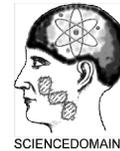




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Communal Facilities in Coastal Settlements of Ondo State, Nigeria: Assessment of Community-Based Organisations' Efforts Using the Facility Contributory Index Model

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ABSTRACT

Provision of Infrastructure is a facilitator for economic advancement at various levels. The impact on local economic development and the mitigation of poverty is immeasurable. Lack of or poor infrastructure has always impeded economic development. In some cases, CBOs embark on physical development projects to provide amenities in their communities. This paper uncovers the impact of facilities provided by CBOs (especially the CDAs) in Ilaje Local Government Area (a coastal LGA) of Ondo State, Nigeria on the economy of residents. The data were derived from 230 respondents through the administration of questionnaire and participant observation. The questionnaire probed into the perceived level of contribution of each physical infrastructure (provided by the CDAs) to the economy of the residents. Facility Contributory Index (FCI) model was developed using Likert's scale to analyze levels of contribution of the facilities. The results revealed among other things that facilities for electric power generation ranked highest on the FCI Table of assessment while recreational facilities had least contribution to residents' economy as a result of low provision and impact level. The relevance of effective power generating facility and other vital infrastructure to businesses and economic development was affirmed. Recommendations include policy review in order to facilitate collaboration between government, CBOs and NGOs with the intention to catalyse the efforts of CBOs in rural coastal communities.

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Keywords: Local economic development; community-based organizations; community development associations; facility contributory index; infrastructure; poverty.

1. INTRODUCTION

Provision of Infrastructural facilities is very vital to the development of any community. This may be responsible for their being referred to in some quarters as communal facilities. Such facilities can be anything that is vaguely tied to public sector services although private sector intervention cannot be completely excluded. These facilities include hospitals, schools, colleges, day-care centers, museums, libraries, nursing homes and homeless shelters to mention a few. Infrastructural facilities are a key factor in the development of sustainable communities. They are important for the communities they serve because in most cases, they not only serve as means by which the local residents are empowered but also through which volunteering services are executed by residents towards the development of their communities.

There is much to draw from the work of Klitgaard (2004). His argument progressed from earlier research results seemingly establishing (or antagonistic to the thought) that investment in rural infrastructure have great effects on poverty alleviation. First, reference was made to the works of Fan et al. (1999) exemplified in a study in India which employed a general equilibrium model to evaluate the effects of government expenditure in a number of sectors. This study proved that agricultural research and development and rural roads contributed greatly to increases in agricultural productivity among several other sectors such as power, health, education and irrigation.

Then he raised contrary arguments from other scholars who argued that rural roads favour the rich and can have undesirable consequences for the poor. The arguments are that first, the well-off take better advantage of the new opportunities presented by lower-cost transportation and energy (because they have more education and capital). Second, when "modern" forms of transportation and energy arrive in a locality, the poor who used to provide "primitive" forms of transportation and energy lose their livelihoods. Third, new infrastructure creates off-farm jobs, which in turn changes agriculture. The last argument was that women may lose, at least in the short run, as they have to take on the management of the farm as well as their duties as primary caregivers. There was also the problem of perception or psychological inferiority as greater mobility and communication create invidious comparisons, so the poor feel worse off even as they are "objectively" better off (Cook, 2003; Ali and Pernia, 2003).

Based on the evidence from the East Asian experience, Klitgaard concluded that first the contributions of infrastructure depend on the setting. For example, the economic value of an additional kilometer of rural road depends on where that road is, the quality of the road, the number of other existing roads, what complementary factors of production exist, economic policies, and the level of development (of the country, region, locality, etc). Second, the contributions of infrastructure can only be evaluated over a long time period. Decisions made today about road construction or power plants have effects far into the future. A study in India by researchers from the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) tried to estimate the time lag for various kinds of investments to have their maximum impact on poverty. The lag times determined by the model are seven years for roads and for power, eight years for irrigation, eleven years for education, and thirteen years for agricultural R&D

(Fan). Third, the contributions of infrastructure are indirect and multiple. Until recently, studies focused on aggregate effects on income. Now, studies are looking at household-level effects and they are going beyond money income.

