



## Anambra State Community Choose Your Project Initiative and Infrastructural Development under the Obiano Administration, 2014-2022

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper examined the impact of Community Choose their Project Initiative (CPI) on Community Development in Anambra State between 2014 and 2022. The This study adopted the descriptive survey research design, while the Empowerment theory of development formed the theoretical framework of analysis. The study discovered that; Community Choose Your Project Initiative impacted on the provision of water bore hole, construction of roads, markets and healthcare facilities in Anambra State under the Obiano Administration, 2014-2022. Community project initiative has impacted on the provision of infrastructure/ social amenities. The study concluded that community-based or community-dictated development approach involves the movement of the people designed to promote better living for the whole community within the active participation of, and if possible on the initiative of the community concerned. Based on the foregoing, the study recommended that; since the Community Chose Your Project Initiative impacted on community development through the provision of water bore holes, markets, construction of roads and healthcare facilities, local governments should involve their communities in the inherence and protection of public facilities provided for them such as electricity, pipe-borne water school building, health facilities, among others, such community involvement has the potential of creating an enormous sense of community.*

## Introduction

Developmental challenge is one of the greatest problems faced by various countries of the world be it developed, developing, undeveloped or underdeveloped. This is because while some of these countries are striving for a breakthrough, others are systematically trying to advance (Onwunyi, 2021). Nigeria is not left out in the bid to lift the masses from the burden of extreme poverty, hunger, starvation, disease, high mortality rate, infrastructural decay or absence and the like. These challenges though existing in various regions of the country but have become more prevalent in the rural areas. Though attempts have been made by government at all levels to ensure a breakeven of this challenges but it has left much to be desired as the rural areas are still swallowing in abject poverty.

In fact, experience has shown that given access to information and appropriate support, communities can effectively organize to provide goods and services that meet their immediate priorities. This is because communities have considerably capacity to plan and implement programmes when empowered (Trade 2001). Poor Infrastructure and social amenities pose a big problem which poor electricity, waterborne disease due to lack of good water, and water-related diseases such as guinea worm, trachoma, diarrhea, dysentery, and skin diseases such as yaws were diseases that often incapacitate and blight human potentials for life. Infant and child mortality were also of high reoccurrence. Inhabitants of the area, especially women and children trekked long distances hunting for water, leaving behind their homes, families, and farms for long periods of time (World Vision Ghana, 2007a; 2007b). The burden of collecting water from distant sources also heavily involved school-aged children. These children were frequently absent from school or most often late to school (World Vision 1989; 1996). Leadership and lack of community participation also poses a very big threat to community development. There is lack of integrity, accountability and transparency on the part of people who are supposed to implement developmental projects in the community areas.

Nwakobi (2007) laments that public funds (made for community projects) are stashed away in bank vaults, while an overwhelming proportion of the population live in abject poverty. An attempt at solving some of these community problems has been the concern of the government over years hence the introduction of Community Choose Your Project Initiative. The inability of the community members given some project to complete the Community Choose Your Project Initiative and community development in Anambra State has been slowing the programme down. This includes a situation where there are communities yet to complete the second

phase of the Community Choose Your Project Initiative in Anambra State, which actually debared them from participating in the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase (Onwunyi, and Umeifekwem, 2023).

## Theoretical Orientation

This paper was anchored on the Empowerment theory of development. The concept of “empowerment” has been accepted widely in recent years and now is used extensively in the field of social work (Gutierrez, Parsons, & Cox, 2000). The origin of empowerment as a form of theory can be traced to the Brazilian humanitarian and educator, Freire (1999), when he suggested a plan for liberating the oppressed people of the world through education. Empowerment was most commonly associated with alternative approaches to psychological or social development and the concern for local, grassroots community-based movement and initiative (Parpart, Rai, & Staudt, 2003). The term has become a widely used word in the social science in the last decade across a broad variety of disciplines such as community psychology, management, political theory, social work, education, women studies, and sociology (Lincoln, Travers, Ackers, & Wilkinson, 2002).

First, the notion of collective belonging, namely referring to “belonging to the social networks of their peers, and an emphasis on autonomy while being part of the collective and social solidarity vis-à-vis establishment” (Boehm & Staples, 2004), was one of the most frequently reported components of collective empowerment in literature. The notion was described as community belonging (Itzhaky & York, 2000) and identification with similar others (Gutierrez, 1990). Second, Boehm and Staples (2004), presented three components: (a) collective belonging, (b) involvement in, and (c) control over organizations in the community. The author examined empowerment from the consumer’s and social worker’s points of view.

Finally, the notion of community building was one of the critical components of collective empowerment. Community building refers to creating a sense of community among residents that will increase its ability to work together, problem solving, and make group decisions for social change (Fetterson, 2002; Mattessich & Monsey, 1997). The author describes it as social cohesion (Peterson et al., 2005) and a sense of personal freedom (Gutierrez, 2000). According to Gutierrez (2000), the goal of collective empowerment practices is to help communities develop the ability to change negative situations and prevent the recurrence of the problems that created the situations. This goal cannot be accomplished without the establishment of community building. In carefully reviewing the conceptual interrelations between the components of collective empowerment, the studies were not significantly different, but consistent with each other.

Empowerment can be synthesized into five progressive stages: an existing social disturbance, conscientizing, mobilizing, maximizing, and creating a new order. The goal of collective empowerment is to establish community building, so that members of a given community can feel a sense of freedom, belonging, and power that can lead to constructive social change. The empowerment process is not a constant, but rather a continuing, development that involves many changes and whereby an individual or group is able to strengthen and exercise the ability to act to gain control and mastery over life, community, and society. As long as empowerment is a process of both thought and action, it is dynamic and constantly evolving (Foster-Fishman et al., 1998; Staples, 1990).

