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NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs) AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS IN IMO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This work focused on NGOs and community development in local governments in Imo State, Nigeria. The local governments used include Owerri Municipal, Mbaitoli, Isiala Mbano, Onuimo, Oru East and Oguta. The work formulated and used three research objectives. The objectives of the study focused on examining the extent NGOs has contributed in environmental protection, health care service delivery and educational development in Imo State. The work was anchored on public goods theory. Descriptive survey was applied and data were collected through primary source (questionnaire). Data were analyzed using percentage, mean and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) at 0.05 level of significance through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21.0). The study discovered that NGOs significantly enhance environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State; there is relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State; and there is significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State. The work concludes that NGOs can play important role in the process of mobilization of population, and support such as educating the rural people, providing training, health care, environmental protection/advocacy, disseminating information, mobilizing resources, promoting rural leadership, introducing innovations, ensuring people's participation, promoting appropriate technology and activating the rural delivery system. It was

Keywords: Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Development, Environmental Protection, Health Care Service Delivery, Educational Development and Local Government Areas.

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recommended that NGOs should play more active roles in sensitization of the people on environmental protection, sanitation, and maintenance. More so, there is need for the government and private individuals and organizations to give all round support to NGOs so that they can play active roles on provision of health care services and educational development to the people in different communities.

Introduction

The need for development, especially in less developed nations like Nigeria cannot be neglected. That is why government all over the world are committed in making and implementing policies which can help their nations remain or achieve development. According to Chukwudi (2017), most communities in Nigeria in general and Imo state in particular are underdeveloped. There is high level of poverty, unemployment, poor educational standards, lack of regular electricity, and poor health care system in most Nigeria communities. These situations have necessitated some non-governmental organizations to practically engage in community development programmes to encourage development of Nigeria communities. Utuk (2021) observes that in the past few years or there about, there has been greater recognition of NGOs as important partners in community development. Community development according to Njoku (2008) is improvement in human capital and infrastructural aspects of the community aimed at reducing poverty, creating employment, and encouraging viable economic activities for the people. Through their roles, NGOs have contributed in community development in different ways. The role or many activities of NGOs in community development include, but not limited to, environmental protection; social service delivery like health care and education; advocacy; and human rights work (Sikula, 2017).

Much attention has been focused on their activities, and projects embarked upon. Yet, despite increasing scale of this sector, and the growing reputation that NGOs have won for themselves and their work over the years, many people do not know what NGOs are all about, what they do or the rationale for their existence. In fact, there is a serious lack of knowledge about the real characteristics of these organizations. Abanyam (2020) reveals that what makes NGOs special can be gathered by looking at their impact on the people in the community, as they have helped to provide food, shelter, clothing, information, and social services to the people in different communities. For this study, the role of NGOs in community

development which were covered include environmental protection, primary health care service delivery, and educational development. Based on the above, this work focused on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community development in Owerri Municipal, Mbaitoli, Isiala Mbano, Onuimo, Oru East and Oguta LGAs in Imo State, Nigeria (2015-2023).

Statement of the Problem

The continuous and the persistent impact of underdevelopment on the lives of the people all over Nigeria, especially in the oil producing Niger delta states, like Imo State is a concern to all stakeholders. The incidence of low level of community development on the people is demonstrated through the waves of economic backwardness, lack of infrastructure, poor health facilities, unemployment, poor education system, lack of proper nutrition, and lack of shelter (Ojo 2020; UNDP, 2021). The issue of poor environmental protection is one of the major challenge affecting different communities in Imo State. This is based on high level of erosion and poor level of environmental maintenance in some communities. Not only that, the issue of poor primary health care is another challenge affecting development of communities.

Neglect of different communities is the major challenge leading to infant and maternal mortality. Some children in different communities find it difficult to attend basic primary education because of distance, low level of school infrastructure and lack of teachers. The above situation has led to high level of poverty in our communities. According to UNDP (2021), over 1.5 billion people of the world population live below the poverty line of one dollar per day, out of which 250 million people are from sub-Saharan African. If the challenges of underdevelopment which encourages poverty in the communities must be reduced, the government, NGOs and other stakeholders must play positive roles.

In an era where economic constraints have restricted the influence of government and limited its ability to meet the developmental needs of the people at the grass roots, a substantial role has to be conceded to the NGOs and private sectors to fill in the gap in community development service provision (Rath, 2019; Bratton, 2019). As a result of this, people are organizing as never before to address the problems they face in their communities and daily lives and in the face of unrelenting economic and social pressure that are changing traditional customs and ways of life, there is a vast out pouring of civic energy and vitality aimed at

advancing people's interest at the local level. It is in view of these prevailing situations that this study aims at examining non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community development in Owerri Municipal, Mbaitoli, Isiala Mbano, Onuimo, Oru East and Oguta LGAs in Imo State, Nigeria (2015-2023).

Objectives of the Study

The general objectives of this study focused on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community development (2015-2023). The specific objectives of the study include:

1. To determine the extent NGOs enhances environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State.
2. To ascertain the relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State.
3. To identify the role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were made.

