

EFFECT OF CITIZEN'S ENLIGHTENMENT ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA (2014-2019)

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Abstract

The attainment of development encompasses citizens' enlightenment in a democratic setting where mutual responsibility involves active participation of the citizens and government. The glaring apathy of citizens' involvement in development issues in their local government and communities has been traced to lack of capacity, skill, and pre-requisite knowledge for involvement. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of citizen's enlightenment on community participation in development in selected local government in Anambra State. The study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study comprised of 1779 members of registered community associations who live within the different communities in the selected local government areas of Anambra States. The study adopted a simple random sampling technique to determine the sample size of 249. The questionnaire relating to citizen enlightenment and community participation was validated before use to collect data. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) was employed for demographic data analysis, while regression analysis was used to analyse the effect. The results ($\beta = 0.301$, $t = 4.533$, $p < 0.05$) showed that citizen enlightenment had a positive and significant effect on community participation in development in Anambra State. Consequently, citizen enlightenment should be encouraged in order to drive the participation of citizens in the development of their communities.

Keywords: Citizen Enlightenment, Community, Participation, Development.

Introduction

Successful and sustainable development of any community is a mutual responsibility that is incumbent on both the government and the community members. Unlike pre-modern societies where the craving for social amenities was remote, relevant decisions to manage modern communities today have become so sophisticated and complex that citizens' preferences and needs can no longer be left for the government to handle all alone. It has been observed that community members' involvement in development issues discourages misuse of community resources and provision of services that are not complimentary to the social wellbeing of the people (Aliyafei, 2017). Fakere and Ayoola (2018) are of the opinion that the involvement of community members in needs analysis, planning, and execution of development programmes elicit completion and sustainable development projects that meet the preferences of the community members.

Interestingly, democratic system of government, unlike the dictatorial system, provides this avenue whereby the citizens are part of development decisions and processes in which they are the direct recipients and beneficiaries of the outcomes. This kind of participatory development of communities does not only ensure functional social amenities like health facilities, pipe bone water, electricity, motorable roads and good community schools, but equally guarantees their sustainability. Hence, this mechanism gives the community members a sense of belonging that motivates them to contribute their resources and time for

the actualization of their wellbeing in the communities (Mark, Cheugn & Hui, 2017; Nabatchi, 2017; Nimegeer, Farmer, Munoz, & Currie, 2016).

Generally, studies have revealed that countries like United States, United Kingdom and Brazil are experiencing progressive development that is beneficially inclusive because it is participatory (Coulter, 2010; Horne, Khan, Corrigan, 2013). Hence, relevant services are not only being provided, but a sense of ownership that promotes sustainable community development is also inculcated in the mind of the citizens. In addition, Achal, Mukherjee, and Zhang (2016); Gargiulo et al. (2017) corroborated that in communities where citizens are involved in development issues, programmes are designed in alignment with the people's needs.

However, in Africa, especially in Nigeria, the level of community involvement in issues relating to development in their communities has been observed to be low (Fashola, 2017). This is based on the fact that over the years, Nigeria has been experiencing a relatively oil boom period that has been helping the country to generate over trillions of Naira every month for the wellbeing of the entire country. But a cursory look at the level of development in the different communities in Nigeria today reveals that government has not been able to replicate her wealth in the areas of provision of basic amenities and infrastructures such as good roads, electricity, education facilities, potable water and adequate health care. As observed by Ajibola, Loto and Enilolobo (2018), the gap of inequality between the rich and the poor has continued to widen and making it difficult for the common man to access basic needs. The inability of the government to provide for the citizens some basic developmental needs presupposes that there is a breakdown of social contract between the populace and government which has been accentuated with poor governance, mismanagement, and corrupt practices among government leaders (Adeyeye, 2014). Now that the period of oil boom is over, studies suggest that the involvement of community members in planning, executing and monitoring of development programmes will help to reposition Nigeria on the part of development. It has been observed that the involvement of citizens in community issues prevent some 'administrative injuries' that are similar to the ones repeatedly committed by past leaders over the years.