Empowerment theory is relevant to this study in the sense that the disadvantaged or oppressed, the aged, and the rural poor, can actualize the latent powers that an individual or group possesses or enable them to use their capacities and power more effectively. This means that empower can be a remedy for individuals and groups with disadvantage and oppression by conscientizing themselves, mobilizing others to ensure that government provide social amenities such as health care, schools, water and other necessities of life to make life meaningful for the rural dwellers. According to Olaleye (2010) empowerment can also be used to prevent criminal behaviors among the youth through training and the provision of needed tools to start a business of their own.

## Methodology

In this study, the research design that was adopted is the survey design, which was aimed at finding out how Community Choose Your Project Initiative affects community development in in Anambra State under the Obiano Administration, 2014-2022. This study focused on the Community Choose Your Project Initiative and community development in Anambra State, with an attention on the chose your project initiative of the Obiano administration. Anambra state is located at South-Eastern part of Nigeria with its administrative headquarter at Awka.

The population of the study comprises of all the inhabitants of the various communities that make up of the selected six (6) local government area which were drawn from the three (3) senatorial districts (zones) in Anambra state. These local government areas were selected based on the status of either rural or urban to adequately enhance balancing. These local governments are; rural- Awka North, Anambra East and Orumba North; Urban-Idemili North, Onitsha North and Ihiala Local Government Area.

A sample is a sub-set of a population observed for the purpose of making inference on the population. In view of this, the researcher chose a sample size using the Taro-Yamane's formula.

Therefore, the sample size of the study was six hundred (600). However, the number of questionnaire administered to each Local Government Area was determined through stratified random sampling technique using the Bowley's proportional allocation formula as cited in Omesonye, (2013).

This study adopted both primary and secondary sources of data collection. Thus, the primary data was sourced from respondents through the distributed structured questionnaire. While, the secondary sources of data were obtained from textbooks, journal publications, conference papers, periodicals, newspapers, projects, internet materials and other relevant documents and articles gotten from the Anambra State Community and Social Development Ministry, Department of Political Science Library, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University.

Data collection for this study was done through the use of structured questionnaire administered to the respondents, face to face interview method, and engagement in focus group discussion. The data collected were presented on a frequency distribution table and in a five point Likert scale method and further analyzed using quantitative method of data analysis using statistical methods like frequency distribution tables, simple percentage (%), Mean (X) was also used in order to determine the most accepted questionnaire items after which, Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) parametric test was further used in testing each of the hypotheses formulated research questions, at 0.05 (5%) significant level.

## Literature Review

### Conceptual Clarifications

The earlier and most commonly held meaning of 'community' refers to people living in a place who have face-to-face contact with each other. Based on this assertion Tönnies (1955) classified community as 'Gemeinschaft' to refer to preindustrial social formation where face-to-face contact was possible in rural and tribal society. With changes in industrialized society, a new society emerged that was more akin to impersonal contact amongst its people. People related with each in formal ways and life was contractual. Tönnies denoted this with the term 'Gesellschaft'. This conceptualization served the purpose of defining and conceptualizing community in earlier days; however, such a tight compartmentalization changed over time as community crossed physical boundaries of place and people could connect with each other by using technologies and still fulfil most of the functions of the community.

An understanding of the concept of development will give a clearer picture of community development. Hornby (2013) defines development as the gradual growth of something so that it becomes more advanced, stronger, etc.; the process of producing or creating

something new. This definition implies that development involves a gradual or advancement through progressive changes. Umehali (2016) sees the changes to be multi-dimensional involving changes in structures, attitude and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth; the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty.

Community development is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Community development processes and practices entails the inclusion and participation of different interest groups, stakeholders and actors including the people whose livelihood projects are geared at improving, government and non-governmental bodies, funding organizations, project experts and executors (Akande, 2010; Nseabasi, 2012).

### **Community Choose Your Project Initiative**

Community Choose Your Project Initiative is an initiative derived from bottom up approach of Community Development. The Anambra government introduced “choose your community project” as a key model for participatory development. The project is significant in the ways in which it breeds in the Anambra State indigenes and residents a sense of belonging and participation in governance. Each community in the State – numbering 181 – was made to choose a 20 Million Naira worth of project of their choice. This development strategy is designed in a manner that communities led by the President-Generals and the traditional rulers have a voice in deciding their pressing need within the community – one that needs government intervention. This is a bottom-top approach to development, and thus participatory in nature. Participatory Development has been defined as “a process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over development initiatives, and over the decisions and resources that affect themselves” (Asian Development Bank, 1996).

In the “choose your projects” initiative of the Anambra State government, the service provider must be an indigene of the community and is expected to source both material and human resources for the project from within the locality. In this way, it strengthens civil society and the economy by empowering groups, communities and organizations in the community, engaging local population in development projects. Most importantly, it enhances the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of development programmes. The “Choose your projects initiative” has had over 95% success rate as communities took ownership of the projects they desired – hospitals, schools, lock-up shops, skills acquisition centers, NYSC corp member's lodge, laboratories, pavilions, etc. Communities that finish their projects also embark on another N20M worth community project (Onwunyi and Okonkwo, 2021).

This development initiative touched the lives of local citizens and arguably provided the impetus for the overwhelming victory of Governor Obiano APGA-led government in the November 18, 2017 governorship election. In the election, the governor won with very clear margins in all the 21 local governments in the State (what has been called 21/21 victory), a first in the history of Nigerian politics.

