



NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION IN EBONYI STATE: A CASE STUDY OF DAVID UMAHI FOUNDATION (2015-2019)

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Article history:	Abstract:
<p>Received: June 20th 2021 Accepted: July 20th 2021 Published: August 18th 2021</p>	<p>Over the years, the inhabitants of Ebonyi State have been living in abject poverty as a result of poor neglect by the government. This prompted many Non-Governmental Organizations such as David Umahi Foundation to find the last solution of reducing poverty in the State. The research study seeks to examine the effort and challenges facing David Umahi Foundation Initiatives on poverty reduction in Ebonyi State. The study was guided by the following specific objectives: to examine the role of David Umahi Foundation on poverty reduction, to examine the challenges facing David Umahi Foundation on poverty reduction in Ebonyi State. This study adopted a descriptive survey. A qualitative method was used in the collection of data which includes: journals, textbooks, David Umahi Yearly Report, Ebonyi State Ministry of Youths and Sports Yearly Report on NGOs Activities, newspaper/magazines and internets. These findings prove that David Umahi Foundation is less capable of reducing poverty than has been theorized and idiosyncratically propagated, because they come with pre-planned agendas with strings attached, under the camouflage of poverty reduction. The study, therefore, recommends a paradigm shift: for the NGO to use locally available resources to fund their activities. This could be followed by empowering and training the beneficiaries with life skills instead of giving them tangible gifts that do not last but instead force them to develop a dependency syndrome, granting full educational support, conducting regular sanitation awareness campaigns, involving beneficiaries in all decisions making.</p>

Keywords: Non-Governmental Organizations, Poverty, Poverty reduction

1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty reduction, and its eventual elimination, is a central objective of development. In pursuit of solutions to developmental problems besetting the African continent, the donor community is increasingly regarding Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as an important agency for empowering people thereby leading more effective and sustainable local development services than those promoted by the government (Basse, 2008, p. 64). This stems from the fact that the state has failed to cater for the welfare of its people (Ibrahim & Hulme, 2010, p. 67). However, there remains considerable doubt about how these objectives can be achieved in practice (Riddell, 1995, p. 23). Poverty reduction as one of the objectives of development has gained much attention from both international and local NGOs. Billions of dollars are donated every year to fight against poverty so that poverty can be reduced.

Reducing poverty was one of the reasons for the United Nations (UN) summit at the dawn of the millennium where a Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with 8 goals, 18 targets and 24 indices subsequently known as the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) in 2015. The first goal was to eradicate extreme poverty for those whose income is less than \$1 per day which is the first target. These proportions are to be reduced to half between 1990 and 2015 (Jide, Felix & Ese, 2014). Although, the UN member states implemented various programmes to achieve these MDGs, only few among the African countries partially succeeded in 2015, while countries like Nigeria did not achieve so much (Ajiye, 2014, p. 34).

Conventionally, the government is responsible for the economic and social welfare of the citizens (Kemi, 2012, p. 11). However, Adebayo (2012, p. 97) revealed that in the past decades, successive governments of Nigeria have put up policies aimed at poverty reduction such as Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Green Revolution Program, National Economic Empowerment and Development strategies (NEEDs) among others, all aiming at poverty alleviation. Despite all attempts, the problem of poverty continues to linger because the prescribed solutions have failed to unravel the root causes of poverty (Kehinde, 2009, p. 17). Thus, the intervention of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Social Entrepreneurs (SE) and Philanthropists, often non-profits, which activities cut across diverse aspects of social needs with immense effect in the transition from poverty to betterment of life.

Statement Of The Problem

Ebonyi State has continued to record positive economic growth but poverty remains a key concern and priority for the Government and many NGOs in the State. The poverty level has in fact been high as at 2015-2019, it is estimated to range between 72% and 82% with more specific numbers being unavailable, as a household survey has not been carried out in the state capital since 2006 census (Emeka, 2019, p. 39). However, the level of poverty in State may be attributed to inadequate revenue allocation from Federal Government and poor internal generation of revenue in the State (Chukwu, 2012, p. 54).

Unequal expansion in facilities in urban areas of the state has seen emergence of isolated areas in various communities, such as Isheaka, Ehen-Uburu, Esu, Abakpa, Mbukobe, Ndiaguo and Nkaliki areas etc. Majority of poor people in these areas live under extreme poverty, lack proper sanitation, clean water and source of income. Due to the huge resources required to upgrade the living standards of the isolated areas in various communities in the State, government initiatives like Ebonyi State Economic Empowerment and Poverty Reduction (EEEPR) and Millennium Development Goals efforts in the state have not achieved much success raises questions on whether it is about the resources or the methodology used by the government.