1. To what extent does NGOs enhance environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State?
2. What is the relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State?
3. What are the roles of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State?

Research Hypotheses

Based on the objectives of the study and research questions, the following research hypotheses guided the study.

Hypothesis I

Ho: NGOs do not significantly enhance environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Hi: NGOs significantly enhance environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State.

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Hypothesis II

Ho: There is no significant relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Hi: There is relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Hypothesis III

Ho: There is no significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Hi: There is significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Literature Review

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

The term NGOs stands for Non-Governmental Organizations, and it includes a wide range (variety) of organizations such as "private voluntary organizations", "Civil Society Organizations", and non-profit organizations" (Mcgann & Johnstone, 2016). Basically, NGOs have no fixed or formally agreed definition, they may be generally defined as non-profit entities independent of government influence (even though they may receive government funding). The World Bank (1995) cited in Surekha (2022) defined NGOs as "private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development. O'Leary (2017) sees NGOs as self-governing, private, not-for-profit organizations that are geared to improving the quality of life for disadvantaged people. Ewoh (2002) opined that:

> *…the term non-governmental organization includes a wide range of non-profit seeking organizations with various activities, among them, trade unions, credit unions, religious organizations, cooperatives, women's groups, environment groups, peasant groups, foundations, and community groups. Most of these organizations were known as public associations, voluntary associations, social welfare organization, charities, and missions during the colonial period.*

Luthans (2022) argued that NGOs are group of organizations distinct from government institutions and business organizations. Their distinct feature is that

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they are formed to complement, supplement and offer alternatives to government development efforts. NGOs are one group of players who are active in the efforts of international development and increasing the welfare of poor people in poor countries. NGOs work both independently and alongside bilateral aid agencies from developed countries, private-sector infrastructure operators, self-help associations, and local government. Thus, the United Nations (2003) describes NGOs as:

> *"any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizen's concerns to government, monitor policies and encourage political participation at the community level. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements".*

The Concept of Community Development

Let us first understand development before community development. According to Asemah (2022), development is a process of change in attitude, social structure and general acceleration of economic growth, through reduction of poverty and inequality. Community development is a concept that is used to describe a strategy that is designed to improve the economic and social life of the people in the community areas. Community development is a process of socio-economic change, involving the transformation of agrarian society, in order to reach a common set of development goals, based on the capacities and the needs of the people (UNDP, 2019; Nwosu, 2017, p. 305). Community development is a strategy that is designed to improve the economic and social conditions of a specific group of people, that is, the rural people. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest, among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas. Community development in general, is used to denote the actions and initiatives taken to improve the standard of living in non-urban neighbourhoods, countryside and remote villages. These communities can be exemplified with a low ratio of inhabitants to open space (Ezeliel & Anum, 2013). As earlier noted, rural areas are such areas in a country that lack necessary social amenities and infrastructures which are necessary for good living. Thus, there is the need for advancement and

growth in these rural areas. The process of bringing about this advancement and growth in the rural areas is what is referred to as community development. Anaeto and Anaeto (2018) observe thus:

> *Community development is a subset and an important part of national development. The idea and concern for rural development stems from the fact that majority of the people in the developing countries reside in rural areas and the fact that development of the nation cannot be achieved without the development of the rural areas. Even the developing countries have recently come to realize that unless the rural areas are well-developed, hardly would any meaningful development occur in these countries.*

The above assertion implies that community development is part of national development, because when rural communities are not fully developed, the objectives of national development cannot be achieved.

Role of NGOs in Community Development

The major role of NGOs in community development as identified in the objectives of this study includes NGOs and environmental protection; NGOs and health care service delivery; and NGOs and educational development.

1. **NGOs and environmental protection:** The contributions of NGOs in environmental advocacy cannot be neglected. According to Aliyu (2023), many NGOs are exposing the high level of environmental degradation and neglect in the Niger Delta Nigeria. There is high level of oil spillage, land pollution, air pollution, and water pollution in the Niger Delta area and the government and oil companies are doing very little to curtail the effects of the above. However, some advocacy and environmental protection NGOs have been exposing these ills and encouraging the government and oil companies to play their roles in environmental protection for the people (Asolo, 2020). In Imo State, some of the NGOs that have been very active in social advocation and environmental protection include Junior Achievement Nigeria, Environmental Rights, Society for Development & Community Empowerment, Development Partnership International, Civil Power Africa, Obediah Foundation, and Campaign For Child Rights to mention bet few.

