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## **Relationship between Rural Infrastructural Provisions and Development in Enugu, Nigeria.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Rural settlements in Enugu are presently marginalized in the provision of basic amenities and infrastructures, especially when compared with their urban counterparts. Provision of infrastructure in Udi L.G.A is uneven and inadequate which in turn affect industrialization. This study tries to review the causes of low or inadequate infrastructure facilities in Udi L.G.A that is hindering both rural planning and development efforts. The study also sought to ascertain the effect of the combined influence of population size and distance from the capital city, Enugu, on the provision of infrastructure facilities in the 25 communities in the LGA. The result revealed that factors of planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation highly influence infrastructure provision in the study area. The study recommends that rural planning should be more thorough, and need to incorporate the people and community's needs.*

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### **1.0 Introduction**

A rural area is a settlement whose predominant activities are primary in nature, like agriculture, mining, fishing,

and so on. According to the UN (2003), a rural area is any settlement with less than 20,000 people. In another angle, a rural area normally lacks adequate

provision of social and infrastructure facilities that enhance the good life as obtainable in most urban areas.

No matter the angle from which a rural area is viewed, the basic concern here is that most rural areas in Nigeria, like in most of Africa, are under-developed and in dire need of planning to bring them to acceptable standards. Good life could be achieved through planning, since the procedure consists of present- and future-oriented actions or formulations, whose ultimate effects are to achieve a certain degree of the "good life" for the inhabitants (Chima, 1998). So, the focus of all rural planning activities is on all the rural areas outside the limits of urban administration. However, rural areas do not exist in isolation from the urban areas. There are therefore some levels of linkages and interactions between the two. Consequently, rural planning should incorporate the elements of this rural-urban link. Rural planning and development consist of efforts to better the lots of the rural environment, at all levels of government no matter the criteria used to define a rural area.

In the views of Mba *et al* (1992), the concept of rural planning and development aims at ensuring that man and the communities in which he lives can look far ahead to a life spent in the best possible social and economic conditions and in a pleasant environment permitting the full development of the individual and groups. This corroborate the views of Ugwu (1990), who believes that rural planning helps in the achievement of general development of

rural areas by taking into recognizance present and future requirements that would ensure sustained development. Rural planning entails the imitating, formulating and implementing plans and policies to redress the imbalance between the rural and urban areas.

Accordingly, rural development is the attainment of a number of ideals of modernization such as a rise in productivity, social and economic equalization, modern knowledge, improved institution and attitudes and a rational co-coordinated system of policy measures, that can remove the most undesirable conditions in the social system that have perpetuated a state of under development (Black, 1966). In fact, for rural planning to achieve comfort and development is not an easy thing. To achieve meaningful development from planning is painstaking, gradual, and needs a high degree of commitment in the execution, implementation and monitoring of the planning tenets. Development is all encompassing. It is a gradual growth in the economy and standard of living of an individual or groups in an area. As such development cannot be achieved in a haphazard manner as articulated by Mba *et al* (1992), the major mistake so far as par the rural areas has been the piece meal and uncoordinated attempt at development of infrastructure and industries. He stressed that any attempt at isolated planning of the rural areas may be as futile as the failed isolated urban planning approaches. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between rural infrastructural

provisions and development in Udi L.G.A, Enugu, Nigeria

## 2.0 Literature Review

The main cause of disparity between the rural and urban areas is the disequilibria in the provision and distribution of essential infrastructures and facilities, weighted in favour of urban areas. Such infrastructures include schools, hospitals transportation networks and the like (Iyoha, 1973; Meisterr, 1976). There is therefore the dire need for adequate rural planning to ensure greater rural development. Rural planning does not only connote the provision of infrastructures, instead it does more than that. Just as the urban landscape is planned in all its ramifications, so also should rural areas be.

Economic opportunities embrace industries and other requisite infrastructure capable of keeping the people economically independent and viable. Moreover, small-scale industries should be set up in the area to forestall out migration to the cities for job plus the general improvement in the quality of rural environment via the provision of modern facilities and infrastructure for the use and enjoyment of the people while still alive. Rural planning and development should also take note on rural energy supply, which tended to make many rural inhabitants not comfortable with their environment.

According to Arunsi (2000), if better life was to be enhanced in the rural area, then energy supplies should be viewed with great concern since energy help in the sustenance of rural industries

that may spark off the provision of rural amenities and general development of the rural areas. He recommends for the planning of rural energy (fossil fuel, coal, oil, natural gas, biomass, electricity) that will be more efficient, cheaper and adequate. Hurley (1981) considered energy a critical aspect of rural planning and development processes which is expended in agricultural operations, in food processing and transportation; in the production of fertilizers, pesticides and farm equipment it is necessary for industrial operations that provide jobs and is required for cooking, for household light and heat, and for the construction and operation of the infrastructure needed for schools, health centers and water supply.