Studies are done also show that NGOs play a great role in poverty reduction in Nigeria. Nwankwoala (2016, p. 71) asserts that NGOs projects were successful and effective in improving the social status of the poor; however, not all the projects were successful in reaching the poor. Olatomide (2012, p. 111) also points out that NGOs have been playing a very important role in Nigeria over the years in the sphere of social development. Ogunyemi and Fakolujo (2012, p. 23) opine that NGOs are a powerful tool in poverty reduction. This is in line with the findings of Oxfam (2009, p. 22) who found that NGOs play a vital role in uplifting the general conditions of the poor. However, these studies focused on NGOs with limited details on their impacts on poverty reduction. Also, there are a few studies conducted on David Umahi Foundation pertaining to the reduction of poverty in Uburu, Okposi communities in Ohaozara Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. Moreover, no studies have been conducted on David Umahi Foundation and poverty reduction in Ebonyi State. This study, therefore, seeks to bridge this gap in order to examine the role and the challenges facing David Umahi Foundation on poverty reduction in Ebonyi State.

Research Questions

- i. How has David Umahi Foundation initiatives reduce poverty in Ebonyi State?
- ii. What are the challenges facing David Umahi Foundation in reducing poverty in Ebonyi State?
- iii. What are the possible solutions that will help David Umahi Foundation in reducing poverty in Ebonyi State?

Objectives Of The Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the role of David Umahi Foundation initiatives on poverty reduction in Ebonyi State. Specifically, the objectives are:

- i. To examine the effort of David Umahi Foundation initiatives on poverty reduction in Ebonyi State.
- ii. To investigate the challenges facing David Umahi Foundation towards poverty reduction in Ebonyi State.
- iii. To make suggestions/recommendations that will help David Umahi Foundation in reducing poverty in Ebonyi State.

Significance Of The Study

Non-Governmental Organization and poverty reduction is the core theme of this research study. This study is important because it will reveal the role and the challenges of David Umahi Foundation initiatives on poverty reduction in Ebonyi State. This study will also assist the government policy pertaining to poverty, poverty reduction and expansion of development programmes.

In addition, the study will assist NGOs to discover suitable approaches and intervention to reduce poverty and enhance development. The study can aid NGOs formulate clear policies, adopt prudent resource management and develop organization culture and hire qualified staff. Thus this intervention will assist to reduce poverty and enhance development.

Finally, the study will help to produce a document containing useful information that can be used for the future by scholars, students and other NGOs serving as a basis of reference for conducting research, which in turn, will lead to a better understanding of the influence of NGOs on poverty reduction.

2.LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Non-Governmental Organizations

Though, there is no acceptable definition of NGOs by different scholars. However, NGOs is known as a non-profitable organization that is well placed to articulate the needs of poor people by providing services and attracting development in the isolated neighbourhood through accessing the most susceptible, poverty suffering people. David and Stephen (2004, p. 56), define NGOs as service organizations that have a paid staff and that deliver specific services to an identifiable constituency, but not exclusively (Lekorwe and Mpabanga, 2007, p. 13). Thus NGOs can be defined as autonomous, privately set up, non-profit making institutions that support, manage or facilitate development action.

NGOs should have a benevolent purpose. Ahmed and Potter (2006, p. 523) also narrow the definition of NGOs by excluding government agencies, corporations, religious groups, political parties, private hospitals, schools, sports organizations, fraternal organizations, and terrorist groups. According to Stephenson (2009, p. 327), NGOs are non-membership support organizations involved in relief, rehabilitation, or community development work in developed and especially developing or Third World countries. They are part of the civil arena which provides a third approach to development in addition, but a not exclusive alteration to the market and the state. Stephenson (2009, p. 328) further identified the key features of NGOs as depending on donor funding, transparency and two-way accountability (to donor and clients), the targeting of the needy or marginalized segments of the population.

However, NGOs originated in the eighteenth century in Western countries, when national-level issue-based organizations focused on the abolition of the slave trade and movements for peace (Lewis, 2007, p. 28). However, NGOs were coined during one of the conferences of the UN in 1945 to distinguish organizations from inter-governmental and member organizations (Mostashiri, 2005, p. 278). However, there are many different classifications of NGOs, which is divided into two, Operational and Advocacy (Uzuegbunam, 2013, p. 74). On one hand, operational NGOs are primarily to design and implement developmental-related projects and programs. They mobilize resources, in form of donations financially, materially or voluntary labour. On the other hand, Advocacy NGOs focus on advocating, defending and promoting policy changes related to a particular cause, especially on rights. Despite the differences, both operational and advocacy NGOs need to engage in fund-raising, work mobilization, organizing special events, engaging the media and so on for sensitization, implementation and achievement of objectives but the line of demarcation rests on the definition of activities and method of implementing projects (Mostashiri, 2005, p. 156). NGOs play important and increasing roles in both national and international development.

Within the African context, the declining role of government especially in Nigeria has led to the alarming rate of the growth of NGOs generally. For instance, a report from the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Ebonyi State (2018, p. 45) notes that the state has 645 registered NGOs aimed at meeting the social needs of the poor, aside from some functions performed by unregistered NGOs such as Emeka Foundation, that is concerned with educational assistance. Youth of Destiny Foundation is involved in community development in the areas of provision of rural borehole water and several other social services.

