Assessment of Growth Pole Factors and Regional Development in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract
The study assessed the growth pole factors and regional development in Rivers State, Nigeria and anchored the study to Francois Perroux's Growth Pole theory. Questionnaires were administered to find out the factors that generate growth in urban centres; and if growth centres generate further growth of towns in the outlying regions. The secondary data used in the study is a review of the regional development components of the annual budgets of Rivers State from 2001 to 2016. This was done specifically to ascertain the extent of the Rivers State government's commitment to the development of growth poles/centres outside Port Harcourt. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the analysis. Results showed that the Government has shown no commitment to the development of growth centres in the State within the period under review. The study further reveals that the Government does not encourage grassroots participation in decision making, hence, development projects have no significant impact on the lives of the rural dwellers, and that allocation of resources and projects is based more on political, rather than economic or equity considerations. Also, Spearman's rank correlation analysis revealed that there is a significant negative correlation between the Rivers State Government's annual budgetary expenditure and regional development ($r=-0.82$; $p>0.05$). The study concludes that growth pole is not just the propulsive industry, but a localization of growth-inducing forces, based on local peculiarities and specialization, and that development of growth centres takes time, commitment and patience, and accordingly recommends that medium-term plans, as well as urban and regional planning policies, be adopted as a policy for regional development planning. It is therefore recommended that site and services scheme should be provided by the Rivers State Government to ensure that the enabling environment is set for private investors to take advantage of such largesse, and also encourage public-private partnership (PPP) as a component of policy to develop garden cities, scenic green belts, and open spaces, while using stick (disincentive) and Carrot (incentive) approaches to encourage outward movement from Port Harcourt.

Keywords: *Budgetary expenditure, Growth pole, Regional Development, Nigeria,* Spearman's rank

1. INTRODUCTION

Governments through regional planning policies can influence spatial economic activities following target that have been set to achieve the desired purpose. Spatial polarization, which is the concentration of productive forces (industries and services in pockets of favoured urban centres), result in regional disparities, inequalities in income within and between urban and rural areas, and deteriorating living condition in the regions (Oyesiku, 1998). Cities are the driving force behind any reasonable economic growth and development (Knox and McCarthy, 2005) and industrialization. Regional development planning includes top-down and bottom-up strategies. The growth pole strategy is an example of a top-down approach, while various other approaches collectively labelled as Neo – populism, constitute the bottom-up approach (Gore, 1984).

It was discovered that a feature of the early stage of development in many countries is the concentration of economic activities. This observation led to the formulation of the growth pole concept pioneered by Perroux, a French regional economist in 1955. The 'pole' of Perroux was the sector of an economy and not spatial (a geographical place or area). However, his ideas have subsequently been modified to include geographic space characterized by the focus of growth centre strategy (Abiodun, 1985). He based his arguments in support of growth poles on the theories laid down by Schumpeter's. He analyzed the developments as an outcome of disjointed spouts in a changing globe. Intermittent spouts are triggered by entrepreneurs that innovate events in firms that are big and control their environments by influencing economically the nature, negotiation, strength and dimension of their operation. The leading or dynamic propulsive industries are concepts of Perroux. The latter is one of the sectors with fast growth and it is big. Innovation is high for economic effects to be felt. The former in this case is the advance level, links with other industries strongly have proficiency in management etc. All areas do not show growth presence at the same time but either at a point or pole possessing different strength and spread potential with different networks. Under such agglomeration, innovation, dominion, efficiency, increased production and more can be achieved (Perroux, 1950). There was a movement to growth development from growth pole while accommodating more complex situations (Boudeville, 1966; Perroux, 1988). Higgins (1988) explained the work of Perroux and stated that every human possesses change energy.

Perroux developed the growth pole concept to show that development is brought about through the concentration of economic activities in space. Growth pole strategies have been applied as a tool for regional development planning both in industrialized and unindustrialized nations (Perroux, 1988). Majority of the strategies adopted could not attain set goals (Miyoshi, 1997). This prompted the fresh regional economic planning history in numerous areas of the world. Abandoned or failed examples are scattered all over the world (Parr, 1996), and the failure of the policy can be attributed to governments' inefficiency and neglect of the strategy (Conroy, 1973).

Britain is the first country in the west that attempted to deal with the problems of regional disparity (Hall, 1992). British Planning was influenced by precursors and seers of modern urban planning principles such as Ebenezer Howard, Patrick Geddes, and Patrick Abercrombie. The challenges of health, housing difficulty, poor living conditions in the big cities, and overcrowding of people brought about by the industrial revolution in Britain were ameliorated by re-housing people in an

entirely new town built far enough away from the 'parent' city to allow it a separate existence (Ardill, 1974).

In Nigeria, development plans have formed the policy framework that governs the operation of the economy and affiliate sectors. Through this planning effort, conscious policies and choice are made by the government to influence the relative rate at which industrial, agricultural improvements, transport and commerce, housing, etc., are provided (Ayinla, 1998). Early development planning focused on resources (sectoral) rather than spatial (places or regions). Regional inequalities and disparity between urban and rural areas continue to haunt the Nigerian spatial (settlement) system. Even though there has not been an explicit regional planning policy in Nigeria, until recently, regional planning in the country is not new as it was in existence during the colonial period of British colonial administration, where regional development programmes have been integral parts of the national development plans. The plan did not contemplate industrial development. Its emphasis was on the development of a limited range of export crops required to supply British industries as well as the building of transport and communication systems to make it easier to evacuate export crops to the seaports and for smooth and easy mobility of the colonial administrators.

