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INTRODUCTION

In most cases, the life expectancy of people in a particular political system depends on the quality of social amenities which obviously, accounts for the quality of life of the citizens. Social amenities, such as well constructed roads, portable and quality water, recreational facilities for wellness activities, functional electricity, sustainable healthcare, an improved education etc; form the fulcrum around which quality of life revolves. A community with tarred roads and controlled erosion will not have too much challenge in terms of human movement and transportation of goods and services from one location to another. This will surely enhance socio-economic activities at the grassroots. Likewise, the availability of safe water, recreational facilities, and sustainable healthcare, quality and affordable education, and effective security can help save the people from water-borne diseases, obesity due to lack of exercise, illiteracy respectively and protection of life and property. Besides, functional electricity and employment opportunity in the community will certainly in addition to strengthening economic activities, enhance citizens' powering of electrical gadgets or appliances such as fans, air conditioners, refrigerators, blenders, juice extractors, micro-waves at home to create comfort and happy homes in such tropical zone like the study area.

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Impact of Poor Social Amenities on Quality of Life in Rural Communities: A Study of Egbuoma Community, Imo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Good service delivery to the whole or a part of any political system is usually instrumental to the quality of life available to the people. It is noteworthy that services to the public such as portable water, good road, good and affordable healthcare, security of life and property, quality and affordable education and job opportunity are fundamental rights of the citizens of a given state. Consequently, when the state fails to deliver these basic needs of life, the quality of life available to the people will drop sustainably, leading to poor standard of living and agonizing drop in the life expectancy of the people. The study therefore examined the impact of poor social amenities on the quality of life of the people of Egbuoma community. It was a survey research. Both primary and secondary data were used and simple percentage was adopted as the analytical tool. Efficiency service delivery model as espoused by Williams Mackenzie in 1954 was adopted as theoretical framework. The study found out that the community has practically suffered the lack of all the identified social amenities, thus the abysmal poor standard of living in the community. The study therefore, recommends a process that will guarantee sustainable rural development initiative in the area which should involve the indigenes of the community. This will help make the project sustainable.

Keywords: service delivery; community; quality of life; social amenities; efficiency service.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In most cases, the life expectancy of people in a particular political system depends on the quality of social amenities which obviously, accounts for the quality of life of the citizens. Social amenities, such as well constructed roads, portable and quality water, recreational facilities for wellness activities, functional electricity, sustainable healthcare, an improved education etc; form the fulcrum around which quality of life revolves. A community with tarred roads and controlled erosion will not have too much challenge in terms of human movement and transportation of goods and services from one location to another. This will surely enhance socio-economic activities at the grassroots. Likewise, the availability of safe water, recreational facilities, and sustainable healthcare, quality and affordable education, and effective security can help save the people from water-borne diseases, obesity due to lack of exercise, illiteracy respectively and protection of life and property. Besides, functional electricity and employment opportunity in the community will certainly in addition to strengthening economic activities, enhance citizens' powering of electrical gadgets or appliances such as fans, air conditioners, refrigerators, blenders, juice extractors, micro-waves at home to create comfort and happy homes in such tropical zone like the study area. It is therefore important to note that

personal or collective satisfaction of the community depends on the functioning of identified amenities. However, the doubt surrounding the availability of these life supports to the people of Community is disturbing because both the state and local governments hosting the community seem not to have plans to introduce sustained changes aimed at improving the standard of living of the local population.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Naturally, human beings need a condition of existence which supports the desire to enjoy living a life of satisfaction and personal fulfillment. Further, this life is dependent on the presence of roads, quality education, improved health facilities/system, portable and safe-drinking water, recreational facilities for wellness purposes, steady electricity supply and effective security out-fit. If these variables are determinants of quality of life in Egbuoma in particular and in every human space in general, how can the people of the community enjoy good quality of life seeing that these social amenities are lacking? The people have suffered various and varying degrees of health set back because of a lack or non-availability of effective health-care delivery, recreational facilities, portable ,and safe water. Many roads in the community are in a state of despair, and this cannot support hitch free transportation of goods and services from the point of production to places of need. The deplorable condition of the roads appears more visible and disturbing during the rainy seasons because of the uncontrolled flooding owing to a lack of drainage systems in the community.

