

Assessment Of The Location And Availability Of Public Facilities And Services In Port Harcourt Metropolis In Rivers State, Nigeria

Eyenghe Tari, Ibama Brown, Wocha Chikagbum

ABSTRACT: The continues increase in both urban and rural population has birthed the problem of inadequate availability of facilities and social services thus giving rise to social disparity and unequal access to basic facilities and services by people of the same population spectrum. Consequently, the problem of social disparity (inequality) is on the increase and is gaining global and local attention. Despite the efforts of government to combat this social problem, it is still raising its head in form of unequal access to educational facilities, health care, good roads, emergency services and etcetera. Hence the study was intended to ascertain whether or not there is disparity in distribution and access to facilities and services by assessing facilities and services in Port Harcourt City. The study adopted the simple random technique for data collection. Also, primary and secondary data were the major data collected with the use of closed ended structured questionnaire. However, the result of the study showed that income formed a major determining factor in the distribution of facilities and services in Port Harcourt while population threshold was not considered significantly in the study area. However, the study revealed that there is gap in the distribution of facilities and services in Port Harcourt City. The recommendations included the involvement of the citizens at grass root in decision making, facilities and services should be provided with respect to actual population on ground, income level should not determine facilities and service distribution. The study concluded that there is disparity and unequal access in the distribution of social services and facilities.

Keywords: Infrastructure, Facilities, Services, Disparity, Urbanization, Population.

INTRODUCTION

The urbanization process in cities all over the world is increasing rapidly thereby increasing the need for the provision of infrastructural facilities and services to meet the needs of the steaming population of the world. According to Baker, (2007), the estimated population of the world's urban areas will equal the rural population for the first time in history. This increase and growth in the urban population is expected to continue to rise, as projected to reach almost 5 billion in 2030. Much of this urbanization is predicted to take place in the developing world, with Asia and Africa having the largest urban growth. Enger and Smith (2006) have earlier said that traditionally, most of the populations of the developing world have been rural. He further said in recent years, the number of people migrating to the cities have grown rapidly. However, the reasons for these migrants are to access social services and cultural benefits that are not available in the rural areas.

The main issue that will be raised is if the government will be able to provide the basic amenities needed to enable the populace to live a good. However, the increasing rate of urbanization has an after effect in urban growth and development with disparity within an urban environment in the distribution of infrastructural facilities and social services. The quality of governance is partly identified by the governments' ability to equitably distribute infrastructural facilities and social services. The government's role extends to the establishment of healthcare delivery, educational facilities, fire service stations, waste management, transportation infrastructure, property rights, police protection units, judiciary, national defence, regulation of market activity and so on which are theoretically categorized as public goods and services, Arvind et al, (2006). The availability and quality of infrastructural facilities and services are viewed as instrumental for development and growth in developing countries. The lack of publicly provided infrastructure in turn has been shown to constitute an important bottleneck for the development of private sector Reinikka and Svensson, (2002). Furthermore, the concept of inequality is common in the developing countries. Cities in developing countries are associated with unequal access to physical and social services, low housing quality, unemployment, etc. Inequality is the gap between two groups of persons within a specific location in space. It is worthy to note that the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements UNCHS in (1995) present's inequality as one of the areas for more fundamental research and it is specially stressed in the report on human settlement 'Cities in a Globalizing World' UNCHS, (2000). Generally, people believe that there is gap in the distribution of infrastructural facilities and social services such as healthcare, education, roads, security, safety, water supply, etc, amongst a given population in a specific location. However, this notion lacks empirical evidence, hence; this study intends to access the

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infrastructural facilities and services in Port Harcourt with the view to ascertain whether or not disparity in the distribution and access to the facilities and services.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The fundamental questions raised in this research which formed the pivot of this study included;

- (1). What are the available facilities and services in the study area?
- (2). What are the conditions of the available facilities and services in the study area?
- (3). What are the criteria used by government in the distribution and location of facilities and services?
- (4). Is there a gap in the distribution of facilities and services in the study area?
- (5). What planning strategies for equitable distribution of facilities and services?