Ball and Dunn (2013, p. 321), asserts that the last decades, in particular, has witnessed profuse effort to place NGOs high up on public agenda as a veritable instrument of development intervention. The disturbing issue, however, is that not only is the advocated capacity of NGOs exaggerated, but such claims are made without paying attention to the field. The unrestrained propagation of such a position is quitted dangerous and misleading. As persistently maintained, advocacy and practice are two worlds apart, sometimes without a bridge (Ukpong, 1999, p. 32). This definition stresses that NGOs have constraints that frustrate public expectations from them as well as gradually diminish the self-confidence of NGOs. Both sets of problems, in turn, have a shrinking effect on the operation capacity of NGOs, which reflect the common experience of both international and local NGOs.

According to Ghali (1995, p. 19), NGOs are basic element in representation of the modern world. And their participation in an international organization in a way guarantee of the latter political legitimacy. Globally, NGO is continuously increasing in number and as such development is inseparable from the aspiration of freedom and democracy which today animates international society. From the viewpoint of democratization, there is the need for participation of international public opinion and the mobilization power of NGOs.

NGOs are generally accepted to be organizations that have not been established by governments or agreements among governments (Burgess and Burgess, 2005, p. 234). Burgess and Burgess, (2005, p. 234) further opine that NGOs have regularly scheduled meetings of their members 'representatives, specified decision-making procedures and permanent staff. Their members are usually individuals and private associations, rather than states, and they may be formally established networks of other organizations.

Concept of Poverty

Poverty like any other concept in social science discipline lacks a precise and universally accepted definition. The nature and 'degree of poverty, its comprehension differ from one society to another. Ezeanyika (2004, p. 32) defines poverty as the absence or lack of basic entitlements which could be economic, political or sociocultural in nature. A critical analysis of this definition indicates that poverty emerges as a result of a lack of financial, human and physical necessities capable of creating a suitable environment for sustainable living standards. Chambers (1995, p. 33) sees poverty as a subset of the general condition of deprivation which dimension includes: social inferiority, isolation, physical weakness, vulnerability, powerlessness and humiliation.

The World Bank Development Report (1992, p. 11) describes poverty as the inability to attain a minimum standard of living. The World Bank (1999, p. 89) report aptly defines poverty as a state where an individual is not able to cater adequately for his/her basic needs of food, clothing and shelters; he or she is unable to meet social and economic obligations; lacks gainful employment, skills, assets and self-esteem; has limited access to social and economic infrastructure such as education, health, potable water and sanitation; and consequently has a limited chance of advancing his/her welfare to the limit of his/her capacities. Corroborating the above view, Ravillion and Chon (2004, p. 77) see poverty as a lack of command over basic consumption leading to insufficient food, clothing and shelter. It could be this that made Dike (2002, p. 112) conceptualize poverty as existing when the resources of families or individuals are inadequate to provide a socially acceptable standard of living. Contemporaneously, poverty can safely be seen as "a situation of people living below a specific minimum level of income, and in imaginary poverty line that recognizes neither national boundaries nor levels of national per capita income" (Nkwede, 2011, p. 432).

In Nigeria, the vulnerability to poverty and its indices are mostly found in the rural areas and marginal urban zones where basic infrastructural facilities are lacking. According to Akani (2001, p. 4), the poverty line in the country is widely expanding. The country is saddled with an army of unemployed youths whose incessant restiveness had led to the development of unethical conduct. In the same vein, Emeka (2013, p. 234) opines that the poor are gripped with depression, degradation, deprivation, insecurity, poor savings ability, poor dietary, shelter and haggard clothing and use of crude farm implements in their farm works. Apart from these, they are vulnerable to disaster, ill-treatment by the institutions of the state. They are rather powerless to influence public decisions affecting their lives.

However, certain indices are used to classify an individual community or state as being poor. Such conditions or indices are outlined and discussed here as:

- i. **Low Consumption of Income Level:** An individual, Community or a country is considered to be poor if the consumption of income level falls below some minimum level needed to meet the basic needs of life. Minimum level is otherwise referred to as poverty line. Poverty line vary in time, place and from country to country.
- ii. **Low-life Expectancy:** Certain countries of the world especially those of Africa lack basic necessities that are expected of worthy living here on earth. Low life expectancy manifest in the form of massive illiteracy, parity in purchasing power., low Gross Domestic Product per capital, unemployment, hunger, disease, malnutrition, infant mortality. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report (1997, p. 6) ranked Nigeria to occupy the position of 146 out of 174 identified as poor countries. This is an indication that poverty is very high in the country.
- iii. **Lack of basic essential Human Capabilities:** Poverty ridden society is usually affected by lack of basic essential human capabilities which are needed to rise from the position of poverty to sustained human development.