The socioeconomic implication of a lack of steady electricity supply in Egbuoma cannot be over-emphasized seeing that it is the power to economic and social progress. Many families in the community have suffered the inability to power their electrical appliances such as radio sets, refrigerators, microwave, fans, etc because of insufficient electricity supply. The negative implication of this scenario is that the people spend too much money on alternative sources of power, which cannot even provide maximum

power to satisfy the needs of the people. Besides, most petty traders and shop keepers face the difficulty of preserving their perishable goods, thus making them suffer economic losses due to lack of electricity for preservative purposes. Given the bad infrastructural conditions that threaten the prospect of good quality of life in Egbuoma community that the study seeks to investigate to make policy recommendations believed would help mitigate the excruciating challenges of poor service delivery to the community.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Given the developmental challenges that negatively affect the quality of life in Egbuoma Community, the study is determined to undertake the following specific objectives'

1. To investigate the major cause of poor quality of life (QOL) in Egbuoma community.
2. To investigate the impact of poor social amenities on the quality of life of people in Egbuoma community.
3. To make useful policy recommendations on how to tackle the identified challenges to good quality of life in Egbuoma community.

IV. ABOUT THE EGBUOMA COMMUNITY

The community called Egbuoma is located in Oguta Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria. The predominant source of living in the community is subsistent farming and petty trading. Fishing is also a big part of the occupation in the community because it is a part of the Delta Region in Nigeria. Demographically, the community has good number of people domicile in it though definite population figure is not available. However, it has a good number of its sons and daughters in the diaspora who have achieved success in many spheres of human endeavour. It is a rural setting which regrettably lacks real government presence in terms of provision of critical social amenities and infrastructure that can make good standard of living a banker. Structurally, Egbuoma has a good number of sub-communities called *nkpu*, in our

local dialect, which means human enclave that is smaller in size and population than a community and higher than a village. The community has a close-styled settlement system where citizens build houses close to each other. This style of settlement is symbolic of “*be your neighbour’s keeper*”. These *nkpu* are large enough to have many villages in them. It is a well established and large autonomous community with several electoral wards and functional polling stations. It has a traditional ruler whose title is *Eze* (King) and who works hand in glove with the town union ruling body and his cabinet members to make sure the community is progressive. The traditional institution is headed by His Royal Highness, Eze

Okorie Ogbuehi of Egbuoma while the Egbuoma Progressive Union (EPU) leadership is usually on the basis of democratic election often conducted periodically. The major occupation in the community is farming and petty trading. However, farmers are usually set back almost every year by the intensity and ferocity of flood in the area usually around September and October when crops are about to mature for harvest. Government has never indicated sustained interest to either control the flood or mitigate the sufferings of the flood disaster victims. The following table is explicit of the structure of the community.

Table 1: Structure of Egbuoma community

S/N	“ <i>Nkpu</i> ” (larger division of the community)	No of villages in each “ <i>nkpu</i> ”	Villages in each <i>nkpu</i>	Population	Occupation/major farm crops
1	Ubaokwum	7	Umuezeala, Umuamara; Umuolowu/Umuisiarusi; Umuihenacho; Umuereke; Umuorji; Umuegbu	N/A	Cassava, yam and fishing (seasonal)
2	Ubahudara	2	Umuodu and Ndiodirigwe	N/A	Cassava and palm oil processing
3	Ihitte Egbu	6	Umuachukwu, Omadi, Ugwurugwuala, Umuomirima, Ebelano, Amagu	N/A	Trading/shop keeping
4	Ubaramehi	6	Umudiji, Umuezike-Egbu, Okwaubaramehi, Umuezike, Umuehi, Umuzu, Ijem,	N/A	trading/shop keeping
5	Odide	3	Umuokpara, Umuduru and Umuezike	N/A	Cassava and yam products
6	Aro-Egbuoma	2	Ndigwe, Aruomeforonye, Ndoti	N/A	Petty trading/shop keeping

Source: Field work by the author, 2020

V. METHODOLOGY

The study made use of both primary and secondary data. The choice of primary and secondary data is to have double-edge sources of data collection which is expected to ensure authenticity of research results. Collection of primary data was done through administration of structured questionnaire. Respondents and population size relevant for data gathering as seen

in table 2 were purposively chosen by the researcher. The choice of such respondents was predicated on the fact that they possess the required information for the study. Though the population of the study is the thirty (30) villages, a population size of two hundred (200) respondents was purposively chosen for convenience. The response scale was designed in line with that of Likert’s. The respondents’ responses were analyzed using simple percentage.