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2. **NGOs and health care service delivery:** Health is critical important to human wellbeing. Most people in different communities are not enjoying quality health care survives because of financial constraints, or farness of the health care facilities (Zakaria, 2021). Such challenge has led to maternal mortality and child death. Such issues have made some NGOs to engage in health care services for different communities to achieve community development. The main tasks of NGOs in the health system is provision of services and health advocacy. These includes medical services, social services and psycho (Adalemo, 2022). Some of the NGOs sometimes provide drugs for the communities, carry out diagnosis for some community members, provide medical service and offer health orientation to the community members.
3. **NGOs and educational development:** Education is the key to all aspects of development. This is because through education the people acquire the right knowledge which could help them to achieve all aspects of development (Akpanudoedehe, 2021). Government and private individuals are playing active roles in development programmes of the state, still there is poor educational standard in Nigeria in general and Imo State in particular. Based on the above gap, the NGOs are actively engaged in improving the educational system through the provision of basic educational facilities, training of students, teachers support, and provision of information about educational programme and activities. Some NGOs organize seminar and workshops and inform the citizens on basic issues that will be useful to them. They offer scholarship, and give financial assistance to some people. According to Hassan and Forhad (2023), many NGOs are encouraging educational development at primary, secondary and tertiary education through scholarship, and provision of educational materials.

Empirical Review

Adalemo (2022) discussed the rural development: New imperative with emphasis on the impact of NGO on rural communities in Nigeria. The study aimed at identifying the steps adopted by the NGO, for project development in rural communities and their roles. It used primary data. The results of the finding reveals that NGOs adopt several steps in project development prominent among them

includes: community sensitization, project sustainability plan, community contribution, and capacity building and continuous stakeholders meeting.

Asolo (2020) researched on development issues in Nigeria with particular focus on the challenges of NGOs in the new millennium. The study examined the role of NGOs in participatory rural development. Frequency tables and simple percentages were used as analytical tools. The results of the analysis show that NGOs performed certain roles and encounter challenges in the same areas as follows: community mobilization/employment, gender awareness and participation, health programmes, micro credit scheme and poverty alleviation, human rights among others.

Aliyu (2023) investigated on NGOs sustainable efforts towards reducing rural poverty in developing countries. The study adopted survey design through primary data and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson product moment test. The results reveal that NGOs activities significantly influence health, job creation, education and economic development in rural communities.

Akpanudoedehe (2021) examined the effects of NGO towards reducing rural poverty in developing countries using Nigeria as a case study, evidence in Benue state. The study adopted multiple regression as tool of analysis using SPSS package. The result of the analysis reveals that NGOs operations in the study area has positive influence on certain basic aspects of human development essentially in the areas of educational development, health and socio-economic development in rural areas.

Zakaria (2021) evaluated NGO-led development interventions and their sustainable management in the Savelugu-nantong district. Within the arena of development, sustainability is increasingly becoming a central issue. The sustainability of NGO led interventions has been challenged. Their activities within the study area have been noted for not living up to expectation. The prevailing circumstances in the study area reveals that these organizations, like the governments institutions they come to collaborate with, have had no significant impact on sustainability. It is this growing trend that takes center stage in this study. The study was qualitative in nature. Questionnaires were administered, focus group discussions were held. Along with these, respondents were observed and engaged in open discussions for further insights for inferences to be made from their statements and conclusions drawn. The study revealed how the work environment of NGOs

impact on the delivery of interventions. The attitude of political regimes and socio-cultural values were not hostile to NGO led interventions. Rather prevailing economic conditions, donor commitment and the manner in which NGOs form groups were not seen as supportive to ensure sustainable interventions. Key findings have been presented and analyzed from a qualitative view point. Analyses have been made of intervention areas of NGOs, factors affecting sustainability, management approaches of interventions and areas of intervention that need emphasis.

Hassan and Forhad (2023) investigated on the role of NGOs in the sustainable development in Bangladesh. Non-governmental organizations are claimed to have impacts on the sustainable development in rural areas of the developing countries and the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is identified as an example. This study considered BRAC as the case and has been aimed to critically outline the roles of this selected non-governmental organization (BRAC) in sustainable development process. With this particular aim, this study has also explored the trends of current poverty situations in Bangladesh. In addition, impacts of the BRAC sustainable development initiatives have also been analyzed, to some extent. This study has selected two villages of the Chandpur district of Bangladesh, where BRAC has been operating intense programmes. This study has used both the qualitative and quantitative methods of research. Results suggest that programmes undertaken by NGOs are capable of having positive contributions in the sustainable development process to a certain level. The fact is that the programme implementation, where efficiency of the NGO employees is an indicator of success factor. The research is empirical and is expectedly to fill the gap of literature.

Gap in Literature

In line with our empirical studies, it could be seen that many related works have been done on this subject matter. However, the exact subject matter was not covered. We are grouping the gap in many categories, thus:

a. **Gap on topic:** As we can see from the related empirical work, none of the past studies covered the exact topic of this work. Only related works were covered, as no work covered both dependent and independent variables
b. **Gap on the area of the study:** This work covered only Owerri Municipal, Mbaitoli, Isiala Mbano, Onuimo, Oru East and Oguta LGAs in Imo state.