The First to Fourth National Development Plans after independence (from 1962 – 1985) were mainly urban-centred and this led to unprecedented rural-urban migration, unemployment especially in the cities, lopsided development, inadequate development facilities, transportation and housing problems, infrastructural decay and obsolescence. This trend in planning at the National level is replicated at the State level.

The first military Governor of Rivers State, Navy Commodore Alfred Diete Spiff (27th May 1967-July 1975) commissioned the preparation of master plans for urban centres in Rivers State in 1975, but none was implemented. Besides, the plans were prepared by Portuguese (foreigners), without recourse to local input, peculiarities, and consultation with the citizens who were to be affected by the plan. Chief Melford Okilo, the Executive Governor from October 1979 to December 1983, came up with a policy of creating fifty (50) 'development centres' in Rivers State (Panden, 2013), wherein, urban growth centres were so designated to be developed outside Port Harcourt, way to spread development outside the capital city. The policy was aimed at regionalization (decentralized development). This was not actualized. Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers State is highly congested and is the only major city of the state.

Under the leadership of Governor Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, a new vision to expand

the city of Port Harcourt was born. This was the establishment of the Greater Port Harcourt City Development Project (GPHCDP) in 2009. The master plan was drawn up in 2008 to renew the old city and build a new city which would lead to the achievement of long-term urban sustainability as well as effective planning for the future. As was the case with the 1975 urban master plans for the State, the 2008 master plans were prepared by foreign consultants (South Africans), still without consultation with the stakeholders, the ultimate beneficiaries of the project. However, the project from its inception had the problem of funding, and funds were not released as envisaged for its smooth take-off and implementation.

This study seeks to review the Rivers State government's development plans (annual budgets) from 2001 to 2016 to ascertain the direction, focus and trend of regional development in the state. It attempted a designation of settlements into hierarchies and 'orders,' of growth centres, aimed at

ensuring a fairly balanced development in the State; Identify forces that generate or propel growth and development of urban centres, and also find out if growth centres propel regional development.

2. THE STUDY AREA

The study involved the entire Rivers State, Nigeria. Rivers State is one of the 36 states of Nigeria, created on 27th May 1967 by Decree No 14, with the split of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, under the administration of General Yakubu Gowon (then Head of State). It has a latitudinal extent of 4^{o} 20' 00N and 5^{o} 50'00''N and longitudinal extent of 6^{o} 30' 00''E and 7^{o} 30' 00'E (Figure 1). Rivers State is bounded on the south by the Atlantic Ocean, west by Bayelsa and Delta States, north by Imo, Abia and Anambra States and east by Akwa Ibom State. Rivers State has twenty-three Local Government Areas (LGAs) presently. According to Nwanyawaa (2010), Rivers State became a member of the Niger Coast (Oil Rivers Protectorate) between 1885 and 1893.

Rivers State is found in the sub-equatorial region. It has a tropical climate with a mean temperature of 30^{o}C, relative humidity of 80% - 100%, and a mean yearly rainfall of about 2,300mm. The rainfall is always high but varies with seasons (Mmom and Fred-Nwagwu, 2013). The warmest months are from January to May, and all have more than 20 days with a temperature of 32^{o}C or above. However, the tropical climate is moderated by the influence of the Atlantic Ocean. The area is also characterized by heavy rainfall from April to October ranging from 2000mm to 2500mm. The drier months of December, January and February are not also free from occasional rains. The state has relatively still air conditions, the prevailing winds being south-westerly and north-easterly.

Geologically, the study area is underlain by the Coastal Plain sands having its place from the Pleistocene Formation (Nwankwoala and Warmate, 2014). The sediments are deposits comprising of gravel, clays, peats, sands and silt from the River Niger. Rivers State is made up of both upland and riverine areas. The topography in the upland ranges between 15 and 40m above the sea level while the mean elevation of about 15m is found in the riverine areas. The study area which is situated in the Niger Delta region has a relatively flat terrain with a marked absence of hills that rise above the general land surface. Near the Atlantic coast, its flat and low relief feature results in water stagnating on the ground surface. The tropical rainforest is found in the inland part of Rivers State and mangrove swamps towards the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. The vegetation represents the most luxuriant, the most complex, and the most diverse terrestrial ecosystem the world has known (Ojeh, 2011). The tropical rainforest vegetation comprises the moist evergreen plant species which are rich timber, palm trees, as well as fruit trees. The vegetation is nourished with high rainfall and high temperature, which provide favourable condition for the growth of a varieties of tall and big trees like mahogany, Obeche, Afara and abundance of oil palm trees and several other species of economic value such as raffia palms, Abura, ferns and grasses (Eludoyin et al., 2013).

Drainage of the study area is poor because of the presence of many surface water and heavy rainfall of between 2000mm and 2400mm (Mmom and Fred-Nwagwu, 2013). The main drainage pattern in Rivers State is largely controlled by the Bonny River, its tributaries and creeks. It is a major feeder to several creeks and creeklets, which together drain the various outcrops of relatively higher land, which are largely surrounded by the mangrove swamps (Bell-Gam, 2002).

Rivers State with a population of about 5,185,400 people occupies a landmass of 11,077 sq. km (National Population Commission, 2006). Just like other cities in the Niger Delta, the capital city of Rivers State, Port Harcourt has witnessed tremendous growth in its population, since its inception. Rivers people consist of people from Ikwerre, Kalabari, Ibani, Okrika, Ahoada, Ogoni, Opobo, Nkoro and Bille. They live in the coastal areas along the Atlantic Ocean and the creeks, deriving their source of livelihood from fishing, farming and trading.