The researcher also visited many places in the community to take pictures to substantiate the position of the study. Besides, the researcher made use of secondary data gotten from already conducted research works from library sources like journal articles, newspapers, government periodicals. Data from this source was analyzed descriptively.

VI. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopted efficiency services approach as formulated by Mackenzie (1954) as the framework of analysis. This theory was adopted because it is one of the leading voices that explained the importance of service delivery to the rural population. In his address to the British House of Commons in the 1950s, Williams Mackenzie maintained that efficient service delivery to the rural people is the fundamental responsibility of regional government, especially the local government. He reiterated that effective service delivery must preoccupy the resources, power and attention of the government. Furthermore, Mackenzie highlighted that delivery of service to the rural communities by the regional government must be pursued and carried out in a manner that will be satisfactory to the federal inspectorate (Nnaeto, 2019.p.15). Realizing the importance of the theory, Sharpe (1970), and Hill (1974) corroborate that efficiency services theory opens the way and thus directs that service delivery is the greatest argument in favour of local government. The following are the major explanatory tenets of Williams Mackenzie “efficiency services theory”:

1. Provision of opportunity for political participation to the rural people.
2. Helps to ensure efficient service delivery to the rural people which is their major source of livelihood and development.
3. Express a tradition of opposition to an overly centralized government. This simply means yearning for local autonomy (Kafle & Karkee, 2003).

6.1 What constitutes a good quality of life (QOL) in Egbuoma community?

According to Aristotle, the quality of life is determined by its activities. Quality of life is one of the recurrent jargons in contemporary development literature. Therefore, for the people of the community under study, acceptable quality of life constitutes the provision of essential needs (tangible or intangible) which will help ease the pressure of life considerably. However, it is important to note that these components of quality of life are equally fundamental parts of the National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPAP) initiated by Nigeria’s former President Olusegun Obasanjo administration, contained in Alhaji Jada Panel Report in the year 2000. Therefore, the following constitute quality of life in Egbuoma autonomous community;

6.2 Availability of functional health care services

The truism that “health is wealth” is as real as life and death. Economic and social prosperity of a community or states has a direct and significant relationship with how much healthcare the citizens are allowed to access. The output of a state or organization is also directly proportional to the state of health and wellness of its workforce. Healthy population is better disposed to ensure uncommon socioeconomic output/prosperity for the community. It is however pathetic that this fundamental source of good quality of life is treated with unjustifiable levity. Ogunna (2007, p.140) emphasized that in most government owned hospitals, medical services are given free of charge to the poor, aged and children. It is important to state that such services fall short of required medical services to effectively address the diverse health challenges confronting the rural population. Both infant and maternal mortality is on the increase.

6.3 Availability of water supply/safe water

Various villages in Egbuoma community are regularly confronted by the challenges of acute water shortage. Many years ago, precisely in the first tenure of President, Obasanjo’s

administration, the government, under the auspices of National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPAP), embarked on rural water schemes which functioned less effectively for few months and parked up. The study will produce sites and pictorials to substantiate this claim. The consequence of this scenario is that the people of Egbuoma community either resort to trekking a very long distance to fetch water from unfit natural water body; make do with collected rain water which of course is not only unfit but also seasonal or only available during the rainy season. The community also faces the task of spending exorbitantly to buy water for household use from private borehole owners (water vendors) who regularly grapple with spending too much money in fuelling their power generators to pump water because of the lack of electricity supply. This condition has multifaceted negative effects on quality of life in the community. Water borne diseases are common without matching medical or healthcare services to mitigate the effects. These arise from drinking unsafe water from rain, natural water body, and well water whose purity is obviously contaminated by both natural and artificial environmental factors including the disturbing open defecation. The poverty alleviation programmes initiated by government were not effectively implemented to serve the development purpose in the community (Ogunna 2007).