Community Choose Your Project Initiative shows that people's desire, interest and comfort in participating in the affairs of their families, work places, and governance have been the source of all agitations in mankind. From the colonial period to the modern era has witnessed lots of agitations and conflicts as a result of oppression, suppressions and neglect in issues that concern them. A lot of work have been done on people's participation or democratic process in line with the with one main objective and that is to encourage local community and local players to express their views in defining the development course for their area in line with their own views, expectations, plans and their socio cultural life style. It is all known that the new projects and programmes may alter their long existing pattern of life, hence its adoption and implementation has to have a soft landing so as not to disorganize the inhabitants as such impositions would lead to greater resistance and failures of the programmes.

Community Choose Your Project Initiative approach tends to be locally focused attempts by groups to achieve change in policy and practice and such collective community action consists of relatively small-scale local attempts to negotiate with power holders and initiate projects and programmes they felt would be of great benefit to the communities and enhance their wellbeing. In this case the community tends to be more responsive and active in participation and completion of the projects.

### **Community Choose Your Project Initiative and Provision of Infrastructure/Social Amenities**

The introduction of Community Choose Your Project Initiative according to Onwunyi, Okonkwo and Obiefuna (2023), equally provided jobs for the youth, security (building of police station for instance) in some communities. Furthermore, the development policy equally helped to address the challenges of community development, with an objective to uplift the living conditions of people who live in various communities. The strategic objectives of community development include empowering local communities developing effective partnerships, working as multi-agencies, becoming learning organizations and improving the life and well-being of the communities and of course making them sustainable.

The basic facilities, services, and installations needed for the functioning of a community or society, such as

public goods and communications systems, water and power lines, and public institutions including schools, post offices, and prisons. Infrastructural facilities and amenities are the large-scale public systems, services or facilities of a country or region that are necessary for economic activities. These infrastructures were provided mainly by the government. The infrastructural facilities and amenities found in the sub-regions include the following: Electricity, water supply, Telecommunication network, Postal services, Waste management, Drainage system, Security etc.

Today, infrastructure development has become a much-debated topic, since scholars from various countries have utilized the aspect of infrastructure development as a parameter and index to measure the ability of each country to complete globally (Opawole, Abio, Bababola & Babatunde 2012). This is mainly because, access to basic, adequate facilities is viewed as strongly related to the wellbeing of individual. According to Sullivan & Sheffrin (2003), infrastructure could be defined as organizational structure and physical amenities that are needed by the community in general. These infrastructures include, industries, building, roads, bridges, health services and many supply as well buy and sell activities.

The rapid growth in the community economics is determined by the accessibility and the delivery of essential infrastructure such as fine roads. The importance of road infrastructure to thrive the economy in certain areas has been emphasized specifically in the rapidly developing areas (Na, Han & Yoon, 2013; Hong, Chu & Wang, 2011; Brooks & Go, 2011 & Owen, Terence & Green, 2012). The importance of infrastructural development for the communities is more focused on the growth of agricultural sectors which is similar to rural community major economic resources (United Nation, 2011). The effect of infrastructural development is also related to the quality of social services especially in the aspect of education, health and quality of life of communities in general. This is in line with the study carried out in Nigeria by Calderon (2009) and Egbetokun (2009) who found out that the basic infrastructure development is integral part of Community development strategies because the infrastructure, development is integrated with all other aspects including electricity, clean water, education, agriculture, nutrition which subsequently be developed as well. The development of the basic infrastructure in the community areas is seen as a holistic approach where it could be the solution for the problems of inequality and social justice for community people in general.

According to Eze (2017), the then governor of Anambra State, Chief Willie Obiano, endeared himself to the people of the state with new approaches to governance that

brought leadership remarkably close to the people. One of his many initiatives that earned him the affection and trust of Ndi Anambra was the Choose-Your-Project initiative for the one hundred and eighty-one 181 communities in the state. This initiative was probably the most revolutionary development model in black Africa and, perhaps, the most democratic too.

In his words Udegbonam (2022), argued that the Choose-Your-Project initiative was able to afford each community in Anambra State the liberty to choose a development project that it considers dearest to it that the state government would execute it with a sum not exceeding N20 million. The communities were also given a free hand to select the labourers and the location of the projects and to take full ownership of the projects from start to finish. All that the state does is to ensure that there's due diligence in the process of selecting the contractors, ensure that there is a strict adherence to standards and provide the funds for the execution of the projects. Adding to this Obi (2022), posits that since it was announced in September 2016 as a component of the widely applauded Economic Stimulus Package by the Obiano administration, as a response to the crushing economic recession in the country, this initiative had a transformative impact on the socio-economic landscape of Anambra State. In nearly every community in the state, there is a project either completed or nearing completion.

More so Eze (2023), added that one of the most fascinating values of the Choose-Your-Project initiative was that it is probably the only government programme in this part of the world that enables the government to first and foremost understand what the beneficiaries need most before responding to that specific need. By implication, this initiative is in line with the bottom-top approach to the community development. Accordingly, this initiative is not the all-too-familiar whimsical act by a presumptuous, all-knowing government that rams its own threadbare agenda down the throats of the hapless electorate that put it in power. Under this model of development, the communities are sounded out on what is most important to them. The various communities are given the chance to prioritise their needs and choose what would have the most impact on them. Some communities choose civic centres; some choose mini stadia while others settled for abattoirs, town hall buildings, doctors' quarters, classroom blocks, borehole projects, lockup shops and different projects that minister to their specific needs. To underscore the sheer diversity of these needs, some riverine communities choose pontoons that would help them carry heavy loads and automobiles across rivers to the hinterland. Nothing could possibly have been more exhilarating to these communities while they await the construction bridges across the various rivers that crisscross the state (Udegbonam, 2023).