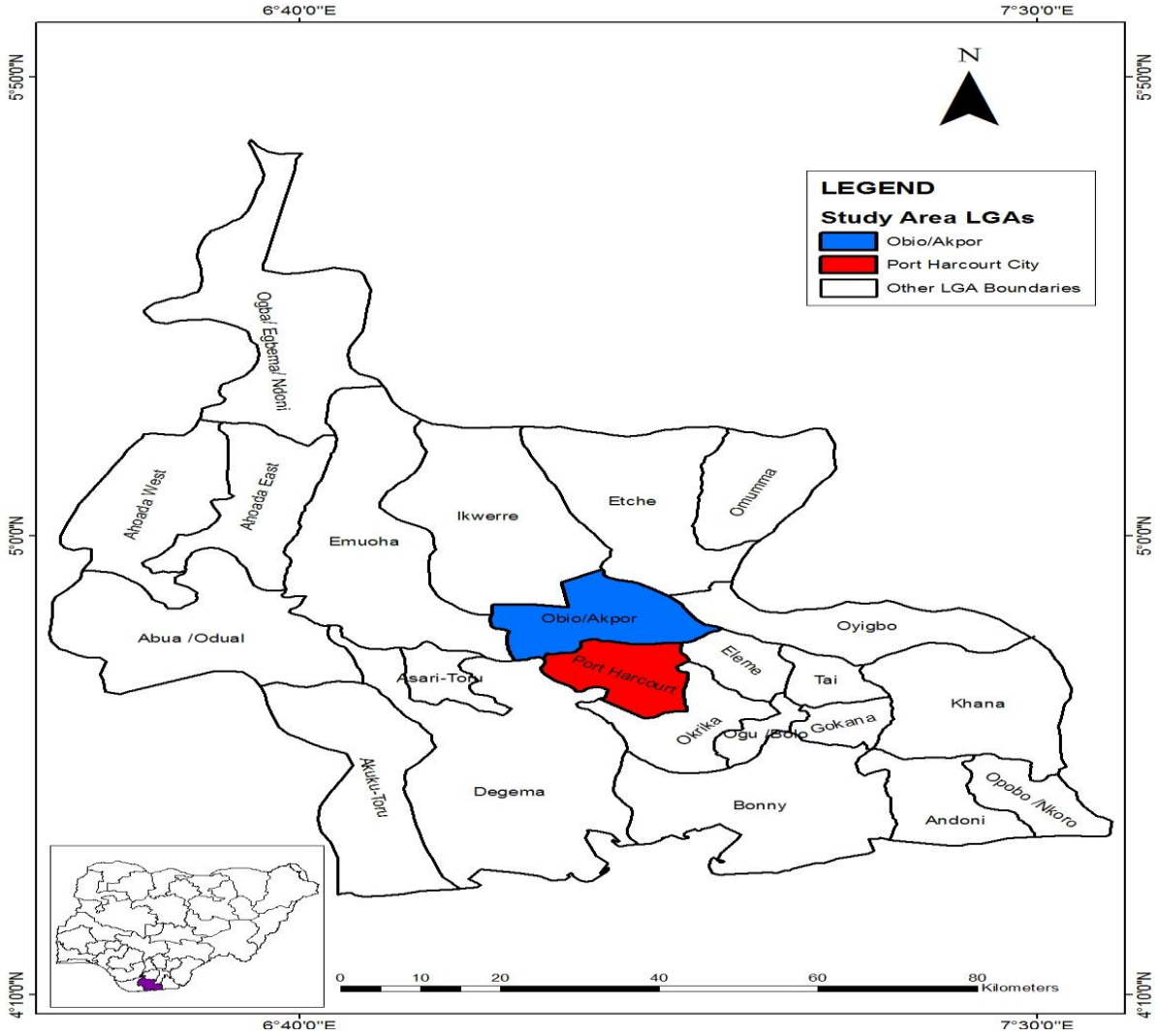

Figure 1. Rivers State Showing the 23 LGAs

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study sample was drawn from the three (3) senatorial districts in the state, namely, Rivers West, Rivers East, and Rivers South-East, which culminated in the use of electoral wards in the State as the sampling frame. Twelve (12) Local Government Areas from the 3 Senatorial districts

that comprise the 23 LGAs were selected using a simple random sampling technique. This represents 12/23 x 100 = 52.17% coverage of the LGAs in the State. Questionnaires were administered to the Heads of households (as the units of analysis) in the various wards of the study sample. The study also adopts the Key Informant Approach, where opinion leaders, chiefs, members of the Community Development Committees (CDCs) were interviewed, using the questionnaire instrument. Table 1 shows the 23 LGAs in Rivers State, the 3 Senatorial Districts and the number of wards in each of the LGAs of the state.

Table 1: Number of Wards in 23 Local Government Areas of Rivers State

S/N	Local Government Area	Senatorial District (Rivers)	No. of Wards in LGA
1.	Ogba Egbema	West	17
2.	Ahoada East	West	13
3.	Ahoada West	West	12
4.	Abua Odual	West	13
5.	Asari Toru	West	13
6.	Bonny	West	12
7.	Degema	West	17
8.	Akuku Toru	West	17
9.	Emuoha	East	14
10	Etche	East	19
11.	Omuma	East	10
12.	Ikwerre	East	13
13.	Okrika	East	12
14.	Obio/Akpor	East	18
15.	Ogu/Bolo	East	12
16.	Port Harcourt	East	20
17.	Eleme	South East	10
18.	Tai	South East	10
19.	Opobo/Nkoro	South East	11
20.	Oyigbo	South East	10
21.	Andoni	South East	11
22.	Gokana	South East	17
23.	Khana	South East	19
	Total		320

Source: Panden (2013)

Trained field assistants are drawn from the Rivers State College of Arts and Science (now Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic) who are indigenes of the various LGAs were recruited to administer questionnaires to heads of households and opinion leaders in the chosen wards in the study sample. The essence is to ensure a high level of interaction, co-operation and harmony between the

interviewers and respondents. A total number of 342 questionnaires were administered in the 57 wards suggesting 6 questionnaires per ward (Table 2). Descriptive statistics were used to describe the results while inferential statistics were used to test the hypothesis. The Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypothesis that states that there is a correlation between the Rivers State Government annual budgetary expenditure pattern and regional development in Rivers State.