6.4 Rural roads and housing

Rural roads play a vital role in important socioeconomic wellbeing of the individual citizens in particular and the community in general. Poor state of roads across the community poses persistent difficulty in the transportation of perishable agricultural produce from where they are produced to the point of sale or need. These vital rural roads are called “Trunk C” roads in Nigeria because construction and maintenance of such roads are exclusive responsibilities of the local government according to the 1999 Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended. Unfortunately, grassroots government meant to bring development to the rural people

does not work in the Nigeria federal system. The foregoing anomaly is partly responsible for deplorable state of roads in the community. It gets deplorable during the rainy season when the community experiences over-flooding of the roads. Unfortunately, the rains maintain intensity during harvest in part of Nigeria where this study was conducted. The study will provide a picture of some important/major roads in the community to proof the concern stated herein. Poor housing is currently a hard-to-mitigate setback to good quality of life to the people of Egbuoma community. People are still living in mud and thatch houses without conveniences, engaging in open defecation which pollutes the environment and easily causes the spread of diseases. It is on record that the Federal Government of Nigeria provides loans to people in the rural areas to build personal houses through the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria. This claim is not effective because its implementation has always been hijacked by the forces of corruption and mal-administration which have been the intractable bane of socioeconomic development and prosperity of Nigeria (Nnaeto, J.O & Okoroafor, G.I, 2016).

6.5 Availability of standard and affordable education for all

Education is a major source of information for individual and national development. Assimilation and deployment of the acquired information or education will determine the specific and general productive relevance of the person. This means education is a sine qua non for both personal and corporate development, thus, it must be pursued with great intensity, both by the giver and receiver. The most effective approach to achieve good quality of life is by ensuring uncompromized implementation of policies on Universal Basic Education Scheme so that illiteracy domiciled in the rural communities could be reduced to a negligible proportion. The Obasanjo civilian administration instituted Universal Basic Education Programme to address the menace of illiteracy especially in the rural areas. Sadly, the programme was marred at the

implementation stage because many communities including Egbuoma did not benefit from the scheme. Egbuoma community has precisely five (5) public primary schools and one secondary school threatened by poor teaching and learning environment, inadequate materials and laboratory equipment for teaching and learning of science and technology, poor student-teacher ratio, and visibly unmotivated workforce who rarely report to duty as regularly as required (Nnaeto & Ndoh, 2017).

6.6 Functional and regular electricity supply

Electricity is a fundamental factor in rural development. Alkire, (2010) rightly opined that power is the most needed factor for all levels of industrialization and allied development. Through community efforts, Egbuoma people kicked off the project of rural electrification in the early 1980s (Ohaebosim, 2019). The support from the government was not enough to set up formidable electricity system that will ensure regular power supply to the community. The efforts of the community to achieve rural electrification was not good enough, thus the project suffered lack of sustainability. Consequently, Egbuoma community is in utter darkness given the dilapidated power installations. This long standing deficit crippled the contribution electricity supply could have made to the quality of life of the people of Egbuoma community.

Other variables which could constitute good quality of life to indigenes of Egbuoma community include; sustained credit facilities to both traders and teeming subsistent farmers; creation of job opportunities through industrial development and skill acquisition programmes suffer one disappointment or the other.

6.7 Conceptual Elucidation Quality of life (QOL)

The concept “quality of life (QOL) is obviously a multidimensional jargon with a multiplicity of definitions, thus problematic to explain in a line of expression. However, there is a concrete consensus among development scholars and practitioners on what the concept is (Wallander; Schmitt, & Koot, 2001). Quality of life is a

conglomeration of material well-being and its associates; physical well-being and its associates; emotional well-being and its associates and productive well-being and its associates (Daniel & Lee, 2007). It can be also conceptualized as those standards that carry society or individual expectation, which can ensure good living in every ramification (Wikipedia, 2019). World Health Organization (WHO) defines quality of life (QOL) as “individual’s perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns”. In a study ‘standard of living Vs. Quality of life: An overview, Fontinelle (2019) opines that standard of living is simply the proportion of realities that support good living, life wealth, comfort and other necessities available to a certain class of people in a particular locale. Quality of life is akin to a condition of happiness in the life of a person, community or state. In a similar development, quality of life (QOL) could represent one’s satisfaction which is in agreement with the dimension and ideal life of the individual (Ruzevicius, 2016).