So, for a proper evaluation there is need for many variables describing the setting, data over a long period of time, and ideally a variety of outcome variables. Accordingly, only few studies fulfill these dreamy criteria. And even if they did, it would be difficult to estimate the complicated contributions of infrastructure to development. The need to look beyond monetary benefits of infrastructure has been highlighted earlier in the works of Sen (1999) so that considering the ultimate goals of development, money is not the bottom line. Rather, it is enhancing human capabilities and freedoms. These include access to information, freedom to choose jobs, opportunities to enjoy leisure, the ability to move and choose, the opportunity to enjoy community life of various kinds, and others. In the review of the Sri Lankan experience, Gunatilaka (1999) showed that designing policies based on the accepted wisdom to maximize benefits of infrastructure provision is a difficult task. The impact and sustainability of such programmes are determined not only by factors such as quality, reliability and quantity, but also by variables such as who decides where they are sited, who actually benefits from them, and the efficiency of institutional structures through which other interventions are equally implemented and sustained.

In all, going by the words of Ali and Pernia there is now wider recognition, including in the international donor community, that if governance and institutional frameworks are strengthened, the linkage between infrastructure and reduction of poverty can be become stronger.

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) have roles to play in economic development of individuals and local communities. Nden (2004) sees CBOs as those organizations which are involved in various developmental activities that enhance the living standard of their communities. They exist in both rural and urban communities as non-profit oriented organizations, which help to promote economic activities and provide infrastructural facilities. CBOs act as facilitators or avenues through which initiatives are executed within or diffused into communities. They are usually “membership” organizations whose purpose is to advance the interests of their members and exist in form of cooperative societies, user associations, workers’ unions or producers associations (Helsming, 2001; Bingen, 2003); and youth clubs. Despite this, the main focus has always been to reduce poverty and improve the economy of individuals and well-being of households in a local setting.

Though the poor exists in urban and rural areas, findings have revealed that rural people are uniformly poorer on a per capita expenditure basis than those in urban areas (World Bank, 1995). Furthermore, the World Development Report 2000/2001 on “attacking poverty” had established a link between poverty and vulnerability with the risk of exposure to various environmental threats resulting from inability to afford an abode in a healthy and conducive environment (World Bank, 2001). This is not to mention hazards of pollution which some coastal areas experience in the face of water pollution especially from the Oil industry. In a measure, CBOs also participate in dealing with issues of environmental management and sanitization by embarking on simple projects such as construction of drainage channels and sewage facilities (Haider, 1998; Emmanuel et al, 2010).

The role of CBOs in the provision of communal infrastructure is becoming more pronounced in recent years. This is the function most Community Development Associations (CDAs); a type of CBOs. Though they may not be able to provide large scale infrastructure such as

roads to link other communities or take out agricultural products, their intervention cannot be ignored. They are a kind of NGOs which differ from other NGOs in both nature and purpose. Though local-based, they can spread upwards and outwards to community groups or professional groups or trade unions (Ogbuozobe, 2000). CBOs are grassroots or people's organization which may come together to pool their labour, to obtain credit to buy goods in bulk, or to promote and develop more sustainable forms of agriculture. Though CBOs are voluntary organizations, it is believed in certain quarters that they are somewhat compulsory as it is in the case of age-grades, community or clan associations and professional associations (Bratton, 1990).

Rate of proliferation of CBOs has become very high especially in developing countries. In recent times, according to recent World Bank findings, when NGOs increased from 6,000 to 30,000 in developing countries, the CBOs were in hundreds of thousands and have become increasingly effective (Shar, 2003). Both NGOs and CBOs have equally become increasingly effective in playing advocacy roles in different areas of human encounter by maintaining pressure on governments and international agencies and corporations to live up to their commitments, protect human rights, cancel external debts and assist in poverty alleviation (UNDP, 2001).