Chima (1998) opined the need for rural infrastructure planning. According to him, water should be provided to the rural areas free to justify their large numbers and also the taxes they pay, noting that rural areas in Nigeria lack virtually most of the basic social amenities. However, effective planning of rural areas in whatever capacity should not be haphazard in nature in order not to defeat the aim. The main aim of the development and planning include: to stimulate growth of capital in the rural areas; to provide diversified employment opportunities, and to provide amenities and services in the rural areas. Mba et al (1992)

It is better to plan for rural infrastructure facilities ahead of rural industrialization than the opposite. Mba et al (1992) He stressed that the

importance of infrastructure to rural development and planning can not be over emphasized because it may well be the determinant of the extent to which rural development can be successful and can be regarded as an integral part of the socioeconomic development and planning package, (Mba, 1978). For adequate rural planning and development, Mba et al (1992) outlined a number of programmes and steps that should be followed. According to him, planners charged with the task of rational decision for present and future arrangement / execution of programmes should be cautious and thorough. The steps included firstly gathering of information from the rural or urban areas and analyzing it; formulation of goals and objectives, plan design, evaluation and choice of alternatives, implementation of rural development programmes, and monitoring of rural development programmes.

Mba stressed that other professionals may be involved in the planning and execution of rural programmes apart from the town planners. There is the need for the integration of the professional views of the architects, estate surveyors, land surveyors, economists, geographers, etc for a thorough output. The present trend in the infrastructure provision across Nigeria shows high disparities between rural and urban areas in terms of roads, water supply, electrification, agriculture, education, health and communication (World Bank Report, 2002). Efficient rural planning would also require an improved knowledge base of rural and

regional planning to rationally help policy makers to marshal the tools to deal systematically with rural problem; would preserve the existing but important ecological processes; embark on efficient and appropriate land use demarcation if necessary; maximizing healthy living condition in the plan; producing aesthetically pleasing environment; ensuring efficient planning for socio-economic and government institutions, and planning for human services in the rural areas. Certain obstacles tend to hinder the effective implementation of rural planning objectives: Shortage of funds; poor staffing conditions; conflict of planning programmes; and obstructing influences of tradition and culture (Chima, 1998).

Government, non-governmental institutions, and planning authorities are advised to be considering developing all rural areas irrespective of population and distances separating them from capitals or other parameters if the much talked sustainable rural development should be realized. To enhance rural development, growth poles can be developed for a group of communities at a neutral center; from there development can diffuse to other areas. As every rural area may not have large or the same population neither size nor be near the capital city simultaneously, government should ensure that rural planning disregards discriminations in any guise or form.

### **3.0 Infrastructure Planning Strategy**

It is important to have an effective infrastructure planning strategy or strategies for the rural areas. This is in

view of the low population size of many communities, the dispersed nature of settlements and the remoteness or distance of most rural settlements from the government seat of power. Though, infrastructure planning in terms of adequacy of facilities and human services is becoming an important aspect of rural planning, it has not been effective and efficient. The planner is normally faced with the constraint of meeting the infrastructure planning need with scanty resources. Umeh, 2004 facilities should be sited so as to minimize travel cost by locating facilities at several points. The remoteness of many rural settlements and the staggering distance between settlements make this option viable. Umeh maintained that there are limited means of transportation, poor social mixture to break ethnic barriers, all of which affect accessibility to facilities, unfavourable physical terrain, and low income that limits spending on travels.

Therefore, it is advised that planners should locate facilities at central location to draw patronage from immediate surroundings. Moreover, facilities to be planned for should be what the community wants. Planners in this regard may apply the principle of

threshold, which is defined as the minimum usage volume or population needed to support facilities, (Berry et al, 1971). Planners may use the growth pole strategy. Perroux (1953 and Livingstone (1971) developed growth pole. Growth does not apply everywhere simultaneously, but manifests in points or poles of growth before spreading out Perroux (1953). In this Principle, facilities can be located at selected places which with time as the areas develop may scatter development to other areas (Perroux, 1953). Having located the facilities, government should also site industries especially agro-allied industries to get the inhabitants fully engaged so as to minimize rural-urban drift. Educational institutions and other development-oriented establishments should also be sited for maximum rural development. Individuals should complement government efforts by setting up small to medium scale industries and other facilities.