6.8 Community

According to the Oxford Dictionary, “Community is a group of people living in the same place or having particular characteristics in common”. This means that one cannot talk about the existence of a community when there is nothing like common culture or identical life style, or identity binding them. Our area of study, Egbuoma community fits into this conceptualization because there are many cultural identities broadly common among the indigenes of the community.

6.9 Social Amenities

Conceptualizing social amenities in a single thought may be too problematic and complex to handle because of the diverse connotations the concept may assume in different cultures. However, Peter-John (2016), maintains that occupants wishing to move into a particular community can only have a sigh of relief for a

comfortable living when they successfully move into such a community that has amenities like; schools and play grounds; shopping destinations; health services and recreational options; Entertainment venues; and transportation. Similarly, social amenities could also represent “places, buildings of infrastructural facilities which are to be shared and to become convergence spots for the local and surrounding communities which will unite them and possibly ensure dynamism and progressivism” (Ministry of Rural Development, Malaysia, 2019). According to a local tabloid (Vanguard, April 4, 2017) “residents of Mkpot, a Nigerian border

community with Cameroon in Akanukpa Local Government Area, Cross River State, especially youths, have deserted the village because of excruciating conditions of living in the rustic locality, citing lack of access road, portable water, electricity, health care facilities”. Social amenities do have the ability of ensuring multiple positive socio-economic realities in a community. It also has the strength to reduce poverty in the community, especially with the provision of portable water, which definitely reduces water-borne diseases that will ultimately reduce the rate at which the people seek hospital attention (Edumadze, 2004).

Table 2: Distribution of questionnaire

S/N	Allocation of questionnaire	No. distributed	No. returned	Percentage
1	Traditional Rulers & cabinet	50	50	25
2	Town union Presidents	50	50	25
3	Professional body/Civil society	50	50	25
4	Farmers and Traders	50	50	25
5	Total	200	200	100

source: survey by researcher, 2020

The table above represents questionnaire distribution table showing the allocation of copies of questionnaire to various segments of human beings and occupational designation in Egbuoma community. The four options were allocated equal copies of questionnaire (50) because it was judgmentally ascertained that they have the requisite information needed for the study.

Table 3: Quesiton1: Does the present state of social amenities in Egbuoma community support your aspiration for quality of life?

S/N	Options	Response	Percentage
1	Strongly Yes(SY)	20	10
2	Yes	30	15
3	Strongly No (SN)	80	40
4	No	70	35
5	Undecided	-	-
6	Total	200	100

Source: Survey data, 2020

The objective of the question is to find out from the respondents whether the present state of social amenities in Egbuoma community is in the direction of helping them actualize the desired quality of life. Responding, 20 (10%) answered “strongly yes” while 30 (15%) answered “yes”. While 80 (40%) responded “strongly no”, 70(35%) responded “no”. This means that, of the 200 respondents, 150, forming its 75% are of the conviction that the present state of social amenities in Egbuoma community does not bring the population close to the desired quality of life. Insofar as the negative response of 75% is far > the positive response of 25%, it therefore means that far more efforts are needed to increase the availability of social amenities so that the community could be set on the path of quality life.

Table 4: Question 2: Which of the following social concerns do you want government to urgently provide in Egbuoma community?

S/N	Options	Response	Percentage
1	All of the above	75	37.5
2	Healthcare & security	69	34.5
3	Provision of safe water	20	10
4	Provision of electricity	30	15
5	Roads	6	3
6	Total	200	100

Source: Survey data, 2020

The Egbuoma respondents are asked to respond to their social needs in order of importance (scale

of preference). 75 (37.5%) of the respondents maintained that all the social amenities mentioned are of equal importance to the community. While 69 (34.5%) of the respondents identified Healthcare and security as most important, 20(10%), 30(15%) and 6(3%) maintained respectively that water, and electricity and roads are important to them. This data simply imply that for the community to achieve the quality of life, these identified amenities must be sustainably present. Unfortunately, the figures below depict a deplorable and moribund state of social amenities in the community.