Table 2. Selected Wards for the Study

S/N	LGAs in Sample	Senatorial Districts	Wards used as Sampling Frame	No. of Wards Covered	Total Wards in LGA	Questionnaires Administered in the wards
1	Ogba Egbema	West	Omoku Town II; Omoku Town V; Egi I; Egbema I; Egbema II; Usomini I(North)	6	17	36
2	Ahoada West	West	Igbuduya II; Okarki; Joinkirama; Ubie III	4	12	24
3	Bonny	West	Ward III Orosikiri; Ward IX, Nanabie; WardVII, Dema Abbey; WardXI, Peterside	4	12	24
4	Abua/Odual	West	Abua II;Akani; EmughanI; Otapha	4	13	24
5	Okrika	East	Okrika III; Okrika VI; Kalio; Ogoloma III	4	12	24
6	Obio/Akpor	East	Obio Akpor; Rumuokoro; Rumueme (7C); Choba; Elelenwo (3B); Ozuoba/Ogbogoro	6	18	36
7	Port Harcourt	East	Abuloma/Amadi-Ama; Diobu; Elekahia;PortHarcourt Township;Ogbunabali; Rumuibekwe Oromineke/Ezimgbu;	7	20	42
8	Ogu/Bolo	East	Ogu I; Ogu III;Bolo III; Ele	4	12	24
9	Opobo/Nkoro	Sout East	Kalaibiama II; Nkoro I; Diepiri; Jaja	4	11	24

10	Eleme	South East	Ebubu; Onne; Alesa; Akpajo	4	10	24
11	Andoni	South East	Ngo town; Samanga; Ataba I; Asarama	4	11	24
12	Gokana	South East	Mogho; B-Dere; K-Dere I; Bomu II; Bodo III; Yeghe I	6	17	36
	Total	12		57	165	342

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

a. Budgetary Allocations to Regional Development Planning (2001-2016)

Table 3 shows a summary of budgetary allocations to Regional Development Planning (urban and regional planning activities within and outside Port Harcourt, the State capital). Sectors of the budget subsumed in Regional Development Planning are Agriculture, Housing, Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency (RSSDA), Greater Port Harcourt Development Authority (GPHDA), Environment and Urban Management. The allocation on regional development did not follow any pattern or trend but the least was discovered in 2005 with 6,050,000.000 naira and the highest was found in 2016 with 53 billion naira. Relating the Rivers State Government annual budgetary expenditure with the regional development, the Spearman's Rank Correlation shows that there was a very strong negative association between Rivers State Governments' annual budgetary allocation and Regional Development Planning (r=-0.82); signifying that the successive governments have not shown a commitment to the development of cities outside Port Harcourt

Table 3: Summary of Budget Allocations to Regional Development Planning (2001 – 2016)

Year	Total Budget Estimate (₦)	Recurrent Expenditure (₦)	% of Total Budget	Capital Expenditure (₦)	% of Total Budget	Regional Development Planning (₦)	% of Capital Budget	% of Total Budget
2001	40.58 billion	15.08 billion	37.16	25.5 billion	62.84	4.19billion	16.43	10.33
2002	63,951,135.583	Ministry of Power alone was allocated 11,785,085.407 (18.43%) of total budget allocation						
2004	79,369,776.180	31,157,990.403	39.3	48,211,785,000	60.7	4,873,100.000	10.11	6.14
2005	96,750,000.000	32,174,248.627	33.3	64,545,751,373	66.7	6,050,000.000	9.37	6.25
2007	179,384,098.50	43.5 billion	24.25	135.8 billion	75.70	10 billion	7.36	5.57
2011	414,100billion	146.259 billion	35.32	267,841 billion	64.68	6,775 billion	2.52	1.64

2012	427 billion	112.73 billion	26.40	314.27 billion	73.60	61.04billion	19.42	14.30
2013	490.32 billion	176.02 billion	35.90	314 billion	64.04	44.63billion	14.21	8.84
2014	485,524 billion	117.09 billion	24.11	368.43 billion	75.88	32.8billion	8.90	6.76
2015	335 billion	118.685 billion	35.43	216.314billion	64.57	19.5billion	9.01	16.53
2016	307 billion	120 billion	39.09	180 billion	60.0	53 billion	29.44	17.26

Sources: The Tide, November 23, 2000; December 20, 2001; November 8, 2003; November 5, 2004; November 4, 2006; December 17, 2010; December 21, 2011; February 25, 2013; January 8, 2014; January 16, 2015; 21 December, 2015.

b. Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

The socio-economic analyses of respondents in the study area is shown in Table 4. The analysis reveals that 40.72% of the respondents in the study area earn monthly income of less than 65,000 naira which translates to about 774,960.00 naira (Seven hundred and seventy-four thousand, Nine Hundred and sixty naira) per annum, whereas only about 9.82% earn monthly income of more than 190,000 naira (One hundred and ninety thousand naira) per annum. Going by the cost of housing, it is extremely difficult for residents in Port Harcourt and its environs to secure affordable housing, where a one-bedroom flat costs 250,000.00 naira (Two hundred and fifty thousand naira) per annum. This requires an expenditure of 32.26% of household income on housing, while a commonly accepted parameter for affordable housing in the United States and Canada is a housing cost that does not take more than 30% of household's total income, and of course, this includes taxes, insurance for owners and sometimes, cost of utility. Housing is considered unaffordable when the monthly cost of housing exceeds 30-35% (Affordable Housing).

