SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF EME-ABIAM AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITY IN OWERRI WEST LGA OF IMO STATE (1990-2010)

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I. CHAPTER ONE : GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

What is now known as Nigeria was initially consisted of a cluster of large and small independent nation-state which were at various trajectory of development. Among such groups were kingdoms and empires like Oyo, Benin, Calabar, and the Sokoto caliphate, alongside entities exercising influence over areas like Kano, Zaria, and Ilorin. Commenting on the Nigeria nation-state, the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo wrote a follows: it has been estimated that there are about 250 national or ethnic groups in the country each with its own distinct language…..' in any case, there are ten principal national groups namely: Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo, Efik/Ibibio, Kanuri, Tiv, Ijaw, Edo, Urhobo, and Nupe. These ten and the other national groups, who are still to be identified separately, are diverse in their origins, and speak different languages. In many respects, their cultural patterns, political institutions, social standards and customary usages differ very widely" [1]

In 1914, following a series of gunboat diplomacy, imposition of protection treaties and violence, Lord Frederick John Dealtry Lugard, sealed up the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorate of Nigeria, in line with the Selbourne Committee which was appointed in 1898 to consider the future administration of Nigeria. Frederick Lugard, a British soldier, explorer of Africa and colonial administrator was born in Madras (now Chennai) in India, but was raised in Worcester, England. He was educated at Rosall School and Royal Community College, Sandhurst.

In August 1897, after a series of colonial missions and postings within Africa, Lugard organized the West African Frontier Force and commanded it until the end of December 1899. After he handed over the command of West African Frontier Force, hewas made High Commissioner of the Northern Nigeria Protectorate, a position he held until 1906. At that time, the portion of Northern Nigeria under effective control was small, and Lugard's task in organizing this vast territory was made more difficult by the refusal of the sultan of Sokoto and many other Fulani princes to fulfil their treaty obligations. He later resigned as High Commissioner; but after about a year following his resignation, he was appointed the Governor of Hong Kong, a position he held until March, 1912.[2]

In 1912, Lugard returned to Nigeria. His main mission was to complete the amalgamation of southern and Northern Protectorates into one entity although controversial amalgamation did not arouse passion in the country. From 1914-1919, Lugard was made Governor-General of the combined Colony of Nigeria[3]

Essentially the increasing pressure to amalgamate Northern and Southern Nigeria appeared to have been mainly motivated by two socio-economic factors. Firstly, to relieve the British treasury of financial burden. It was also done so that surpluses derived from the Southern Nigeria could be used to subsidize the North.

In furtherance of the above objectives, Mr L. Harcourt, the then Secretary of State for the colonies, while addressing the British parliament said: “In Southern Nigeria, the revenue has increased by £867,000 and the expenditure by £661,000 and there is for the current year an estimated surplus of £120,000.... Northern Nigeria has up to now been and still is a subsidized protectorate, but whereas in 1906, the Grant-in-Aid...was £315,000, in this current year, after providing f or such interest, the Grant-In-Aid, asked for is only £156,000 or less than half, and with the amalgamation..... I hope that we may be able to set a short term to these Grants-in-Aid and at the same time relieve the Treasury from its liabilities and the protectorate from Treasury control”.[4]

There is a good correlation between the pre 1960 events of better skill developments in Nigeria as a nation which has witnessed various developments from the onset. Throughout history, the country has gone through series of socio-economic development based on policies initiated by government officials both at state and national level. Socio-economic Development is any programme that creates sustainable access to the economy for its beneficiaries. This means that contributions should be providing sustainable benefit, to use the old saying SED projects teach people to fish rather than giving them a fish. If a company is not creating sustainable access to the economy for beneficiaries then they are not involved with SED.[5]

Socio-economic development is a process that seeks to identify both the social and the economic needs within a community, and seek to create strategies that will address those needs in ways that are practical and in the best interests of the community over the long run. The general idea is to find ways to improve the standard of living within the area while also making sure the local economy is healthy and capable of sustaining the population present in the area. Socio-economic development occurs in neighbourhoods in metropolitan areas, sections of smaller cities and towns, and even in rural settings.[6]

Socio-economic development contributions should concentrate on two areas, namely imparting transferable skills, and enabling access to the workplace. Imparting transferable skills ensures that beneficiaries have lasting economic value to the economy.

Enabling beneficiaries to access the workplace means that they accrue experience, thus making them more valuable to the economy. There are a number of factors that must be considered as part of any socio-economic development effort. Understanding the current circumstances that prevail in the area is the first step toward regional development. By assessing the potential of human capital in the area, allowing for the current unemployment rate and when laws and regulations are currently in place that may be impeding the introduction of new industry into the area, it is possible to begin developing a plan that will ultimately mean more jobs, stable employment for more households, and more money flowing through the local economy.[7]

Way back into history, a lot of policies have been enacted by various heads of state such as General Yakubu Gowon, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo and others. These policies were aimed at developing the socio-economic status of the country.[8]

Focusing on Imo state, Owerri West local government precisely, there has been a lot of socio-economic development moves in the area. During the advent of democracy in 1999, the then governor Achike Udenwa came up with schemes to aid the socio-economic development of Imo state of which Owerri West local government area was also to benefit from.[9]

Owerri West Local Government Area is located at the rain forest zone about 120 kilometers North of the Atlantic Coast. The Local Government shares boundaries with Ngor Okpala Local Government Area in the South, Owerri Municipal Council in the East, Mbaitoli Local Government Area in the North, and Ohaji Egbema Local Government Area in the West. The Local Government has a population of 250,000 people and covers an area of 15 square kilometres.[10]

Statement of Problem

Socio-economic development in Nigeria has taken a whole new dimension where the intended development process and progression are not being followed by the people in charge. Development, most especially socio-economic development is needed today in the Nigerian society. However we cannot appreciate the extent of these developments except a study is carried out to see if the intended development is taking the desired and proposed route. There have been studies on development. However, there is little or no academic study on Emabiam, a micro Society. Attention has been largely focused on urban areas and state capitals. Hence for this to be achieved there is need to look at the historical perspective of socio-economic development of a typical rural setting in Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

Nigeria is a country that needs a holistic approach when dealing with issues that has to do with socio-economic development of the country. And as such it will not be out of place if a study of this nature

will provide a respite to the quest of the individual scholars and writers who are looking for solutions and remedies to the problem of socio-economic development in Nigeria.

This study will be of desired relevance to students, and academic staff alike. It will serve as a reference tool for students and academicians who wish to delve into the area of socio-economic development and how it affects the development of various communities in the Nigerian economy. It will avail other scholars great opportunity to explore every other possibilities when it comes to historical research and development. Looking at the various issues dealing with development in a country like Nigeria, there is need for a study like this. This is so because the study of this nature will help to unveil and unravel the hidden truths and causes of poor and slow socio-economic development in a country like Nigeria.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to Emeabiam autonomous community in Owerri West LGA as a case study. Hence every literary piece in this research work will be centred on socio-economic development with emphasis on Emeabiam autonomous community. As such the method to adopt in obtaining data for this research is through the questionnaire, archives, and other relevant sources of information. To this end, literatures and reviews will be focused on socio-economic development.

Methodology

The writer employed the historical descriptive method using primary sources such as archival materials, programmes of events and minutes of meeting. Secondary sources which will be used include relevant book and journal articles as well as a search of relevant internet sources.

The population for this study will be limited to all adults in the community from age 25-70. This is because this study is historical in nature. The random sampling method will be used to select samples for the research work. This will give every member of the population an equal chance of being picked for this study.

Literature Review

The review of this work focused on a socio-economic development, its historical progress, and how it has impacted the Nigerian economy. This is in terms of the improvement of life and well-being of the citizenry. As such, manuscripts, articles, write-ups and pundit views will form part of the materials that will be brought to review in the research work. More so, this study will be a review of socio-economic development in Nigeria from 1990-2010 using Emeabiam Autonomous community of Imo state as a case study. In accordance with this study, the following books have been summarised;

Ehirim and Onyeka in their Journal research Effects and Prospect of Rural to Urban Migration on the Poverty Status of Migrants in Imo State, Nigeria, focused on the effect and prospect of rural-urban migration on the poverty status of migrants in Imo State, Nigeria. The study analysed the socio-economic activities of migrants, determined by poverty status of migrants and isolated determinants of rural-urban migration on Imo State, Nigeria.[11]

Emanuella, answers the following question in her Research Writing Water supply in Owerri City; Nigerian who is gaining authority and who is losing it? The Owerri, the Private Sector rather than the public sector leads in water provisioning. Efforts are underway for a public-private partnership are influenced by political affiliations and social relationship, cultural representations of which water -supply can also be considered as a socio-economic development. Yet, both the private and public sectors have not been able to provide water to some Eastern part of Nigeria, like Emeabiam.[12]

Globally, one of the major public health issues is poor standard of environmental Sanitation. Most of the tropical African cities like Owerri-West do not have adequate facilities to achieve an ideal environmental sanitation. The empowerment of the new Polyvalent Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) is suggested to bring about a desired and positive change towards an improved environmental sanitation standard.[13]

Looking at this Journal research critically, Anunonwu Christopher with other writers in their research Evaluation of Environmental Sanitation in Owerri-West of Imo State, failed to pinpoint the factors that can lead to poor environmental sanitation in the Owerri-west region such as population increase and

urbanization which made the available but limited amenities not to serve all the inhabitants thereby bringing about environmental decay.[14]

In Christopher's Journal research, Sustainable Management of Natural Resources for Socio-Economic Development of Imo State of Nigeria, studies a sustainable management of natural resources for Socio-Economic development in Imo State. This it does with the aim to determine the extent to which the exploitation and exploration of natural resources, has affected the ecological and environmental conditions of the area. This research paper also reveals that various environmental ecological problems associated with natural resources exploitation in the state and various socio-economic effects which the location of natural resources has on host communities. This research did not give us recommendation which include harnessing the resources in a manner that it will be sustainable, not at the expense of destroying the environment.[15]

Payne and Philips in Development, offered a comprehensive and wide-ranging analysis of the various ways in which this important concept-development, has been used in social and political analysis over the past 200 years. The book moves on to consider the 'golden age' of development theory after 1945, before bringing debates right up to date by assessing current and future trends in development thinking.[16]

Chudi Eke- Ejelam an Abiam author, in his book, The Igbo of Eme-Abiam, traces the growth and development of Eme-Abiam sons and daughters educationally and professionally, starting from a most humble beginning to where they are today. It projects the future landing of this important post of the Igbo race. But the author has failed or rather had ignored the health and water supply sources as part of Abiam socio-economic development, which is also a crucial development aspect.[17]

A renowned African political scientist Claude Ake, marks an eloquent plea for combining democratic governance with new community-based development initiatives that emphasizes self-reliance and are designed to build Africans' self-esteem by giving individual communities the opportunity to set and work toward their own economic goals. Ake, then, does not bemoan the "marginalization" to which Africa has allegedly been subject in the post-Cold War era. On the contrary, international neglect is portrayed as a

blessing in disguise that can spur community action and advance the region along the path to self-reliance. Development, Ake says, is both a process and an end. Again and again, Ake reminds us that "the problem is not so much that development has failed as that it was never really on the agenda in the first place.[18]

Endnotes

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II. CHAPTER TWO : SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Definition of Socio-economic Development

Development! This is one word that has found relevance in Nigeria and in other geographies the world over. Its relevance in Nigeria has taken different hues and dimensions since Lord Lugard, in 1914, amalgamated the Northern and Southern Protectorates of the country into a mega-entity, trying to melt more than 400 ethnicities and languages into one.[1]

Professor Claude Ake describes development as a process by which people create and recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization in accordance with their own choice. Development he says, is something that people must do for themselves, although it can be facilitated by the help of others. If people are the end of development, as is the case, they are also necessary its agents and it means. Ake stresses that development is not a project, but a process; it is not economic growth even though in a large measure it determines its possibility.[2]

Development can however make the desired meaning if it incorporates verifiable or accessible facts of an entity's background. Development can mean the conquest of environment and making it suitable for human habitation and progress. In doing that, the environment must also be enriched and sustained to ensure that the future of human beings is not blighted permanently.[3]

Socio-economic development contributions should concentrate on two areas, namely imparting transferable skills, and enabling access to the workplace. Imparting transferable skills ensures that beneficiaries have lasting economic value to the economy. Enabling beneficiaries to access the workplace means that they accrue experience thus making them more valuable to the economy. These above stated priorities ensure that socio-economic development is sustainable, and the result is better equipped, more valuable contributors to the economy.[4]

Socioeconomica process that brings about changes in locations where people live, work, and share things in common, while factoring in economic, social and cultural impact as well as economic, social,

cultural and political wants and needs. The quote identifies location as a place of community as well as a geography occupied by a socioeconomic group. The socio prefix (socio-economic) stands for social.[5]