Fig. 1

Fig: 1 .This water project is located in a village in Egbuoma community called Umuezeala. The project was executed by government but it stopped working not long after it was commissioned. The project was a victim of political gimmick which is very common in Nigerian politics. They are usually done during the electioneering campaign by government in order to woo voters to return them to power, only to turn and face another direction when they win they are returned to power. Weed around this facility is less because the picture was taken

during intense dry season. Government water projects across the community suffer the same fate. The following water project sites attest to the claims:



Fig. 2

Fig 2 ; Another water project which never served the grassroots. When the researcher enquired why the facility is as moribund as it is, the locals responded that one of the politicians supervising the project took away the big soundproof generator powering it to an unknown destination; one of the factors which, made the project moribund.



Fig 3: Another water project built by government at a location called Ebelano in Egbuoma community which had long been overtaken by weeds.



Fig. 4

Fig 4: One of the many natural water bodies in Egbuoma community is this stream/river called Obana. This picture is that of a natural water body in Egbuoma. Such natural water bodies are many in the community and they serve as an alternative source of water to the community, especially to those who do not have the wherewithal to buy water from commercial water vendors. The implication of this for those who do not have the means to purchase water from the vendors is that, their health is endangered by drinking from contaminated water bodies or rain water already contaminated by the atmosphere. With the prevalence of open defecation in the rural areas, which obviously is washed into the water bodies, contaminates the streams and thus make them unfit for any manner of human consumption. In such natural water bodies like this, people wash their cloths, bathe, store their cassava roots for fermentation and fetch for other domestic uses.

Table 5: Question 3: Poor primary health care system accounts for high maternal, infant and general mortality in Egbuoma community

S/N	Options	Response	Percentage
1	Strongly Agree	85	42.5
2	Agree	68	34
3	Strongly Disagree	27	13.5
4	Disagree	16	9
5	Undecided	2	1
6	Total	200	100

Source: Survey data, 2019

Information in the table suggests that 85 and 68 of the respondents representing 42.5% and 34% of the respondents serious agreed and agreed respectively that most patients die because of poor healthcare. Though there are a few clinics and health centres in the community, there are no adequate prophylactics, medical personnel, medical facilities for proper diagnoses, and prompt medical attention both to ordinary and emergency cases. The rich opts for medical attention in very expensive private hospitals outside the community, while the poor who rely on public healthcare services see their chances of receiving good medical attention hang on a balance. It was also observed that one of the health centres in the community do have days of operation in a week. This means that if one is unlucky to be in need of medical attention on the day that the clinic does not operate, the person will either visit the private clinic if he or she is financial capable, or resort to self medication which is more hazardous. About five years ago, a relation of mine, 9, was sick and rushed to Nkwo-Egbuoma branch of the health centre in the community. For almost many hours, the medical personnel (mainly nurses) were administering malaria medication on the boy without any sign of stability. Sadly, the next decision was to ask us to take the boy to another hospital. On gathering to a private clinic, in less than two minutes, just through physical examination of the boy, the private healthcare giver diagnosed him of anemia (shortage of blood). In few minutes of blood

transfusion, the boy stabilized and was ready to be discharged.



Fig. 5

Fig 5: This facility is one of the two public health centers in Egbuoma community. This one is located at a place called Ebelano, sharing a border with the first primary school the community has, called Central School, Egbuoma. One can see how quiet and lifeless the facility looks. The health center opens for business once or twice a week. It was under lock and key at the time of our visit. There is nothing supportive of a health care facility that is in this place; starting from medical personnel to required medications and other

medical paraphernalia. These public healthcare facilities do not have what is required to attend to the healthcare needs of Egbuoma community because they lack presence of doctors, leaving only nurses who are not well trained to man the centres, no requisite medical paraphernalia to improve healthcare provision, the centres do not operate on daily basis, personnel are not domiciled in the community of service, and other factors that affect effective operation.