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Some studies that used Nigeria organizations were not done within Imo State but used other parts of Nigeria.

c. **Gap on the indices/objectives of study:** The variables in our objectives of study were not exactly covered by past researches. Past work did not exactly use the indices which include environmental protection, health care service delivery and educational development.

Theoretical Framework

Public Goods Theory

The public good theory was developed by Weisbred in 1977. According to the public goods theory, organizations are established to contribute to the public good of the society (Weisbred, 1977). Based on that, NGOs emerged to satisfy the residual unsatisfied demand for public goods in the society. Here, the existence of NGOs is due to a market condition called contract failure (Salamon, 1987). Weisbred (1977) claims that people created NGOs when the government or market could not provide goods for all or serve the general interests of everybody. This theory reasons that for some goods and services (e.g. care for the vulnerable people), the purchaser is not the consumer. In such circumstances, the market does not have basic information to provide suitable services in line with consumer's choice.

Justification for Using the Public Goods Theory

This work used public goods theory. There arises the need for an alternative that can offer the purchaser a degree of assurance that the goods or services being purchased meet adequate standards of quality and quantity. Brown and Korten (1991) suggested that state failure creates a situation in which NGOs emerge as innovative responses to different types of problems. NGOs work for more charitable purposes and are more worthy of the trust of the purchaser, unlike the profit businesses that are motivated by profit and therefore tempted to betray the trust of a purchaser (Sooryamoorthy & Gangrade, 2001). Anheier (1990) argued that NGOs are capable of providing services more economically than the government. NGOs do not seek profits for their services and they undertake their projects at lower labour cost because they rely on voluntary local inputs that do not include transaction costs.

NGOs could therefore, fulfill unsatisfied needs like health care, environmental advocacy and education. Furthermore, the contract failure theory assumes that

when people confront difficulties in pursuing contracts, they turn to find reliable agents in NGOs. Again, Brown and Kurten (1991) maintain that NGOs could emerge in the case of market failure in developing countries. In such circumstance, NGO's existence is due to the fact that people have trust in them more than the profit making entities. Thus, NGOs could play the role of the local intermediaries by mobilizing the people for participation in government initiated projects. NGOs could also be profoundly effective as intermediaries for the delivery of services to disadvantaged people in the society. In this regards, NGOs could be considered as alternative institutions through which the underprivileged are better served than conventionally. NGOs try to stimulate the participation of the underprivileged and are able to reach those strata of society which are bypassed by public service delivery systems.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a survey design to investigate the subject matter. Survey is a research method which focused on primary data. Survey was used because the researcher used questionnaire to collect data directly from the respondents.

Population of the Study

The population of this study is 755. This is because the researcher used only two local government areas each from the three senatorial zones of (Owerri, Okigwe, and Orlu) the state. The population therefore comprises both staff of the youths enhancement organization and community representatives from the six local governments selected. The population is presented in the table below:

Table 1: Population of the study.

S/N	Local Governments	Staff of Youths Enhancement Organization in Each LGA selected	Community Representatives in the LGAs	Total
1	Owerri Municipal	17	143	160
2	Mbaitoli	26	124	150
3	Isiala Mbano	18	103	121
4	Onuimo	13	92	105
5	Oru East	13	96	109

6	Oguta	15	95	110
Total	**LGAs**	**102**	**653**	**755**

Source: the NGOs, and the LGAs under study, 2024

Sample Size

Sampling involves taking a portion out of the entire population. This is because of the fact that the population is large; hence sample becomes necessary. The sample size is mathematically derived using Taro Yamane Formular which is expressed as:

$$n \quad \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

When n = sample size to be derived
N = total population
e = tolerable level of error of significance (0.05)
1 = constant

$$n \quad \frac{755}{1+755(0.0025)}$$

$$n \quad \frac{755}{2.8875}$$

n 261.45

n 262

Sampling Technique

The sample techniques used in this study is purposive sampling technique. This is based on the fact that the researcher used his own judgment to select the people who can effectively respond to the questionnaire.

Instrument for Data Collection

In carrying out this research, the use of questionnaire was employed to gather necessary and relevant data from the respondents. The questionnaire was designed to sample the views of the respondent on the issue of the study. The questionnaires was only close ended questions, developed in likert system of strongly agreed, agreed, undecided, disagreed and strongly disagreed.

Validity and Reliability of Instrument

Content and face validity was used to validate the instrument. More so, test/retest exercise was carried out by the researcher.

Method of Data Analysis

Three levels of quantitative analysis were used. They include Simple Percentages, Bar Chart, Mean Statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (at 0.05% level of significance) aided by SPSS version 21.0. Simple percentage is for the analyze the demographic variables of the respondents .Also, the Bar Chart was used to give more meaning and understanding to the information from the simple percentage (as it concerns demographic variables of the study). Mean statistics was used to analyze the thematic issues of the study from the questionnaires distributed. More so, Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient (at 0.05% level of significance) aided by SPSS version 21.0 was used to test the hypotheses.