Nevertheless, Chambers (2012) posited that community members fail to participate and hold government accountable for the development of their community due to lack of knowledge, skills and capacity that are germane for citizens' active involvement. Fashola (2017); Gigler and Bailur (2014) averred that what the citizens need is education or enlightenment in relation to their rights to participate and hold government accountable for good governance, service delivery and sustainable development in different communities. Though some studies; Eleberi, Mbadiwe-Woko and Owede (2014); Wasilwa (2015) have looked at community development as it relates to rural transformation, the issue of citizen's enlightenment and capacity development for community participation in development has not been addressed. Hence, there is need to investigate community participation from the perspective of citizens' enlightenment for the development of communities in Nigeria. Therefore, the study examined the effect of citizen's enlightenment on community participation in development in selected local government in Anambra State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Citizen Enlightenment

In every community, informed knowledge that stimulates activities that are transformative in nature is apposite. Citizen enlightenment as seen by Mapuva (2016) constitutes a process that enables community members to become informed about their roles and responsibilities in a democratic setting. The degree of enlightenment of the citizens or community members in a democratic setting determines the level of their involvement in carrying out some activities that can make the government to become responsive to communities' needs. But when citizens are unaware of their rights, and equally do not have the capacity and prerequisite knowledge to participate in governmental activities relating to their communities, they remain docile and suffer the consequences. Hence, Ikyembe (2015) observed that the education or training of citizens to acquire the right understanding of their roles in participatory governance is a legitimate component of democracy that improves the common good of the communities.

In addition, Amakihe, Ako, and Fasanu, (2017) believed that when citizens are enlightened and knowledgeable in the handling of development issues in their communities, they develop the required impetus to participate and hold the government or local authority accountable and responsive to the citizens. So, through enlightenment programme, community members are taught how to use some mechanisms to make the government and other service providers to deliver quality services in alignment with citizens' needs (Babajanian, 2014; Chukwuemeka, Ugwuanyi, Ndubuisi-Okolo, and Onuoha, 2014). Hence, Babajanian (2014) reiterated that citizens who have been enlightened on the use of community charter of demands, citizen report cards, score cards, and social audits are able to participate actively and make meaningful contributions to the development of their communities.

In another dimension, Eddington and Ambrose (2010) further explained that citizen's enlightenment does not only promote knowledge of the people's democratic heritage, political and legal institutions, but also equip them to participate in governance as informed citizens. These authors, Eddington and Ambrose (2010), added that citizen education helps to acquaint the citizens with the requisite skills, values, capacities and the dispositions that can assist them to participate actively in their communities. Similarly, Fashola (2017) asserted that citizen's enlightenment is very important because it provides an avenue through which the citizens are acquainted with the use of media, community action plan, and writings that can put pressure on the local authorities to respond to the demand and preferences of the people. Yang, Xu and Shi (2017) stated that citizen enlightenment programme does not only reduce the pre-conditions that preclude community participation, but help to create an enabling environment for easy collaboration between the stakeholders and government in the deliberations and execution of community affairs.

Community Participation

Preston, Waugh, Taylor, and Larkins (2014) perceived community participation as an avenue where community members acquire the education and increase their competence for active participation that influences the direction and execution of community programmes. In like manner, Dooris and Heritage (2013) averred that in the formulation of policies and their applications, community participation enables community members to make informed decisions about factors that have effects on their daily lives. Mark, Cheugn and Hui, (2017); Nabatchi, (2017); Nimegeer, Farmer, Munoz, and Currie (2016) equally perceived community participation as the degree of collaboration and cooperation among community members to decide and execute any development programme in line with their culture.

Generally, scholars; Achal, Mukherjee, and Zhang (2016); Gargiulo et al. (2017); Pereverza, Pasichnyi, Lazarevic and Kordas (2017), agreed that community participation helps to achieve the following objectives in the community: (1) Community participation increases democracy through the involvement of people in decision-making, planning and action. This is an exemplification of human right. (2) It helps to achieve equality within a society by enabling the local community to exercise their voice against social exclusion. (3) Community participation does not only enable community members to have a deep insight of community issues, but also helps them to develop the competence to handle such issues in a way that benefits the entire community. (4) It makes it possible to make better decisions and provide relevant services that promote sustainable community development. (5) Community participation also promotes sense of ownership that engenders sustainability of programmes. Though, Bappi, Singh and Dahiru (2017) viewed community participation from the perspective of self-help project dimension, this study is looking at community participation as the involvement of community members with government to carry out development programmes from needs analysis to monitory and evaluation of projects in their communities.

Citizen enlightenment and Community participation

Musah and Fuseini (2014) carried out a study to examine the implication of civic awareness and engagement. Specifically, it focused on civic activities on which the citizens have been enlightened, the

level of awareness on civic issues and the existing differential between the respondent's general level of awareness and their civic engagement. Having used a structured questionnaire to study a sample of 120 respondents, data was generated and analysed. The study showed that the respondents that received citizenship education carried out their civic activities successfully. This explained the fact that this experimental group received education or enlightenment, and so they became highly aware or knowledgeable about civic issues than the control group. In addition, the findings equally revealed that there is a significant difference in the intention to participate in community service between people with citizenship education and those who do not have such education. This showed that education can make a difference in the life of individual and stimulate him/her to participate in community activities.