Fig. 6

Fig 6: Another health center located at a place called Nkwo-Egbuoma, very close to the palace and residence of the traditional ruler of Egbuoma autonomous community, HRH, Eze Okorie Ogbuehi of Egbuoma. This center functions, though, on an irregular basis with a couple of medical staff (no doctors) and in unprecedented need of medications and other medical paraphernalia.

Table 5: Question 4: How does a hopeless state of power/electricity supply affect socioeconomic wellbeing of people in the Community?

S/N	Options	Response	Percentage
1	Serious effect	106	54
2	Effect	65	32.5
3	Little effect	25	12.5
4	No effect	4	2
5	Total	200	100

Source: Survey data, 2019

The respondents affirm that lack of electricity supply actually affects socioeconomic wellbeing of the people in the community. In effect, while 106(54%) of respondents affirms that lack of electricity supply has a “serious effect” on the socioeconomic wellbeing of the people in the community, 65(32.5%) said the situation has “effect” on the socioeconomic wellbeing of the people. 25(12.5%) and 4(2%) maintain that the situation has “little effect” and “no effect” on the socioeconomic wellbeing of the people respectively. With > numbers (54%) and (32.5%) stating that hopeless electricity supply impedes on socioeconomic wellbeing of the people, it

therefore means much has to be done in terms of supply of electricity to the people in order to improve their socioeconomic wellbeing. The researcher observes that many business outfits suffer a lot to function as a result of running generator set. Many implications abound: One, the cost of running a generator set in terms of cost of fueling, and actual maintenance take a financial toll on the operators. Second, the environmental health is jeopardized by noise pollution and the emission of carbon dioxide (Co₂), which can aggravate the depletion of the ozone layer to the health detriment of mankind.



Fig.7

Fig 7: This picture shows one of the many dilapidated electrical installations in the community. Many of such sites abound in the community, making power/electricity supply a huge mirage

Table 6: Question 5: Poor rural roads impede the effective movement of people, goods, and services from place of production to location of need

S/N	Options	Response	Percentage
1	Strongly Agree	83	41.5
2	Agree	68	34
3	Strongly Disagree	28	14
4	Disagree	18	9
5	Undecided	3	1.5
6	Total	200	100

Source: Survey data, 2019

The result attests to the fact that the paucity of good rural roads is a significant impediment to socio-economic activities which adversely affect the quality of life in Egbuoma community. To this effect, 41.5% and 34% of respondents (SA and A) respectively affirmed that lack of good roads significantly slows down marketing of their goods and services especially during the rainy season when over flooding is very common. Therefore, good roads are important determinants of quality of life in Egbuoma community. The picture of some roads below can empirically support the respondents’ claims.



Fig. 8: One of the numerous bad roads in the community

This is a major road in the community. It is so because it is the road that leads to many villages that make up Egbuoma autonomous community. There is no way one can pass through the villages in the community without either passing through this road or at least seeing it at a close range. This

picture was taken in the month of March, 2019 when the rainy season was about to commence. At the peak of the rainy season (June, July, August, September, October, and November), this major road and others are usually impassable.

Table 7: Question 6: How would you describe government effort towards security of life and property in Egbuoma community?

S/N	Options	Response	Percentage
1	Ineffective	78	39
2	Very effective	12	6
3	Very ineffective	86	43
4	Undecided	24	12
5	Total	200	100

Source: Survey data, 2020

The data in the table proved that insecurity is a significant threat to quality of life in Egbuoma community. Empirically, 86 respondents, representing 43% and 78 respondents, representing 39% affirmed that issues of insecurity cuts down quality of life in Egbuoma. Therefore, the community needs adequate security that can guarantee effective socioeconomic ventures for there to be hope for improved standard of living for the people of the community.

Table 8: Question 7: Are you convinced that government will step up actions, very soon, to address challenges to desired quality of life in Egbuoma community?

S/N	Options	Response	Percentage
1	Likely	7	3.5
2	Very likely	24	12
3	Very unlikely	86	43
4	Unlikely	71	35.5
5	Undecided	12	6
6	Total	200	100

Source: Survey data, 2020

In response to the above question, respondents appear skeptical of quick government intervention to address the challenges to their desired quality of life. This manifests when 86(43%) and 71(35.5%) opted for “very unlikely and unlikely” respectively. This means the community does not know when their aspiration for desired quality of life will be achieved.