Economic development in a sentence could be defined as the progress in an economy. Economic development usually refers to the adoption of new technologies, transition from agriculture-based on industry-based economy, and general improvement in living standards.[6]

Social development is a broad term that describes actions that are taken to build positive outcomes and prevent negative social outcomes that can adversely affect a community. These outcomes include issues ranging from crime, poverty, gang activity, school disengagement, teen pregnancy, addictions and substance abuse, obesity, and poor health.[7]

Social development is a process that results in the transformation of social structures to improve the capacity of a society in order to fulfill its objectives. It aims specifically in developing power to elevate expansion of human activity.[8]

Aspects of Socio-Economic Development

Social Aspects of Sustainable Development in Nigeria

- Poverty alleviation
- Demographics
- Healthcare
- Education
- Human Settlements (Quality of life)

Poverty

The thrust of current Nigerian Government policy against poverty is to enable the poor and more vulnerable sections of society to achieve sustainable livelihoods. The approach is to economically empower communities, families, and individuals through a sustained, well coordinated, and comprehensive programme of poverty alleviation.[9]

On-going Government activities related to poverty have been regularly featured in the National Rolling Plan beginning with the 1900-1992 Plan. They include programmes such as: economic programmes for the empowerment of women; Primary Health Care (PHC) programme, whose purpose is to bring health care, particularly preventive health care to the grass roots of the Nigerian Society; establishment of the Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) in all States of the Federation; establishment of the People's Bank, aimed at extending small credits to people in the informal sector of the economy with the aim of strengthening informal economic activities, cities, and towns and villages; establishment of the National Economic Recovery Fund (NERFUND) which provides easy access to credit by small and medium scale enterprises; establishment of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), a self employment promotion programme which has largely promoted waste to wealth employment activities; education of itinerant communities such as the Fulani normal, Ijaws, etc; establishment of the River Basin Development Authorities and provision of rural access roads; and establishment of the National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) aimed at promoting integrated rural development.[10]

There is an inextricable link between poverty and environmental degradation. Poverty can be the cause and/or the effect of environmental degradation. Poverty itself is a complex multidimensional problem with origins in both the National and international domains. While managing resources sustainable, an environmental policy that focuses mainly on the conservation and protection of resources must take due account of those who depend on the resources for their livelihoods, otherwise it could have an adverse impact both on poverty alleviation and on chances for long-term success in resource and environmental conservation.[11]

Demographics

Most African plans for development fail to include population factors. In general the projected targets for development have not been attained because of large rural sectors engaged in subsistence agriculture; inadequate educational facilities and personnel; poor transportation; restricted foreign exchange earnings; low levels of saving and poorly developed financial systems and an inadequate manufacturing system. Only 6 out of 36 Tropical African countries, Nigeria for example, had populations of over 10 million in 1970; an

estimated rate of population growth is usually above 2% per year. Tropical Africa's potential wealth in land and mineral resources is vast and extensive but problems of unemployment, underemployment, inadequate health and educational facilities, the rapid rate of urbanization, and reliance on foreign capital are impeding needed progress and planning.[15]

Health Care Status

Health related environmental problems in Nigeria vary with the social and economic development achieved by different states, and even different towns and villages within individual states. They are linked to poverty, absence of adequate water supplies, lack of sanitation services, and poor housing conditions. With increasing industrialization, the risk of respiratory illness and cancer-related deaths also rises. Extensive and rapid development in all industrial and many agricultural sectors have sharply increased the exposure of industrial workers and large segments of the population to these risks. The major public health problems associated with poor environmental sanitation, exposure to communicable diseases, and poor personal hygiene predominate and are often compounded by malnutrition which reduces resistance to diseases especially among vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant and lactating mothers, and the aged. Malaria, cholera, schistosomiasis, diarrhea, and other diseases transmitted by mosquitoes and other vectors such as filariasis and parasitic infestations like guinea worm and onchocerciasis are still major public health problems. Many other diseases such as tetanus, whooping cough, and tuberculosis are becoming more prevalent in urban areas as a direct result of overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions. Other public health problems are associated with exposure to hazardous chemicals and heavy metals.[16]

Education

The future strategy and plans of the Nigerian Government for creating and improving capacity for sustainable development are to: a) develop a blueprint for environmental education and public awareness by 1998; b) ensure that environmental education is a core ingredient of the educational system at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education by 1999; c) make environment and development education available to people of all ages; involve school children in local studies on environmental health, including

safe drinking water, sanitation, food and the environmental and economic impacts of resource use; d) encourage all sectors of society, including industries, universities, governments, non-governmental organizations, and community organizations to train people in environmental management; e) work with the media, theatre groups, entertainment and advertising industries to promote a more active public debate on the environment; f) train decision-makers on the basic tenets of environment and sustainable programmes for different strata of the environment on a continuing basis; g) develop and implement tailor-made environmental education and awareness programmes for different strata of the environment on a continuing basis; and h) institutionalize environmental responsibility through regular competitions and awards such as cleanest village in each local government, cleanest local government in each State and cleanest State in the Federation, as well as the most environmentally-friendly industries on a sectoral basis.[17]

Human Settlements (Quality of Life)

The activities of the Nigerian Government through the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing are highlighted under the relevant programme areas: providing adequate shelter for all; improving human settlement management; promoting sustainable land use planning and management; promoting the integrated provision of environmental infrastructure such as water, sanitation, drainage and solid waste management; promoting human settlement planning and management in disaster prone areas; promoting sustainable construction industry activities; and promoting human resource development and capacity building for human settlement development.

Nigeria has witnessed a rapid rate of urbanization in the last two decades. It is estimated that over 40% of the Nigerian population now live in urban areas. The rapid rate of urbanization has brought with it some significant problems including a shortage of housing, overcrowding, traffic congestion, environmental degradation, inadequate infrastructure and services, etc. In recognition of these problems, the National Rolling Plans since 1990 have factored in National Housing Policy instruments for implementing the National Housing Programme. Furthermore, the National Housing Fund and an Infrastructural Development Fund have been put in place to facilitate the attainment of the goals of sustainable human settlement in the country. Several policies have been adopted by government to improve Urban Management. The National

Urban Development Policy was formulated in 1992 to provide guidelines for urban development and management. An Urban Development Bank and an enabling law for the establishment of physical planning units at all levels of government have been achieved under the policy.[19]

These future plans have the objective of achieving a state of environmentally sound human settlements free of slum conditions in which all have access to adequate and affordable shelter, and efficient infrastructure and services which will foster sustainable economic growth, and an improved standard of living and well-being for all Nigerians.

Status

Over the years, Nigeria has been experiencing a rapid rate of urbanization. In 1952, 10% of the population lived in urban centres with population of 20,000 people and above. This increased to 20% and 38% in 1970 and 1993 respectively. By the year 2010, 60% of the population will live in cities. On the growth in size of cities, the rate has been equally rapid. In 1960, Lagos and Ibadan were the only two cities with more than 500,000 people. The number of such cities increased to 9 by 1980. In 1990, about 14 cities had a population of over one million. This is expected to rise to 18 by the year 2000.[21]

Challenges

The problems and challenges posed by rapid urbanization in the country are immense. Among these are inadequate shelter resulting in overcrowding, inadequate and inefficient transportation systems, poor infrastructure facilities and services, development of slum areas in cities such as Lagos, Ibadan, Kano, and Port Harcourt, and generally poor environmental conditions.

In the Government's various efforts at attaining sustainable human settlement development, several constraints to planning and implementation of physical development have been experienced. These constraints include: rapid rate of urbanization; declining socioeconomic standards; fund limitations; human resource deficiencies; fluctuating political will; unintegrated policy focus; dearth of base maps; inadequate database for planning and monitoring; and insufficient foreign technical assistance. Future planning for

emergency preparedness and management aims to mitigate promptly the negative impacts of natural and man-made disasters on human settlements, the National economy, and the environment. Nigeria has had a number of emergency situations arising from natural and man-made disasters. The natural phenomena include tropical storms, land erosion, windstorms, floods, drought, desertification, human diseases, coastal erosion, livestock diseases, crop pests and diseases, wildfire, harmattan haze, and landslides. Other potential hazards include earthquakes and volcanoes. The major man-made hazards include civil strife; road, water and air traffic accidents; and technological episodes such as oil spills, hazardous wastes dumping, and industrial accidents. All of these hazards call for urgent action to strengthening the emergency preparedness to reduce peoples' vulnerability and cushion the impact of disasters on settlements, the economy, and the environment.[22]

Effects of Socio-Economic Development

It is easy to say, and admittedly, floods have a tremendous socio-economic impact. Its main effect is to retard development. A flood stricken area must first be restored to normal before any development activity can be carried out. Restoration can take time. The social and emotional traumas inflicted on the people usually have a short-term inhibiting effect on the community's drive. Hence, a little time can elapse before any concerted move for normalization can take place. The ranaging flood from the Cameroon dam which started its cataclysmic havoc from the Middle-Belt region through Rivers Benue and has Niger has finally berthed in Anambra State, several Communities and rendering million people homeless.[23]

Flood damage is incalculable. Assessment of damage attributable to floods alone is difficult. Floods usually occur in association with other natural destructive phenomena such as tropical cyclones. Losses due to flood can wipe out whatever gains that may been achieved in economic development.[24]

Unemployment as a chronic socio-economic problem mostly amongst the youth in Nigeria has an immense effect in the economy. A situation where you see thousands of graduates and reliable littered all over the streets of Nigeria, youth hawking who ordinarily would have found gainful employment in some enterprises; or would have demonstrated their skills and resourcefulness if there are enabling environments

and reliable management structures on ground. The presence of large army of unemployed youths in Nigeria is a clear case of failure of leadership to utilize abundant human and natural resources in the country to create jobs that will engage the youths in productive and meaningful economic activities.[25]

Factors Affecting Socio-Economic Development

Factors Affecting Social Development

Children's development of social skills is affected by the nature of their family and early educational experiences. Whether in a nuclear, blended, or extended family; a communal arrangement; or a single-parent family, the child learns social patterns and skills within this context. Children find love and security and form attachments with people who protect and care for them. In the family, children become socialized through interactions with parents, siblings, relatives, and neighbors; once in a school setting, they need new ways of acting, relating, and socializing. Children who have had a strong attachment to a nurturing figure and see themselves as separate from this nurturing figure are ready for a group situation. Children who have not fully developed strong attachments to another person may have a more difficult time adjusting to the complexity of the social system of the school.[26]

The Family

Children who experience the security of loving parents and have strong attachments to their parents are better able to reach out to relate with others. According to attachment theory, children who enjoy a secure attachment relationship with their parents and caregivers use this relationship as a support to venture out and explore their environment.[27]

They reach out to others, return to the caregiver for support, and venture out again, going further into the world of social relationship. As the child confidently wanders out to test the social waters, he enlarges his social world, expands his social contacts, and is more likely to learn from experience in social interaction.[28]

Some developments in behavior and thought are very similar for all children. Around the world, most infants begin to focus their eyes, sit up, and learn to walk at comparable ages, and children begin to acquire language and develop logical reasoning skills at approximately the same time. These aspects of individual growth are highly predictable. Other aspects of development show a much wider range of individual differences. Whether a child becomes outgoing or shy, intellectually advanced or average, or energetic or subdued depends on many unique influences whose effects are difficult to predict at the child's birth.[29]

A variety of factors influence child development. Heredity guides every aspect of physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and personality development. Family members, peer groups, the school environment, and the community influence how children think, socialize, and become self-aware. Biological factors such as nutrition, medical care, and environmental hazards in the air and water affect the growth of the body and mind. Economic and political institutions, the media, and cultural values all guide how children live their lives. Critical life events, such as a family crisis or a national emergency, can alter the growth of personality and identity. Most important of all, children contribute significantly to their own development. This occurs as they strive to understand their experiences, respond in individual ways to the people around them, and choose activities, friends, and interests. Thus, the factors that guide development arise from both outside and within the person.[30]

Parents who are social themselves serve as models for their children. Children may be able to use the image of their parents interacting with others in their own attempts to make and be friends with other children or to cooperate and share. Socially competent parents may affect their children's social skill development in another way. Parents who are secure and competent offer children a model of security from which to build their own social skills.[31]

Having looked at the factors affecting social development, we need to consider the factors affecting economic and social development; this section considers the economic and social development of the non-industrial world from two perspectives.