Eleberi, Mbadiwe-Woko and Owede (2014), investigated a phenomenon with the title, adult education and community development programmes as vital tool for transformation of rural communalities. After a careful examination of the study, the authors discovered that education of the adults is very important for community development. This is because when people are enlightened, they are motivated to take part in the community activities that help to ameliorate and alleviate the living conditions of the people. These authors recommended that government agencies and non-government organisations should mobilize the people for active participation in development programme selection, implementation strategy, and monitoring as a bottom approach to development.

Another study was carried out by Claes and Hooghe (2008), for the purpose of investigating how citizen education or enlightenment can affect political interest. A sample of 3,334 students was studied in 81 schools in two of the most populated provinces in Canada, Quebec and Ontario. After a regression analysis of the data generated, it was revealed that civic education can have an impact on political interest of the students.

Ikyembe (2015) embark on a study to investigate rural enlightenment and socio-economic development programmes of government radio broadcasting stations in Kaduna State. The aim was to identify the rural enlightenment in relation to socio-economic development programmes as well as the level of benefits and satisfaction the people derive from the programmes. Having adopted a survey method for the study, the author used a stratified random sampling technique in the selection of the sample size. Questionnaires were administered to a sample of 323 respondents to answer questions in the area of their health, inside politics, politics today, entrepreneurship and agric panorama so that the level of impact of these programmes would be determined. The analysis of the data generated revealed that the populace was enlightened on the socio-economic development programmes that were disseminated through the media. This reaffirms the fact that citizens are teachable. Therefore, necessary structures need to be put in place to get the people enlightened in different areas that will empowered them to contribute to the development of their own community.

Anambra State

Anambra State is one of the states in the South-East geo-political zones that has a landmass of 4887sqkm and a population of 4.1 million which is based on the 2004 National census. This state is bounded by five states, which are Delta State to the west, Kogi State to North, Imo and Rivers and Enugu States to the south. Obviously, Anambra State has a locational advantage of being the gateway to other South-east and South-south States of these zones. In addition, the State has also been observed to be richly endowed with both human capital and natural resources such as oil, iron ore, natural gas, kaolin, and clay.

Anambra State has twenty-one (21) local government areas which are located within Anambra north, Another Central, and Anambra South senatorial districts. In Anambra North, there are seven (7) local governments which are Onitsha North, Onitsha South, Oyi, Ogbaru, Anambra East, Anambra West and Ayamelum. In addition, Anambra Central also has seven (7) local government areas which are as follows: Awka North, Awka South, Njik-oka, Anaocha, Idemili North, Idemili South and Dunukofia. The last Senatorial district which is Anambra South equally has Ihiala, Nnewi North, Nnewi South, Orumba South, Orumba North, Aguata, and Ekwusigo as seven (7) local government areas.

As regard to the citizens of Anambra state, it has been observed that they are being dominated by Christians who do not only speak Igbo as their language, but have a population that is consisted of farmers, artisans and civil servants (Arinze-Onyia, Modebe, Aguwa & Nwobodo, 2015). It has been observed too that the citizens of this state are not unaffected from the problems that all Nigerians faced in the country, such as bad roads, dilapidated schools, and lack of portable water. (Agu-Aguiyi, Onyia, Anigbogu and Umehali, 2017). However, in 2012, it was noticed that some private development agencies came to Anambra and taught them how citizen can cooperate with the government to enhance development in their community (Fashola, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on participatory democratic model. It has been acknowledged to have been first used by Arnold S. Kaufman in his argument for participatory politics (Clark, 2011). The concept of participatory democracy was actually advocated in contrast to the liberal and Marxist idea of democracy, including the elitist democratic thought that was equally supported by Schumpeter (Albiston, 2018). This theory heralded that a participatory society is capable of bringing about political equality and self-education. They argued that when citizens are directly involved in governance and development issues, their political ideas and citizenship education are not only enhanced, the inequality in the community is reduced (Nabatchi and Amsler, 2014). In addition, Pateman (2012) explained that participatory democracy is hinged on the idea that citizens and their institutions cannot be separated from one another if the society wants a suitable system that is development oriented. He added that citizens have the right to contribute to issues that have collective effect on their lives and also work with the structure that is in place to accomplish the set targets or projections.

Based on these tenets of the theory, a collaborative effort of both the government and the citizens will enhance the development of any country. This is because the involvement of citizens in development programmes will guide against self-interest seeking, corruption and diversion of resources to areas that are not beneficial to the public. In this context of the study, local government which is the nearest government to the people should involve the community members in development programmes in order to ensure effectiveness, accountability and relevant development that satisfies the needs of the community members.