LITERATURE REVIEW

FACILITIES AND SERVICES: AN OVERVIEW

Urban inequalities are a result of economic, demographic and social stratifications affected by political will, management, distribution of resources and corruption at different levels in society. The resulting effect or non-existent service provision, interrupted service or poor facility management of infrastructure and services availability, delivery, maintenance and interlinked aspects of social services and management are burning nexuses that need urgent attention and political will. Failure to do so will inevitably lead to deprivation and inequality, a retarded economy and social stigma in urban societies. In addition, spatial and social fragmentations have serious implications for urban growth and competitiveness. Halfani, (1998) cited in Cheru, (2005). The lack of foreign investment, negligible involvement in international trade, and the steep decline in export revenues coupled with limited domestic savings and investments have been identified at the African region, South Asia, Middle East and Latin America and cannot share the same technological knowhow attained in modern era which are mostly based in North America and Western Europe. In the end, globalization ends up reinforcing the pre-existing process of 'urbanization without development' whereby inequality and fragmentation continues to worsen, setting the stage for the breakdown of the social order, and making most African, Asian and Latin American cities inefficient and ungovernable, Cheru, (2005). Hence, inequality which most times causes poverty will depend on how segregated or oppressed groups national income gains can be distributed within the socio-economic systems of the country with emphasis on the poor in the society, Heilbrun, (1981). Large shares of the region's urban population are becoming poorer. Since urban dichotomies define individual or group status, societal position and powers, intra-urban differentials are becoming pronounced. Because people with similar characteristics tend to settle in similar areas, this process has distinct spatial dimensions, UN-HABITAT, (2008). According to UN-HABITAT, (2008) this urban fragmentation has created two cities within a city, which is illustrated in satellite towns in Maputo, Mozambique whereby the urban poor inherited high urban densities,

with unplanned Urban spatial layout and mostly deprived from access to adequate housing, residential land, municipal services and other urban benefits. The advantageous groups tend to reside in the ordered, formally planned and structured high income areas and enjoy municipal services. This is evident of urban inequality in the system further increasing urban poverty. Thus, on the other hand, the allocation of public resources is essentially a political decision. Politicians allocate public funds in ways that improve their chances of winning elections. In order to do so, public officials can provide infrastructure and services universally and thus improve the lots of everyone, or they can target resources to localities, individuals or specific groups, Dafe, (2009). This notion has caused socio-economic disparity and inequality in many settlements be it urban or rural environment. Dafe, (2009) has identified in the city of Nairobi, Kenya that spatial segregation is caused by income status. She further illustrated that better infrastructure and services are provided to residents of higher income areas thereby leaving the urban poor living in slums to decide their fate, as government justified that their settlements are informal and urban service delivery would be on their official recognized settlements. McFarlane and Rutherford, (2008) focused explicitly on the construction of differential and inequality between social groups through the discursive and material in shaping of urban infrastructure. For example, in producing distinctive notions and ideals of modernity, morality, public space and citizenship, they offered an empirical challenge to the existence of a modern infrastructural ideal by demonstrating how forms of universal, equitable provision of services were rarely achieved in Southern cities. This highlights a significant shift in the dominant logic underpinning service provision from universal supply to adaptation to demand, with the increasing inequalities in services that this always implies. This review implies that inequality does occur; it is manifested most of the times on unequal access and distribution of facilities and services. Also, to tackle the problem of unequal access and distribution of facilities and services, government needs to adopt a system of facilities and services provision by demand rather than the old way of universal supply.