Collaboratively, Onwunyi (2023), opined that in addition to bringing governance closer to the grassroots, the Choose-Your-Project initiative also ensured that no community is left out of the concentric circle of development; that every community in Anambra State is treated as equal and given a chance to determine what is best for it. To that extent, the initiative scores an enviably high mark, as a development model that best approximates the true meaning of bringing the benefits of democracy closer to the people. This therefore proves that, it encourages a dialogue between the government and the grassroots as against the familiar monologue arbitrarily imposed by the usually aloof government, who knows what is best for a people that it barely knows.

From a different perspective Obiora (2022), argued that there was also the highly important aspect of the numerous jobs that this initiative created for the usually forgotten rural folks, who are frequently cut off from any meaningful financial empowerment. According to Obiora (2022), the Choose-Your-Project initiative was designed to spin off jobs to the natives of each local community, placing immediate cash in the hands of the breadwinners of most families and consequently alleviating the pangs of the current recession. To that extent, the initiative was initiated for the multiple purposes of fulfilling a democratic promise, bringing development closer to the people and creating employment for hitherto forgotten folks.

The implication of the above stand points is that the chose your project initiative is indeed pleasantly reassuring to see that former Governor Willie Obiano continued to expand the borders of imaginative leadership in his time as the governor. Once in every while, he comes up with something that stretches our vision to new horizons; something like his convening of Nigeria's first real Security Summit with an Israeli security expert, as a facilitator; something like the creation of the highly popular Anambra Rice brand or his pioneering of the export of vegetables to the United Kingdom. There is also the unexpected turning of Anambra, hitherto known for commerce and industry into a frontline agricultural state; and now the introduction of the Choose-Your-Project initiative with its value-laden offerings.

Infrastructure facilities, according to Hirschman, (2013), refer to those basic services without which primary, secondary and tertiary production activities can function in its wider sense, infrastructure facilities embrace all public services from law and order through education and public health to transportation, communication and water supply (Kahn, 2016). In other words, infrastructural facilities are elements in the package of basic needs, which a community would like to procure for better living. Kahn (2016) assert that community

infrastructural facilities can be classified into three main types; namely, physical infrastructure – such as roads, water, community electrification, storage and processing facilities; social infrastructure – namely, health and educational facilities, community Centre's, fire and security services; institutional infrastructure which include credit and financial institutions, agricultural research facilities and social infrastructure. It is perceived that the adequate provision of these types of infrastructures will enhance the introduction and adoption of innovations offered by institutional infrastructure.

Nonetheless, the importance of the infrastructure development for the communities is more focused on the growth of agriculture sectors which is synonymous with the rural community's major economic resources (Ndulu, 2006; Calderon & Serve, 2008; Egbetokun, 2009; United Nation, 2011). The advancement in the aspect of basic infrastructure for communities is seen as an accelerator for the growth of the rural communities' economy which in turn will give a positive impact for the quality of life for the community as a whole (Ale, Abisuwa, Olagunagba & Ijarotimi, 2011). At the same time, the development of the infrastructure such as road infrastructure is seen as the key for the development in the rural areas because by having these developments, basic amenities such as clean water, electricity and communication network will be brought into the rural areas as well (Straka & Tuzova, 2016). The Njikoka local government area is committed to develop the community areas by establishing various relevant infrastructure such as the Pipe borne water, building of police stations building of town halls and lock up Shops, renovation of corp members' hostels etc.

The impact of the infrastructure development is also related to the quality of social services especially in the aspect of education, health and the quality of life of rural communities in general. This is in line with the study carried out in Nigeria by Calderon (2009) and Egbetokun(2009) who found that the basic infrastructure is an integral part of the Community Development strategies because the infrastructure development is integrated with all other aspects, including agriculture, education, health, nutrition, electricity and clean water, which subsequently be developed as well. The development of the basic infrastructure in the rural areas is seen as a holistic approach where it could be the solution for the problems of inequality and social justice for rural areas in general.

The importance of infrastructure for rural areas has also been discussed by Adeyoye, Yusuf, Balogun & Carim-sanni, (2011). The lack of basic amenities is the main factor that can affect the quality of life of communities as well as the factor that can undermine the effort in enhancing the rural communities' economic

transformation which generally rely on the agricultural resources. Aziz (2015) who did a study on the relationship between the infrastructure and the economic growth in India revealed that the basic infrastructure is essential for a good quality of life especially in the socioeconomic aspect. The lack of basic amenities in the rural areas has direct negative impacts on the village residents such as increasing the rate of poverty, declining the agricultural products and hindering the ability to continue living a good life. All these negative impacts will definitely affect health services and halt access to education for the village communities.

Apart from this, electricity supply is also vital in ensuring the quality of life among communities. This is in line with previous studies done in this area, for example a study by Bose, Uddin & Mondal (2013), who examined the impact of the development of electric facilities for communities. They found that the villages that are selected to be supplied with electricity demonstrated positive results in the aspects of production, profit margin, development and business modernisation, women empowerment, quality of life and human capital development. On the other hand, Waeli & Mahdi (2017) felt that the use of alternative power resources that is environmental friendly such as solar power is a good and effective way to help the communities to have access to the electricity supplies in substitute with the use of electric generators that are costly and could cause air pollution. The use of environmental-friendly solar power is more beneficial as the resource is renewable.

Through his report in the Global Energy Network Institute 2014, Fong (2014) explained that most of the communities that do not have access to electricity supplies are among those in the developing countries. The communities with no access to electricity supplies is seen as having a low quality of life compared to their counterparts in the urban areas because electricity supply

is a necessity for everyday life. Fong also stated that there are several negative implications caused by the absence of electricity supplies in rural areas such as the inability to store materials in the cold storage especially food and medicines, low exposure of lightings which can impact the education sector and economic productivity, the hindering of modernization process and the limitation of communication network and its effects during emergencies.