METHODOLOGY

The design that this study adopted is the cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study comprised of all the members of registered community associations who live within the different communities in the selected local government areas of Anambra States. These local governments are the areas where development agencies carried out citizen enlightenment programme. The Local Government and communities with registered associations.

The study adopted a simple random sampling technique to determine the sample size for this study. The simple random technique was used to select one development association with longest period of existence from each community in the three local government areas in Anambra State which were purposively chosen because of the development agencies' activities in these areas. In addition, the researcher adopted this technique because he believed that the oldest community development association would have participated greatly in the development activities in its community. Validated questionnaire relating to citizen enlightenment and community participation was the instrument that was used for the collection of data. The response rate of the questionnaire was 96%. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) was employed for demographic data analysis, while regression analysis was used to analyse the inferential statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Categories	Anambra State Frequency (208) and Percentage (100%)
Gender	Male	161(77.4%)
	Female	47(22.6%)
Age	20-29	36(17.3%)
	30-39	48(23.1%)
	40-49	47(22.6%)
	50-59	38(18.8%)
	60 and above	39(18.3%)
Educational Qualification	Religion studies	-
	Sch. Cert.	40(19.2%)
	WAEC/Grade II	61(29.3%)
	OND/NCE	51(24.5%)
	HND/Degree	48(23.1%)
Occupation Distribution	PG Education	8(3.8%)
	Farmer	74(35.6%)
	Trader/Artisan	125(60.1%)
	Public/Civil ser.	9(4.3%)
	Unemployed	-

The results in Table 1 reveal that majority of the respondents from Anambra were males with 77.4%, while 22.6% were females. The statistical results indicated that 17.3%, 23.1%, 22.6%, 18.8%, and 18.3% of the respondents were between the age brackets of 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, and above 60 respectively.

More also, the questionnaire required the respondents to indicate their educational qualification. As a result, 19.2%, 29.3%, 24.5%, 23.1% and 3.8% of the respondents respectively indicated that they qualified in the areas of Primary school leaving certificate, WAEC/Grade II, OND/NCE, HND/Degree, and postgraduate education. From the dimensions of occupational distribution, the respondents were also required to indicate areas in the categories of farmer, trader, artisan, public/civil servant and unemployed. Hence, while 35.6%, 60.1% and 4.3% of the respondents in Anambra respectively indicated that they are farmer, trader, artisan, and public/civil servant.

Test of Hypothesis

H₀ Citizen Enlightenment has no significant effect on community participation in Anambra State

Table 1.2: Regression Result for Effect of Citizen Enlightenment on Community Participation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	0.301 ^a	0.091	0.086	3.69579		
a. Predictors: (Constant) Citizen Enlightenment						
ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	280.712	1	280.712	20.552	.000 ^b
	Residual	2813.731	206	13.659		
	Total	3094.442	207			
a. Dependent Variable: Community Participation						
b. Predictors: (Constant) Citizen Enlightenment						
Coefficient						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	16.618	6.908		2.406	.017
	Citizen Enlightenment	.600	.132	.301	4.533	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Community Participation

Table 1.3 presents the result of the regression analysis for citizen enlightenment as predictor of community participation. The results show that the regression coefficient ($R=0.301$) indicates a moderate relationship between citizen enlightenment and community participation. The R-Squared statistic ($R^2= 0.091$) as explained by the fitted model implies that about 9.1% of the total variation in measure of community participation is traceable to the changes in citizen enlightenment. The ANOVA result shows that the model is statistically significant with F-value of 20.552 and p-value $p<0.05$. The regression coefficient, t statistic and p-value for the model shows that citizen enlightenment has a positive and significant effect on community participation ($\beta= 0.301$, $t = 4.533$, $p<0.05$). Therefore, it is apposite to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that citizen enlightenment has a positive and significant effect on communities in the participation of the development in Anambra State.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found that the enlightenment of citizens has a significant influence on community members as they participate in the development of their communities. This means that when citizens are enlightened in governmental and development issues, they will be able to initiate projects in the areas of their needs, monitor and evaluate the projects to ensure their successful completion and sustainability. In this way, the government will be held accountable to deliver relevant services that meet the needs of community members because of the involvement of the public.

Hence the study recommended that the public and private development agencies need to organize periodic enlightenment programmes in order to educate the citizens in a way that they can develop the capacities to participate with the governments for the development of their communities. Thus, enlightenment of citizens in the areas of initiating, monitoring, and evaluation of development projects in their communities will make government and other service providers to deliver relevant and sustainable services without any diversion of resources to non-priority areas.

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