In terms of the place of origin of respondents, the analysis showed that out of the 334 respondents, 292 were from Rivers State. Those not from Rivers state numbered 42, giving a percentage of 87.43% (Rivers State) and mainly from LGAs peripheral to Port Harcourt metropolis and predominantly inhabited by natives/ indigenes, while only about 12.57% are from outside the State, and these minority respondents reside more within Port Harcourt, Obio/Akpor, and Ikwerre Local Government Areas, which have cosmopolitan outlook, by their proximity to the capital city of Port Harcourt. Respondents were asked to comment about their choice of location (why they choose to remain where they live). Their opinions vary from the reason of choice being influenced by business activities, nearness to a place of work, cheap rent, the quest for a job and by their being an indigene of the area they live. Thus, the majority (68.56%) thought that they chose to be where they live because they are the indigene of the place. The major occupational activities engaged in by the indigenes (respondents) in the various LGAs of the state are fishing (35.33%), farming (37.42%), palm oil production (3.29%), hunting, lumbering, all for subsistence, government employment, transportation and trading activities.

Table 4. Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Monthly Income (#)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 40,000	136	40.72
41,000 - 90,000	79	23.65
91,000 – 140,000	47	14.07
141,000 – 190,000	39	11.68
191,000 – 240,000	21	6.29
241,000 – 290,000	9	2.69
291,000 and above	3	0.90
Total	334	100.0
Place of Origin of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Rivers State	292	87.43
Outside Rivers State	42	12.57
Total	334	100.0
Choice of Location	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Business activities	34	10.18
Indigene	229	68.56
Cheap rent	40	11.98
Job opportunities	12	3.59
Nearness to work place	19	5.69
Total	334	100
Economic and Primary occupation	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Farming	125	37.43
Trading	31	9.28
Fishing	118	35.33
Transportation	5	1.50
Public/Civil Service	36	10.78
Hunting	3	0.90
Palm oil Production	11	3.29
Lumbering	5	1.50
Total	334	100

c. Impact of Development Projects on Residents in Various LGAs

The analysis of the impact of development projects on residents in various LGAs between 2001 and 2016 is presented in Table 5. The project impact analysis revealed that 24.55% of respondents agreed that it has been very significant. However, 33.23% were of the view that the projects have not yielded any significant impact in the study area whereas 17.96% and 12.57% of respondents have agreed that the impact of the project was average and had no impact respectively. The analysis

showed that some development projects executed in the various LGAs by the Local, State, Federal Government and other agencies like Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), include, link roads, community market, borehole/ water project, primary and secondary schools, health centres, public toilets, skills acquisition projects and centres, town hall, civic centre, landing jetty, pavilion for hosting of occasions, restroom, Greater Port Harcourt Development Authority (GPHDA) Project, Dualisation of roads and ICT Centre project.

Table 5. Impact of Development Projects on Residents in Various LGAs (2001-2016)

S/N	Project Impact	Project Rating	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Very Significant	7	36	10.78
2	Significant	6	46	13.77
3	Average	5	60	17.96
4	Insignificant	4	57	17.07
5	Very Insignificant	3	54	16.17
6	No Impact	2	42	12.57
7	Negative	1	39	11.68
	Total		334	100.0

d. Growth Poles and Regional Development

Table 6 presents the analysis of growth poles and regional development in the study area. The analysis depicts that 76.05% of the respondents agreed that the urban centres in their LGAs that developed through administrative, industrial establishments, commerce, trade, tertiary institutions, etc., help diffuse growth and innovation into the nearby communities, through the quest for accommodation (housing), and desire for setting up other related businesses. Only 23.95% responded to the contrary that there has been no noticeable evidence of the spread of growth from existing growth centres to outlying regions or areas in their LGA.

Responding to the budgetary allocation and regional development, respondents who affirm that their Local Government Areas have witnessed growth and development as a result of the State Government's annual budgetary allocations/expenditures came up to 21.86%, while 78.14% of the respondents said they have not witnessed any development accruing from Government's annual budgetary allocations.

Table 6. Growth Poles and Regional Development

Evidence of spread of growth from existing growth center	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	254	76.05
No	80	23.95
Total	334	100.0
Budgetary expenditure and regional development	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	73	21.86

No	261	78.14
Total	334	100.0

e. Pre-Information on Project Implementation, Stage of Project Information, Participation in Project Extension and Satisfaction with Level of Participation

The analysis in Table 7 presents the view of respondents on the projects' implementation, information, execution and satisfaction. Concerning the pre-information on project implementation, 32.43% responded they were informed while 67.57% said they were not informed. In response to the question as to what time (stage of the process) respondents were informed about planned projects, 17.96% said it was before implementation; 23.16% replied it was after implementation; and about 58.98% said they were informed during the stage of project implementation. In terms of participation in project implementation, 89.79% replied they don't participate, whereas, only 10.21% affirmed participation. In terms of satisfaction with citizens' level of participation in the execution of community development projects, only 6.31% of respondents said they were satisfied and an amazing 93.69% expressed their dissatisfaction with the level of community participation in project implementation.

However, some suggestions were proffered by respondents on the ways to improve participation in planning and these included that government should engage local labourers in government development projects in the various communities; community members should be informed about the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of planned or intended projects in their communities and that family heads be consulted on planned projects in their communities, to determine the desirability and actual need for the project in their community.

