructural facilities and amenities are the large-scale public systems.

Table 4: Response on physical amenities that are needed by the community

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	1.4	1.4	1.4
	Disagree	9	2.5	2.5	3.9
	Undecided	8	2.2	2.2	6.2
	Agree	187	52.4	52.4	58.5
	Strongly Agree	148	41.5	41.5	100.0
	Total	357	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4 above indicates that 41.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that physical amenities that are needed by the community 52.4% of the respondents agreed, 2.2% of the respondents were undecided, 2.5% of the respondents disagreed while the remaining 1.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that physical amenities that are needed by the community.

Table 5: Response on community economics is determined by the accessibility of essential infrastructure

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	17	4.8	4.8	4.8
	Disagree	18	5.0	5.0	9.8
	Undecided	12	3.6	3.6	13.4
	Agree	260	72.8	72.8	86.3
	Strongly Agree	49	13.7	13.7	100.0
	Total	357	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table 5 8above indicates that 13.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that community economics is determined by the accessibility of essential infrastructure, 72.8% of the respondents agreed, 3.6% of the respondents were undecided, 5.0% of the respondents disagreed while 4.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This shows that community economics is determined by the accessibility of essential infrastructure.

Table 6 Response on infrastructural development for the communities is more focused on the agricultural sectors

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	17	4.8	4.8	4.8
	Disagree	11	3.1	3.1	7.8
	Undecided	23	6.4	6.4	14.3
	Agree	170	47.6	47.6	61.9
	Strongly Agree	136	38.1	38.1	100.0
	Total	357	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table above indicates that 38.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that infrastructural development for the communities is more focused on the agricultural sectors, 47.6% of the respondents agreed, 6.4% of the respondents were undecided, 3.1% of the respondents disagreed while the remaining 4.8% of the respondents disagreed. This implies that infrastructural development for the communities is more focused on the agricultural sectors.

Table 7: Response on infrastructural development is also related to the quality of social services

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Disagree	34	9.5	9.5	11.5
	Undecided	21	5.9	5.9	17.4
	Agree	218	61.1	61.1	78.4
	Strongly Agree	77	21.6	21.6	100.0
	Total	357	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table above indicates that 77 respondents representing 21.6% strongly agreed that infrastructural development is also related to the quality of social services, 61.1% of the respondents agreed, 5.9% of the respondents were undecided, 9.5% of the respondents disagreed while the remaining 2.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that infrastructural development is also related to the quality of social services.

# **Test of Hypotheses**

Here, the three hypotheses formulated earlier in this study were tested using Pearson's Chi-square. The results are presented below.

# **Test of Hypothesis**

Community project initiative has impacted on the provision of infrastructure/ social amenities in Uruagu and Akabo communities, Nnewi North Local Government Area, Anambra State.

**Table 8: Chi-square Tests for Hypothesis Two** 

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	113.743 <sup>a</sup>	24	.000
Likelihood Ratio	147.575	24	.000
Linear-by-Linear	8.829	1	.003
Association			
N of Valid Cases	400		

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Since the Pearson chi-square value of 113.743 at 24 degree of freedom is significant at .05 alpha level, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. Hence, we conclude that community project initiative has impacted on the provision of infrastructure/ social amenities in Uruagu and Akabo communities, Nnewi North Local Government Area, Anambra State.

# **Discussion of Findings**

Community project initiative has impacted on the provision of infrastructure/ social amenities in Uruagu and Akabo communities, Nnewi North Local Government Area, Anambra State. Community project initiative has impacted on the provision of infrastructure/social amenities has Pearson chi-square value of 113.743 at 24 degree of freedom is significant at .05 alpha level. However, despite approaches adopted to tap the wealth in these communities, especially in the developing economies, it appears that not much has been done to harness the endowed resources of the areas. Community development is reputed to be an indispensable component among the approaches adopted world-wide for the socio-economic transformation of any nation, especially developing nations like Nigeria (Anyanwu, 1992).

## **Conclusion**

This study the impact of community project Initiative (CPI) on Community Development in Uruagu and Akabo communities, Nnewi North Local Government Area, Anambra State. This community-based or community-dictated development approach involves the movement of the people designed to promote better living for the whole community within the active participation of, and if possible on the initiative of the community concerned. The contribution of self-help development activities to rural community development depends largely on the existence of committed local leaders in the rural areas concerned as well as the extent to which government encourages local planning and participation. The wide variations in the scope and impact of selfhelp activities on the welfare of rural dwellers in different parts of the study areas reflect the nature of community leadership and their inclination towards self-help programmes. This implies that in those areas where there are no effective self-help groups, community development activities have not made much impact on the social welfare of the rural population. It is often taken for granted that people in the local communities will at one level or the other participate in the development of their communities. It is also aimed at testing the validity of widely accepted theory which suggests that the community project Initiative (CPI) is tied to Community Development in Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State. From the analysis it was discovered that community chose your project initiative has impacted on the provision of infrastructure/ social amenities in Uruagu and Akabo communities, Nnewi North Local Government Area, Anambra State.

## Recommendation

The study recommends among that efforts should be made to encourage people to participate more in community development project and training community participation in maintenance of projects should be conducted in order to increase the technical sustainability of projects.

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