NIGERIA URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES: AN OVERVIEW

Over the years Nigerian cities are growing in an unprecedented manner both in size and population. This growth was rapid and the cities were faced with numerous urban challenges such as uncontrolled and unplanned growth, substandard and sub-human environment resulting to slum and squatter settlements, unemployment, inadequate infrastructural and social amenities (education, healthcare, roads, recreational, electricity, water and sanitation, safety and security problems, and urban governance) to meet the demands of the urban population. However, from the colonial era till date the governments have promulgated many urban development laws and regulations, policies, plans and projects which are significant to urban development and planning. Some of these laws and regulations, policies, plans and projects include:

- (1). The Cantonment Proclamations of 1904 Ordinance of No. 9 of 1914.
- (2). The Road and Township Ordinance No. 29 of 1917.
- (3). The Lagos Town Planning Act of 1928.
- (4). The Nigerian Town and Country Planning Ordinance No. 4 of 1946.
- (5). The National Development Plans (1962-1985).
- (6). Concept of New Towns that was adopted widely in principles and practice, eg Abuja, Eke Aladja, Onne, FESTAC/Satellite towns in Lagos, etc.
- (7). National Rolling Plans from 1986-till date.
- (8). Land Use Decree of 1978.
- (9). World Bank Assisted Urban Development Programme initiated in Nigeria which Sites and Services Schemes were carried out in Bauchi and Imo states.
- (10). FG carried out studies in 24 major urban centres in the country in 1974 to identify critical areas of infrastructure needs.
- (11). Infrastructure Development Fund (IDF) was created in 1985 to finance urban development projects in collaboration with World Bank.
- (12). National Housing Policy was adopted in 1991 and established the National Housing Fund in 1992.
- (13). Established the Urban Development Bank in 1992 to develop urban infrastructure and public utilities.
- (14). Promulgated the Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Decree No. 88 of 1992.
- (15). Initiate several programmes after the second HABITAT Conference in 1996 such as Sustainable Cities Programme, Urban Basic Services Programme, Community Up-grading Programme, Safer Cities Programme and Campaign on Good Urban Governance.
- (16). Preparation of National Building Code.
- (17). Urban Planning Boards and Authorities were established at states and LGAs respectively including planning schemes were prepared in some quarters of some cities.

Thus, in 1999 when a democratic government took over power from the military administration the Nigerian cities were still faced with urban problems and have furthered worsen because of increase in population from natural growth and migration. These highlighted laws and regulations, policies, programmes, plans and projects did not solve perceived urban problems. Nigeria population then from National Population Commission (NPC) estimated that in 2002 the country population was about 115 million, which 49.8 million (43.3%) are living in urban area with 5.8% growth rate per annum when national growth rate in 2.8%, NUDP, (2006). In 2002 the President of Nigeria Chief Olusegun Obasanjo setup Presidential Committee on Urban Development and Housing to come up with policies to combat these urban challenges. This committee was chaired by Dr. Peter Odili then Governor of Rivers State with fourteen others as members from different professions concerning environment and housing, FG, (2002). The Committee in 2006 came up with national policies, programmes and strategies on how to tackle these urban challenges. The areas calling for new policy initiatives included access to building land; urban economy, poverty and employment generation; urban transportation, communications and traffic management; urban renewal

and slum upgrading; urban environment; urban infrastructure; social welfare services and social integration; urban finance; urban management information; human resources development; urban security; urban governance and special case of metropolitan centres. The Committee established a National Urban Development Policy (NUDP) for the country as to “develop a dynamic system of urban settlements, which will foster sustainable economic growth, promote efficient urban and regional development and ensure improved standard of living and wellbeing of all Nigerians”, NUDP, (2006). Objectives and strategies to achieve this policy were carefully outlined that covers entirety of issues confronting contemporary cities in Nigeria.

NATIONAL URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICY (NUDP) ON EDUCATION SECTOR: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL

It is obvious that in Nigerian cities, both physical and social infrastructure are inadequate and poorly provided resulting socioeconomic disparity between the urban residents. In the area of education the illiteracy gap was high especially the urban poor who are vulnerable to urban disadvantages, this made the FG in the NUDP document in 2006 have target for education sector in the policy. This target for education falls within the urban infrastructure policy for the country. Under the urban infrastructure education was categorised as socioeconomic infrastructure. The goal adopted in urban infrastructure was “to ensure greater efficiency in the operation of Nigerian cities and enhance the quality of life of urban resident especially of the poor”, NUDP, (2006). The NUDP from the strategies formulated to the achievement of goal on urban infrastructure include review of existing network of infrastructure in each urban centre especially the metropolitan centre to establish deficiencies, gap and inadequacies; ensure that spaces are provided in cities master plans for infrastructure facilities and protected from other land uses; make sure engineering and town planning specifications and principles are consulted for conformity to contemporary modern cities and involve the private sector in provision of urban infrastructure. Although, no specific target was boldly given to education but it was expected that all urban infrastructure will be given priority attention to cover the gaps being experienced in the cities which education is one of the top issue going by the deplorable state of education in the society especially primary and secondary education. Funds were expected to release from the FG to states and LGAs to assist in providing primary and secondary schools across the landscape of the country.

NATIONAL URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICY (NUDP) ON HEALTH SECTOR: PRIMARY HEALTHCARE SERVICES

With the ever growing population of Nigerian urban centres, there is bound to be challenges in the provision of urban services. The inadequacies and accessibility problems in urban services are increasing daily. Over the years, the continue health challenges in urban centres are exacerbating from accessibility, affordability and adequacy. This prompts the NUDP in 2006 to see it as national concern which priority should be given to the health sector. The health facility was seen as a socioeconomic infrastructure. The NUDP see it as social welfare

responsibility of the three tiers of the government in Nigeria. There is need for cooperation and collaboration amongst the governments. Many states in country have their healthcare programmes to carry out primary healthcare services. In urban areas primary healthcare facilities were built with assistance of international organisations and private donors to meet health service demands with more emphasis on the urban centres. Though, inadequacy and accessibility are the major challenges because the existing health facilities are not evenly distributed coupled with the large population size in our urban centre, especially the metropolitan areas that are more urbanized both in spatial area and population (those with more than 1 million populations) for example Lagos, Ibadan, Kano, Kaduna, Port Harcourt, etcetera

NATIONAL URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICY (NUDP) ON ROADS DEVELOPMENT

Roads are said to be the life-wire of any settlement; rural and urban. From the NUDP, 2006 it is observed that most Nigerian cities and towns are saddled with the challenges of mobility and transportation. Thus, no Nigerian city has an effective and efficient mass transit system because of inadequacies of existing roads in the cities, maintenance problems and lack of provision for new ones to commute people and goods from one point to another. Traffic congestion and managing urban transportation and poor urban transportation infrastructure characterizes the Nigerian urban transportation system. Lack of urban planning is observed to be the crux of the matter. NUDP, 2006 formulates national policy on urban transportation, communication and traffic management solving Nigerian cities transportation problems. The objectives of this policy include guarantee environmentally sustainable, accessible and affordable mode of transport in urban centres; promote participation and partnership in the provision, operation and management of efficient transportation and communication in urban areas. To achieve these objectives the NUDP strategized some measures. These strategies are:

- (1) Review the specification of road construction to meet present day traffic characteristics and demands and produce strategic plan for road network for the major cities for greater efficiency;
- (2) Promote upgrading of communities and neighbourhoods in core areas of traditional cities for easy accessibility and movement of goods and people;
- (3) Ensure that construction of all categories of roads in cities conforms to acceptable standards; and
- (4) Control on urban sprawl that are being experience in Nigerian cities.

These strategies are expected to be implemented to tackle the traffic and transportation challenges in Nigerian cities rather the problem is overwhelming the city managers because of lack of commitment to the implementation of the policy by the three levels of governments (federal, state and LGA) in the country. Most of the major cities in Nigeria lack adequate roads to meet the demands of the people. These are experienced in cities such as Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna, Kano, Aba, Port Harcourt, etc. Thus, if urban planning is carried out practically by the government and its agencies of development the problem of road infrastructure will be

improved drastically and sustainable urban development will be achieved.