First, we review what is known about development, both social and economic. The perspective that we take upon this is closely similar to the view that we advance elsewhere about the fundamentals behind economic growth anywhere: that this is a manifestation of the working of a complex series of interlocking systems, of which the economic component is an essential part. There is, however, a long way to go in the development of these systems. In purely economic terms, the poorest 80% of the world's populations created around 2.6% of the tradable wealth in 1960. By 1980, this had fallen to 1.1%, and appears to be around 0.9% of all value added at the turn of the century. Today, around 1.2 billion people inhabit the wealthy nations, but around the same number live on less than US$1 per day. About the same number lack access to safe water and twice as many live without adequate sanitation. Achieving anything resembling catch-up is, evidently, some way off. Success stories such as Singapore and Hong Kong stem from a rich history of complex institutions, human resource and the pursuit of the best. However, the key limits to creating a more complex framework within which to generate wealth seems limited more by internal institutional issues than by factors such as capital or human resource.[32]

Second, we consider the relationship between development and sustainability. We do this in the light of the growth in population, which will rise from something over 6 billion in 2000 to, perhaps, 8 by 2020. The relations between the poor and the rich will be closer-coupled than ever before in history. The relationship will remain lopsided insofar as wealth, power and access to knowledge will also be asymmetrical. Each will, however, want things of the other and both will have the capacity to do the other harm.[33]

The Development Process

Elsewhere, we have reviewed the fundamentals of economic growth, noting that this is one easily-measured facet of something much more complex: the growth of the general capabilities and complexity of a society. The economic element depends markedly on the functionality of all of the other facets.[34]

Development appears to occur when a number of necessary components are put in place, and the equivalent checks have been removed. To grow, a plant needs air, light, water, the correct temperature,

mineral nutrients and the like. Any one of these can be a limiting factor and restrict the plant's growth. When the supply of any one of these is limiting, then adding what is needed or otherwise adjusting the system to correct the limit will produce a burst of growth. Injections of capital, the creation of security or a change in political balances may correct something which was limiting in the social fabric of a nation, and a burst of activity will follow. Much of the early literature on development extrapolated from individual events of this sort to general - usually economic - prescriptions. We now know that his is an inadequate approach. Nations which are limited in one particular manner - as was, perhaps, China during the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath - may show rapid and multifaceted growth once this constraint has been removed. Nations in which very few of the required features are in place will, by contrast, prove refractory to almost all interventions. Nothing happens because too many links in the necessary systems have yet to be put in place.[35]

What, in broad terms, are these features? They fall into three major categories: the maintenance of stability, constructive economic change and overall social cohesion. We examine these in detail in a moment. Each of these elements consists of many contributory parts. Most of these form cross-links between these categories. Taken together, however, these factors create a system which gives rise to the phenomenon of development. In essence, a complex system - the society - is able to become more even complex only when all of the parts that are necessary to is adaptability are firmly in place. When they are not, then local systems of governance and the scope of individual aspirations are limited to relatively simple and established horizons.[36]

External events may help development or they may hinder it. The terms of trade which are currently experienced by the exporters of primary products - that is, by most of the poor or agrarian nations - are worse than they have been for fifty years. The developed countries have often established tariffs against manufactured goods, making it harder for the poor nations to add value to primary products, such as leather, cotton or metals. In addition, many industrial nations subsidies' their domestic agriculture, often to the extent of over-producing food which is then placed on world markets or shipped as aid. As a consequence, world food prices are depressed, to the detriment of the world's peasant farmers. In addition, where food aid

is made available over protracted periods, local producers may be driven out of business. Nevertheless, both the world's spectacular development successes and its failures have been conducted against this backdrop, so it cannot be entirely or even primarily responsible for either of these.[37]

Let us return to the factors which drive development. Statistical analysis shows that stability is the most influential of these three components. The term ‘stability’ can be used in two senses. A nation (or firm, or social group) can be unchanging and predictable if it is paralysed by an oppressive force or an intractable problem. By contrast, a structure may be stable because it reacts flexibly to change: its surface manifestations change, but the core is retained and continues to inform its actions. This second kind of stability creates the conditions for economic development. It affords a framework within which individual agents can operate in confidence, knowing that the society will continue to function within well-understood guidelines, despite its continual re-adjustment to meet changing conditions.[38]

Economic development is the measure of an economy’s progress in terms of technology, industrialization and standard of living.[39]

Social and Cultural Values

Social and cultural values affect economic development through attitude toward progress. Societies that value achievement, personal gain and accumulation of wealth and things generally, according to the University of Houston, realize a greater level of economic development faster than societies that discourage personal and group achievement. Factors encouraged in individuals comprising an achievement-based society include a strong work ethic and value placed on thrift and economy.

Happiness

Happiness is a factor affecting economic development, according to the Illinois Business Law Journal, because it directly correlates to workplace productivity. Productive and successful businesses that provide an economy with its forward, developmental momentum are comprised of productive workers. Workers who are productive are so because they are happy people. It is suggested, however, that individualized

happiness does not stem from the material, but from personal development and interpersonal relationships. Conversely, the result of success in these areas leads to the economic growth of the entire community.[40]

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III. CHAPTER THREE : HISTORY OF EME-ABIAM COMMUNITY

The Igbo Race.

Igbo land is the home of the Igbo people and it covers most of the South-East Nigeria. This area is divided by the Niger River into two unequal sections- the eastern region (which is the largest) and the Midwestern region. The river, however, has not acted as a barrier to cultural unity; rather it has provided an easy means of communication in an area where many settlements claim different origins. The Igbo are also surrounded in all sides by other tribes (Bini, Warri, Ijaw, Ogoni, Igala, Tiv, Yako and Ibibio).[1]

The origins of the Igbo people has been the subject of much speculation, and it is only in the last fifty years that any real work has been carried out in this subject. Like any group of people, they are anxious to discover their origin and reconstruct how they came to be how they are…their experiences under colonialism an since Nigerian's Independence have emphasized for them the reality of their group identity which they want to anchor into authenticated history.[2]

Analysis of the sources that are available (fragmentary oral traditions and correlation of cultural traits) have led to the belief that there exists a core area of Igbo land, and that waves of immigrant Community from North and West planted themselves on border of this core area as early as the century. This area- Owerri, Orlu and Okigwie- forms a belt, and the people in this area have no tradition of coming from anywhere else. Migration from this area in the recent past tended to be in all directions, and in this way, the Igbo culture gradually became homogenized. In addition to this pattern of migration from this core area, other people also entered the Igbo territory in about the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. Many of these people still exhibit different characteristics from that of the traditional Igbo for example geographical marginality, the institutions of kingship, a hierarchical title system and the amosu tradition (witchcraft). For some time, some Igbo- speaking people claimed that they were not Igbo-the word was used as a term of abuse for "less-cultured" neighbors. The word is now used in three senses, to describe Igbo territory, domestic speakers of the language and the language spoken by them.[3]

The Igbo inhabit the following states in Nigeria: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. There are also people of Igbo extraction in the northern part of Delta State and parts of Rivers State. The Igbo, excluding the folks in Delta and Rivers States, live in an area of 25,422.2 square km with a population of about 20 million. Igbo is both the language and the people (singular and plural).[4]

Cultural Zones among the Igbo

Units	Cultural area	General name
I	Northern or Onitsha Igbo	Onitsha
II	Southern or Owerri Igbo	Owerri
III	Western Igbo	Ika
IV	Eastern or Cross River Igbo	Aro and Abriba
V	North-Eastern Igbo	Izza

Table 1: Cultural Zones among the Igbo

Ejiofor, adapting his data from D.Forde and G.I. Jones in their book, the Ibo and Ibibio-speaking peoples of South Eastern Nigeria, also sets out table for divisions of the Igbo speaking peoples.

i. Northern or Onitsha Igbo

Main division	Administrative Area	Linguistic Designation
Western NriAwka	Onitsha, Awka	Onitsha Igbo
Eastern Enugu	Nsukka, Udi,Awgu, Okigwi	Nsukka, Wawa Igbo
Onitsha Town	Onitsha	Onitsha Igbo

ii. Southern or Owerri Igbo

Isu- Ama	Okigwi, Orlu, Owerri	Owerri Igbo
Oratta- Ikwerre	Owerri, Ahoada	Owerri, Ikwerre Igbo
OhuhuNgwa	Aba, Bende	Ngwa Igbo
Isu Item	Bende, okigwi	Abriba Igbo

iii. Western Igbo

Northern Ika	Ogwashi-Uku, Agbor	Ika Igbo
Southern Ika or Kwale	Kwale	Ika Igbo
Riverain	Ogwashi-Uku	Olu Igbo

IV. Eastern or Cross River Igbo

Ada (Elda)	Afikpo	Abriba Igbo
Aba- Ohafia	Bende, Okigwi	Abriba Igbo
Aro	Aro	Abriba Igbo

v. North-Eastern Igbo

OguUku	Abakiliki, Afikpo	Izza

Table 2. (i-v) main division of Igbo speaking People.

It should be noted that the British did not only conquer the territory and people, they polluted their languages. Onicha became Onitsha, Okaigwe became Okigwi, Owere became Owerri, Enu-Ugwu and Oka were now Enugu and Awka respectively.[5]

Origin and History of Eme-Abiam

Discovering the history of Eme-Abiam has been long awaited as the Community was seen as forgotten entity yet unleashed. For scores of years, there have been bits and pieces written about Eme-Abiam in stapled sheets, pamphlets, long hands, etc. in 1992, Jemy Jones Osigwe made a good attempt to document the Community Eme-Abiam. There was that initial excitement especially when the booklet, The Abiam Man, Past, Present and Future was introduced at the Christ Church (Anglican) Communion, Eme-Abiam. Critiques proferred that the pamphlet faltered on depth of content and proof errors. However, Osigwe in his own way, documented the much he knew and could put down on Eme-Abiam. Eme-Abiam is situated in the South West of Owerri, the capital of Imo State of Nigeria. Political considerations in the late nineties placed Eme-Abiam under the administration of Owerri West Local Government Area. It came out from a clan known as Uratta in the year 1900 situated on the Southern part of the present Owerri West LGA. The town Eme-Abiam is in between two different Rivers, better still, bounded on one side by Uramurukwa River and the other side by Ottamiri River, with both rivers meeting at one extreme end of the town, on their onward journey to their destination- the Atlantic Ocean. What makes Emeabiam unique is that no part of the Community lives beyond or on the other side of the river banks.[6]

To the South, Eme-Abiam is bounded by Umuekwune and partly by a stream of Umuokpo Waterside. This stream, Oranmiriukwa, is the natural boundary that separates the community from both Umuekwune and Etchi (in Rivers State). To the north, Eme-Abiam shares boundary with Okolochi and Eziobodo; Obibiezena to the east, and the Ottamiri stream at the west axis, which separates it from Ngbirichi and Umuagwuo areas in Ohaji, Egbema LGA.[7]

By 1996, Eme-Abiam became an autonomous Community, prized off from the former triune Mbato autonomous Community. Mbato as a triune autonomous Community comprised Eme-Abiam, Eziobodo and Okolochi. The three towns were not originally traditional triplet. This is because in 1977, Chief Japhet U. Ezemadu was Udo1 of Eme-Abiam. The concept of Autonomous Community came with the return to democratic governance in the late 1970s. Political leaders, wanting to win and take all, longed hitherto separate towns with a different and settling into one. They picked the traditional leaders and who should be

loyal to the authority of the state government. Such a traditional ruler had wide range of powers, over the communities including that of adjudicating on disputes of sorts and representing parties on various issues. The Autonomous Community also served as the lowest level of government of sorts and outreach by other levels of government.[8]

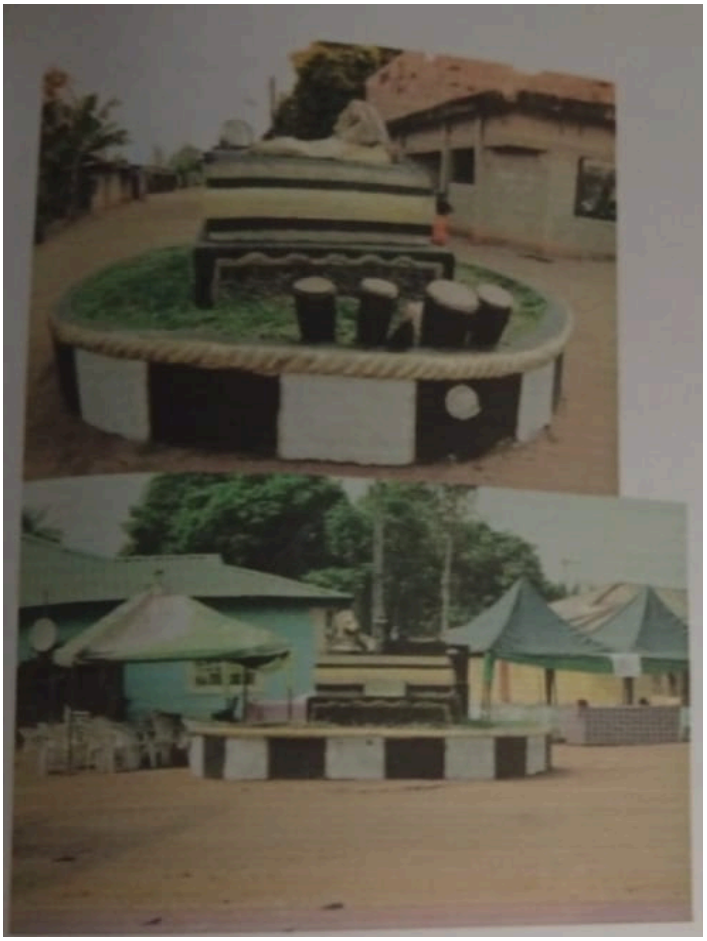
Eme-Abiam, Eziobodo and Okolochi were politically forced into an embryo of convenience by Chief Sam OnunakaMbakwe (now late) Governor of Imo State (Oct1979-Dec 1983). Each of these towns tried to extricate itself from the other without success. The power locus was with the "Lord Temporal", the divinely selected Eze F.B.I.N. Nwabiri of Okolochi. His selection was divinely selected in the sense that in Owerri where a lot was cast among those that Eme-Abiam, Eziobodo and Okolochi presented, it fell on him. Every civil/traditional case had to face his adjudication first before taken further to higher appeals, if unresolved at his level.[9]