This paper focuses on the economic impact of facilities provided by CBOs in a rural coastal Local Government Area (LGA) of Ondo State, Nigeria. It covers the economic benefits of such infrastructure provided by these organizations from the residents' perspective and perception of performance of observable facilities. The scope does not include the specific details of activities or scale of projects of the CBOs from such organizations' account of their involvement. This is premised on the assumption that the residents (who are the benefactors) are in a better position to report on the impact of CBOs' activities on their economy and not the CBOs themselves. The facilities assessed by the residents include schools, markets, water facilities, recreational centers, community halls and electricity among others. Ilaje LGA was selected for this study because it is the only LGA in Ondo State, Nigeria that borders the Atlantic Ocean (being along the coast) which meets the target or delineation of rural coastal settlements. The study employs the application of Facility Contributory Index (FCI) model, which was developed using Likert's Scale, to determine the extent of impact of the provided infrastructure on the living standard of the residents in the study area. Similar index has been employed as Relative Satisfaction Index to compare the level of satisfaction derived by residents proximal to a selected dump site (in Lagos metropolis) with that of an area distant to the dump site (Bello, 2006; Bello and Ajayi, 2010). Over time, other researchers which have adopted similar models include Onibokun (1974); Bernhat et al. (1999); Mayraz et al. (2009).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Ilaje LGA is located in Ondo State in the South-western geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The total land area of the LGA is 2,300 square kilometers. It lies within 4°28' - 7°40'N and 5°41' - 7°23'E while the headquarters is located at Igbokoda town. The present population of the LGA is less than 350,000 persons going by a projection from the 2006 National Population Commission census figures. The major tribe is Ilaje while the dominant occupation of the people is fishing. Ilaje consists of two dominant kingdoms namely the Mahin and the Ugbo kingdoms with minor kingdoms as Aheri and Etikan. Ilaje LGA is divided into 12 political wards. Ilaje LGA represents a coastal area with mostly rural settings accommodating a relative lower income class.

Stratified random sampling was employed to select the investigated settlements and streets within the LGA. The political wards in the LGA were employed as the strata for the research. The 12 existing political wards in Ilaje LGA were used as the strata. Ten percent (10%) of settlements in each stratum were randomly selected to represent the sample size for number of settlements investigated. Both open and close ended questions were employed to elicit data from household-heads in the respective settlements. A total of 230 copies of the survey questionnaire were administered and retrieved from respondents. The Survey was conducted on a weekend to allow for easy and maximum access to respondents and to provide time off work for field assistants to administer the questionnaire. The field assistants were employed (from the junior staff workforce of the Local Government Secretariat) and sensitized on the nature of the research and how to gather the necessary data. The field assistants were indigenes of the Study Area who knew the terrain and could interact fluently in local dialect with the residents. Equally, executive members of selected CBOs in communities namely Mahin, Ayetoro and Igbokoda were interviewed on some of the operations of the CBOs in the Area.

Data processing involved uni-variate analysis resulting in the generation of tables and charts which were later employed in the development of the Facility Contributory Index (FCI) model. The model was further developed using Likert's Scale to obtain the level of contribution of the facilities provided by CBOs to the respondents' economy. Afon (2004) employed a similar analytical tool (which he called *Residents' Satisfaction Index*) to determine respondents' satisfaction level derived from 20 objective environmental attributes (Environmental Quality Indicators – EQI) in the urban core of Ogbomoso in Oyo State of Nigeria while using what he called the Actual Aspiration Index (AAI) as basis for comparison. He compared aspirations of the people with real satisfaction from the environmental indicators; thereby analyzing across two models. This research analyzes the relative impact of the facilities involved with same satisfaction model.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main goal of CBOs is to make provision for facilities, services and financial assistance for individuals and host communities in order to make life easier for residents and the community at large. In this regard, Likert's scale was employed in the rating of level of contribution of facilities provided by CBOs to the economy of the people in Ilaje LGA. The Facility Contributory Index (FCI) model was developed such that weights were assigned to the people's perception of the level of each facility contribution.