The development of basic amenities is essential for a better quality of life. The inefficiencies in the provision of basic infrastructures such as roads, clean water supply, electricity supply and communication systems can affect the quality of life of the rural communities. It is pertinent to develop the network of basic amenities in the rural areas in order to reduce the gap between rural and urban areas community. Furthermore, it is necessary to reduce this gap in order to maintain the quality of life in general (OnwunyI, Asukwo and Ojukwu, 2024).

In addition, the local communities were asked to form unions or associations for the purpose of providing common facilities for themselves the provision of community infrastructures such as community feeder roads, community water and sanitation, community housing and electrification, the promotion of productive activities such as food and agriculture, community industrialization and technology, the promotion of other extracurricular activities such as socio-cultural and recreational programmes, intra and inter community cohesion activities. The plan for the implementation of DFRRI programmes was organized into two phases. In phase one, the target was to provide water for 250 communities in each of the states of the federation, to construct 90,000km of feeder roads, and to promote community housing, health and agriculture (Onibokun, 2011).

### **Data Presentation, Analysis And Discussion Of Findings**

The data presentations based on the second research question through relevant questionnaire items were presented and analyzed. In this section, the data generated from the Anambra State were presented, analyzed and interpreted. A total of four hundred copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents, out of which six hundred copies of the questionnaire were properly filled and found relevant to the study. Therefore, the analysis in this section was based on the relevant copies.

**1: Gender of the Respondents**

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

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table above shows the distribution of respondent base on their gender. 147 respondents representing 41.2% are female while 210 respondents representing 58.8% are male. This indicates that there are more male than female in Anambra.

**Table 2: Marital Status of the Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Single	64	17.9	17.9	17.9
Married	274	76.8	76.8	94.7
Others	19	5.3	5.3	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 20224

The table above indicates the marital status of the respondents. Majority of the respondents representing 76.8% of the respondents are married, 17.9% of the respondents are single while the remaining 5.3% choose others as their response. This implies that majority of the sampled local government areas of Anambra are married.

**Table 3: Age Distribution of the Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18 - 30 years	62	17.4	17.4	17.6
31 - 40 years	89	24.9	24.9	42.3
41 - 50 years	170	46.6	46.6	88.9
51 years and above	36	10.1	10.1	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

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

**Table 4. Showing the gender Distribution**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Female	168	42.0	42.0	42.0
Male	232	58.0	58.0	100.0
Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Source: *Author's computation, 2024*

The data in Table 4 show the marital status of respondents in the thirteen ministries. The results show that majority of the 400 respondents are married. They account for 58 % (232) of the respondents. 30% are single, 4% are divorcee and the remaining 8% account for respondents who have lost their source (i.e. widows 6% and widowers 2%).

**Table 5. Showing marital Status**

Table 4.3 Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	120	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Married	232	58.0	58.0	88.0
	Divorced	16	4.0	4.0	92.0
	Widow	24	6.0	6.0	98.0
	Widower	8	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Source: *Author's computation, 2024*

The distribution for the age range of the respondents in Table 4.4 and figure 4.2 above shows that most of the respondents for the study are between the age of 35 to 44 years old, with a frequency percentage of 36%. 26% are between the age of 45 to 54 years, 22% are between the ages of 25 to 34 years, 12% are at the peak of their service year and the remaining 4% are between the ages of 18 to 24 years.

**Table 6 Showing the distribution of age range**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-24	16	4.0	4.0	4.0
	25-34	88	22.0	22.0	26.0
	35-44	144	36.0	36.0	62.0
	45-54	104	26.0	26.0	88.0
	55-60	48	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Source: *Author's computation, 2024*

The evidence on the highest education qualification of the participants of the study as shown in table 6, revealed that over 76% have HND/BSc and above as their highest education qualification (60% have HND/BSc, 10% have MSc and 6% have a PhD). This shows that most of the respondents are educated to university level. The distribution for respondents with highest education qualification less than a university degree such as NCE/ND, WASC/GCE and FSLC have a frequency percentage of 8%, 12% and 4% respectively. The distribution shows that majority of the participants her highly educated and as such there is an evident level of literacy within the study area.

**Table 7, showing Highest Educational Qualification**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FSLC	16	4.0	4.0	4.0
	WASC/GCE	48	12.0	12.0	16.0
	NCE/ND	32	8.0	8.0	24.0
	HND/bsc.	240	60.0	60.0	84.0
	Msc.	40	10.0	10.0	94.0
	Phd	24	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Source: *Author's computation, 2024*

The frequency distribution in table 7 show the length of service analysis of respondents. The table and chart show that 160 respondents representing 40 percent of the sample size have been in service for 5 to 10 years, 64 of those respondents representing 16 percent of the sample size have been in service for 11 to 15 years, also 64 of the respondents representing 16 percent of the sample size have been in service for 16 to 20 years, 24 of those respondents representing 6 percent of the sample size have been in service for 21 to 25 years, 40 of the respondents representing 10 percent of the sample size have been in service for 26 to 30 years and 48 of those respondents representing 12 percent of the sample size have been in service for 31 to 35 years.

**Table 8: Response on Infrastructural facilities and amenities are the large-scale public systems**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	26	7.3	7.3	7.3
Disagree	10	2.8	2.8	10.1
Undecided	68	19.0	19.0	29.2
Agree	209	58.5	58.5	87.7
Strongly Agree	44	12.3	12.3	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 8 above indicates that 12.3% of the respondents strongly agree that Infrastructural facilities and amenities are the large-scale public systems, 58.5% of the respondents agreed, 19.0% of the respondents were undecided, 2.8% of the respondents disagreed while 7.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that infrastructural facilities and amenities are the large-scale public systems.