Decision Rules

According to Asika (2008), there is need to establish the decision rules so as to determine the level of relationship among variables. According to Alvin & Ronald (2010) the decision rules for Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) are as follows:

Table 2: Pearson decision rule.

Coefficient Range	Strength of Association
0.81 – 1.00	Very Strong
0.61 - .80	Strong
0.41 - .60	Weak
0.21 - .40	Very Weak
0.00 - .20	None

Source: Alvin & Ronald (2010)

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Out of the 262 copies of the questionnaire distributed by the researcher, only 229 copies were properly filled and returned.

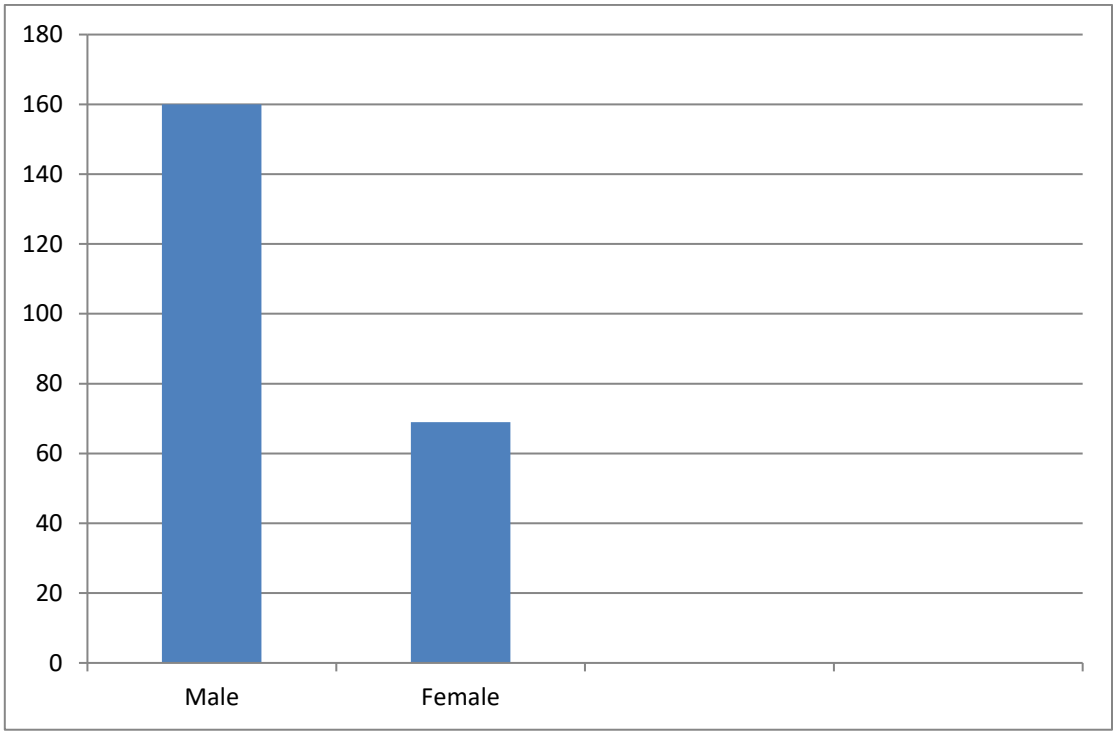
Data Analysis

Section A: Personal Data

Table 3: Gender of the respondents.

Options	No of Responses	% of Responses
Male	160	69.9
Female	69	30.1
Total	**229**	**100**

Source: Field survey (2024).

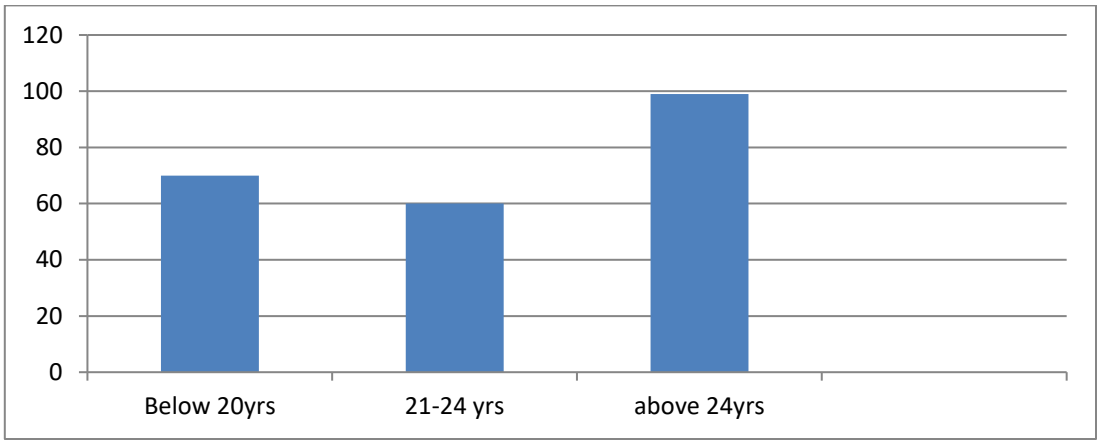


According to table 4.3 above, 69.9% of the respondents are males whereas 30.1% of the respondents are females.