3.1 Facility Contribution for Ilaje LGA: Sum of Frequencies for Levels of Contribution

Tables 1 and 2 give the calculated values for Sum of Weighted Values (SWV) and the Facility Contributory Index for each facility in a ranked manner. The weighted values are first calculated by multiplying the weights attached to each level of contribution with the number of respondents. The Facilities on Tables 1 and 2 are arranged serially according to the ranking of the facilities based on number of respondents and their FCIs respectively.

The calculations for FCI and the values at the base of the tables are arrived at with the formulae given below:

$$\text{FCI} = \text{SWV}/\text{No. of Respondents}; \quad \text{Mean} = \text{FCI}/\text{No. of facilities}$$

Table 1. Facility contribution for Ilaje – frequencies for levels of contribution

S/N	Facility	Provided/ No. of Respondents	Very Little Contribution	Little Contribution	Fair Contribution	High Contribution	Very High Contribution
1.	Primary School (Classrooms and Furniture)	84	42	21	3	14	4
2.	Road (untarred)	72	40	5	11	11	5
3.	Market	69	19	11	16	19	4
4.	Electricity	55	22	16	6	7	4
5.	Secondary school (Classrooms and Furniture)	53	19	16	5	8	5
6.	Water supply	45	15	16	7	3	4
7.	Health facility	42	21	7	4	6	4
8.	Community hall	35	15	9	5	6	0
9.	Recreational Centre /Playground	27	15	7	0	5	0
10.	Waste Collection Facility	17	5	5	2	5	0

Source: Author's Computation, January 2008

Table 2. Facility contribution for Ilaje – sum of weighted average and facility contributory index computation

S/ N	Facility	Provided/ No. of Respondents	Freq. for Very Little Contribution X1	Freq. for Little Contribution X2	Freq. for Fair Contribution X3	Freq. for High Contribution X4	Freq. for Very High Contribution X5	SWV	FCI	FCI - Mean	(FCI - Mean) ²	Ranking
1.	Electricity	55	22	32	18	28	20	152	2.76	0.50	0.2500	1
2.	Market	69	19	22	48	76	20	185	2.68	0.42	0.1764	2
3.	Waste Collection	17	5	10	6	20	0	41	2.41	0.15	0.0225	3
4.	Secondary School Classrooms & Furniture	53	19	32	15	32	25	123	2.32	0.06	0.0036	4
5.	Water Supply	45	15	32	21	12	20	100	2.22	-0.04	0.0016	5
6.	Health Facility	42	21	14	12	24	20	91	2.17	-0.09	0.0081	6
7.	Road (Untarred)	72	40	10	33	44	25	152	2.11	-0.15	0.0225	7
7.	Community Hall	35	15	18	15	24	0	72	2.06	-0.2	0.0400	8
8.	Primary School Classrooms & Furniture	84	42	42	9	56	20	169	2.01	-0.25	0.0625	9
9.	Recreational Centre/ Playground	27	15	14	0	20	0	49	1.81	-0.45	0.2025	10
<i>Summation</i>									22.55		0.7897	
			MEAN = 22.55/10 = 2.26.		VARIANCE = 0.7897/10 = 0.0790.		SD = (0.0790) ^{0.5} = 0.2811.					

Source: Author's Computation, January 2008.

3.2 Facility Contribution for Ilaje – Sum of Weighted Average and Facility Contributory Index Computation

The outcome of the computation of the FCI for Ilaje shows that only 4 of the facilities have positive deviations above the mean of FCI. These facilities are electricity, market, waste disposal facility and secondary school. The facilities with negative deviations about the mean are water supply, health facility, road, community hall, primary school, and recreational centers. The highest FCI is 2.76 while the lowest is 1.81. An overview of the rankings of the facilities on Table 2 shows that electricity is ranked first with a FCI of 2.76. In a settlement like Ayetoro, the community has made provision for a generator which runs for certain number of hours during the day. CDAs in several other settlements in this LGA have made similar provisions for the people to have access to electricity, though this is not the case in every settlement. Electricity has great influence on life including the economic aspect of people's life. The case is not different in Ilaje settlements; hence the great value placed on the efforts of the CBOs in making alternative power supply available to the people.