**Table 9: Response on There is the high presence of social amenities in the communities**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	7	2.0	2.0	2.0
Disagree	34	9.5	9.5	11.5
Undecided	21	5.9	5.9	17.4
Agree	218	61.1	61.1	78.4
Strongly Agree	77	21.6	21.6	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table above indicates that 77 respondents representing 21.6% strongly agreed that there is the high presence of social amenities in the communities, 61.1% of the respondents agreed, 5.9% of the respondents were undecided, 9.5% of the respondents disagreed while the remaining 2.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that there is the high presence of social amenities in the communities.

**Table 10: Response on there is the possibility of a standardized facilities because the communities are made to do it themselves**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	17	4.8	4.8	4.8
Disagree	18	5.0	5.0	9.8
Undecided	12	3.6	3.6	13.4
Agree	260	72.8	72.8	86.3
Strongly Agree	49	13.7	13.7	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table 10 above indicates that 13.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that there is the possibility of a standardized facilities because the communities are made to do it themselves, 72.8% of the respondents agreed, 3.6% of the respondents were undecided, 5.0% of the respondents disagreed while 4.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This shows that There is the possibility of a standardized facilities because the communities are made to do it themselves.

**Table 11: Response on Provision of employment opportunities to the rural populace as a result of some of the projects initiated by the communities**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	5	1.4	1.4	1.4
Disagree	9	2.5	2.5	3.9
Undecided	8	2.2	2.2	6.2
Agree	187	52.4	52.4	58.5
Strongly Agree	148	41.5	41.5	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 11 above indicates that 41.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that there is the provision of employment opportunities to the rural populace as a result of some of the projects initiated by the communities 52.4% of the respondents agreed, 2.2% of the respondents were undecided, 2.5% of the respondents disagreed while the remaining 1.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This implies that there is the provision of employment opportunities to the rural populace as a result of some of the projects initiated by the communities.

**Table 12: Response on Physical amenities that are needed by the community are provided**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	17	4.8	4.8	4.8
Disagree	11	3.1	3.1	7.8
Undecided	23	6.4	6.4	14.3
Agree	170	47.6	47.6	61.9
Strongly Agree	136	38.1	38.1	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table 12 above indicates that 13.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that physical amenities that are needed by the community are provided, 72.8% of the respondents agreed, 3.6% of the respondents were undecided, 5.0% of the respondents disagreed while 4.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This shows that Physical amenities that are needed by the community are provide.

**Table 13: Response on Community economies is determined by the accessibility of essential infrastructure**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	10	2.8	2.8	2.8
Disagree	30	8.4	8.4	11.2
Undecided	51	14.3	14.3	25.5
Agree	132	37.0	37.0	62.5
Strongly Agree	134	37.5	37.5	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table above indicates that 37.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that Community economies is determined by the accessibility of essential infrastructure, 37.0% of the respondents agreed, 14.3% of the respondents were undecided, 8.4% of the respondents disagreed while 2.8% of the respondents were undecided. This implies that Community economies is determined by the accessibility of essential infrastructure.

**Table 14: Response on Infrastructural development for the communities is more focused on the agricultural sectors**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	17	4.8	4.8	4.8
Disagree	18	5.0	5.0	9.8
Undecided	12	3.6	3.6	13.4
Agree	260	72.8	72.8	86.3
Strongly Agree	49	13.7	13.7	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table 14 above indicates that 13.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that infrastructural development for the communities is more focused on the agricultural sectors, 72.8% of the respondents agreed, 3.6% of the respondents were undecided, 5.0% of the respondents disagreed while 4.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This shows that infrastructural development for the communities is more focused on the agricultural sectors.

**Table 15 Response Infrastructural development is also related to the quality of social services**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	17	4.8	4.8	4.8
Disagree	11	3.1	3.1	7.8
Undecided	23	6.4	6.4	14.3
Agree	170	47.6	47.6	61.9
Strongly Agree	136	38.1	38.1	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table above indicates that 38.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that Infrastructural development is also related to the quality of social services, 47.6% of the respondents agreed, 6.4% of the respondents were undecided, 3.1% of the respondents disagreed while the remaining 4.8% of the respondents disagreed. This implies Infrastructural development is also related to the quality of social services.

**Table 16: Response on infrastructural development is also related to the quality of social services**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	7	2.0	2.0	2.0
Disagree	34	9.5	9.5	11.5
Undecided	21	5.9	5.9	17.4
Agree	218	61.1	61.1	78.4
Strongly Agree	77	21.6	21.6	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

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

**Table 17: Chi-square Tests for Hypothesis Two**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	113.743 <sup>a</sup>	24	.000
Likelihood Ratio	147.575	24	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.829	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	600		

Source: Field Survey, 2024

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

**Table 18 Regression Results of effect of Community Choose Your Project Initiative on the provision water bore hole, construction of roads and healthcare facilities in Anambra State under the Obiano Administration, 2014-2022.**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R <sup>2</sup> Change	F Change	df 1	df 2	Sig. F Change
1	0.209 <sup>a</sup>	0.044	0.042	3.96220	0.044	27.47	1	60	0.000
2	0.585	0.342	0.340	3.28904	0.298	9	1	61	0.000
3	b 0.587 c	0.34 4	0.341	3.2872 0	0.00 2	272.187 1.673	1	50 9 9	0.196

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	431.396	1	431.396	27.479	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	9435.124	601	15.699		
	Total	9866.521	602			
2	Regression	3375.852	2	1687.926	156.033	0.000 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	6490.668	600	10.818		
	Total	9866.521	602			
3	Regression	3393.930	3	1131.310	104.696	0.000 <sup>d</sup>
	Residual	6472.590	599	10.806		
	Total	9866.521	602			

a. Dependent Variable: Community Development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Water Borehole, Construction of Roads, health facilities

c. Predictors: (Constant), Water Borehole, Construction of Roads, health facilities