Poverty worldwide is a social problem. Jones (1986, p. 52) observes that the causes of poverty in any nation are associated with the socio-political and economic settings of such a nation and not necessarily with the people. Obi, Nwachukwu and Obiora (2008, p. 4), and Eneh (2011, p. 54) enumerated causes of poverty, especially in Nigeria to include: low productivity, market imperfections, environmental degradation, lack of modernization tendencies, physical limitations, bureaucratic stiffing, dependency of third world countries, income inequalities, laziness, illiteracy, increased population, hunger, lack of industry, exploitation, lack of initiative, low productivity, lack of skills, economic underdevelopment, non-implementation of policies and programmes, corruption, political instability, social conflict, weak governance, mismanagement, unemployment and ignorance.

A cursory look at the factors above, reveals that some are exogenously caused while others like illiteracy and laziness are endogenously oriented. The only factor that has speedily oiled and fuelled poverty is the distribution of income. The distortion of income is not a problem among the poor but the population (Bellow, Shehu and Madu, 2011, p. 32). Essentially, Adawo (2010) argued that distribution of income could be viewed from two perspectives viz; the fiscal distribution of income and provision of both social and economic infrastructure. Imperatively, in Nigeria, the practice of relative wage income hypothesis, where jobs are evaluated on the basis of job content and wages are paid accordingly is largely not applicable, rather government incomes at all levels are shared among politicians, political cohorts and dubious contractors (Edoh, 2003, p. 32). Paradoxically, the fact that infrastructures (good road network, health facilities, electricity and potable water) are not provided endemically spreads poverty (Barnes, 2010).

Looking at the African settings, Joseph (2006, p. 38) pointed out that what contribute to poverty include: family size, low level of human capital, inaccessibility to cultivable land, lack of all weather roads, poor access to market and slow endowment of human capital. Other causes of poverty in Nigeria include: Poor health status of citizens, family structure (Polygamy) ignorance, economic crisis, culture and social values (Nkwede, 2010, p. 90).

Level of Poverty in Ebonyi State

Ebonyi State is one of the 36 states in Nigeria. The state was carved out of the old Enugu and Abia State on 1st October 1996 under the military administration of Late Gen. Sanni Abacha. Poverty in Ebonyi State at its creation was so pervasive that it was classified as the poorest State in Nigeria. The Federal Office of Statistics 2015-2019 record shows that 72% and 82% of people are poor and that signs for social sectors development are not favourable, particularly for the poor. Even at present, evidence of poverty is still very high, despite the huge human potentials and natural resources endowed in the state (Ogochukwu, 2019, p.4).

In Ebonyi State, basic infrastructural facilities such as roads, health services, education, water supply, electricity, housing etc are lacking in most areas and where such amenities exist, they have virtually collapsed. Other signs of poverty among Ebonyi State residents manifests in the malnourishment of vulnerable group (children and women), acute unemployment, child labour, hawking among the youth from rural areas where approximately seventy percent (70%) of the population are living (Ene, 2018, p. 7).

The United Nations Development programme UNDP Human Development Report (2002) revealed that Ebonyi State ranked very low on the Human Development Index (HDI) using a combined measurement of longevity (Physical Health), knowledge (Education) and income (Purchasing Power). According to the report, low life expectancy for males is estimated to be below 59.2 years and that of the females is 60.7 years. Mortality rate for children under five (5) years is 191 per 1000 life. One third 1/3 of the state's population resides in rural setting without safe water and good sanitation. Sources of drinking water are often from shallow and open wells, contaminated water from rivers and ponds. A good number of Ebonyians are still illiterates and social amenities are lacking and industries are nonexistent. For instance, Ebonyi State is one of the states in Nigeria without 132 KVA electric transformers, needed for rapid industrialization.

The health sector in Ebonyi State is not measuring up in any way. Hospitals are not adequate and where there are found, they are not properly equipped or without medical personnels such as doctors, nurses and hospital attendants. The resurgence of preventable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases (STD), HIV/AIDS, Guinea worm, diabetes mellitus etc is still very high.

In Ebonyi State, the road network is still very poor especially in the rural areas where over 70% of state populations who are predominantly farmers are residing. The poor road network in Ebonyi State has serious effects on the evacuation of farm products and movement of people to and from the rural areas. The poverty level in Ebonyi State can be attributed to inadequate revenue allocation and poor revenue generation in the state which is stated below:

Revenue Generated in Ebonyi State (2015-2019)

Year	Revenue Allocation	Internal Generated Revenue
2015	2.5 Billion Naira	1.3 Billion Naira
2016	2.3 Billion Naira	1.5 Billion Naira
2017	3.7 Billion Naira	2.4 Billion Naira
2018	3.5 Billion Naira	2.7 Billion Naira
2019	3.6 Billion Naira	2 Billion Naira

Ebonyi State Ministry of Finance Yearly Report 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019

The above table clearly shows that Ebonyi State is one of the states that have the poorest revenue generation in Nigeria. This implies that the available funds in the state cover cannot be able to lift a large number of Ebonyians from poverty in the state. This is one of the reasons for the increase in poverty, hunger, diseases, malnutrition, illiteracy, unemployment, lack of basic social amenities in the state.

