

COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBOs) AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN IMO STATE

(A STUDY OF UMUCHOKO IBEME IN ISIALA MBAND LGA).

**A RESEARCH WORK PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC
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ABSTRACT

This research work on “Community Based Organizations (CBOS) and Rural Development in Imo State (A Study of Umuchoko Ibeme in Isiala Mbano LGA)”, investigates the various roles of rural development anchored by community based organizations in the locality. The objectives of this research work is directed at assessing the various rural development projects executed by CBOs in the study area; identifying the various challenges faced by CBOs in the discharge of their functions and suggesting ways of improvement on their activities. Primary data were used for the study and collected through questionnaire and interviews. The data elicited was analyzed and presented using tables and percentage while the hypothesis was tested using chi-square statistical tool. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were adopted for the analysis. The result of the study identified the various forms of developmental projects executed by the CBOs in the community and challenges they face in their day-to-day operations. The study also suggested means of promoting the affairs of CBOs in the community. The study recommended the need for Ministry of agriculture to exploit the need for community based organization in the planning and execution of the programs so that the community can benefit, this improving their socio-economic standards, and for community based organization to incorporate teachers in their activities, who are the role models to pupils and students in the community to improve the education standards in district.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Rural development or transformation has remained a burning issue in development efforts all over the world. This would probably remain so for several reasons. In developing countries like Nigeria, majority of the people live and find their means of livelihood in rural communities which are considered the single most coherent socio-political unit next to the family (Chiegwe, 2017). Furthermore, rural areas are characterized by high level of illiteracy, poverty, ignorance, disease, low income per head, poor infrastructure and poor living conditions. The situation makes life uncomfortable and has continued to fuel the mass influx of people from rural areas to the urban centres (Osunde and Omoruyi, 2019). Rural transformation is considered a very virile means of stemming the tide or scourge of rural-urban migration.

Consequently, the problem of developing rural communities is now a major concern in the development planning of developing economies. Adewale, Obanewa and Asokhia (2012), observed that the popularization of rural development and transformation as government policy in Nigeria is aimed at integrating the rural populace into the national development process. In this way, the idea of rural development is fast growing as a priority in the basic human needs of rural people.

The failure of governments' top-down approach and lack of involvement of the people at the grassroots in the bottom-up strategy have weakened the confidence of the public in central authorities. The inadequacy of government to make provisions in respect to the growing population has led to the adoption of self-help techniques by the people through collective action known as Community Based Organization, which arises as a result of the needs of the people to be met (Omoyibo, 2018). Here, people organize themselves based on appropriate institutional arrangement, mutual agreement and shared understanding to plan and execute public goods and services that directly touch their lives (Omoruyi, 2018). Communities therefore seek solace in indigenous institutions, which pressurize government for attention to development problems in their communities and/or undertake development programmes and projects that they observe that are very needful in their immediate communities.

From the primitive stage of man's existence to the time of civilization, development has always stemmed from the coming together of people or groups for the common interest of members. Grouping for mutual help and improvement of lives of community members has been accepted as a strategy of community development. This goes to show that the involvement of the people in addressing the felt-needs of their community is not a recent phenomenon.

Ever before the advent of colonialism, the 'we' consciousness that existed among the people made it possible for them to come together and articulate their efforts

towards action for meaningful development. There has been associations of titled men, married women, hunters, age grades, secret societies etc. These groups willingly, without any form of payment and compulsion and anticipation of one form of reward or the other, join together for a particular purpose; usually for the improvement of their lives and community (Kolawole, 2012). They help tremendously in meeting the welfare needs of the people.

The communal lifestyle that existed among the community members also made it possible for them to assess their problems, plan and ensure successful execution of projects. Thus the development of the communities through the mobilisation of the people and their resources has remained one of the greatest and oldest strategies of transformation in the African community. The most significant attribute of this strategy is that it is based on the philosophy of self-determination, self-reliance and self-help (Ejionye, 2015). They constitute the media for resource mobilization to confront local challenges. These include the finance and execution of projects, lobbying and nomination of representatives to government offices to air their views and press their needs and developing of human resources against future developmental needs of their immediate communities. Thus, their impacts have been felt in the areas of economic development, policy matters, health and infrastructure, environmental and physical development among others (Agbola, 2018).

Self-help projects undertaken through voluntary efforts and the active participation of individuals and corporate groups in communities constitute an important nucleus in grassroots development. This process involves organizing community members for identification of their needs, plan; and for actions to meet these needs with maximum reliance on their initiative and resources, with or without the assistance of government or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). According to Olisa and Obiukwu (2019), the growth and development of a town is mainly a reflection of the population growth, location of industries, specialization and organization of the inhabitants of the community.

In Imo State for instance, most people believe that it is the responsibility of the government and its functionaries to provide for the needs of the communities. It was maintained that government could, and should develop communities, provide basic infrastructure, social and physical amenities. Though the government is seen by some as a greater provider with unlimited resources, sociologists and development experts see collective efforts and self-help as inevitable tool in community development. The purpose of CBOs is to plan, implement, and monitor social and economic development programs and provide technical and financial help to the communities. CBOs positively affects the process of rural change i.e. increase in income, improvement in health, nutrition and literacy status of the populations. Various communities have been transformed through self-help, cooperation and mutual assistance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Community development has its root in self-help efforts hence the need for constitution of Community Based Organizations (CBOs). This research work is concerned with establishing the link between community based organizations and rural development. The CBOs has been seen as agent of development under the local government. The need of the people to build a strong rural economy and development has been neglected by the government of the day. This consequently implied the extent of neglect experienced in the rural areas by the present government that has necessitated the formation of the CBOs to help foster development where the government has failed.