Eme-Abiam by 1966, therefore, was in Owerri LGA with headquarters in Owerri, the capital of Imo State. At the time, Owerri LGA comprised what is currently known as Ngor-Okpuala, Owerri Municipal Owerri and Owerri-West LGAs.[10]

Nigeria is said to be within Longitude 15°E, putting it one hour ahead of countries like Ghana in the time zone. Eme-Abiam enjoys this longitude privilege. It is in the tropical forest zone with tall, bulky trees including Iroko, Mahogamy, onruapu etc. The foliage of the uninhabited part of the land is usually thick and impregnable except one uses machetes or other instruments to access them. In spite of these gifts, timber-felling and lumbering is not part of the occupation of the people. Quite a few Eme-abiam men have however, joined the lumbering business.[11]



The Umuikea-Emeabiam symbol of bravery, 'lion' (Umuikea people have this superstitious belief that whenever a lion appears, it's a sign that a strong man in the village would soon die or is dead).



The lion statute is built at the middle of the village square, where events are held.

SOURCE: BY THE RESEARCHER

DATE: 26 OF DECEMBER 2013.

Origin of Eme-Abiam

As stated earlier, there was no documented history of Abiam-uku the founder of Eme-Abiam. Nomgor work has been done on the origin of Eme-Abiam all that has been gathered were (still are) oral traditional which were also relied on in the major part of this study. The secondary sources in terms of some written but unpublished materials and a few published ones will come in handy to enrich this work.[12]

Oral source could not also establish who was indigenous to the land. However, these lapses do not subtract from the overwhelming evidence that Abiam lived in the land space as currently obtains and procreated, living behind heirs and heiresses.[13]

OmireNobi, however, points out that Abiam-Uku's first abode was the Afo-Uku market that shares boundary with the Cherubim and Seraphim church.[14]

As was common in those days in Eme-abiam and its neighbors, once a man's name was mentioned, what follows was the mother's name. The conscious omission of the father's name, tradition submits was to avoid the man inheriting the hatred or malice that some other strong men of valor might have against the father. Second reason was that the traditional system in Eme-Abiam encouraged polygamy. A man score of children, some of them bearing similar names. The best birth of knowing the children was therefore by discerning who the mother of each was.[15]

It was not so with Abiam. No name was given as his mother neither was his wife (or any of his wives) mentioned in the oral tradition. Also omitted from the oral tales is the name of the village or villages of his wife/wives. No place could also be pin-pointed as to where Abiam was born or migrated to or lived and its descendants consequently spread out from that pivot to all over the land space currently.[16]

Abiam gave birth to Eme, whichsome elders gave birth was Emeyionu. (This denotes the impact of bridled tongue, the power in silence). Abeam may have had other sons which tradition uphold highly. Again Nobi posits that 'Eme was the first and surviving son" of Abiam. Emeyionu, or Eme for short, subsequently carried on the flower of procreation and gave birth to three sons namely, Onyeche, Mgbarakwa or otherwise Akwa and Okpo. Okerafor, on the stool says that Abiam begat 'Eme, the grand parent of Onyeche, Akwa and Okpo. Onyeche begat OkpulaandUmuikea, Akwa begat OkokwunaUmuso. Okpo begat Umunechena Okpoche. These are the villages that make up Eme-Abiam today and from where seventeen kindred sprang up from, including the dwellers at the omu mmiri.[17]

Eme-Abiam as a town has six villages namely, Umuikea, Umuokpo, Okpuala, Nkasi, Olokwu and Umuso and seventeen kindreds namely; Okpoche, Umuoboa, Umuodu, Umuenyekwa, Umuokele, Egbelu, Umuokese, Umuochi, Akurunwu, Ariogu, Umuanyauba, Umu-Egolu, Umu-noche, Umu-Ekwea and Umuchoche.[18]

The people of Eme-Abiam are Igbo, and of the Owerri dialect. Natural resources (endowment) palm oil, cocoa yam, cassava, timber (oji), rubber-lump (plasties buckets, plates, cups, rubber shoes, sandals, bags, etc.), foodstuffs, sand and gravel (for building). These gravel and sand was extracted from the two Rivers. Umokpo is a tributary to Otamiri.[19]

The Eme-Abiam/Okweke (a neighbouring village) war was the only war history recorded in Eme-Abiam. The war can be referred to as a 'just war', which resulted to a slight confrontation between the youth of Eme-Abiam and the Okweke youths. Apart from this war, Abiam never experienced any war, though because of the two Rivers which so many villages found difficult to maneuver.[20]

Abiam indigenes are predominantly farmers, they are also known for craft making, palm wine tapping, fishing and hunting.[21]

In Eme-Abiam, food is never a scarce commodity as they have everything in abundance. Here are the Abiam varieties; yam (pounded yam with any Igbo soup but most favorite ofe-owerri, can be boiled or roasted yam with oil sauce), japu (what is known as fufu but the Igbo call it akpu the English name is

cassava), eberebejapu-peeled cassava (tapioca, abacha), ugba (Igbo salad), ofe Owerri (Owerri soup) with eba (garri), Akidi (beans), Ukwa and melon soup, etc.[22]

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V. CHAPTER FOUR : SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN EME-ABIAM

Introduction

No entity can survive without a socio-economic stronghold. The ways and means of a family, a community, or nation must be able to sustain such an entity. The economy of an enclave is otherwise known as the substructure that props up a super structure consisting of politics with governance, social relations traditions and customs, justice and defense a well as other indices of human survival and existence.[1] The economy of Eme-Abiam in pre-colonial times was primarily agriculture at its simplest and subsistence levels. The aim of the practice was to satisfy one of the most basic needs of the Homosapiens, food.[2]

The Abiam community with its people has always responded to the times and stages of development. Development as a concept here applies to man conquering the adversities of the environment for his convenience. The obligation to conquer the environment, also leave man with the responsibility to care for, enrich and sustain that environment to further his living.[3] As earlier mentioned in the previous chapters of this work, Eme-Abiam has no doubt experienced socio-economic developments before and after the period (1900-2010) covered in this study.

Education

Education, Boost to Abiam Economy

Eme-Abiam has produced hundreds of educated men and women. (Note that they are not in their thousands, yet). Some are within the country plying their educational trades while others are overseas. It is reasonable to infer that these educated people send money home for various purposes education of their siblings or

dependants, build of houses or even taking care of their elders. No matter what, the multiplier effect of money repatriated from abroad is invaluable.[4]

In every society or community, the development is a function of the level of education that people in the community has. Education has the capacity to turn around a community to be an envy of other communities around her. There are so many things an educated society draws to itself. The community handles right resources (both human and natural) found within their areas to uplift the standard of living.[5]

Umuikea – Emeabiam, on its own has improved and is still improving. Most of Umuikea sons and daughters that are well read have really shown the benefits in one attaining a high level in education. The emergence of a global revolution and changes in human living with the aid of education will show that we are in a time when every person should be educated so as to be part of the world. A society without interest in education will die and be ruined for life by another society, with the power (education). Thank God for Umuikea graduates and undergraduates Association (UGUA) for the help they rendered in making sure that some Emeabiam youths receive adequate education through the scholarship scheme they have instituted so far.[6]

Before socio-economic development shone on Eme-Abiam in the 60s, 70s and 80s, when Emeabiam had no student(s) male or female in any secondary school let alone being in tertiary institution. As time went on, Eme-Abiam began to have trickles into secondary schools. The trickles then went from home to home, urging parents to send their children to school. Some of them heeded the call and are today reaping the rich harvests of educating their children. To think the Umuikea-Emeabiam now has a reasonable number of graduates and undergraduates as to warrant the formation of an association (UGUA) is a dream come true for the Abiam people as members of UGUA have gone a step further than the earlier 'trickles' by sourcing and raising funds to give scholarships to deserving pupils.[7]

The secondary school scholarship award scheme is the bright feather that shone on UGUA's cap giving her apparent distinction among contemporary social organizations. The UGUA scholarship committee vested with the execution of the scholarship program is proud to declare that in just five years,

the scheme has benefited five students of comprehensive secondary school Eme-Abiam the sole catchment area of the scheme the lucky stars. Nduibuisi Ikenna, Anokan Godwin, Eboh Jane etc. have successfully completed their secondary education. All are indigenes of Umuikea except few who hails from Umuogii Umuekune also in Emeabiam.[8]

Charity they say begins at home as UGUA extends her scholarship cake to Okpuala, Umuokpo, Olukwu/Umuso in the next session and beyond UGUA's objective is to use her scholarship scheme as a unifying factor that could once again give all parts of old Emeabiam into a new fraternal relationship. Thus, the scholarship has got its sustenance through free will donations from philanthropists throughout Emeabiam.[9]

Very well, it is pertinent here to see how some early Abiam people catalyzed the pursuit of education and how many followed and achieved greatly. Like in many communities in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa, the white man's education or what is today known as Western education was viewed and approached with a great deal of caution, suspicion and skeptism. The informal education stated in tradition of the community held sway. Seeking the formal Western education was considered a sell-out to a race of people (the whites) who were spited as albinos that the gods in their wrath punished by denying them skin pigmentation. Yes, the whites were on control but for the Abiam folk to change from what was there to a strange, alien format of developing the child was anathema. It was a very unwelcome gesture and venture indeed and an unnecessary societal pressure impacted from outside the domain and control of the people. Like most parts of Igbo land, the traditional elite, the wealthy men, kings, princes and men of substance did not out rightly embrace the new form of education. They rather sent their servants and maids.[10]

When Christianity ventured into Eme-Abiam in 1903, with the establishment of St. Paul's church by strangers at Umuokpo waterside, people were already appreciating the new religion which came with a new system of formal education. Even though the new educational system had a close of religion, it served a dual purpose of making converts and endowing those interested with literacy skills.[11]

Ugwuanya Nwosu, as earlier quoted, says that even though a church was established in Eme-Abiam in 1903 (at Umuokpo) and later at Okpuala and Umuikea (1915) yet formal educational activities were held at the minimum level of religious learning catechism, Bible lessons etc. by 1918 about 15 years after the Umuokpo waterside church and three years after its presence at Umuikea/Okpuala (Egbelu /Okpuala).[12]

The merger of St. Andrew's Umuokpo and St. Mark Egbelu/Okpuall in 1941 to become Ms central school located in the centre of the Community brought relief. According to Nwosu, the effect of such a merger which reduced the distance from Umukpo to Egbelu /Okpuala was the encouragement it gave to families to send their children to school.[13]

Though it would seem that Eme-Abiam started late in education other parts of Igbo land especially Abiam's near neighbours did not fare any much better. The records say that by 1940, only eight secondary schools were in Igbo land, a majority of them around Onitsha. The records as presented by Nzimiro maintained that Onitsha stands out as one of the Igbo cities that could be used to trace Igbo modern civilization. Bishop Ajayi Crowther of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) arrived at Onitsha & planted a tree in a church yard which was established by him in Onitsha inland town. That was in 1857. In 1885, the Roman Catholic missionaries followed suit. Rev. Father Lutz, Stepping on his experience in Sierra Leone was encouraged by Bishop Crowther to set up shop by the Onitsha waterside from these two spiritual Icons, Christianity spread hinterlands into other Igbo areas. With the churches, school and education doggedly followed.[14]

Dennis Memorial Grammer School (DMGS) established in 1923 by the CMS, Christ the King College (CKC) established by the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) in 1933, Queen of the Rosary College for Girls (1942) Onitsha Girls (CMS) School, St. Charles Teachers College for boys (1928) Catholic Convent School for girls and so on.