Poverty Reduction Programmes in Nigeria

Poverty reduction programmes started in Nigeria in 1986. These programmes include the pre-SAP, Poverty Alleviation Program (PAP), The National Poverty Eradication Program (NAPEP), The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), The Seven-Point Agenda (Hussaini, 2014, p. 720). However, the implementation of these entire programmes has always been undermined by the activities of the corrupt politicians both in the military and civilian and top government officials. Most of the money that is meant for these programmes was often misappropriated. According to Peters (2016, p. 22), the constrain affecting poverty reduction programmes in Nigeria includes:

- i. Poor Management of these programmes
- ii. Lack of effective mechanism for projects monitoring during implementation
- iii. Poor co-ordination of the programs during implementation.
- iv. Failure to have an in-built mechanism for sustainability of the programs and programs benefit.
- v. Failure to involve the beneficiaries at both the conception and implementation stages. Failure to check the high level of instability within the macro-economic and policy environment

These constraints are often intensified by incessant fall of oil prices, (Nigeria major foreign exchange earner) mismanagement of the economy and corruption. A greater part of the Nigerian foreign exchange is used to pay foreign contractors, to service foreign debts and for the importation of essential commodities, the majority of which only satisfy the frivolous consumption of the few elite. Only projects, which involve kickbacks that facilitated capital flight, were engaged in, and over two-thirds of Nigerian foreign reserve was looted in this way. Successive Nigeria government efforts in promoting Agriculture, provide incentives for the establishment of industries, provide infrastructure in cities and towns, and enabling the environment, to attract local and foreign investors, has failed to produce desired result. For these reasons the living condition of the majority poor Nigerian, democratic government notwithstanding remain abysmally low (Christian, 2015, p. 65).

3.METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design which focuses on the role of the David Umahi Foundation on poverty reduction in Ebonyi State. Specifically, the study will critically review the effort of David Umahi Foundation initiative on poverty reduction and the challenges facing David Umahi Foundation towards poverty reduction in Ebonyi State. The study adopted secondary data. Secondary data sources include David Umahi Foundation Yearly Report, Ebonyi State Ministry of Youths and Sports Yearly Reports on NGOs Activities, government documents and publications, textbooks, resource materials from the Internet, journals, and conference/seminar papers. However, the contributions and submissions of various scholars were evaluated to determine the findings of this research study. The opinions of these scholars helped in the strengthening and understanding of research and furthermore helped in building a base or platform for the enquires and research undertaken for the study.

Study Area

Ebonyi State is in Southeastern Nigeria. It is inhabited and populated primarily by the Igbo. Its capital and largest city is Abakaliki. Other major towns include Afikpo, Unwana, Onueke, Edda, Onicha. It was one of the six states created in 1996 by the then federal military government of General Sani Abacha. The State of Ebonyi was created from parts of both Enugu State and Abia States, which were the Abakaliki division from Enugu State and the Afikpo division from Abia State respectively. It has three senatorial zones, the Abakaliki division made up of Ebonyi North and Ebonyi Central senatorial zone, while the Afikpo division made up the Ebonyi South senatorial zone. Ebonyi has thirteen local government areas as well as local development centres created by the state government. It has six higher institutions of learning: Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki (EBSU); Federal University Ndufu Alike Ikwo (FUNAI); Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Unwana; Savannah Institute of Technology, Ishieke Junction, Abakaliki; Federal College of Agriculture, Ishiagu; Ebonyi State College of Education Ikwo (EBSCOEI) and College of Health Sciences, Ezzamgbo.

4.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is third sector theory by Allan Fisher (1939), in his paper titled: "The third sector and domestic missions," The theory suggests that third sector is an umbrella used to describe the range of organizations with different structures and purposes, belonging neither to the public sector (state) nor to the private sector (profit-making private enterprise). It includes non-profit-making organizations and associations, including charities, voluntary community groups and cooperatives (Casey, 2004, p. 231). According to Wallace (2006, p. 123), all these organizations share the same fundamental elements:

- i. **Non-Governmental Organizations:** although they often work with or alongside government agencies, and may receive government funding or commissions, third sector organizations are independent of the government.
- ii. **Non-profit:** third sector organizations raise funds and generate financial surpluses in order to invest in social, environmental, or cultural objectives. They do not seek to make profits as an end in their own right.
- iii. **Values-driven:** third sector organizations pursue specific goals which are often aligned with particular social and political perspectives. They may be associated with or work with political parties, but a political party is not a third sector organization.

The presence of large NGOs is sometimes seen as an indicator of a healthy economy in local and national financial measurements (Bratton 1989; Uphoff, 1993). With a growing number of NGOs focused on social services, the environment, education and other unmet needs throughout society, the nonprofit sector is increasingly central to the health and well-being of society (Porter and Oakley, 2002, p. 333). Peter (2000, p. 12) suggests that the NGOs provide an excellent outlet for a variety of society's labor and skills.