Apart from the economic impact of electricity provision is the social undertone and the lively environment that it creates for residents of the communities. Furthermore, the cost of individual power generating sets in homes increases the level of risk to lives and properties in communities as most of such sets are powered by highly inflammable petrol (gasoline). The better alternative of Inverters which are common in some homes in cities is more expensive and most homes will not be able to afford or maintain such in Ilaje. The availability of electricity also promotes a sense of security in settlements as miscreants and thieves are known to perpetrate evils under the cover of darkness.

Community markets are common place within the LGA as some of these markets have been very useful in improving people's living standard. It is ranked second with a slightly lower FCI (2.68) than that of electricity. In Mahin town for example, the market complex which resulted from a joint venture between the community and UNDP serves as major trade centre for many settlements within and outside the settlement. Communities from several island settlements and others from hinterland converge at this market to trade in goods. Traders from the island settlements sell water resources such as fish and crustaceans and in turn buy other food stuff such as yam from traders from hinterland. Markets are major economic centers and the contribution of the CDA which in most cases coordinate the efforts of the community and work towards getting external support has really paid off in Ilaje. The reason inferred from a higher ranking of electricity than market is simply based on the presence of home-based enterprises which equally benefit from such facility as electricity. Home-based enterprises are common in the Nigerian environment. Some sell from shops attached to their residents (though this may be viewed as illegal conversions by the Town Planning Authorities) while others are in Containers converted to shops. Certain businesses at home are done from small wooden stands referred to as kiosks.

Next in ranking is waste collection facility. For waste collection facility, though the FCI is positive and higher than the average with a value of 2.41, only 17 respondents reacted to this question which implies a FCI that does not have a wide spread influence or a wider picture of the impact of the facility on the economy of the people within the LGA. In the few cases involved, when CDAs provide such facility, it turns out to be in the big settlements where such reduces running cost of businesses as residents will not need to spend on the collection and disposal of their refuse. It is necessary to also inform that waste generation in these settlements are not of high volume while several small settlements exist on water and

some dump their waste in water around them. Additionally, contrary to what obtains in some urban centers where “scavengers” pick from dumps and bins for recycling process or re-use to earn a living, such businesses do not thrive in rural areas. In urban centers, some ignore the stigma attached to such economic pursuit but the population of rural areas is more of close-knit extended family setting where image protection is vital.

Secondary schools provided associated businesses. Communal efforts which come in form of furniture supply and the provision of certain facilities needed in schools have been of great support. In this case, its FCI of 2.32 puts it in the 4th position on the Table with a deviation of just 0.13 above the mean. Furthermore the benefits of trading in stationery and confectionaries around school premises cannot be ruled out. Several residents around schools are the greatest benefactors of this facility in rural communities. At the times of Schools Sports Competition popularly referred to as Inter-House Sports Competitions, businesses even boom more with parents, spectators and friends of students present to partake in the fun of the day. It is however not surprising that this ranks below electricity and market since mainly residents close to the schools benefit from such opportunities and Inter-House Sports Competition only happens once in a year.

Water supply would only have a FCI of 2.22 with a negative deviation of -0.04 about the mean. The FCI is very close to the average FCI which indicates that in the case where this is provided by CDAs, the influence on individual economy within the communities involved could not be viewed as high. Except for those who locally produced sachet water for sales, the direct economic impact of such facility is minimal. Most communities could not afford the alternative of a functional borehole. The cost of sinking such boreholes alone as a community appeared quite enormous. The overhead tank or reservoir together with the power supply and other supporting facilities definitely add to the cost of providing such water supply not to mention the maintenance cost. Since most of such boreholes are run on electricity, the cost of running generators to pump the water would equally add to the running cost. Another dimension to the problem of water is the underground water pollution caused by the Oil Installations in the Niger-Delta region of the country.

The health facility is ranked sixth with FCI of 2.17 which is also below the mean of FCI. This did not come as a surprise as such facilities are hardly of interest to people due to the level of literacy and professionalism required to run such facilities. Additionally, the indirect effects of such may not be appreciated in economic terms by rural dwellers. In the urban place, where many have come to understand that health is wealth, provision of and ranking of health centers or other forms of health facilities could be high.