Following are the number of schools in Igbo land that were established by the missions (1940 – 1960); the only authorities permitted by colonial government to found or have schools, Nzimiro presented these facts.[15]

Schools	Population	Number
Primary Schools	17,728	32
Secondary Schools	2,249	8
Secondary Commercial School	151	6
Teacher Training Schools	310	2
Modern Secondary School	22,711	27

By 1934, Nzimiro notes, the Igbo had produced only one lawyer compared to scores that the Yoruba had churned out. It stands to reason that since most of the school in Igbo land came between (1940 and 1960, Eme-Abiam did not terribly lag behind or drag in utter disadvantage. In 1941 CMS Central School, a primary level school came into existence. It was a merger of St. Andrew's at Umuokpo and St. Mark's at Egbelu / Okpuala. At this stage, people were already sensitized to the goodies that award the educated person, even with a primary school certificate yet, great many parents were hesitant and skeptical. Many still considered the cost sending their sons to school, yet paying the bills while the farms suffered from the death of farmlands.[16]

However, there were some Eme-Abiam individuals, who, in those heady ways of foot the ragging and lethargy towards education, stepped out and campaigned vigorously. They moved from compound to compound, from one stubborn traditionalist to another, urging parents to send their children to school. There came the "send your wards to schools" Crusade. At Umuokpo another secondary source pointed at Stephen Nkwocha as doing the leg work to mobilize converts into the church and for formal education to take root there. Though the crusaders are no more the legacy progress their children their posterity have inherited through education.[17]

This presentation would not be complete without later-day laborers and crusaders for education. They stuck out their necks so that the value of education would penetrate deep. Chief Benson Udushirinwa Bob Anyanwu (BUB) from Umuikea, Rev. Can. Bernard Emenyionu Anyawu (Umuokpo), Chief Geoffrey Agbagwa (Umuokpo) and Mr. Edward Onyeaghala (Okpuala)-bless their souls- and a host of others made sacrifices. Some of them when they were in charge of the mission schools in Eme-Abiam, allowed indigent

but brilliant children to remain in their schools without paying the required fees damning the attendant risk to their positions as school heads. They were penalized by apex administrators of these schools in various ways not withstanding their great discretion to train the Abiam child that desired education.[18]

Till, this day and at the risk of sounding offing education has been and will continue to be the single most important industry that has contributed and will further shape the social economic destiny of Eme-Abiam. The economic future of Abiam will be hinged on how many scores of thousands of Abiam persons got tertiary education on various fields.[19]

We must take into cognizance the fervency with which some other sons and daughters of Eme-Abiam applied their knowledge and skill so that education would take root. They did silently but the results were resounding in later years. We must sing them here or their efforts would be lost in the dustbin of history. They came under associations or union and proved very effective in what they did. Let us take few here; in the late 1950s, there was the Emeabiam Teacher Union which later emerged to accommodate students and renamed Emeabiam Teachers and Students Union. The students later broke away to form Emeabiam Students Union (ESU) with Emmanuel Iheagwam, (who later became the first Bishop of Egbu Diocese of the Anglican Communion) as the president. Livvy Ugwuanya Nwosu (Later a lecturer at the Alvan Ikoku College of Education) was the secretary of the ESU and Benaiah Ajoku (now a rited Reverend gentleman) served as the financial secretary treasurer.[20]

The union was said to have embarked on a house to house campaign, urging parents to send their children to secondary school. The campaign yielded many dividends, sources disclosed. Mr. Polycarp Eke has publicly acknowledged that he was a product of that crusade. He later proceeded to the university in the early 1980s to obtain a degree in Economics / Education, a show piece of what the academic promotion achieved.[21]

The ESU became so dynamic that of organized extra moral lessons and debates for students during the holidays, and initiated several other developmental projects. At a stage in those hey days, they were invited by the Port Harcourt branch of Emeabiam Town Union to settle their problem and so did they

sources said that their success in this spurred the Lagos branch of the town's union to extend an invitation to the unions entire also, but constraints hindered their going to Lagos. The students union tried to set up a strong home based Eme-Abiam Town Union to which the other branches would affiliate to and succeeded[22]

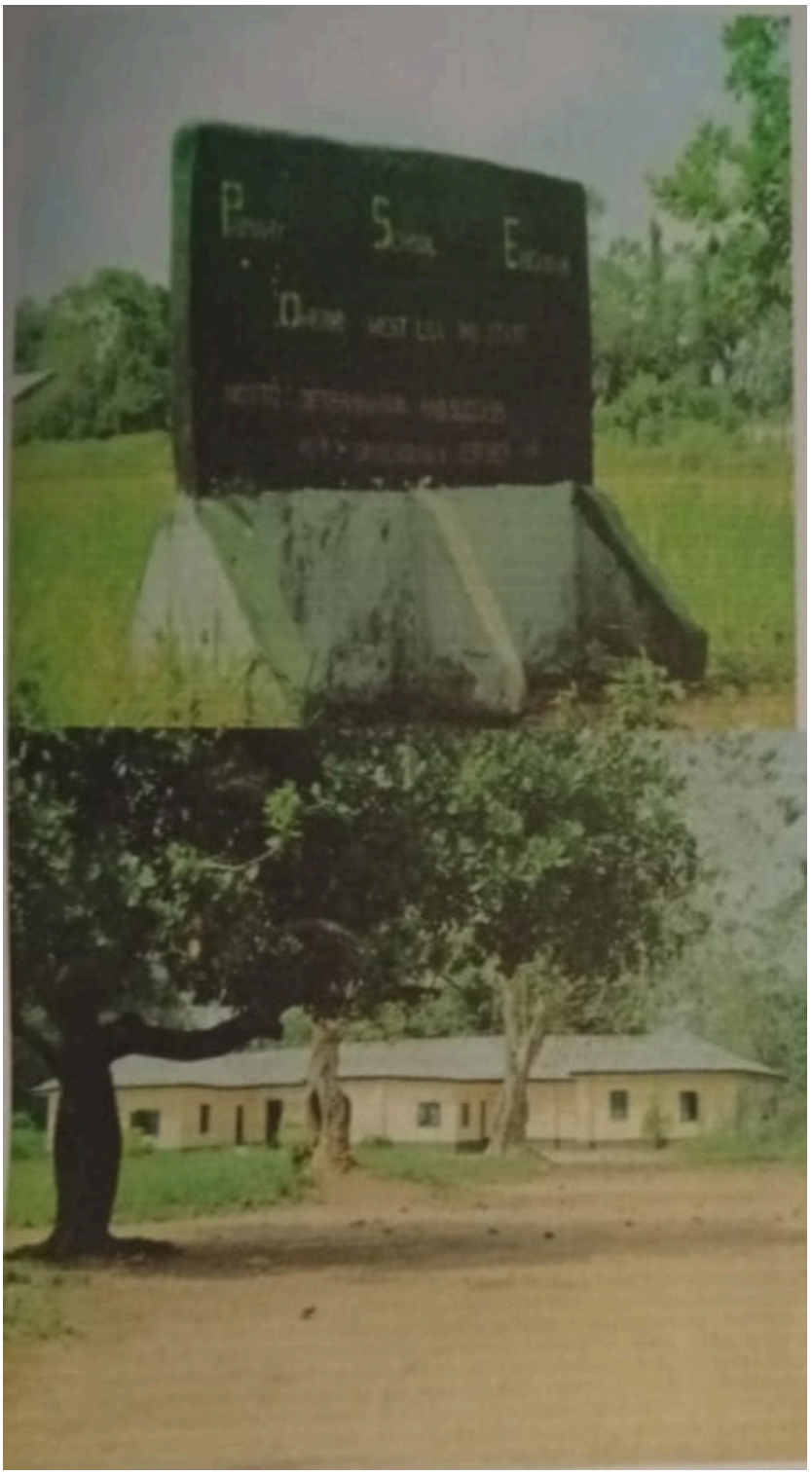
A former executive of the union said "we made a major breakthrough until the spirit of sectionalism that has been the bane of the Eme-Abiam Town Union took a strong hold.[23]

Two other associations the Eme- Abiam social club with Philip Nkwocha as president, and Eme-Abiam Youth Club with Livvy Nwosu as helmsman, emerged in the 1970s/80s to champion the crusade for more education of the people and various aspects of development. They contributed to generate ideas and resources to the comprehensive Secondary School, Postal Agency, electrification and eventual electricity supply to the community.[24]

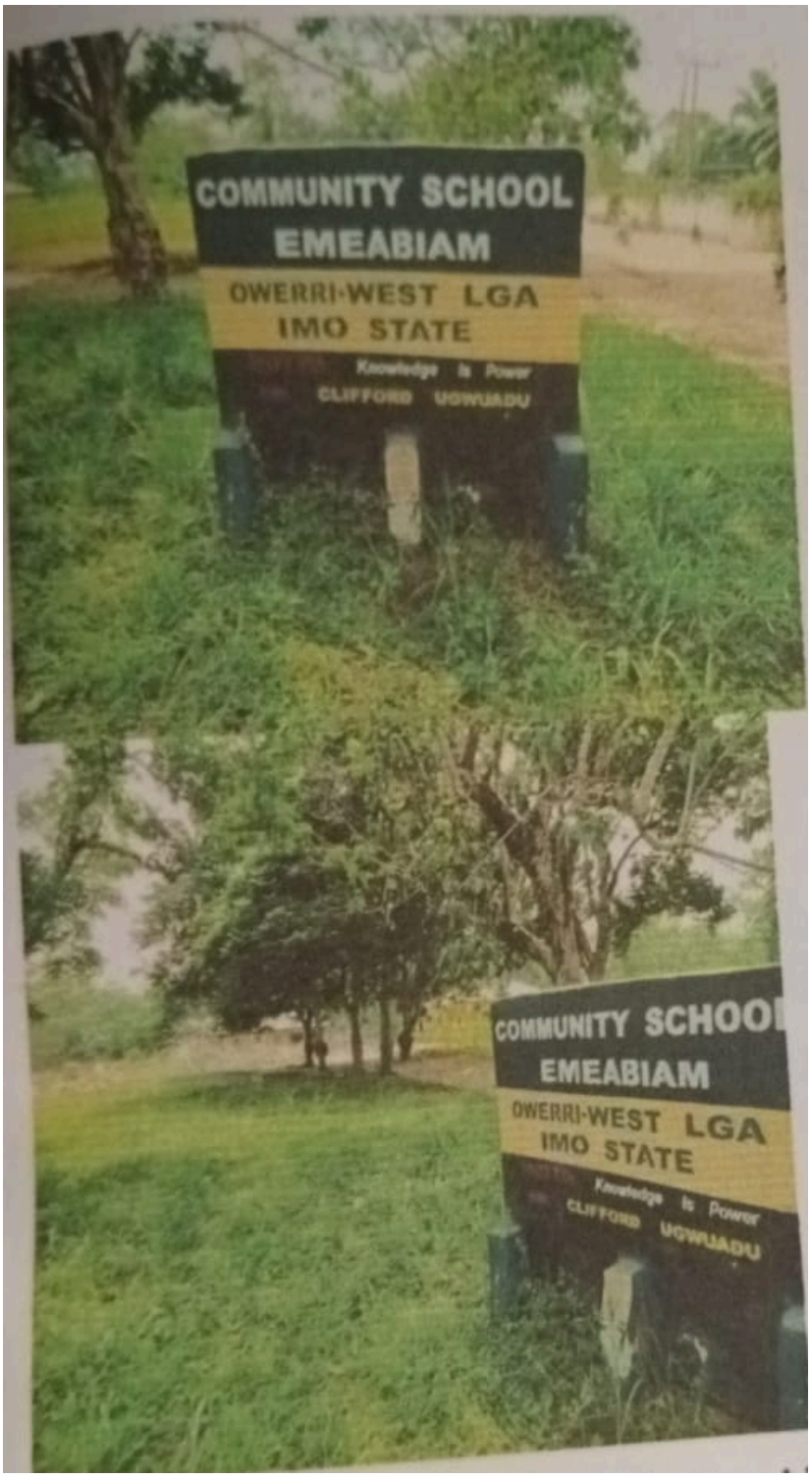
So far, the crusade of those founding fathers and he was of the struggle in combination with modern effort have continued to pay off. Eme-Abiam built a comprehensive secondary school which started in 1982, 59 years after the first secondary school, the DMGS was planted in Onitsha in 1923. Eme – Abiam had earlier built along with Eziobodo & Okolochi (under Mbato Autonomous Community Spirit) a secondary School would bear Mbato Community Comprehensive Secondary School, Eziobodo. The covetousness in man, made the people of Eziobodo at the completion of the school about 1972 to put a signpost proclaiming total ownership of the school. With such appropriation by Eziobodo against all the tenets of the covenant before the building, Abiam felt challenged and established as own Computer Secondary School in the year 1981.[25]



The only Secondary School in Emeabiam founded in 1981.