This theory is relevant to this study because David Umahi Foundation is an important NGO that is making up for the institutional weaknesses of Ebonyi State through promoting socio-economic development of the state. This is done through David Umahi Foundation delivering social services to the poor people living in isolated areas of various communities in Ebonyi State, equitably and efficiently, and through a participatory approach to development, ie engaging beneficiaries in poverty reduction programmes. Thus oriented toward bottom-up processes of development that emphasizes local-level development, integrated interventions, mobilization of the poor and participation.

5.PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter focuses on the analysis of data from secondary sources. The main purpose of the study is to establish the role and challenges facing David Umahi Foundation on poverty reduction in Ebonyi State.

The Effort of David Umahi Foundation Initiative on Poverty Reduction in Ebonyi State

Access to safe water, proper sanitation, quality education has gone beyond the reach of most Ebonyians particularly those in the rural areas of Ebonyi State. According to Elechi (2013, p. 56), access to safe water proper, sanitation, quality education is a constant and urgent problem in Ebonyi State. Nearly 200, 000, people live without safe water in Ebonyi State, over 50,000 children drop out of schools, while a staggering 150, 000, people have no access to adequate bathroom facilities in the State. Every year 1,350 people, mostly children, die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation, and hygiene (Chukwu, 2017, p. 78).

This problem of poverty was attributed to poor revenue allocation, poor internal generated revenue and corruption in the State. This has raised the hope of many poor Ebonyians to have so much confidence on the ability of

NGOs to deliver at the expense of the non-performance of governments. Streeten (1997, p. 194) claims that so much hope was placed on NGOs to liberate the people because the people have lost confidence on their governments and markets have been out rightly left for private businesses that have the 'purchasing power', thus the poor are left behind and excluded from the scheme of things. This failure on the side of government and the private sector has cooked up hopes that NGOs would succeed. This led to the intervention of David Umahi Foundation and other NGOs who have come in as the saving grace with efforts aimed at providing social amenities to the poor people in Ebonyi State.

Therefore, in order to ascertain the effort of David Umahi Foundation on provision social amenities and how it has impacted in reducing poverty in Ebonyi State, different views of beneficiaries imbedded in scholars works will be explore and scrutinize towards examine the effort of David Umahi Foundation projects on poverty reduction in Ebonyi State. According to Nwosu (2016, p. 34), David Umahi Foundation has installed boreholes and has carried different sanitation awareness campaign in various communities in Ebonyi State. Ojukwu (2017, p. 54) noted that:

The majority of people of Nkaliki, Akeze, Ugulangu and Isheake and Isu communities have been living in absolute poverty due to communal clashes that have befallen their communities and this has promoted David Umahi Foundation to intervene by carrying out proper sanitation awareness campaign and installation of thirty-six boreholes and other projects but the humanitarian projects has not reduced poverty in their communities because all the projects were cited in the main town of the community which is far away from isolated areas where poor people are living.

According to one of the beneficiaries, Victoria Igwe in Ebonyi State Ministry of Youths and Sport Yearly Report (2019, p. 14), "David Umahi Foundation has giving many scholarships to two hundred and forty-five (245) students in Uburu, Ugulangu and Isheake communities but after the first payment of school fees was made the beneficiaries are abandoned to their fate to fund their school fees themselves". This is in line with the views of Pervez, Janjua and Kamal (2011, p. 12), that education can help reduce poverty but if not maintained along the line that it can increase poverty back. Therefore, education should be emphasized in collaboration with other poverty reduction initiatives.

On the other hand, another beneficiary, Ogonnaya Chukwu in Ebonyi State Ministry of Youths and Sports Yearly Report (2019, p. 16), asserts that "David Umahi Foundation has carried out environmental sanitation awareness campaign programmes in Ndiagu community. He claimed that one of the NGO staff was assigned to him to clean up his environment and carried out a medical checkups on him during the campaign but the NGO staff has not come back to check on his health". In the same vein, one of the beneficiaries, George Igwe in Uche (2018, p. 3), noted that David Umahi Foundation has trained volunteers on community sanitation to undertake baseline information and follow up on those who need medical care and attention but the NGO over the years have not check on the volunteers to know how they are fairing in Uburu and Okposi communities.

According to Chief Chinadu Odi the CDC Chairman of Akeze community in the Ministry of Youths and Sports Yearly Report (2019, p. 17), David Umahi Foundation has constructed eight boreholes and two central tanks in Akeze community but the installation of boreholes by David Umahi Foundation do not reduce poverty in the community. Similarly, Okpara Ene, the Traditional Prime Minister of Uburu Community in Odikamnor, Ikeh, Uhuo, Akpan and Azi, (2018, p. 54) asserts that David Umahi Foundation has constructed sixteen boreholes with four central tanks in Uburu community, But the two tanks are contaminated with parasites like ringworm, tapeworm and water-borne diseases as a result of poor cleaning of the two tanks and this has caused severe illnesses to the community.