Table 4: Age bracket of the respondents.

Options	No of Responses	% of Responses
Below 30yrs	70	30.6
31-40yrs	60	26.2
Above 40 yrs	99	43.2
Total	**229**	**100**

Source: Field survey (2024).

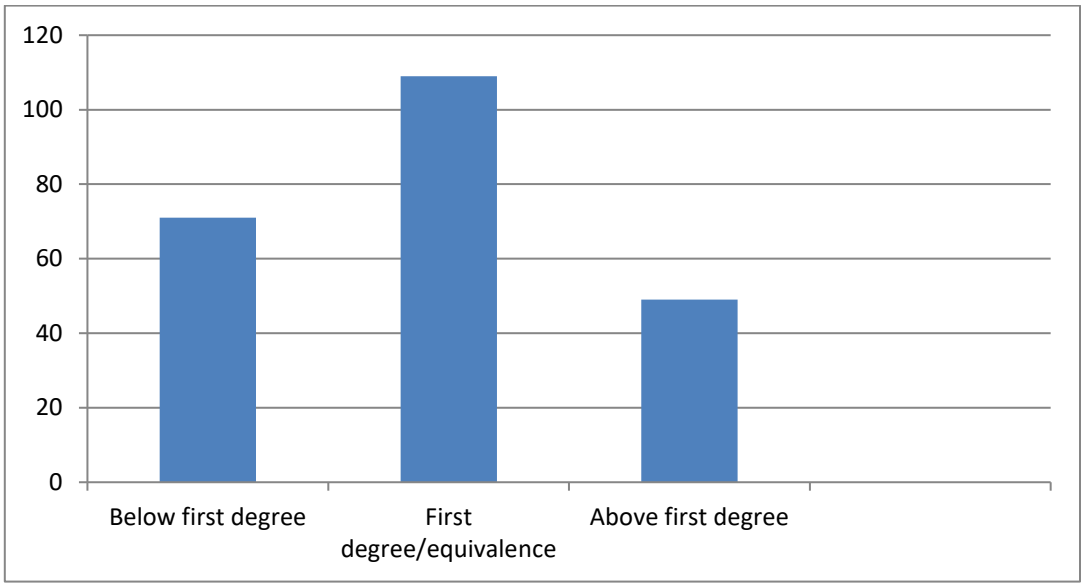


According to table 4, 30.6% of the respondents are below 30 years and 26.2% of the respondents are between 31-40 years while 43.2% of the respondents are above 40 years.

Table 5: Educational level of the respondents.

Options	No of Responses	% of Responses
Below first degree	71	31.0
First degree/equivalence	109	47.6
Above first degree	49	21.4
Total	**229**	**100**

Source: Field survey (2024).

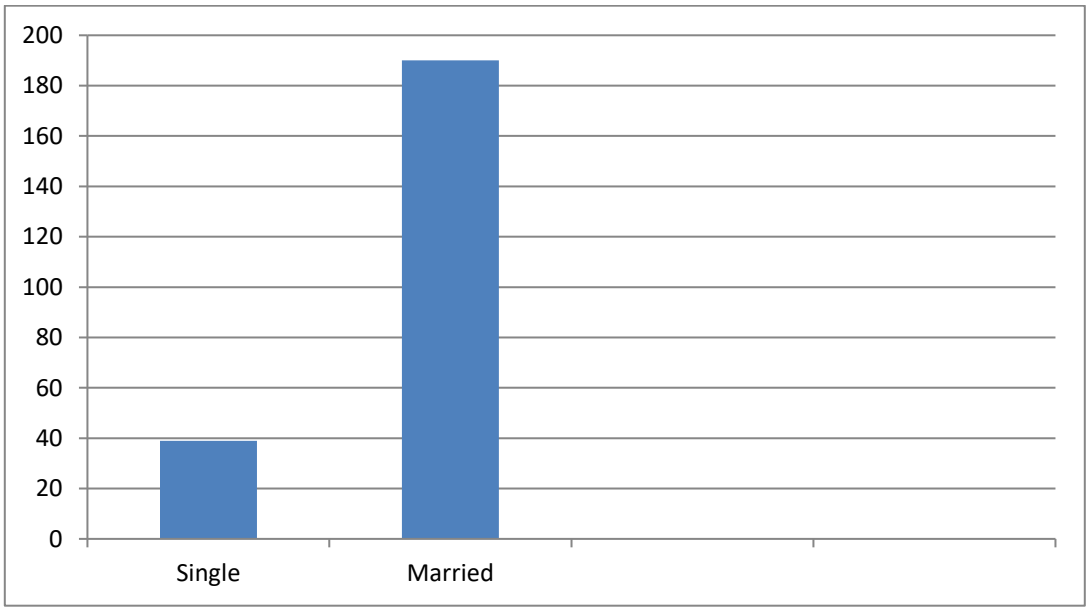


The above table has shown that 31.0% of the respondents have below first degree, 47.6% of the respondents have first degree/ equivalence and 21.4% of the respondents have above first degree as their qualification.