The First Roman Catholic Primary School in Emeabiam founded in 1933



The First Anglican Primary School in Emeabiam Community founded in 1928



A primary school in Umuokpo 'Development primary School'-D.P.S, though still developing, started 2013.

SOURCE: BY THE RESEARCHER

DATE: 26 OF DECEMBER 2013.

Health

The general condition of the Abiam people is not left out, as development process capped the community. UGUA Umuikea Graduate and Undergraduate Association is concerned about the health of the Eme-Abiam community hence they published a magazine with an educative article on stress, what it is, its causes, its disastrous consequences if not prevented, how it can be prevented, and how avoid it. Not only stress, but also on cancer, HIV AIDS, sex education and general health precautions.[26]

Apart from a local Uzondu hospital owned by one Mr. Uzondu though out dated as it has been in existence the 80s, there had not been recorded another hospital on Emeabiam. Any serious health issues would be transferred to the Eziobodo Teaching Hospital in Ezibbodo a neighboring community to Eme-Abiam (little Cottages where women give birth). We would not have the wonders of health science and the multiplier effect that exorcised the land of kitikpa (Small pox) and otoro (cholera) if educated men and women did not stand out to be counted.[27]

Infrastructural Facilities.

Eme-Abiam Electricity Project

However, it was until Eme-Abiam had public power supply about 1998, both by striving vigorously and through providence that it was discovered that many young people who fled the townships and returned home picked up skills. Economic pressures and perhaps mostly the absence of national planning for citizens of the country had forced them home, turning them into subsistence farmers, palm wine tappers, and some into mischief makers and pranksters. With electricity supply, welders, ratio and refrigerator repairers, barbers and such semi- skilled people opened shops and started showing their skills.[28]

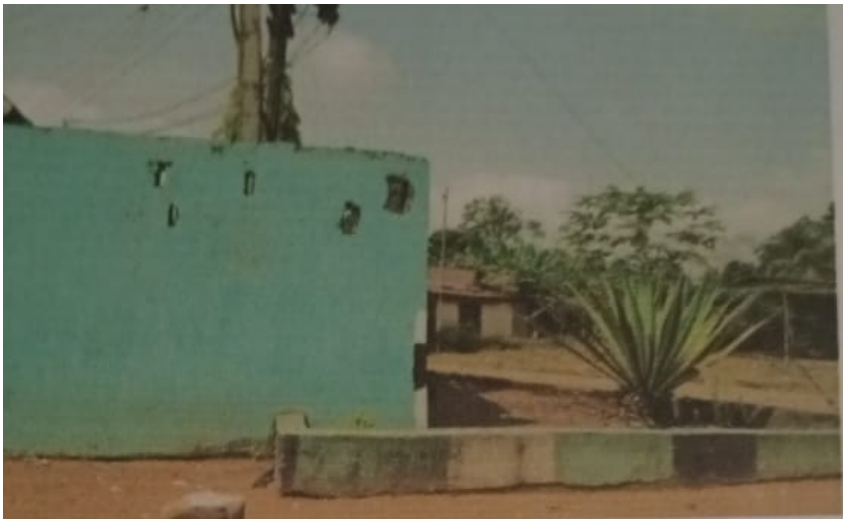
But electricity did not come-easy. All the village of Eme-Abiam starting with Okpuala, the Umuikea and Umuokpo had embarked on fund raisers to ensure that the community had electric light. They had barely mounted poles and were thinking of how, with their almost zero economic base they would embark on wiring and energizing. Then providence smiled on the poor people.[29]

Pa Gaius Mbilitem of Eziobodo was an aide to AVM Nura Imam, the minister of power and steel during the regime of Gen. Ibrahim Babangida. Iman had asked Mbilitem what he would do for him as he (Imam) was soon to leave office. The noble-minded Mbilitem, replied frankly that he would want his community to be given electricity. He did not ask for a car for himself, not money to enable him build a house in Lagos and his home town. Like biblical Solomon who asked for wisdom to enable him provide good leadership for his people, Pa Mbilitem made a patriotic request. A surprised Imam promised he would do it for him because of his self-selflessness.[30]

Then stepped in Abiam people in Lagos Pa Obed Ekeocha, Pa Bernard Ekeocha, Chief Augustine Ahaotu, Mr. Cyril Eleazu, chief Sam Achonwa, and young fellows like Mr. Benjamin Ekechi, Kenneth Opara and, Calab Aguguo. They went to see Mbilitem who presented Eme-Abiam and Eziobodo to his oga, the minister for consideration as one community that should benefit in the public power supply. Later, Okolochi was added.[31]

Initially the Abiam delegates were on a mission to recover funds that were meant for communities that suffered great calamities during the war. The military governments or officers within had latched on ignorance of communities entitled to this United Nations fund and made personal fortunes out of it until Mr. Tobias Egbucha, an Abiam son, got hint of it and told his people.[32]

As the light shines in Eme-Abiam, Eziobodo and Okolochi today, the unsung heroes as above, many of them who have slept with their fathers, must be remembered.[33]



Eme-Abiam Electricity project founded in 1998

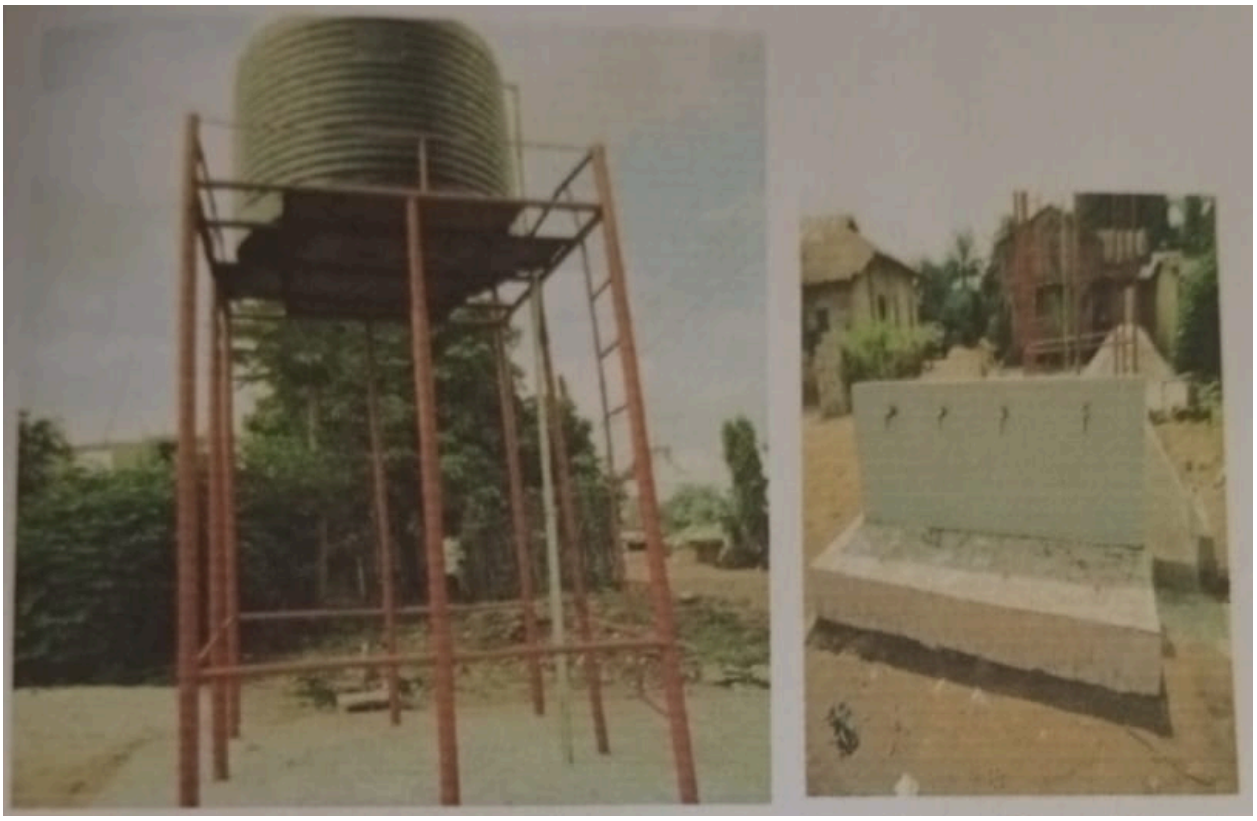
Other infrastructural facilities



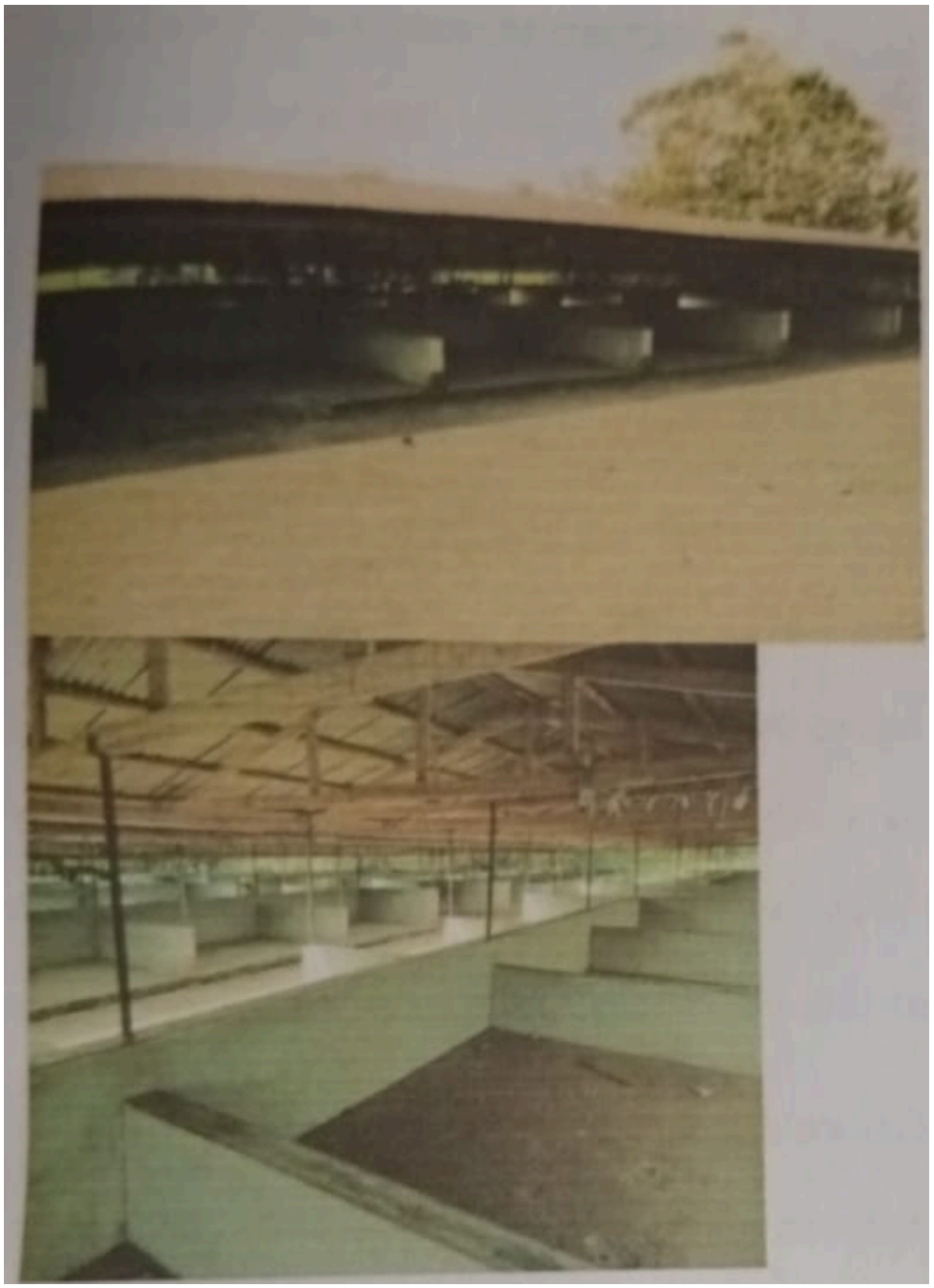
Man-power brought to Eme-Abiam by UNICEF in the year 1994

SOURCE BY THE RESEARCHER

DATE 26 OF DECEMBER 2013



From man-power to the opening of bore-hole. But some villages in Emeabiam, still use the man-power system (as seen above, a young boy from Umuokpo fetching water using the man-power system (2013)). The tiled bore-hole system was a 2008 project by the Umuikea community effort.



Nkwo-Emeabiam- the central market, it is on the outskirt of Emeabiam. Indigenes live kilometers away which led to little patronage as villages in Emeabiam set up their own little (daily) market, closer to them. It is not an everyday market. It opens once or twice a week. People come from far away communities and villages to display and sell their goods.