For Roads, CDAs in this environment do not have the economic power to provide roads which meet required standards. In fact most of the settlements are not linked by roads and do not possess internal link roads. In most cases they are accessible by boats and linked internally by mainly wide walkways. The state government constructed a 35-kilometre road from Igbokoda to Ugbonla while another 45-kilometre road was under construction from Aboto to Olokola, the site of the Free Trade Zone. However, this is a government venture and not a community project. The best that could be achieved by the CDAs was to clear and grade some paths for easy mobility within and around the community and equally for transportation of their wares to the market. Road provision has a FCI of 2.11 and is ranked seventh on the FCI Table with a negative deviation of -0.15 about the mean.

Next to road on the FCI Table is Community Hall. Community halls have not accrued much economic benefits to the people in Ilaje (despite its potentials). Community hall has a low

FCI of 2.06 (with negative deviation of -0.20) and was ranked eight on the Table. The fact that most community halls are not attractive or big enough and do not attract attention as venues for ceremonies in most settlements in Ilaje (except for big settlements like Ayetoro, Ugbonla and Ode-Mahin) could be responsible for this. Consequently, the individuals around them have not derived betterment effects from their existence. Most times they are venues for town meetings. In urban centers, such halls perform several functions ranging from community meetings and enlightenment programmers to ceremonies though the private sector has recently emerged with better options in form of Event Centers for ceremonies.

Primary schools have negative deviation of -0.18 about the mean with FCI of 2.01 while it ranked ninth. The children in the schools are from poor homes most of which do not have enough to even afford the basic needs to facilitate the education of their children. The nearby residents around the schools hardly get anything from the sales to children of such schools. This is contrary to the case with secondary school where some of the students engage in petty jobs in order to have extra "pocket money" to spend. With this they have more to offer economically to traders living around the school premises. This could be responsible for the wide difference in the ranking of these two levels of education.

Recreational centers or playgrounds are mainly available for playing football and do not usually yield benefits to the people. No wonder the FCI is as low as 1.81. It is easy for the CDAs to take steps to clear sites for recreational use for the people. As a matter of fact, the Youth Associations are more helpful in this area as it is their 'jurisdiction' to initiate and take care of such initiatives. But this hardly brings any financial or economic benefits to the community. Most have not come to understand the need to organize competitions which will attract crowd and consequently businesses and sales to certain parts of their settlement thereby yielding economic benefits to residents.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, it has been discovered that CBOs in rural coastal areas of south-western Nigeria have provided certain facilities to improve the economy of residents thereby helping to alleviate poverty in the area. In this respect, residents have assessed the impact of these CBOs. Thus it has been discovered that the provision of electricity through power generating plants and construction of communal markets were perceived as highest contributors to the people's economy. For electricity, this has emanated from the benefits which accrue to traders at every nook and cranny of the communities including those with home-based enterprises while the influence of sales for traders at markets constructed in specified locations (some of which attract visitors from outside specific communities) favours market construction. The primary school and recreational facility ranked lowest in their contribution to the people's economy since most residents including those around the primary schools do not benefit economically from them and recreation has not properly taken its root in form of competitive sports which can economically benefit individuals and the communities at large. The difficult terrain of the area has not encouraged such development. Between these four facilities are several others with varying impact level.

There is great need for CBOs to intensify and sustain efforts. The responsibility of coordinating such efforts through policy generation and review lies with the government. Partnership between government and CDAs is equally necessary in order to facilitate the efforts of CDAs towards infrastructural development of communities to ultimately catalyse poverty alleviation and LED. This starts with initiation of a periodic forum for interaction between the government and the CDAs. Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is suggested

within a decentralised power generation system which puts power supply in the hands of state governments. CDAs are to provide security for power installations and facilities in their communities as part of their contribution to provision of stable power supply. Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation approach should be introduced by CBOs to monitor projects while adequate feedback mechanism should be put in place.

CDAs will continue to aid the bottom-up approach to infrastructural and economic development. The need to continue exploring this aspect of the society will ever remain germane to the welfare of the human race, the development of communities and alleviation of poverty.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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