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	75.001	0.889		84.375	0.000
	Community Choose Your Project Initiative	0.054	0.010	0.209	5.242	0.000
2	(Constant)	53.411	1.502		35.551	0.000
	Community Choose Your Project Initiative	0.051	0.009	0.197	5.952	0.000
	Water Borehole	0.448	0.027	0.546	16.498	0.000
3	(Constant)	94.316	31.660		2.979	0.003
	Road Construction	-0.421	0.365	-1.639	-1.154	0.249
	Health Facility	-0.372	0.634	-0.454	-0.586	0.558
	Community Choose Your Project Initiative *Social amenities	0.009	0.007	2.110	1.293	0.196
Dependent Variable: Social amenities						

Table above illustrated summary results of hierarchical multiple regression analysis of effect of Community Choose Your Project Initiative on the provision water bore hole, construction of roads and healthcare facilities in Anambra State under the Obiano Administration, 2014-2022. In model 1, Community Choose Your Project Initiative was regressed on the provision water bore hole, construction of roads and healthcare facilities. The results yielded the coefficient of  $F(1,601) = 27.479$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) and the regression coefficient of  $R^2 = 0.044$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) which denoted that the model was statistically significant and explained that 4.4% of the variance in on the provision water bore hole, construction of roads and healthcare facilities could be accounted for by a rise in Community Choose Your Project Initiative (see Appendix).

In model 2, the moderating variable which is water borehole, was tested with Community Choose Your Project Initiative. The results of model 2 show that water borehole, was tested with Community Choose Your Project Initiative 34.2% of the variation in community development ( $R^2 = 0.342$ ). Under changed statistics, the results reveal that the  $R^2$  change increased by 28.8% from 0.044 to 0.342 ( $R^2 = 0.342$ ). In addition, the value of the F-ratio, which represents the ratio of the improvement in prediction that results from fitting the model, is 17.087,  $p < 0.05$ . This shows that water borehole, was tested with Community Choose Your Project Initiative had a significant positive effect on community development (see Appendix).

In model 3, when health care facilities was interacted with water borehole, was tested with Community Choose Your Project Initiative on the relationship with community development in Anambra State, a change occurred ( $R^2 = 0.344$ ). However, this value was not statistically significant at  $p > 0.05$  ( $p$ -value = 0.196). This means that the interaction variable accounted for no change in community development in Anambra State. Therefore, culture has no moderating effect on the relationship water borehole, was tested with Community Choose Your Project Initiative and community development ( $F$  change = 1.672, 0.196):  $F(3,599) = 104.696$ ,  $p > 0.05$  Based on these results, the hypothesis which states that culture has no moderating effect on the relationship between water borehole, was tested with Community Choose Your Project Initiative and community development in Anambra State was not rejected.

**Table 5.1.12 Community Choose Your Project Initiative in Anambra State**

S/N	Community	Projects
1.	Eziowelle	2 Pavilion with 400 Seating Capacity
2.	Umuoji	Operation centre with fencing of the entire centre and ancillaries
3.	Adazi Enu	48 lockup shops
4.	Umunachi	2 Pavilion with 400 Seating Capacity
5.	Umudioka	Community civic centre, gate house, fencing with ancillaries
6.	Akwaukwu	Completion of classroom blocks
7.	Oraukwu	Community Town Hall
8.	Ogidi	Skill Acquisition Center
9.	Amansea	Community Civic Center
10.	Aguluzigbo	120 Open Market Stalls, 11 Lockup shops
11.	Ukwulu	Community Civic Center
12.	Nri	2 Mini Health Centres
13.	Isuaniocha	Community Civic Center with Gallery
14.	Abba	Renovation of Town Hall
15.	Agulu	Community Abattoir, Borehole, Cow Pen, generator House
16.	Neni	4 Classroom Blocks with offices for the principals
17.	Ichida	Doctors Quarters, Overhead Tank, Gate House, fencing with ancillaries
18.	Akwaeze	2.15km Earthwork, Drainage and Culvert
19.	Adazi-Nnukwu	1.5km Earthwork, 1.3km Drainage and Culvert
20.	Umuawulu	2.025km Earthwork, Drainage and Culvert
21.	Obeledu	Earthwork, Drainage and Culvert
22.	Nawgu	Community Civic Center
23.	Mbaukwu	Doctors Quarter, Fencing with ancillaries
24.	Obosi	Duplex Sectarat, Fencing with ancillaries, Overhead Tank
25.	Okpuno	Community Civic Center
26.	Nnokwa	Community Civic Center
27.	Alor	Amphi-Theater
28.	Abatete	Cottage Hospital
29.	Ezinator	120 Open Market Stalls, 2 Boreholes
30.	Ifitedunu	200 Open Market Halls
31.	Mgbakwu	Market, Borehole, Renovation
32.	Urum	200 Open Market Stalls
33.	Amwabia	Upgrading of Amwabia Park with Entrance Gate, Lavatory and ancillaries
34.	Uke	Town Hall
35.	Nnobi	Community Town Hall
36.	Awba-Ofemili	Electrification
37.	Ojoto	Skill Acquisition Center, 22 Lock up stalls
38.	Nwafija	44 Lockup Stalls
39.	Enugwu-Ukwu	Renovation of Civic Centre
40.	Nimo	44 Lockup Stalls
41.	Omogho	Health Centre/ Quarters
42.	Uga	Doctor/Nurse Quarters
43.	Utuh	Shopping Plaza/ Boreholes
44.	Oko	Dormitory for Secondary Schools
45.	Ikenga	10 Classroom Blocks/ Health Centre
46.	Ihembosi	450 Capacity Hall
47.	Ajali	Civic Center
48.	Unubi	Health Centre
49.	Umuoma	10 Classroom Blocks and Accessories
50.	Ogbunka	29 Shops and Town Hall
51.	Achina	19 Shops and Town Hall