NATIONAL URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICY (NUDP) ON URBAN SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES: FIRE SERVICE

The safety of any society is important, because if lives and properties are not secured, then investments will be in doubt. Many of the mature cities in the world attach much importance to safety and this aspect is keyed into their everyday planning in the lives. Urban safety and emergency services are given total support with strong legislative backing at national and local levels. In Nigeria setting urban safety and emergency services are neglected. Much attention is not given to emergency services both at national and local levels. In NUDP, 2006 emergency services in area of fire disaster were not given any regard apart from crime, violence and environmental protection. This has made most of the urban centres not have strong emergency legislations and policies. Most times emergency issues are kept in view by the executive. Emergency plans are no there, in case of challenges. Every year lives and properties are destroyed in fire outbreak in Nigerian cities and lessons are not learnt on out to combat the situation. Emergency awareness is giving to the populace on how to tackle fire disaster if it occurs. In fact, there is no emergency plan in Nigerian cities when compared with the advanced cities in the developed economy. Fire stations are not provided in many cities in Nigeria coupled with the poor urban planning and lack of development control mechanisms whereby slums and squalors that are upspringing at every corner of the cities with no accessibility of vehicles and other urban infrastructure and services. This is a major challenge to urban managers and need to be considered seriously during decision making time.

METHODOLOGY

The study area comprises Port Harcourt City and Obio/Akpor Local Government Areas which are the core of Port Harcourt metropolis. Port Harcourt City is the administrative capital of Rivers State and the centre of business activities in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The territory is located on latitude 4.75°N and longitude 7° E in Rivers State, Port Harcourt Master Plan, (1975). The Local Government Areas are bounded by Ikwerre and Etche Local Government Areas at the North, Asari-Toru and Okrika Local Government Areas at the South, Emuoha LGA at the West and Eleme and Oyigbo LGAs at the East in Rivers State. The study area region covers about 370km² (143sqmi) which Obio/Akpor LGA is about 261km² (101sqmi) and Port Harcourt City LGA is about 109km² (42sqmi) NPC, (2006).

Table 1: Mean Rating of Facilities and Services available in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area



Source: Rivers State Ministry of Land Housing, 2012
 Fig. 1: Map of Rivers State showing the Study Area

However the study adopted the simple random method of data collection with primary and secondary data as the major sources of data. Also, data were collected through the administration of close ended structured questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using the descriptive method data analysis. The total population of this study was one million, two hundred and ninety four thousand, nine hundred and sixty eight (1,294,968) and all communities in both Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City LGAs. That is all the eighty-nine (89) communities in Obio/Akpor LGA and twenty-five (25) communities in Port Harcourt City LGA. However, the sample size of this study was four hundred (400) which was obtained from the total population of the selected communities from the political wards of both Local Government Areas which formed the study area.

ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Available Facilities

SN	ITEMS	YES	NO	MEAN	STD DEV	DECISION
1	Primary school	77(74.8)	26(25.2)	1.75	0.44	Available
2	Secondary school	57(55.3)	46(44.7)	1.55	0.50	Available
3	Tertiary Institution	4(3.9)	99(96.1)	1.04	0.19	Available
4	Postal services	1(1.0)	102(99.0)	1.01	0.10	Not Available
5	Public hospital/health services	54(52.4)	49(47.6)	1.52	0.50	Available
6	Roads	100(97.1)	3(2.9)	1.97	0.17	Available
7	Drainages	93(90.3)	10(9.7)	1.90	0.30	Available
8	Fire services	3(2.9)	100(97.1)	1.03	0.17	Not Available
9	Modern market	0(0.0)	103(100)	1.00	0.00	Not available
10	Police service	66(64.1)	37(34.9)	1.64	0.48	Available
11	Water from the mains (Public tap)	1(1.0)	102(99.0)	1.01	0.10	Not available
12	Organized open space	61(59.2)	42(40.8)	1.59	0.49	Available
	Grand mean and SD			17.02	3.44	

Criterion Cut-Off Point=1.5

Source Authors' Field work, 2012

Table 1 above shows the number of available facilities in Obio Akpor Local Government Area. It revealed that available facilities included schools (primary, secondary and tertiary institutions), roads. Public hospitals, drainages, police services and open spaces while facilities such as postal service, fire services, modern markets and public water supply were not available.