Table 6: Marital status of the respondents.

Options	No of Responses	% of Responses
Single	39	17.0
Married	190	83.0
Total	**229**	**100**

Source: Field survey (2024).

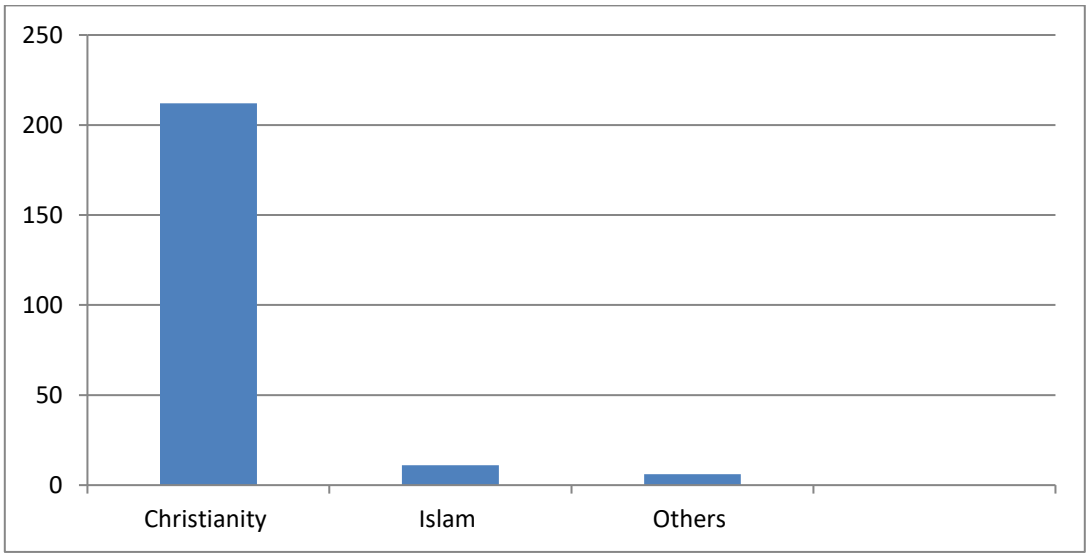


The above table has shown that 17.0% of the respondents are single and 83.0% of the respondents are married.

Table 7: Religion of the respondents.

Options	No of Responses	% of Responses
Christianity	212	92.6
Islam	11	4.8
Others	6	2.6
Total	**229**	**100**

Source: Field survey (2024).



According to table 7, 96.2% of the respondents are Christians while 4.8% of the respondents are Islam and 2.6% of the respondents indicated others.

Section B: The Subject Matter

Question one: To what extent does NGOs enhance environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State?

Table 8: Responses on if to what extent does NGOs enhance environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	∑X	X	Dec.
1	NGOs encourage environmental protection	100	78	6	45	229	691	3.0	Positive
2	Most NGOs advocated for clean environment	111	79	28	11	229	748	3.3	Positive
3	NGOs advocate protection of water and land	112	80	28	9	229	753	3.4	Positive
4	Some NGOs encourage the benefit of planting trees	120	81	7	21	229	758	3.3	Positive
5	Most NGOs encourage environmental maintenance	99	97	21	12	229	741	3.2	Positive
	Grand mean							**3.2**	

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It was discovered in table 8 that items 1 to 5 were all positive. This is because item 1 has a mean of 3.0, item 2 has a mean of 3.3, item 3 has a mean of 3.4, item 4 has a mean of 3.3 and item 5 has a mean of 3.2; hence all the items have mean scores more than 2.5 and above. It is therefore concluded that NGOs significantly enhance environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Question two: What is the relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State?

Table 9: Responses on if what is the relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	∑X	X	Dec.
1	NGOs advocate for improved health care system	99	97	21	12	229	741	3.2	Positive
2	NGOs carry out free diagnosis for some patents in the community	98	96	19	16	229	734	3.2	Positive
3	NGOs provide drugs for some community members	111	77	2	39	229	718	3.1	Positive
4	NGOs in most cases pay medical bills for some community members	123	82	7	17.	229	769	3.4	Positive
5	NGOs in most cases sensitize people on health matters, and diseases	115	95	9	10	229	773	3.4	Positive
	Grand mean							**3.3**	

It was discovered in table 9 that items 1 to 5 were all positive. This is because item 1 has a mean of 3.2, item 2 has a mean of 3.2, item 3 has a mean of 3.1, item 4 has a mean of 3.4 and item 5 has a mean of 3.4; hence all the items have mean scores more than 2.5 and above. It is therefore concluded that there is significant relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Question three: What are the roles of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State?