SOURCE: BY THE RESEARCHER

DATE: 26 OF DECEMBER 2013.

Eme-Abiam Rubber Estate.

The rubber estate established in Eme-Abiam 1961/62, was a statement that Dr. Micheal Iheonukara, made to mark a new aggressive agricultural pursuit. Whole Eastern region, spread over 3,500 acres of land. The rubber estate along with other farm settlements all over the defunct Eastern Nigeria, were as a result of Okpara's administration case study of the Asian and Israeli agro – economy and its attendant prosperity. Okpara reached the conclusion that only an agrarian economy with its agro-allied offshoots, will sustain an entity everlastingly in human terms. He was right. Once Nigeria's focus shifted from agriculture to oil it lost grip of its economy. And the super structure has ever quaked non-stop.[34]

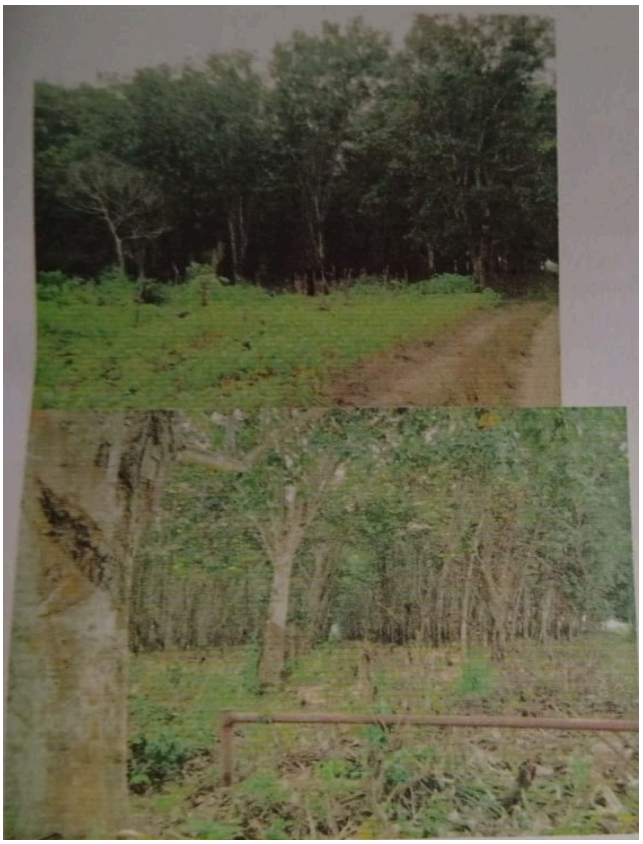
The Chinese and Israeli economies where involved in 'ruralification'- a program that was translated to mean transforming the rural sides through consciously planned plantation agricultural programs will integrate people, crops and machinery. In other words what the Rubber Estate intended to do when it was in the early sixties was to install machineries that will convert the rubber latex into by products for the Nigerian and foreign markets. And there were still are, so many uses for the natural rubber.[35]

When the first military coup plotters struck in January 1966, the rubbers in Eme-Abiam were yet to mature. No Eme-Abiam man had been trained to manage the Rubber – Estate. The machines had not yet arrived.[36]

The Rubber plantation momentarily boosted the economy of Eme-Abiam community. People came from far and near Eziobo (now Eziobodo) Ihiagwa, Nekede, Okolochi, Obibiezena, Imerienwe, Umukwune, Mbaise, Ikeduru, Mbaitoli etc. they flocked the plantation of about 11.26sq km to plant and to tend the new rubber shoots.[37] This investment created Job opportunities for the Eme-Abiam indigenous and royalties are paid to the landlords known as Obilobi.[38]

Furthermore, the rubber Estate created Job as some was to clear the middle or the rows of the plantation, some maintained the plants, applying insecticides and herbicides. They protected the rubber plants until they grew to their natural height of some six to nine meters with their leathery and shiny leaves heralding the wind, gentle or fierce. These workers were paid bi-monthly, sometime monthly, as sources say.

The money may have been small but it suited them and met their needs and those of their families. The rubber plantation and the influx of people into Eme-Abiam also created other avenues of economic growth. People from distant lands settled in the land as tenants. Those with extra skill plead them and got some more money on the side.[39]



Eme-Abiam Rubber Estate or Plantation founded by Michael Okpara in 1961/62



Raw material (rubber) extracted from rubber trees. This material when processed are made into plastics (cups, spoons, etc) and rubber slippers, sandals, belts, bags, etc.

SOURCE: BY THE RESEARCHER

DATE: 26 OF DECEMBER 2013.

Transportation

Emeabiam in the mid-sixties suddenly became semi-urbanized. Big Lorries locally called gwongworo became a common feature. They were owned by non-indigenes. Later, those owned by indigenes like Paul Anaemotu of Umuobaa, Okpuala, and Anurukwem Eke (Oshimiri) of Umuokpo also plied the four main entries into the community Eziobo – Eme-Abiam, Okolochi – Eme – Abiam, Obibiezena -Eme-Abiam and Umuekwune – Eme–Abiam routes. The wealth that was coming in was from both indigenous in- groups in Diaspora and the strangers regarded as out-groups by the indigenes.[40]

It must be mentioned here that Chief Felix Okereafor, more popularly known as Ajirija, around 1967 till the early 1970s had cabs that plied Owerri – Eme Abiam route one of the cabs was driven by his younger brother. The contribution of Ajirija to boost road transport of the community cannot be ignored especially when it is considered that at that period, the commonest means of transport was either foot or by bicycle.

Chief Henry Eke, known as (Nkpogbu also ploughed in this transport business to uplift Eme-Abiam. Now, there are now cars of different types, motorcycles plying Abiam roads.[41]

Culture/ Religion

Emeabiam people love culture, they speak Igbo language very well, culture is known as "Omenaala". What Abiam people are known for and their admirings.[42]

Administration:

The administration of each village was directly controlled by the oldest man known as Oha and assisted by the second to the oldest man known as Ikoro Emeabiam. When all the Oha and Ikoro from each village come together they form the highest ruling body of the village known as Ohanikoro council of elders. Then there was nothing like village council, the village was responsible for setting dispute, cleaning cafes and hosting events or ceremonies. Obi (Nze) is the next after the two elderly men in the village, responsible for the administration of the village, Obiri, is the meeting place. The town crier carries his ugele to give information about the village and calls for meeting. Public gathering, exhibition of dances, settlement of cases disputes, big shows and ceremonies were done at the village square (Ohanikoro Insitution), has been till date.[43]

According to Chudi, findings are that Oha na Ikoro, is the highest traditional decision making body in Abiam, they decided that 'Ezeship' should be rotational, starting with the first son of Eme (Son of Abiam). Informed sources, however, said one of the criteria used in deciding who should be Eze, was community development service.[44]

Imu Nwa (New Births)

The birth of a child is heralded with joy and funfair the women (midwives) would be the first to break the goodness by bellowing (shout of joy) and dancing together. This attracts great audience, who join in the jubilation train.[45]

The women who rush to the scene, normally with different ages of children trailing them would be given Nzu (white clayey chalk). Women, children (non-agers teenagers) all received nzu which they ate as one would eat sweets. Nzu on Abiam, and in fact in many part of Igboland, was a symbol of peace. Once the child is brought home from the midwives, there would be nmi Oromu, Kinsmen brought wine to the blessed home. An izu after the child was born nmii anyasu followed. Later in the evening, men arrived the scene for small round of raffia palm wine (nmii nguo) with a condition of ugba cum meat or fish. To Nde Eme – Abiam, no gathering could be said to be complete without Ugba (Oil bean fruit cooked and Sliced and left to ferment), appreciated well by the Owere people. In fact, in later years of civilization, detractors of the Owerri people would mock them as, Ata Ugba, nuo nmii, ndi Ogbagba Kuru ma. (This denigration of the Owerre man commotes that with palm and Ugba, the cared less about the development happening around him).[46]

However when the man gathered, and once the Oji (Kola nut) is served, the next expectation would be nmi ngwo and ugba. Discussion could last for into the night once there was a continuous supply of nmii ngwo such talks were usually light banters and Inanties that were not expected to add to any form of personal development or that of the community. They are the equivalent of today's beer parlor talks.[47]

Omugwo (Birth Ceremonies)

Nwakaego as a name and sentence as most Igbo names, means child is greater than money. Normally, greetings do not ask of your wealth or materials. That is the omugwo attachment of the people to new birth and the attended joy of a child, the welcome ceremony, so to speak of a new born into the family or compound. It modern equivalent is the dedication of children in present day churches with attendant revelries and extravagance. omugwo took place on the 24th day after a child was born. During omugwo, the wife's mother because she understood her daughter very well, who grew up under her care was excellently suited to perform the role of a nurse to her. In fact, it was a taboo for a man in Eme-Abiam to make sexual overtures to his another in-law, much less of actually being involved.[48]

After three weeks of birth, the whole family will gather in the oldest man's house for naming. Age of teething they carry the child round the village to show the villagers. 18 years they buy the child gun and machete. Because they believe all young men are soldiers looking at the occupation of Emeabiam, they are farmers, so the machete and hoe, cutlass is for farming and also for hunting.[49]

The ceremonies that herald a new born show the importance that the Abiam man and in fact the whole Igbo race lays on additional beings into families, compounds or into a community.[50]

Ilu Nwanyi (Marriage)

Indigenes of Eme – Abiam are not allowed to marry themselves (an Umuikea man marrying an Umuso lady) reasons so that one would not end up getting married to close relations (inter-marriage). It is highly forbidden.[51]

New born babies are direct results of the ilu nwayi or marriage. Children born out of wed lock, even thought cared for and in a way integrated into the family system, overall suffer some form of stigmatization. This is why it was (still is) the respectable norm for every man/ woman of Abiam origin or migrants into the community to look forward to the price or high honor termed marriage.[52]

First, there is Iju Ajuju Uzo (making equires). However, where a bride's father is dead or has elder brother (s) such good relationship with the direct father of the girl, such an elder may play the role of father at the occasion. In iju ajuju uzo (enquiring making) the visitors carry with them jar (s) of palm wine. Kola nut is served (Igbo kola nut).[53]

Those days, a girl had no choice of her own than what her parent's decided for her in terms of marriage she had an education and little informal skill as a hand working farm hand. If she has a good voice for singing or if she were a good dance, it enhanced her chance of having suitors. Otherwise, majority of the girls were usually betrothed when they were non ager. As they stepped into their early or mid – terms, marriage became a more formality. If there was problem with the betrothing partner (either by death or

sickness or he suddenly decided to many another wife despite objections) the girls was free to accept proposals from other suitors.[54]

The two Eke days were sacrosanct to marriage ceremonies. It is not certain that the influence of Christianity has eroded this from the socialization prices the Abiam man was (still is from findings) not one to receive suitors to his daughters on Eke day neither would he undertake a trip in that regard on Eke day.[55]

After ajuju uzo, the suitors would now proceed with a next visit with nmii ibika, to re-enforce their request for the particular girl in the family. After nnii ibika, they repeat their visit with nnii okalezi (to prove their seriousness or truthfulness). At this point the girls would follow her prospective husband with his relations to his homestead. That trip is called ije abaliamo (four day marital leave). She returns to her father's a compound with a keg of wine given to her prospective mother-in-law would ensure that her son never made or succeeded in any sexual overtures. In fact, the maiden slept with her mother in law to be if she returned the empty keg to her suitor in her next trip of one week, two weeks that would show she has consented to be married into that family.[56]

However, once a girl consented, the full rights of marriage were kicked off. Again, this would depend on how wealthy or prepared the prospective husband was. James Onyike (2004:77) states that when ime ihe nme is not done "the girl, no matter how long she may have spent with the husband (many maidens prefer that their mother's rites be settled first) is considered not fully married. Any such woman could have her offspring claimed by her maiden parents/family. Such an offspring actually answered the girl's father's name.[57]

Belief System and Religious Productivity

In the beginning, all Abiam people were animists. The worship was as to what physically they could related to streams, unusually grandiose frees or plants of some mystical essence, etc.[58]

Like other parts of Igbo land these deities were not actually the objects of worship. The Abiam people believed that these smaller deities could take their supplications to the great God chukwu, who could not be approached directly but had to be reached through mediators or mediums.[59]

Some religious analysts and thinkers have already dwelt on these issues. Many of them have said all religious agree that the great God has to be worshipped through mediator(s) Christianity through Christ Islam through Mohammed, Confucianism through king-fu-tse Confucius; or Buddhism through Siddhartha (Gautarna) Buddha there are others like the Japanese Chinese Shintoism, the Indian Hinduism etc.[60]