Table 2: Mean Rating of Facilities and Services available in Port Harcourt Local Government Area

SN	ITEMS	YES	NO	MEAN	STD. DEV.	DECISION
1	Primary school	274(92.3)	23(7.7)	1.92	0.27	Available
2	Secondary school	191(64.3)	106(35.7)	1.64	0.48	Available
3	Tertiary Institution	38(12.8)	259(87.2)	1.13	0.33	Available
4	Postal services	112(37.2)	185(62.3)	1.38	0.49	Available
5	Public hospital/health	209(70.4)	88(29.6)	1.70	0.46	Available
6	Roads	297(100.0)	0(0.0)	2.00	0.00	Available
7	Drainages	254(85.5)	43(14.5)	1.86	0.35	Available
8	Fire services	97(32.7)	200(67.3)	1.33	0.47	Available
9	Modern market	224(75.4)	73(24.6)	1.75	0.43	Available

10	Police service	210(70.7)	87(29.3)	1.71	0.46	Available
11	Water from the mains (Public tap)	85(28.6)	212(71.4)	1.29	0.45	Available
12	Organized open space	139(46.8)	158(53.2)	1.47	0.50	Available
	Grand mean and SD			19.17	4.69	

Criterion cut-off point= 1.5
Source: Authors' Field Work, 2012

Table 2 above showed that all the facilities listed in the study area were available in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Conditions of the Facilities and Services in Obio/Akpor L.G.A.

S/N	FACILITIES/SERVICES	CONDITIONS					MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	DECISION
		EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NEED TO BE LOCATED			
1	Primary school	4(3.9)	63(61.2)	11(10.7)	3(2.9)	22(21.4)	3.23	1.27	In good Condition
2	secondary school	4(3.9)	38(36.9)	16(15.5)	9(8.7)	36(35.0)	2.66	1.38	Not in good
3	Modern market	0(0.0)	1(1.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	102(99.0)	1.03	0.30	Not in good
4	Roads	2(1.9)	13(12.6)	52(50.5)	35(34.0)	1(1.0)	2.81	0.74	Not in good
5	Drains	2(1.9)	11(10.7)	42(40.8)	38(36.9)	10(9.7)	2.58	0.88	Not in good
6	Fire service	0(0.0)	1(1.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	102(99.0)	1.03	0.30	Not in good
7	Police service	2(1.9)	15(14.6)	33(32.0)	21(20.4)	32(31.1)	2.36	1.13	Not in good
	Grand Mean & Standard						15.70	5.99	

Criterion cut-off point=3
Source: Authors' Field Work, 2012

Table 3 above showed the present state of affairs of the facilities and services in Obio /Akpor Local Government Area. The table revealed that all the available facilities and services available in the L.G.A were not in good condition except primary school.

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviations on the Conditions of the Facilities and Services in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area

S/N	FACILITIES/SERVICES	CONDITIONS					MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	DECISION
		EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NEED TO BE LOCATED			
1	Primary school	15(5.1)	239(80.5)	19(6.4)	0(0.0)	24(8.1)	3.74	0.88	In good Condition
2	Secondary school	4(1.3)	90(30.3)	42(14.1)	0(0.0)	161(54.2)	2.25	1.40	Not in good
3	Modern market	2(0.7)	93(31.3)	126(42.2)	10(3.4)	66(22.2)	2.85	1.12	Not in good
4	Roads	2(0.7)	129(43.4)	146(49.2)	20(6.7)	0(0.0)	3.38	0.62	In good Condition
5	Drains	8(2.7)	78(26.3)	113(38.0)	63(21.2)	35(11.8)	2.87	1.02	Not in good
6	Fire service	0(0.0)	10(3.4)	35(11.8)	131(44.0)	121(40.7)	1.78	0.78	Not in good
7	Police service	0(0.0)	103(34.7)	139(46.8)	18(6.1)	37(12.5)	3.04	0.95	In good condition
	Grand Mean & Standard Dev.						19.90	6.77	

Criterion cut-off point=3
Source: Authors' field Work, 2012

Table 4 revealed the conditions of available facilities in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area. The facilities that are in good conditions included primary school, roads and police services while facilities that were not in good condition included secondary school, modern market, drains and fire services

CRITERIA USED TO DISTRIBUTE AND LOCATE FACILITIES

Table 5: Mean and standard deviation on the criterion used to distribute and locate facilities in Obio/Akpor L.G.A.