Table 7. Projects' Implementation, Information, Execution and Satisfaction

Pre-information on Project Implementation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Not informed	226	67.57
Informed	108	32.43
Total	334	100.0
Stage of Project Information	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Before implementation	60	17.96
During implementation	197	58.98
After implementation	77	23.16
Total	334	100.0
Participation in Project Execution	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Participate	34	10.21
Not participate	300	89.79
Total	334	100.0
Satisfaction with level of Participation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Satisfied	21	6.31

Not satisfied	313	93.69
Total	334	100.0

f. Economic Dependence on Port Harcourt and Preferred Development Projects in order of Priority

Respondents' opinion was sought to ascertain if they relied so much on the city of Port Harcourt for economic survival and sustenance. The analysis revealed that 68.86% affirmed that they do, while only 31.13% said they do not rely or depend on the city for their survival (Table 8). Opinions of respondents were sought to list the development projects they would like to have in their Local Government areas in order of priority of constant power (electricity supply); establishment of industries; improved road network; library, functional drainage system, skills acquisition programmes, cassava processing farm, storage and preservation of farm produce.

Table 8: Dependence on Port Harcourt Economically

Economic Dependence Port Harcourt	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Dependent	230	68.86
Not Dependent	104	31.13
Total	334	100.0

g. Factors that lead to Urban Growth and Factors Influencing Choice of Location of Development Projects

The analysis in Table 9 is presented on the factors that lead to urban growth and factors influencing the choice of location of development projects in Rivers State. Analysis of the factors of urban growth revealed that 20.06% agreed on business and commercial activities while industrial presence attracted 36.23% of the respondents. Natural resources endowments, availability of basic socio-economic facilities and improved road network were attested to by 10.48%, 9.28% and 8.98% of the total respondents respectively. On the factors influencing the choice of location of development projects, four items were considered and they are political consideration, economic consideration, equity consideration and fairness in project allocation. In terms of political consideration, 32.04% of the respondents affirmed that the allocation of projects was not influenced by politics while 67.96% said politics greatly influence where projects are sited. Majority of the respondents (70.96%) responded that the allocation of development projects does not consider economic factors or economic viability. Only 29.04% agreed that development projects were located based on economic consideration. However, 23.05% of the respondents affirmed that the mode of allocation of projects and resources is governed by equity, while 76.95% responded to the contrary; that it has no equity consideration.

In respondents' opinion about the fairness in the allocation of government development projects and resources to their local government, 18.86% said the allocation was based on fairness while 81.14% said that government's consideration was not based on fairness. According to the perception of respondents, all good projects in the state are located in Port Harcourt, Obio/Akpor,

and Ikwerre Local Government Areas of the State, and that the State government focuses more on already developed areas of the state.

Table 9. Urban Growth and Choice of Location for Development Projects Factors

Factors of Urban Growth	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Business and Commercial activities	67	20.06
Availability of basic Socio-economic facilities	31	9.28
Improved Road Network	30	8.98
Tourist attractions and Heritage	9	2.69
Agriculture	19	5.69
Daily Major Market	22	6.59
Industrial Presence	121	36.23
Natural Resource Endowments	35	10.48
Total	334	100
Factors influencing Choice of Location of Development Projects		
Political consideration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Political	227	67.96
Not political	107	32.04
Total	334	100.0
Economic consideration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Economic	97	29.04
Non economic	237	70.96
Total	334	100.0
Equity consideration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Equity	77	23.05
Non equity	**257**	**76.95**
Total	334	100.0
Fairness in project allocation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Fair	63	18.86
Unfair	271	81.14
Total	334	100.0

h. Greater Port Harcourt City Development Project

An interview section with staff of Greater Port Harcourt Development Authority (GPHDA), to ascertain their achievements and challenges, revealed that the major obstacles to development are funding; problem of land acquisition; community/public participation and buy-in, while their

achievements include, preparation and implementation of a new master plan for the Greater Port Harcourt City, after the expiration of the Port Harcourt Master Plan of 1975; setting up of legal and administrative framework for the implementation of the master plan, as well as acquisition and allocation of land.

i. Obstacles to Development

High level of criminality; insecurity; Non-consultation with stakeholders; threats to farmers in the bush by criminals who try to unleash mayhem on unsuspecting farmers, were among obstacles (identified by respondents) impeding development in some parts of Rivers State. Respondents also expressed government bias in resource allocation in favour of already developed regions, while areas that have no political influence are neglected.

j. Suggestions to Improve level of LGAs Development

Respondents were asked to suggest ways their LGAs can be developed to reduce undue reliance on Port Harcourt. Proffered solutions are improvement on existing facilities, for example, Port Harcourt International Airport; Reduction in the level of criminality and effective security system; Transfer of some government ministries/parastatals to LGAs outside Port Harcourt; Establishment of industries in the Local Government Areas to; make jobs available in all LGAs to reduce dependence on the city; Skills acquisition and Youth empowerment; Constant power(electricity) supply; Construction of Link Roads; More infrastructural facilities in Local Government Areas; All LGAs should be given equal priority in planned or proposed government development projects and allocation of resources; Establishment of tourist attraction centres; Provision of hospitals; Improved transportation system; and decentralization of facilities/amenities, for example, tertiary institutions and functional socio-economic activities.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Nigeria has had several development plans from the colonial era to this day but does not have a regional development policy. What seems to be regional development policies have been subsumed, over time, in the various National Development Planning approaches, to the extent that these approaches have become synonymous with policies. Earlier National Development policies have failed to achieve the desired results because the planning approach adopted has been sectoral (economic and financial), and did not consider area-based(regional) planning. Besides, development has been urban-biased to the utter neglect of the peripheral regions, and this is responsible for the lopsided and unbalanced development in the country. This national or federalism bias is replicated at the levels of the states, to the extent that annual budgetary allocations and expenditures have continued to favour the administrative centres (capital cities), which, incidentally are the seats of government, economic and commercial nerve centres of the states, with so much level of spatial polarization. Basic socio-economic and physical infrastructural facilities are concentrated in these cities. The result, of course, is predictable: unemployment, wanton crime, traffic congestion, overuse of facilities, which are eve highly inadequate, housing problems, etc.