#### **4.0 Methods and Data Analysis**

The study area Udi LGA was divided into five clans for workability (Uchegbu, 2005). In all, there were original 25 communities in Udi LGA as shown on Table 1.

**Table 1. Clans in Udi L.G.A and number of communities**

| S/No | Clans        | No of communities |
|------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1    | Umuneke      | 8                 |
| 2    | Ojebe Ogene  | 7                 |
| 3    | Ugwunye      | 5                 |
| 4    | Ngwo         | 2                 |
| 5    | Oshie        | 3                 |
|      | <b>Total</b> | <b>25</b>         |

Source: Uchegbu (2005)

The sampling technique was applied to get a sample from the entire communities. The ultimate aim of sampling according to Nwabuoke (1986), is that of making inference about the whole by studying only a part, and making generalization based on the sample. We selected randomly two communities from each clan, so that a total of ten communities were studied. Further, well-structured open ended and closed ended questionnaires were administered to two executives from each community's town Union. As such the sample size was 20. The questions in the questionnaire focused on the causes of low or inadequate infrastructure facilities in Udi L.G.A, which have affected tremendously adequate rural planning for enhanced development. The infrastructure / social amenities are: tarred or quality road, electricity, pipe

borne water, post office, health centre, industry, banks, schools, and market. Out of 9 facilities studied, each community indicated the number of facilities it had from the government, whether Local, State or Federal.

Opinions vary as shown in Table 2 on the causes of government apathy in rural infrastructure provisions. According to Jorgensen (1982), people in the lower income scale in the developing countries reside for most part in rural areas; either in clustered communities or scattered residences where requisite service are scarce or completely lacking. It has been argued that small population provide small labour force / human resource and hence is capable of making assumable use of infrastructure because of size of population.

**Table 2: Facilities / Population of each Community**

| S/No | Randomly chosen Communities | No. of facilities | Population      | Distance (km) from state Capital |
|------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1    | Udi                         | 8                 | 6492            | 25                               |
| 2    | Umuabi                      | 4                 | 8494            | 30                               |
| 3    | Abor                        | 4                 | 8023            | 11.75                            |
| 4    | Umuungbe                    | 3                 | 9571            | 25.2                             |
| 5    | Affa                        | 3                 | 20,547          | 24.9                             |
| 6    | Egede                       | 3                 | 8776            | 22.5                             |
| 7    | Ngwo Asa                    | 9                 | 38425           | 10                               |
| 8    | Eke                         | 5                 | 8106            | 18                               |
| 9    | Obioma                      | 3                 | 5007            | 20                               |
|      |                             | EY                | EX <sub>1</sub> | EX <sub>2</sub>                  |

Sources: Uchegbu (2005)

### 5.0 Conclusion and Discussion

Agu (1990) wrote on the main causes of rural-urban migration in Nigeria especially in Udi L.G.A. which collaborates with the finding of Umeh (2004). Both studies found that the main cause was inadequate or lack of economic opportunities in the area. Their studies also found out that rural infrastructure in the form of good roads, pipe borne water, electricity, hospitals/maternity, postal and telecommunication facilities, cultural and educational facilities were inadequate in the area. They suggested among others, the immediate restructuring in the technology and rural agriculture of the rural areas for improved food supply and engagement of youths in agricultural processes.

The importance of adequate infrastructure planning and development cannot be over emphasized. As a matter of fact the main difference between rural area and an urban area chiefly lies in the

presence of infrastructure. Infrastructure presence in the form of electricity, communication gadgets, health facilities, good roads and networks, educational institutions, agriculture and agricultural institution, adequate water supplies etc. would attract industrial growth. Even in some rural areas that enjoy electricity supply small scale industries thrive.

In Udi town of Udi L.G.A, small scale industries and other commercial and ancillary/miscellaneous services are obtained. Development is a gradual process. If the trend of provision of infrastructure should be continued, then rural development in Udi is assured. Therefore, Planners should study the present status quo, by having an interactive session with the rural inhabitants before planning for them. Through this, information could be collected on infrastructure existing and, the infrastructure of needs of a particular area(s).

In conclusion, to be ensure effective rural planning and development in Udi L.G.A, interaction between rural inhabitants must be overcome. The planning should be made, implemented/ executed, monitored, and reviewed from time to time. The above are the essential tenets of planning for any geographic area. After this, the population of each community or groups of communities should be noted to find out the types of

facilities that can be sustainably maintained by the communities. The location of each rural area in relation to the capital should be appraised. The study reveals that in Udi L.G.A there is a significant relationship between the number of facilities provided by the community and the development achieved by these communities in the Local Government Area.

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