Summary of David Umahi Foundation Projects in various communities in Ebonyi State

S/n	Communities	Local Government	Project	The extent of Poverty Reduction
1	Nkaliki	Abakaliki	3 Boreholes and 2 times sanitation awareness campaign	Very Low
2	Uburu,	Ohaozara	6 boreholes, 2 big tanks 120 scholarship to students, 2 times medical care programmes, 4 times sanitation awareness campaign	Low
3	Okposi	Ohaozara	3 boreholes, medical care and 2 times sanitation awareness	Very Low
4	Isheake	Ebonyi	75 scholarship to students and 4 boreholes	Low
5	Akeze,	Ivo	1 time medical care and sanitation	Very Low
6	Ugulangu	Ohaozara	50 scholarship to students and medical care	Low
7	Ndiagu	Abakaliki	5 boreholes and 1 time sanitation awareness campaign	Very Low
8	Isu	Onicha	7 boreholes and one tank	Very Low

Source: Ebonyi State Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2019.

The Challenges Facing David Umahi Foundation and Poverty Reduction in Ebonyi State

The challenges facing David Umahi Foundation on poverty reduction can be attributed to the following issues:

- i. **Lack of Funds:** David Umahi Foundation is expressing difficulty in finding sufficient, appropriate and continuous funding for some of their projects in different communities in Ebonyi State. It should be noted unreservedly that David Umahi Foundation has been entirely relying on foreign aid. Accessing international donors has been a major challenge facing their funding conditions. David Umahi Foundation has limited resource mobilization skills and is often not looking for funds that are available locally, preferring to wait for international donors to approach them. According to Agere (2014, p. 65), the availability of funding is critical to the service delivery of the NGOs while the unavailability of funds plays a debilitating role in the effective running of these institutions. Since most of all the NGOs operate on a non-profit basis and depending on donations, it, therefore, makes their survival unpredictable especially if market fluctuations occur and recessions descend upon global economies (Agere, 2014, p. 65).
- ii. **Poor Networking** was identified as a major challenge facing David Umahi Foundation. It is the cause of duplication of efforts, conflicting strategies at the community level, a lack of learning from experience and inability of the NGO to address local structural causes of poverty, deprivation and under-development. Negative competition for resources also undermines the reputation of the David Umahi Foundation and the effectiveness of their activities at the various communities in Ebonyi State.
- iii. **Development Approaches:** David Umahi Foundation are still focusing upon what some refer to the 'hardware' approach to development, i.e. the building of infrastructure and the provision of services; rather than what some refer to as the 'software' approach of empowering people and local institutions to manage their affairs. David Umahi Foundation seems unaware of changes in the role of government, the changing Aid paradigm, and the effectiveness of a "right's based" rather than "welfare" approach. While it is becoming harder to fund and sustain service delivery interventions in Ebonyi State (Emeka, 2018, p. 57).
- iv. **Low Turn of Beneficiaries:** Despite different measures put in place by David Umahi Foundation to reduce poverty in Ebonyi State, the turnout of beneficiaries during sanitation awareness campaigns other projects in various communities in Ebonyi State are always low. This can be attributed to the ignorant, lack of knowledge of the beneficiaries or benefited communities and this has become a major problem to poverty reduction in Ebonyi State (David Umahi Foundation Yearly Report 2018, p. 6). This finding is in synergy with Emeka (2015) who found out that ignorant, lack of knowledge is the main cause of the low turnout of people during NGOs programmes in Nigeria.
- v. **Corruption:** Corruption and its ramifications manifesting itself in embezzlement of organizational funds, paying ghost workers, misuse of organizational infrastructure such as vehicles for one's personal gain etc. is a cankerworm that seriously continues to undermine the productivity of David Umahi Foundation notwithstanding (Emeka, 2018, p. 50). Reports have indicated that those entrusted with funds for the NGO programmes on poverty reduction misuse them for personal benefit (Uzo, 2018, p. 53). It is heart-breaking that all these filthy actions would be at the expense of the targeted beneficiaries who are in most cases needy and vulnerable.
- vi. **Lack of cooperation** between David Umahi Foundation and other local NGOs in Ebonyi State is also a major problem facing the NGO. David Umahi Foundation often feels unhappy cooperating with other local NGOs in carrying out their humanitarian projects in various communities in Ebonyi State, even though an agreement between the NGOs and organization exists. Furthermore, other NGOs often claim that David Umahi Foundation always feel uncomfortable working with them after the agreement has been signed by both parties. According to the monthly report of Youth of Destiny Foundation (2018):
David Umahi Foundation thinks we will take their jobs and they see that the poor dweller in various communities in Ebonyi State will like us. Sometimes they get angry with us. But we are not international NGOs so we cannot take their jobs and glory.