The various approaches to regional development in Nigeria include the following:

Administrative decentralization (Creation of States and Local Governments); Backward or Depressed Areas Development, which culminated in the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to address the developmental needs of the environmentally backward Niger Delta Region; Establishment of tertiary institutions; and River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA). The National Urban Development Policy in Nigeria was launched in 2012, but this is not a Regional Development Policy, and States have also not keyed in to adopt the tenets of the Policy, just as it has also not been effective at the National level. About 39% (760 hectares) of the State's total land areas, particularly in the upland area is suitable for cultivation. Japan, South Korea, and Singapore's success in economic development is a result of their exportation of goods and services. This is in line with the economic base theory, wherein regions specialize in the production and manufacturing of goods and services that they have a comparative advantage. The major obstacle to the implementation of Greater Port Harcourt development project (which has an element of regional development planning objective) is funding, and over-ambitious planning, viewed against the backdrop of the proposed annual expenditure of 100 billion for 50 years by the initiator of the project in 2009.

1n 2001, Rivers State Government emphasized the need for enhanced expenditure on rehabilitation of decaying agriculture, infrastructure, housing, urban and rural power supply, road transportation, and waste management, but out of a total budgetary estimate of 40.58 billion, only 4.19 billion (10.33%) was allocated to regional development activities, which also include development of Port Harcourt and other LGAs in the State. In the 2002 budget, Ministry of Power alone was allocated 11,785,085.407billion, out of the budget estimate of 63, 951,135.583, and this represents 18.43% of the total budgetary estimate.

In 2004, total budgetary allocation to urban and regional planning was 4.8 billion (6.14%), and in 2005, it was 6 billion (6.25%) of the total budget. In 2011, urban and regional planning was allocated 6.7 billion (1.64%) of the total budget. An analysis of the three-year budgetary allocations (2004; 2005 and 2011) to the urban and regional planning sector reveals a total allocation of 17.5 billion, which is 14.03% of the three-year budgetary allocations to urban and regional planning, compared to 18.43% to the power sub-sector for just one year (2002), which exceeds the three-year allocations to urban and regional planning by 4.4%.

The 2012 Rivers State budget proposal of ₦427 billion was aimed at raising welfare provision and to rapidly catapult the state into an economic giant driven by agriculture. But only ₦3.035 billion (0.71%) was provided for agriculture, which in the words of the Governor was "the foundation for sustainable economic growth, and housing was allocated 6.3 billion (1.48%). Agriculture and housing combined, constituted only 2.19% of the 2012 allocation, while Power (electricity) was allocated 25 billion (5.85%).

The proposed budget of ₦490.32 billion in 2013 which the governor announced was to set the state on an economic rebirth, allocated ^44.63 billion (8.84%) of total budgetary estimate to urban and regional planning (for the entire State), while water sector, which, as stated by the governor, was aimed at providing the needed infrastructure for sustainable delivery of water in Port Harcourt metropolis was allocated ^25.50 billion (5.20%), and monorail, within Port Harcourt main town, had 10 billion (2.04%) which is distinct from the 8.5 billion allocated to the transport sector. The 2016 budget of ₦307 billion allocated 53 billion to infrastructural development to promote economic growth and diversification of the economy. The budget stated that it was aimed at

effective mobilization, equitable allocation and prudent management of public finances, building a modern, productive, diversified and competitive economy to create jobs and empower the Rivers people, as well as address the development needs in the area of infrastructure empowerment through small and medium scale enterprises, provision of adequate security and enlargement of the economy of the state.

The Spearman rank correlation statistics revealed that there is a negative correlation between the annual budgetary expenditures of Rivers State Government and the development of regions outside the capital city of Port Harcourt. The income level of the citizenry is so low that it is difficult to achieve affordable housing, which does not require expenditure beyond 30-35% of household income. Lack of good roads and poor transportation networks linking all islands in the state has greatly hindered the development of the State. Elaa (2017) emphasized that if the islands of Rivers State, such as Opobo, Andoni, Nkoro, Bille, Tombia, Bonny, Bakana, Abonnema are linked to the mainland, they would have been turned into cities, create enormous commercial activities, job opportunities for Rivers indigenes and serve as world tourist attractions and trade, looking at tourism from the world perspective, where notable tourist destinations have been by the sea, like that of Venice, in Italy and Victoria Island in Lagos, Nigeria.

In terms of allocation of development projects, the generality of the opinion of respondents is that politics, rather than economic or equity consideration, influences the choice of location of projects. However, the major forces that propel growth of urban centres, such as tertiary institutions, deliberately created and established urban growth centres, enhanced and effective transportation network, etc., are not issues optimized by government, as successive government's lack commitment or the political will to engender the growth of urban settlements beyond Port Harcourt, hence, the experience of growth poles or centres inducing growth in Rivers State is mere tokenism or rather nonexistent. Obstacles identified as working against development in the various regions include terrorism and high level of insecurity; urban bias in resource allocation and non-involvement of the citizenry in making developmental decisions that affect them. Consequently, the projects executed in the various regions by governments and its agencies were rather imposed on the people, relying on the power of top-down planning as against bottom-up planning, hence, the projects have little or no impact on the people: the projects hardly represent the people's needs and priorities.