In Abiam, there are several agbara, i.e. deities or gods (if one chooses to call them by that) that reigned before Christianity sidelined them. It must be noted that agbara also connotes spirit being, most often the evil or wicked type. That is why when the Abiam man spews the curse, agbara kugbuo kwagi, he is not invoking any good spirit.[61]

However, there were (for some, are) Ofo-Eme-Abiam believed to be central to all Nde Eme-Abiam, Elern (Emuobaa, Okpuala), Nwalozie –uwa(Umuonyekwe,Okpuala) Oraminukwa or Uramunikwa (Umuchioko, Okpuala) Anyangwu and Ala – Umuodie (Umuidea) and the rest.[62]

In the 1990s, Christians led by venerable Ebenezer Eleazu, literally 'chased' away the deity and burnt her shrine (with all her totems).[63]

Before the advent of the Christian missionaries, Emeabiam highly religious, were idol worshippers as earlier mentioned, until 1916 the late Iheagwam Abiaka an illustrious sone of Umuikea Emeabiam, through his influence as the then chief as at that time influenced the CMS, now the Christ Anglican Church Emeabiam to the town by giving them an evil forest to clear and build their church. The introduction of Christianity in Emeabiam did not completely stop the people from their idol worshipping until the year 2000 when idol worshipping was completely demolished (abolished) from the town by these same Christian missionaries. It is on record that the first church that came into Emeabiam town.[64]

Wherever it made its entry, it shook the foundations of any culture or whatever customs or traditions played host. New adherents of the Christian religion placed themselves at a superior pedestal. They gave the practitioners of the traditional religion the lower complexes a hard battering, a bloody nose.[65]

This was so because even the environmental was shy and timid. It bears repetition to restate Coleman (1986): "All wads out of West Africa, save ore, had either to the dessert, or to the sea. To attempt to cross either was an undertaking indeed." Coleman insists that to reach the tropical forest, in which Eme-Abiam is situated:

> *You must pass through it by flies. It is like a town a thousand miles long. The paths lead to perfectly definite spots, from one village to another. Every village is a roadblock; the path comes to the village breaks up to enter houses, regathers itself, and leads out on the other side.*

It was in this kind of environment that Christianity, emboldened by a spiritual force made a foray.[66]

Christ's Crush on Eme-Abiam

However, for Eme-Abaim, the traditional mode of worship prevailed for perhaps centuries until Christian missionaries came knocking about 100 years ago.

The following paragraphs will rely heavily on the "Welcome Address Presented by Christ Church at the 2002 Diocesan Synod of the Egbu Diocese of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)" as compiled by Dr. Ugwuanya Nwosu as secretary of the History Committee. It was the first denomination of Christianity, under the evangelistically aggressive Church Missionary Society (CMS) to touch down in Eme-Abiam and make a tremendous impact before the Roman Catholic Church (RCM) followed suit. The committee identified two separate routes by which the CMS came to the community. There was the St. Andrew's Church, Umuokpo, Eme-Abiam, which was a product of the missionary fervour of the Niger Delta Pastorate Mission (NDPM).[67]

At the northern part of Eme-Abiam, precisely at Egbelu/ Okpuala axis there was established by the CMS Niger Mission/ St. Mark's Church. It is pertinent to state that the NDPM was created by the CMS Niger mission for the main target of evangelizing the Niger Delta and the hinterlands which at present encompass the entire eleven states in the South-South and South-East zones.[68]

However, after nearly a year of preaching to and teaching the sparsely populated non-indigenous residents of the waterside, a mission station named St. Paul's Church was planted there and started as a church in 1903. The missionary campaigns began to make impact on the host community, Umuokpo, and drew some of the community's indigenes to join the strangers at the waterside church every Sunday to hear sermons and study the Holy Bible. What started initially as a mere curiosity for some of the host members became an entrenched habit. The first indigenous souls recorded were Abraham Nkwocha, John Nkwocha, Daniel Nwagbara, Hezekiah Nwoke and Stephen Nkwoeha.[69]

It is to be noted that their English first names could have emerged as a result of their conversion to Christianity. At baptism, there was then some coaxing on the locals to take Bible names to replace their native names, which they were persuaded to accept were heathen. Their native names over time became lost in the interplay between the new religion and the traditional one that was the mainstay before the spiritual 'invasion'. The practice of losing one's indigenous name has persisted till this day. There were however some isolated cases where the native names prevailed.[70]

These early starters, especially Stephen Nkwocha who had already been baptised into the NDPM Church at Degema where he was living and making a living to become very strong pillars in St. Andrew's Church, Umuokpo, which was established in later years.[71]

Past, Present and Future of Traditional Religion

Duru Nobi, the high priest of Elem, the goddess of Okpuala, submitted the following well-researched piece some of it from his 1976 unpublished work Eme-Abiam - My Village.

"Who will tell the world about our past? Have we no past before the birth of Christ, some 2000 years ago? We are to tell the outside world who we are, who we were and who we hope to be. If we had any religious belief at all, we should tell the world what that religion was. Did we at any time embrace Chineke (God), or were we born belief-less, leader-less, sex-less - an image or robot with no brain or thinking faculty of any sort, just sitting dormant and ready and willing to receive some form of life from white men?

Suppose somebody called one a fool once and twice and got away with it, he does not need to taunt the person with the appellation of a fool a third time because the person has proved himself a real fool.[72]

"Everything black is bad from the point of view of the white man. The blacks have no history, no present and no future. They have no religion. They have no names till the white man arrived to give them slave names as Basil, Cornelius, Bartholomew, Marcellinus, Magdalene, and Sylvester - names the black person cannot even pronounce! Suppose you are a bishop of the white man's faith, either Roman Catholicism or Protestantism (Anglican or Methodist Church). Suppose you believe that Christ was the one who would show you the way to 'heaven'. Suppose your grandfather did not see, hear or know Christ. Would it point to his rotting in hell today? Certainly mine is not. It is time the blacks woke up and stopped swallowing uncritically whatever the white people say or write about us".[73]

"We are going to argue that an organised religion existed in Okpuala ever before the arrival of Christianity in 1915. If Christ came to this world about two thousand years ago, I believe that my goddess' mace in my house is much older than this. Any interested person can come and see the mace. The mace also debunks European argument that, before they came to us, we did not know anything about steel. Steel was used to support the end of my mace.[74]

"By 1913, Ahotu, the oldest man in Umuobaa, had died. The headship of Umuobaa fell on Eke Iwuala. Add this to his priesthood of the powerful Elem goddess, and get a man of immense power and glory. Elem-ism was the undoubted religion of Okpuala to the envy and anger of the Christian crusaders. Eke Iwuala's resistance to Christianity was buoyed by the fact that the oldest Christian church at Umuokpo was rumoured to be a conduit pipe for evil - the slave trade. Christianity was thus seen as evil. Throughout

the dark period of this odious trade, it was held that nobody from Okpuala was either captured as slave or sold into slavery, and much of the credit for this went to the teachings of Elem-ism. Stories abound that whenever her subjects were threatened, she would metamorphose into a flying horse, a warrior, swarm of bees, holocaust, etc. in pursuit of the enemy. The latest legend was the Nigeria-Biafra war. It is claimed that nobody who took shelter at Okeohia Elem suffered any calamity.[75]

"Elem is generally called agbara Okpuala (the goddess of Okpuala, or the religion of Okpuala). Okpuala had both Elem and Ofor Eme-Abiam but Ofor Eme-Abiam did not enjoy the popularity and reverence of Elem. Ofor is a symbol, Elem is an agbara or goddess. However both agbara and ofor are imbued with divine powers. Any Umuobaa person can attest to the powers of Elem, even in 2009.[76]

"By 1914 Christianity was engulfing Umu-Okpo and Umu-Ikea but Okpuala, the son of Erne, remained glued to their traditional religion. Elem-ism was this age-long religion."

"The outbreak of the First World War provided the white men with a golden opportunity to eliminate or humiliate Eke Iwuala and his Elem. Eke Iwuala was asked to support the white man's nomination of Ofurum (his elder son) to join the war. Ofurum was the heir apparent to Elem goddess. Remembering the pretexts of the Benin punitive expedition of yesteryears, Eke Iwuala agreed to release his very young son, Onyenobi, to go to war instead. Onyenobi was clearly under age but had developed muscles as a result of being a wrestling champion. In addition to coercion and brute force, Britain used poisoning as an instrument of colonialism and imperialism. Adobo and his family went into extinction because of poisoning from the slave dealers they fiercely resisted. Adobo was the precursor of Abiam.[77]

Other Churches

Many more denominations made entry into the community, some trying to overthrow the orthodoxy of the first two churches that turned the society from unapologetic traditional worshippers to followers of the Christian faith that has had more than a life transformation but also a positive impact on the environment called Eme-Abiam.

Such churches include the Eternal Sacred Order of the Cherubim and Seraphim which stormed the arena claiming a fervent spiritual hue that qualifies an adherent to get all solutions to his/her earthly problem. There also came Assembly of God Mission, which incontrovertibly is the first Pentecostal church in Nigeria, the Apostolic Church, Zion Church, the Deeper Life Bible Church and motley of others which showed presence and won converts in the 1970s and 1980s.[78]

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VI. CHAPTER FIVE : SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Socio-economic development is a process that can take place anywhere, anytime and whenever as long as the resources human, financial or material resources and technical knowhow (ideology) are available for development.

Emeabiam before the inception of this project, has little or no history whether it has hit its crux of development (socio-economically), or not. But this research work has been able to bring to limelight the various socio-economic developments in the Community, its stages, and progression.

Socio-economic development in the Educational aspect, religion-churches, how they came to being, and progression, culture- what was and what has now become of the norms and totems of the Emeabiam people and Infrastructural facilities till date.

Recommendations were made for addressing the issues raised in the course of this study.

Conclusion

The socio-economic development of the Abiam people however cannot be overemphasized. Development is something according to Claude Ake (2009) is something that people must do for themselves, although it can be facilitated by the help of others. If the people are the end of development, as is the case, they are also necessary to its agents and its means. Based on this assertion, the following conclusions were deduced at the end of this research study.

Socio-economic development involves progress on both the social and economic growth. Such progress includes provision of social amenities such as water, roads, hospitals and schools. On the economic front, it involves creating economic opportunities, employment and an environmental for businesses to thrive.

Socio-economic development in Eme-Abiam is indeed an obvious transformation, as Eme-Abiam is seen as a town, as a community, as a people, united in history, which made development thus as successful tool. Over the years, there have been evidences of development in the community is highlighted earlier in the work. These included Education, Infrastructural facilities, cultural and religious activities, etc.

Recommendations

In view of the importance of socio-economic development in Nigeria and the world as a whole, the following recommendations are offered for necessary implementations;

Socio-Economic development could be measured with indicators, such as GDP (Gross Domestic Product), life expectancy, literacy and levels of employment. Changes in less-tangible factors are also

considered, such as personal dignity, freedom of association, personal safety and freedom from fear of physical harm and the extent of participation in civil society.

More so, if we can also have a stable government and a rigid constitution, (to avoid changes in Law and government). Physical and ecological environment should be looked into. Changes in this may not be progressive. More programs and project pertaining to socio-economic development should be implemented by the government and experts should also be mobilized to carry out such programs and projects.

Educational Implication of the Study

This study has the following educational implications:

Firstly, the curriculum contents of socio-economic development should now be reviewed by curriculum experts. The curriculum contents of socio-economic development should be emphasized into worthwhile ideologies about 'development'.

Furthermore, Socio-economic development can be beneficial to students when proper values and attitudes (like going on excursions or on academic field trip to where socio-economic developments projects have been implemented) are transmitted when teaching. The Abiam children should also be taught more on their culture and background together with their normal school curriculum.

Suggestions for further studies;

On consideration, the inclusion of socio-economic development into the curriculum of tertiary institutions on 'development' of students (less- tangible factor). Socio-economic development ways in Emeabiam were beyond the period of time covered in the study. More so, The role of individuals (Abiam people) in enhancing socio-economic development in their community. Socio-economic development not only in Emeabiam, in other communities or local government area of Imo State.

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2	Mr. Gooswill Praise	29	Ogun State	Engineer	January, 2013
3	Mr. Ikeri Christian .A.	59	Onne, Port-Harcourt, Nigeria.	Civil Servant	26th December 2013
4	Mr. Okigwe James. P	30	Lagos, Nigeria	Clerk	December, 2013.
5	Mrs. Ikeri Josephine .N.	50	Ikorodu, Lagos, Nigeria.	Business Woman	December, 2013.
6	Mrs. Ngejuru Lucy	65	Ikorodu, Lagos, Nigeria.	Nil	December, 2013
7	Mrs. Akakuru Ojiugo .C	53	Mbieri, Owerri, Imo state, Nigeria.	Lecturer	December, 25th, 2013.
8	Ms. Nnorom Grace .A	35	Lagos, Nigeria	Working Class	November, 2013
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