The people of Umuchoko Ibeme in Isiala Mbano Local Government Area, just like most rural areas in Nigeria have suffered gross neglect and deprivation over the years. The people have waited too long for the government to provide them with basic infrastructures and thus have resorted to self-help efforts by the constitution of CBOs. With their collective efforts, many developmental projects have been executed such as construction of primary schools, market squares, culverts, bore-holes, health clinics and even rural electrification. The success recorded by the CBOs in community development was not without cost. The people went through thick and skin to pool resources together to execute the project(s).

These identified problems necessitated the study to draw a line of connection between Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and rural development in Umuchoko Ibeme in Isiala Mbano Local Government Area of Imo State.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to assess the relationship between Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and rural development.

The specific objective of the study include:

1. To assess the rural developmental projects executed by the CBOs in the study area.
2. To identify the various challenges confronting CBOs in the execution of rural developmental projects in the study area.
3. To suggest ways of improving the operations of CBOs in the community.

1.4 Research Question

1. What are the various developmental projects carried out by CBOs in your locality?
2. What are the challenges affecting the smooth operations of CBOs in your locality?
3. In what ways can the activities of CBOs in your locality be improved?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

H0: Community based organizations do not contribute to sustainable rural development.

H1: Community based organizations contribute to sustainable rural development.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This recommendations of this study will be valuable to the government, the rural populace, policy makers and researchers.

The findings of the study will provide government agencies, non- governmental agencies and members of rural communities with vital information that will enable them take a decision as to whether or not to evolve new strategies for implementing rural development programmes in the state. These new strategies will serve as models which could be tried out in other rural communities in Nigeria through community participation.

The recommendations of the study will assist policy makers and implementers of community development programmes to take appropriate measures that would ensure proper or successful implementation of rural development programmes through liaison with community based organizations.

The findings made will help to raise the level of people's awareness of the need to identify with, and participate in the implementation of rural development programmes.

New data generated and analyzed will be valuable to future researchers to understand the areas that demand research expansion on the subject scope.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study investigates the relationship between community based organizations and rural development in Umuchoko Ibeme village in Isiala Mbano local government area of Imo State.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

- 1. Un-cooperation of staff of the Local Government:** There were excessive delays involved in getting materials and opinions from the local government; hence most of the officials that should have provided useful information are usually absent or unwilling to divulge such information with fear of disclosing official information to external person(s).
- 2. Limited funding:** There was dearth of finance for this research due to harsh economic realities of this country and this made it difficult for researcher to transport herself to and fro everyday to the government ministry.

- 3. Time:** The timeframe allotted to this study was insufficient. This was as a result of the rushing in the activities of the institution which was cut short by school closure as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic which ravaged the country and the world.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Rurality: This refers to members of a particular locality with a particular interest and same felt needs.

Community based organization: This refers to an association of members of a particular locality experiencing a similar problem with an interest of alleviating that particular problem.

Community development: This refers to changes within the community brought about by its members in improving their social-economic standards

Rural Development: This refers to the efforts of the community, government and private agencies and community members to improve the socio-economic livelihoods of the rural populace.

Agencies: This refers to government departments and ministries as education, health, social services and County commission and county government.

Capacity building: This refers to the process of empowering group members with skills to enhance the sustenance of their socio-economic activities.

Sustainable Development: This refers to as the socio-economic activities of the community, government and other private organizations whose benefits can withstand the prevailing social, political and economic conditions.

Rural areas: This refers to areas characterized by low technology, high illiteracy level, absence of factories and industries, poor road networks with agriculture as its dominant economic activity.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

From the research work, the following were the findings were deduced:

1. The major developmental projects sponsored by the community based organizations in the community include food production, promotion of educational programmes, establishment of health institutions, financing of community entrepreneurship and the provision of basic infrastructures.
2. The challenges affecting the performance of CBOs in the study area include unclear identity, personalized leadership, differences in membership expectations, poor resource and revenue base, and overall unfavourable government policies do affect their operations.
3. Members suggested ways of improving the performance of CBOs to include training and education of members, improved leadership qualities, network of organizations, good government support and policies and improved organizational exposure.
4. The CBOs in the locality are majorly sponsored through membership contributions, government grants, donor grants/loans from financial institutions.

5.2 Conclusion

The study examined the relevance of Community Based Organizations in rural development. The study identified CBOs as bedrock for accelerated rural development. Through the instrumentality of their presence and projects, many lives are touched and community people's wellbeing are improved. The result of the study identified the various forms of developmental projects executed by the CBOs in the community and challenges they face in their day-to-day operations. The study also suggested means of promoting the affairs of CBOs in the community.

5.3 Recommendations

- ✓ There is need for Ministry of agriculture to exploit the need for community based organization in the planning and execution of the programs so that the community can benefit, this improving their socio-economic standards.
- ✓ The community based organization need to in cooperate teachers in the activities, who are the role models to pupils and students in the community to improve the education standards in district.
- ✓ There is need for enhanced funding, networking and capacity building to the community based organizations in preventive health measures.
- ✓ There is need for the community-based organization to diversify their entrepreneurship activities to include service and commercial activities.

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