There is high dependence of the peripheral regions on Port Harcourt for economic survival and sustenance. In the same vein, master plan preparation in Nigeria is always contracted to foreign firms and consultants: The nation-wide master plan preparation in 1975 was by foreigners (The Portuguese prepared that of Rivers State during the same period). The 2008 master plan for Greater Port Harcourt was prepared by a South African firm, all without local input. Towns can grow and be self-sustaining if they have the threshold population and income to sustain and patronize socio-economic facilities in their locale. Towns located near water bodies (develop as seaports). Other towns may develop and be self-sustaining by resource endowment, while some towns may develop because of the presence of a university. All these have their concomitant multiplier effects.

The assumption by the growth pole strategy that regional development and rural growth depend on urbanization and industrialization is not completely correct. New strategies now incorporate local peculiarities and a broadening of the scope of growth pole strategies to include agricultural development, integrated rural development, resource-based development, etc. The conventional

annual budget by the government has not contributed to meaningful regional development and the government has not shown a commitment to the development of cities outside Port Harcourt. Planning is a continuum, and so, a process geared towards the production of a long-term plan (city development) can hardly be achieved through the yearly budget. Grassroots or rural development initiative (development from below), which considers maximum mobilization of each local government area's natural and human resources has not been encouraged by the government. Threats of insecurity discourage future development, as no investor would want to invest in an area devoid of peace. Until the government takes decisive steps to stop all forms of threats to life and property, any instituted policy to attract investors may not be viewed with seriousness, and would likely not achieve the desired result. Development projects executed by the three tiers of governments in the various regions/local governments of the state have not been impactful because the projects were conceptualized and implemented without consultation, participation and input from the people who are the beneficiaries of the projects, and as a result, the projects do not have strong weighting on the order of priority and perception by the respondents.

The practice of contracting master plan preparation to foreign firms does not elicit local input and interest in the development of towns and cities. Settlements outside Port Harcourt metropolis are poorly developed because the government of Rivers State does not encourage regional development as evidenced from the paltry and negligible yearly budgetary allocations to urban and regional planning. There is deliberate spatial polarization in favour of the capital city of Port Harcourt, and Rivers State, in particular, and the country at large does not have a deliberate regional development policy and so policies, which have been ad hoc, are embedded in extant development plans adopted to solve immediate pressing issues. The inability of Rivers State to induce growth of other regions outside Port Harcourt implies that cities rather than acting as engines of growth can become rather parasitic. Dominant centripetal forces inherent in the system have not been resolved to cause outward flow of growth and developmental impulses (centrifugal, trickle-down or spread effects). The National Urban Development Plan (2012) gives a striking example of a country that dwells so much on paper thrust but lacks the political will to implement proclaimed policies. Even though the policy is tangential to regional development, it is not a regional development policy, in the sense of planning and incorporating developmental goals for rural areas.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion drawn from the study is that the failure of the growth pole strategy in most instances is largely due to politics; faulty development process; misapplication of the strategy; impatience and non-commitment on the part of government and institutions to adhere to the initial objective for adopting the strategy as a tool for regional development; and appreciation of the strategy from a limited perspective, merely as an "industrial-urban development strategy. From the findings, the following recommendations are suggested.

1. Medium-term plans should be adopted as a deliberate policy for regional development planning, to develop cities outside Port Harcourt.
2. Site and services scheme should be provided by the Rivers State Government to ensure that the enabling environment is set for private investors to take advantage of such largesse.

3. Government should encourage public-private partnership (PPP) as a deliberate policy of regional development to develop garden cities, scenic green belts, open spaces, and propel development outside Government should liaise with private entrepreneurs to set up small-scale industries, such as fish canning **(**Cottage) industries in the riverine (fishing) communities of the state, as well as large-scale agrarian reform in the upland (farming) communities. Light manufacturing industries and Small market towns and centres should also be established in rural areas, to serve as growth centres/poles.
4. Agro-urban communities should be encouraged by government for regions to attain self-sufficiency in food production, by placing an embargo on the importation of some agricultural and manufacturing products where local abilities and technology for their production have been discovered and tried for effectiveness in production.
5. Stick (disincentive) and Carrot (incentive) approaches should be introduced by government as a deliberate policy to encourage outward movement from Port Harcourt by placing stringent measures against investors, developers and industrialists who desire to further invest or develop in Port Harcourt, by placing such penalty as high taxation, while placing tax-free years for would-be developers or investors in areas outside Port Harcourt.
6. The government should be patient, show commitment to developing cities outside Port Harcourt, and invest the time and allocate the requisite funds to encourage the success of the growth pole strategy, and never mix developmental issues with politics.
7. Regional planning should focus more on comparative advantages of regions, while allocating socio-economic and physical infrastructural facilities, including institutional decentralization, to create some level of spatial equity, since all regions cannot be at par in development because of natural endowments, favourable locations, arable land, etc.
8. Local and indigenous planning consultants should be used to prepare master plans for any region or urban area in the state for future development, and the draft master plan document should be published for public scrutiny and comments, to ascertain if it reflects their initial contribution, before it is finally adopted for implementation.
9. The educational curriculum should emphasize more of vocational skills acquisition while policies are aimed at encouraging the development of latent local technology, both in manufacturing and agriculture.
10. The administrative framework for implementing the Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Law (NURPL: Decree No 88 of 1992), which is the extant law in the country to regulate physical development on land, should, as a matter of urgency, be implemented at the three tiers of government, which is the establishment of the Urban and Regional Planning Commission (Federal), the Urban and Regional Planning Board (State), and the Local Planning Authorities (LPAs, at the Local government level). These are the institutions that will ensure the planned and orderly development of settlements. Lagos State and others in western Nigeria have set the pace. Others States should take a queue.

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