52.	Ezinifite	Health Centre, Nurse Quarters and Borehole
53.	Akwaihedi	42 Shops
54.	Ndiokolo	500 Capacity Hall/ Office
55.	Ogboji	20 Shops and Town Hall
56.	Awa	Doctor/Nurse Quarters, Borehole
57.	Azigbo	20 Shops and Town Hall
58.	Ndiokpalaek	Health Centre, Nurse Quarter, Borehole
59.	Ekwulobia	Skill Acquisition Centre
60.	Okpeze	2 blocks of 5 classroom/Office
61.	Nwafija	Nurse Quarter/ Health Centre
62.	Ezinifite	20 Shops/ 40 Market Stalls
63.	Umuchu	Doctor/Nurse Quarters, School Fencing
64.	Mkpologwu	12 Bed Ward for Community Hospital
65.	Azia	Culverts (33 Meters), Drainage (560 Meters)
66.	Amaokpala	24 Shops/ Doctors Quarters, Borehole
67.	Ndiekweu	Primary Health Centre
68.	Ebenator	Civic Center
69.	Umunze	Town Hall/ borehole
70.	Osumenyi	Health Center/ Borehole
71.	Eziagu	Health Center/ Borehole
72.	Mbosi	Civic Center
73.	Ubuluisizor	12 Classroom/ Borehole
74.	Uli	Town Hall, 6 Classroom/Office
75.	Umuomaku	16 Shops/ 16blocks of Market Shades
76.	Owere Ezukalla	Health Centre/ Borehole/ Quarters
77.	Ndiokpaleze	400 Capacity Hall/Office
78.	Amichi	Town Hall
79.	Onneh	Health Center/ Nurse Quarter/ Borehole
80.	Umuchukwu	Health Center/ Nurse Quarter/ Borehole

**Source: Author's Compilation**

According to our respondent in Omor, Cosmas, he asserted that in 2016 when the Nigerian economy slipped into recession and many states failed to meet basic financial obligations, the economy of Anambra state remained stable and even grew by 1%. During the period, the state government under Governor Willie Obiano not only met financial obligations regularly but embarked on impactful and people – oriented projects.

It is true that while the recession lasted, and many states groaned under the weight of the declining economy, Governor Obiano completed over 600 community – based projects and reflate the economy of the state by injecting no less than N7.24BN into it in the first and second phases of the ‘N20M COMMUNITY CHOOSE YOUR PROJECT INITIATIVE’. The novel and unprecedented initiative was a strategic plan by the Obiano administration to drive development from the rural communities while ensuring proper reflation and growth of the state's economy at the micro level. It was a plan that became an instant success in improving infrastructural development at the grassroots. The multiplier effect of money made it even more potent as money circulated fast

within the communities and cushioned the effects of the recession.

The table above showed that the 179 communities (later increased to 181 communities as Onitsha, and Obosi were granted special status and got additional projects due to their sizes), in Anambra state selected their most needful project and built it by themselves. While some communities built hospitals, others built market stalls and shops. Yet some built drainages, culverts, civic centres, classroom blocks and living quarters for doctors, teachers and members of the youth service Corp. Each community built according to its area of need. Amazingly, the initiative recorded the construction and completion of lock – up shops and open market stalls in 116 communities, construction of civic centre/ town hall in 104 communities, construction of classroom/laboratories and dormitory in 32 Communities, construction of health centres and hospital wards in 51 communities, construction of skills acquisition centres in 13 communities, construction of quarters/ admin blocks in 49 communities, construction of perimeter fence in 43 communities, rural electrification in 27 communities, drilling of boreholes in 24 communities among many others. The Willie Obiano government's

N20M COMMUNITY CHOOSE YOUR PROJECT INITIATIVE has proven to be the best model for rural development. No wonder Forbes magazine recognized it as the blueprint for rural development in Africa. The initiative continues into its third phase (Aniagbaoso, 2019).

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The Community Choose Your Project Initiative impacted on community development through the provision of water bore hole, markets, construction of roads and healthcare facilities in Anambra State under the Obiano Administration, 2014-2022. Community project initiative has impacted on the provision of infrastructure/ social amenities has Pearson chi-square value of 113.743 at 24 degree of freedom is significant at .05 alpha level. This is further buttressed by Umeh (2020), when he asserted that the then campaign strategy that endeared Obiano to the people was the publication of all the projects of the governor in all the 179 communities in the state. Chief Victor Umeh who was Obiano's campaign organisation chairman said the projects published were verifiable. The projects were made possible through the choose-your-project initiative. Under this programme, communities were given N20million to choose and execute any project of their choice, while a local contractor was used for the job. Obiano had explained that the reason for this was to ensure that the contractor would not abandon or even misuse the money, and in the event of such, he could be traced by indigenes of the community since he is one of them. From the findings above, the following recommendations have been put forward as policy statements;

1. Since the Community Chose Your Project Initiative impacted on community development through the provision of water bore hole, markets, construction of roads and healthcare facilities, local governments should involve their communities in the inherence and protection of public facilities provided for them such as electricity, pipe-borne water school building, health facilities, among others, such community involvement has the potential of creating an enormous sense of community. For example, Anambra State government came up with the idea to establish neighborhood watch group in each of the autonomous community to assist in provision of security to life and property of which other state can key into in achieving community development in the rural community in their states.
2. The study equally recommended that there is the need to raise the amount disbursed to communities for developmental projects, this is true because the twenty million given to communities (#20,000,000) at the first tranche was not enough, hence other tranches.

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