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Satisfied with the Level of provision of facilities in	4(3.9)	99(96.1)	1.04	0.19	Disagree
2	Government display fairness and equity when distributing facilities to communities.	3(2.9)	100(97.1)	1.03	0.17	Disagree
3	My contribution was Sought before locating any facility in my community.	5(4.9)	98(95.1)	1.05	0.22	Disagree
GRAND MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION				3.12	0.58	

Source: Authors' field Work, 2012

Table 5 above showed that majority of the respondents disagreed with all the items which implies that the criterion used by the government for the distribution of facilities and services in the area is not fair and favourable to the residents/populace of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

Table 6 Mean and Standard Deviation on the Criterion used to Distribute and Locate Facilities in Port Harcourt L.G.A.

S/N	ITEMS	YES	NO	MEA	SD	DECISI
1	Satisfied with the Level of provision of facilities in my community	62(20.9)	235(79.1)	1.21	0.41	Disagree
2	Government display fairness & equity when distributing facilities to	19(6.4)	278(93.6)	1.06	0.25	Disagree
3	My contribution was sought before locating any facility in my community	10(3.4)	287(96.6)	1.03	0.18	Disagree
GRAND MEAN AND SD				3.31	0.83	

Source: Authors' field Work 2012

Table 6 showed that majority of the respondents disagreed with all the items which implies that the criterion used by the government for the distribution of facilities and services in the area is not fair and favourable to the residents/populace of Port Harcourt L.G.A.

DISPARITY IN THE DISTRIBUTIONS OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES

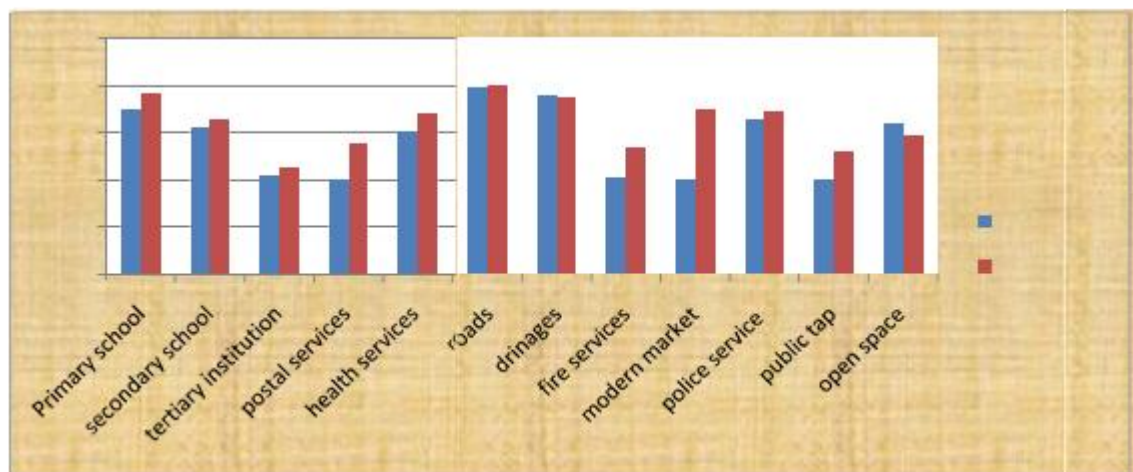
Table 7 showed the gap in the distribution of facilities and services in Obio/ Akpor and Port Harcourt L.G.A. Single asterisks (*) was used to indicate the facilities and services common to both local government while double asterisks (**) indicate those facilities and services they do not have in common. "Modern market" is not available in Obio/Akpor Local .Government Area but it is available in Port Harcourt Local Government Area while there is availability of "organized open space" in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area which is not available in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area.