A report from Environmental Health Foundation, dated 27th May, 2019, noted that the applied for partnership with David Umahi Foundation on environmental sanitation awareness campaign title "Green Environment" coming up on 23rd October 2019 in Mbukobe and Ndiaguo communities in Ebonyi State. Their request was to participate to augment their manpower during the campaign. But their letter was turn down because the NGO is two years old in the business of humanitarian services.

6 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

- a. The study revealed that David Umahi Foundation exists in Ebonyi state and have made some impact especially by providing humanitarian services such as installation of boreholes, creating health awareness campaign, educational scholarship to students in various communities in Ebonyi State. However, the programme has failed to be a tool for sustainable poverty reduction as result of some challenges such as lack funds, absence of strategic planning, poor networking, development approaches, low turn of beneficiaries and lack of cooperation between them and other local NGOs in Ebonyi State.

- b. The study equally revealed that David Umahi Foundation lack strategic planning in providing infrastructure facilities direct to the isolated areas of various communities in Ebonyi State, this is because all the NGO projects are centered in the main towns of various communities which is far away from the poor people living in isolated areas of the communities. This result was corroborated by Chukwu (2012, p. 23) when he wrote that all projects and social services (such as education, boreholes, health, recreation and security) provided by NGOs are not adequately cited in isolated areas where poor people are living in various communities in Ebonyi state.
- c. The study has also shown that David Umahi Foundation has not improved access to safe drinking water despite its intervention by providing boreholes in various communities in Ebonyi State. A survey of parasites in drinking water sources in Uburu community shows that there is prevalent of parasites and water borne diseases as a result of poor cleaning of the water tanks in the community (Odikamnor, Ikeh, Uhuo, Akpan and Azi, 2018, p. 54). This is same for the other communities mentioned where access to safe source of drinking water was a problem despite the provision of boreholes.
- d. The study equally revealed that the directive approach to development efforts especially poverty reduction programmes has been the bane of development programmes in Nigeria. David Umahi Foundation also suffers from this perennial problem.
- e. Finally, David Umahi Foundation has failed to be a tool for a sustained poverty reduction in Ebonyi State as a result of total neglect of other local NGOs in partnering with them in their yearly programmes in Ebonyi State.

7.CONCLUSIONS

Going by the high expectations of the intended benefits and the euphoria that followed the establishment of the programme, compared with the reality on ground, one will conclude that David Umahi Foundation has done little in terms of poverty reduction. This according to the findings can be attributed to some challenges such as lack funds, absence of strategic planning, poor networking, development approaches, low turn of beneficiaries and lack of cooperation between them and other local NGOs and corruption.

The study equally revealed that David Umahi Foundation lack strategic planning in providing humanitarian project direct to the isolated areas where poor people are living but their projects is centered in the main town of the various communities in Ebonyi State and most of the installed boreholes have not improved accessible safe drinking water to the poor people, even the student on scholarship are abandon to their faith and environmental sanitation has not improve the hygiene and health condition of the poor people and this have thereby increase poverty instead of reducing poverty in various communities in Ebonyi State.

8.RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings, the study makes various recommendations:

- i. David Umahi Foundation should look inwardly or within the country to generate enough funds from friends, groups or in partnership with local NGOs, corporate organizations in Ebonyi State and this will reduce over dependence of the NGO on the international donor partners.
- ii. In order to reduce poverty, in addition to holistic approaches, David Umahi Foundation needs to tackle it dynamically, strategically and comprehensively. This is because poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon that needs a multidimensional approach. There is a need to look at other categories of needy people in the society such as the elderly, widows and disabled persons, rather than placing emphasis on one category.
- iii. David Umahi Foundation should not only focus on the provision of scholarship, installing boreholes, creating sanitation awareness but should also include financial empowerment in their strategic plans in order to reduce poverty in Ebonyi State.
- iv. David Umahi Foundation should carry out a wide-ranging house-to-house sanitation awareness campaign initiative in various communities in Ebonyi State, so as to draw the attention of the people massively during their initiative.
- v. There is a need for David Umahi Foundation to improve monitoring and evaluation strategies for the projects they implement for sustainability reasons. From the field, the researcher discovered that the NGO abandon their beneficiaries after they have provided a long time projects in the various communities. It is therefore the responsibility of David Umahi Foundation to monitor, evaluate, train and encourage beneficiaries to maintain proper sanitation of their environment and hygiene. This would go hand in hand with sensitizing them about the rights and responsibilities of every beneficiary in the organization. This would enable key beneficiaries to have a sense of responsibility, hence promoting project sustainability and sustainable poverty reduction.
- vi. Finally, unless the issue of corruption is taken seriously, people will continue to misappropriate and embezzle public funds unhindered. Corruption as a monster should be tackled before any meaningful benefit will yield from public programmes. This also is one of the militating factors against the objectives of David Umahi Foundation.

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