Table 10: Responses on if what are the roles of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	∑X	X	Dec.
1	NGOs encourages educational development	111	77	2	39	229	718	3.1	Positive
2	Some NGOs encourage primary education	123	82	7	17	229	769	3.4	Positive
3	Some NGOs provide educational material to students	100	78	6	45	229	691	3.0	Positive
4	Some students enjoy scholarship from NGOs	111	79	28	11	229	748	3.3	Positive
5	Some NGOs sensitize the public on benefits of education	112	80	28	9	229	753	3.4	
	Grand mean							**3.2**	

It was discovered in table 10 that items 1 to 5 were all positive. This is because item 1 has a mean of 3.1, item 2 has a mean of 3.4, item 3 has a mean of 3.0, item 4 has a mean of 3.3 and item 5 has a mean of 3.4; hence all the items have mean scores more than 2.5 and above. It is therefore concluded that there is significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Testing of Research Hypotheses

Ho_1: NGOs do not significantly enhance environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Table 8 was used in testing this hypothesis.

H_i1	**NGOs enhances environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State**	**Pearson Correlation = 0.89** **Sig = 0.05** **N = 229** **Grand mean = 3.4** Accepted

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The table above shows that the Pearson product moment correlation is 0.89 which indicates that NGOs enhances environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State. This is because the result is very strong. Hence, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Table 9 was used in testing this hypothesis

H_i2	**There is significant relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State**	**Pearson Correlation = 0.84** **Sig = 0.05** **N = 229** **Grand mean = 3.3**	Accepted

The above table indicates that the Pearson product moment correlation is also 0.84 which reveals that there is significant relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State. The above result is very strong. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Ho_3: There is no significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Table 10 was used in testing this hypothesis.

H_i3	**There is significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State**	**Pearson Correlation = 0.81** **Sig = 0.05** **N = 229** **Grand mean = 3.4**	Accepted

The table above showcases that the Pearson product moment correlation is 0.81 indicating positive. For that the alternative hypothesis is accepted and we conclude that there is significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State.

Concise Table for Hypotheses Testing

S/N	Hypotheses	Statistical Tools Applied (Software R studio)	Result
H_i1	NGOsenhances environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State	Pearson Correlation = 0.89 Sig = 0.05 N = 229 Grand mean = 3.4	**Accepted**

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H_i2	There is significant relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State	Pearson Correlation = 0.84 Sig = 0.05 N = 229 Grand mean = 3.3	**Accepted**
H_i3	There is significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State	Pearson Correlation = 0.81 Sig = 0.05 N = 229 Grand mean = 3.4	**Accepted**

Discussion of Findings

The major findings of this study are discussed thus:

Test of hypothesis one revealed that NGOs enhances environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State. The achievement of environmental protection in the southern Nigeria has been effectively encouraged by the NGOs within the areas (Abanyam, 2020). Some NGOs have carried out orientation and environmental education for the people.

Test of hypothesis two indicated that there is significant relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State. The contributions of NGOs health care of the people cannot be neglected (Surekha, 2022). To him, some NGOs provide drugs, diagnosis, medical services and medical equipments to some communities and members of the communities.

Test of hypothesis three shows that there is significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State. According to Asolo (2020), most people especially the youths in different communities enjoy scholarship and other educational supports from NGOs (Zakaria, 2021). For that, NGOs are impactful on the educational development in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular.

Summary

This work focused on NGOs and community development in selected LGAs in Imo state, Nigeria. The objectives of the study focused on the extent NGOs enhances environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State; the relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State; and the role of NGOs in educational development

in selected local government areas in Imo State. On the basis of the above, three corresponding research questions and hypotheses were formulated.

Survey research design was applied and data were collected through primary source (questionnaire). Data were analyzed using percentage, mean and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) at 0.05 level of significance through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21.0). The study discovered that NGOs significantly enhance environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State; there is relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State; and there is significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State. Based on the findings, the researcher made conclusion and recommendations.

Conclusion

This work focused on NGOs and community development in Selected LGAs in Imo State, Nigeria. The study discovered that NGOs enhances environmental protection in selected local government areas in Imo State; there is significant relationship between NGOs and health care service delivery in selected local government areas in Imo State; and there is significant role of NGOs in educational development in selected local government areas in Imo State. The work concludes that NGOs can play important role in the process of mobilization of population, and support such as educating the rural people, providing training, health care, environmental protection/advocacy, disseminating information, mobilizing resources, promoting rural leadership, introducing innovations, ensuring people's participation, promoting appropriate technology and activating the rural delivery system.

Recommendations

From the foregoing discussion, the following recommendations were made:

1. NGOs should play more active roles in sensitization of the people on environmental protection, sanitation, and maintenance.
2. There is need for the government and private individuals and organizations to giver all round support to NGOs so that they can play active roles on provision of health care services to the people in different communities.
3. NGOs should encourage the investment of human resources development especially in such areas as primary, secondary and tertiary education so as to

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achieve sustainable development. NGOs should educate literacy skilled training and human resources development as a means of enhancing community development.

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