Table 9: Question 8: Which of the following is the most regular source of water to the people in Egbuoma community?

S/N	Options	Response	Percentage
1	Government water scheme	2	1
2	Streams/Rain	16	8
3	Water vendor	142	71
4	Self-provision	26	13
5	Undecided	14	7
6	Total	200	100

Source: Survey data, 2020

The greater number of respondents 142(71%) maintained that most regular source of water for domestic use in the community is water vendor, popularly called “borehole water” in the local parlance. The respondents said 26(13%) have personal source of water in their respective homes in the community. Critically, 2(1%) said government provides water to the community. The insignificant responses in favour of government substantiates the picture of dry and rusted water tanks and taps, water scheme sites overtaken by weeds, old and outdated water projects seen across the community. According to the survey, 16(8%) who could neither afford private water nor regularly afford buying from the water vendors supplements the situation with either relying on stream or rain water for domestic use. This choice exposes the people to water borne diseases and other environmental hazards.

VII. RESEARCH FINDINGS

In view of data collected and analyzed, it is observed that government has for many years, neglected to address the following challenges in the community;

- Provision of adequate security without which no social amenity can be fully and happily enjoyed by the masses.
- The community has been suffering lack of portable water for many years with resultant health challenges.

- Complete blackout of electricity is responsible for the folding of many socioeconomic ventures in Egbuoma community.
- Bad rural roads affect the transportation of many agricultural produce and allied services from production point to consumption point.
- Poor and sub-standard educational system reduced the quantum information which could have made access to quality life very easy in Egbuoma community.
- Poor healthcare system (operational difficulties) is a major cause of avoidable deaths in the community.

VIII. RECOMMENDATION

Findings of the study necessitate the following recommendations;

- The relevant government authorities should approve and support the use of community-based security to protect the people of the community. Using the indigenes to secure the area will make it self-sustaining and effective.
- The drilling of solar powered water boreholes at strategic locations across Egbuoma community is recommended to help provide safe water and thus reduce incidences of water borne disease pandemic. Making government water scheme a major source of water to the community should be a top priority.
- Regular power/electricity supply is very necessary to ensure effective operation by artisans, small and medium scale ventures and other power users in Egbuoma community.
- Government should fix the major road that connect the community with the Local Government Council headquarters and then mobilize the youth, that is (in alliance with the youth) to regularly attend to other rural roads in order to make for easy movement of goods and humans in the community.
- Best quality of life is traceable to the information at your disposable and proper education is fundamental to it. Therefore, government should motivate teachers who work with the schools in the community by

training and promoting them as at when due, payment of salary, making conducive teaching and learning environment available. Besides, pupils and students should be armed with the requisites for quality education.

- Finally, the universal expression that “health is wealth” cannot elude the people of Egbuoma community. Thus, it is strongly recommended the two health centres in the community present in a comatose be rehabilitated (qualified medical personnel, doctor inclusive and necessary medications) to provide the health needs of the rural populace.

IX. CONCLUSION

Quality of life is a fundamental desire of every mortal no matter the socioeconomic status of a place of residence. In developed climes where virtually every community that makes up the state has socioeconomic realities that support a good standard of living, quality of life is treated as citizens’ right, not a privilege. But in developing climes, such as Nigeria, fraught with institutional corruption and prismatic modus operandi, achieving quality of life is better described as a mirage because government has hardly implemented policy recommendations bordering on major sources of high standard of living such as effective healthcare delivery, regular and uninterrupted power/electricity supply, quality and affordable education, recreational facilities, safe and portable water, good road system and adequate security. Through responses to the questionnaire, and personal observations, Egbuoma community is in dire need of these variables needed for the security of standard quality of life. The study, therefore, suggests that while Egbuoma community hopes for government intervention, they should aggressively begin to look inward to institute community, collective, and self-help approach to providing a happy living to itself. This approach may attract government intervention faster than when government is expected to initiate and complete it. Finally, the people of the community have suffered an unprecedented poor standard of living due to

government negligence in the provision of social amenities, which are fundamental to an improved standard of living for the people.

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