Table 7: Disparity in the Distributions of Facilities and Services

S/ N	ITEMS	OBIO/AKPOR	PORT HARCOURT
1	Primary school	Available	Available
2	Secondary school	Available	Available
3	Tertiary Institution	Available	Available
4	Postal services	Not available	Available
5	Public hospital/health	Available	Available
6	Roads	Available	Available
7	Drainages	Available	Available
8	Fire services	Not available	Not available
9	Modern market	Not available	Available
10	Police service	Available	Available
11	Water from the mains (Public tap)	Not available	Available
12	Organized open space	Available	Not available
	GRAND MEAN	17.02	19.17

Source: Authors' field work, 2012

MEAN RATING ON THE COMPARISON OF AVAILABLE FACILITIES AND SERVICE IN BOTH OBIO/AKPOR AND PORT HARCOURT CITY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS



Source: Authors' Field Work, 2012

Fig. 1 above revealed that the mean rating on the comparison of available facilities and services in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas base on the criterion mean cut off 1.5. The result showed that Port Harcourt City Local Government Area was more favoured in the distribution of facilities and service than Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. Obio/Akpor is only advantaged over Port Harcourt on drainages and open

space. In Port Harcourt Local Government Area, all the facilities are available except for two (2) items which were not adequately provided these open space and drainages while in Obio/Akpor L.G.A. 4 items (4) were not available at all which are, postal services, fire services, modern market and public tap.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings are summarized as follows;

- (1) The study revealed that population threshold was not considered in the distribution of facilities and services in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (2) The study further revealed that population was slightly considered in the distribution of facilities in service in Port Harcourt, Local Government Area even though its effect was insignificant.
- (3) The study also revealed that income was not a predictor to distribution of facilities and services in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (4) More so, it was revealed that income was a criterion for locating facilities and services in Port Harcourt Local Government Area.
- (5) There is a gap in the distribution of facilities and services between the two Local Government Areas in the study Area; more facilities were available in Port Harcourt Local Government Area than Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, favouring Port Harcourt Local Government Area more than Obio/Akpor. Most of the facilities in the two Local Government Areas are in poor condition except for primary schools in Obio/Akpor and primary schools and roads in Port Harcourt.
- (6) Criteria used to distribute facilities included population threshold and income of respondents, planning strategy for equitable distribution of facilities and services included participatory planning, needs and demand.
- (7) The population of Obio/Akpor has in recent times increased more than that of Port Harcourt Local Government Area as against the figure contained in the 1991 population census which does not reflect in any database.

CONCLUSION

The research assessed facilities and services in the study areas with a view to ascertaining whether or not there is disparity in the distribution and access to these facilities and services. The study identified that facilities and services are available in both local Governments. Besides, it was further revealed that there were no clear criteria used in the location of facilities and services and the criteria used did not favour the greater majority of the populace which is a pointer that public participation method of planning was never adopted. More so, the study revealed that there is disparity and unequal access to facilities and services distributed in the study area (Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Area) whereas Port Harcourt City Local Government Area is more populated than Obio/Akpor Local Government Area; this indicates a lack of good governance from those allocating these facilities and services. It also revealed that income levels of respondents played a major role in the distribution of facilities and services in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

However, the following recommendations were made;

- (1) Government should encourage needs assessment and public participation in decision making with respect to the location of facilities and services.
- (2) Also, facilities and services should be distributed with respect to actual population size, needs and demands to reduce disparity and unequal access to available facilities and services.
- (3) Furthermore, government should adopt the culture of maintaining facilities and services early before they decay and become derelict and irreparable.
- (4) Besides, government at all levels should create a database with respect to population data and ensure that census is carried out within an appropriate timeframe and documented.
- (5) Finally, income level of any spectrum of the population should not form the basis for the distribution and location of facilities and services.

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