

Perception on Micro Factors Hindering Public Participation in Planning for Urban Development: Experiences from Bida, Nigeria

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Public participation programme (PPP) has gained popularity as an approach in planning for the development of human environment. In international practice, however, there are criticisms and controversies over its application in the planning process. The observed scenario resulted in inadequate and ineffective PPP in planning for urban development especially in the cities of developing countries. Most studies, however, focused on the macro factors hindering PPP, while microfactors remain poorly understood especially in relation to the decision making process in the planning process. The aim of this paper is to identify and rank the relative impact of micro factors impeding citizens from participating in government-based PPP for urban development in Bida, Nigeria. 344 questionnaires were administered by adopting a random sampling method in selecting participants; made up of planning officers, traditional leaders, youth leaders and household heads. Coefficient matrix of standard multiple regression analysis on stakeholders' perception is used in ranking the relative impact of micro factors impeding citizens from participating in the decision making process for urban development. Findings revealed that public orientation (0.224 Beta value) is the most critical factor affecting public participation in the decision making process for urban development in Bida. This study further upholds that level of education status, marginalization, economic status, time constraint, amenities status, and cohesion are the contextual factors hindering PPP. This study suggests areas to facilitate adequate and effective citizen participation in planning for urban development. This invariably could be used by the practitioners and lawmakers of public participation to promote an effective programme in urban governance in the ancient cities of developing countries.

Key words: Developing Countries, Micro factors, Public participation, Urban Development,

Introduction

Over the last three and a half decades, one of the most subject matters in political thought and discourse has been how to create a community in which public are fully participating in the decision making process (Karikari, 2016; Lane, 2005). Public in participatory process refers to both informal as individuals and formal as representatives of collective interest of affected parties, namely; people, groups, and private organization (Horney *et al.*, 2016; International Association of Public Participation, 2014). The practice of public participation has been increasing in scope

and scale due to educational advancement of people. The scenario of growth in public participation practice has been facilitating by adopting traditional practice methods, namely; public hearing, writing comment, and citizen-based committee (Gurney *et al.*, 2016; Adedoyin, 2014). Many studies have mentioned that PPP is an effective way of making government more accountable and responsive, minimizing cost, changing the system of monopoly through broad-based social inclusion in urban governance, and reducing urban poverty (Hordijk *et al.*, 2015; Bovaird *et al.*, 2015; Hug, 2014).

Despite the significance of PPP, however, it has been encountering challenges due to its application in planning process, especially in the ancient cities of developing countries (Muse, 2014). The observed scenario of challenges has resulted in inadequate and ineffective citizen participation in planning for urban development. Gastil *et al.* (2016), Hutter, (2016) and Azizan (2012) attributed the challenges of PPP to macro factors, while the micro factors had limited attention as impeding factors; namely, cultural factors, socio-economic factors and environmental factors. In Nigeria, especially traditional cities such as Bida, government-based PPP have not been recording adequate and effective citizen participation.

The scenario is due to poor public orientation, ethnic diversity, economic status of citizens, and poor education background etc. This article aims at identifying and ranking the relative impact of micro factors impeding citizens to participate in decision making process of programme initiated by government for urban development in Bida-Nigeria. This article starts with literature, which made up by introduction, public participation and its challenges in Nigeria. The article furthered by describing methodology and ends with findings and discussion which are concluded with suggestions on how to mitigate impeding factors in order to promote effective PPP in the ancient cities of developing countries, such as Bida-Nigeria.

Public Participation and Legal Framework in Nigeria

Public participation as a process is to integrate citizens into decision making in planning and management of socio-economic activities in the human environment (Astrid *et al.*, 2016; Elizabeth & Mitchman, 2015). This article is been prompted owing to the significance of PPP, and most importantly the support of PPP by a legal framework in Nigeria. As earlier mentioned; PPP makes government to be more accountable and responsive, minimizing cost in urban governance,

promote broad-based social inclusion in planning process and mitigates urban poverty especially in developing countries. In Nigeria context, despite review and modification of planning laws, there was no any effective legal framework promoting citizen participation in government-based planning process throughout the colonial administration from 1854 to 1960 (Kperogi, 2016). Until 1992, following the modification of the Town and Country Planning Act 1946 (TCPLA) and metamorphosed into Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Law 1992 (NURPL). The ACT No. 88, section 13 of NURPL 1992 permits Nigerian citizens to participate in preparation (decision making process) and execution (implementation, monitoring, and review) of development plan or project. Public participation is further enhanced as enshrined in Nigerian Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) ACT No. 86 1992. Section 7 stipulates that before Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) or State Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) gives final verdict on public development policy, programme or project; members of the public especially the beneficiaries, affected or interested citizens/organizations must be allowed to forward their comments (Idemidia, 2017; Owusu, 2016). This implies that ordinary Nigerians and professional agencies (i.e planning officers, psychologist, surveyors etc) have legal power to participate in decision making process for the development of their environment.

Despite the needs to participate, coupled with increasing of public interest to participate and the support of legal framework, there has been insignificant and ineffective citizen participation in decision making for urban development in government-based programme (Owusu, 2016; Adedoyin, 2014; Muse, 2014). The scenario of inadequate and ineffective citizen involvement in PPP for urban development is traced to macro or institutional factors and micro or local factors (IAP2, 2014). These are the principal challenges impeding PPP in developing countries, especially in the ancient cities of

Asia and Africa countries as described in the preceding section.

Challenges of Public Participation Programme in Urban Planning

Public participation is arguably a significant element of local democracy which pave ways for involvement of citizens in planning and management of their environment (Jackson, 2015). In the contemporary world, however, scholars argued that the application of PPP has been undergoing transformation of victims ranging from macro factors to micro factors (IAP2, 2014).

(a) Macro factor: This is an institutional-based challenges from government due to some constraining factors, namely; lack of adequate consultation with professional bodies, ineffective communication between government/agency and local residents of planning communities, lack of transparency in the programme, poor approach of engaging citizens, incompetence of the agency co-ordinating or organizing the programme, and late preparation of the programme (IAP2, 2014; Ghartey, 2016). This paper, however, principally focused on micro-based impediment affecting citizens from participation in government-based PPP in Bida-Nigeria, which precedes the next section.

(b) Micro factor: This is a local-based challenge which also refers to individual constraint militating against willingness and ability of citizens to participate in decision making process for urban planning (Dietz & Stern, 2008). As further elaborated by Dietz and Stern (2008), micro-based factor of PPP is categorized into three, namely; cultural, socio-economic, and environmental factors.

Cultural factor: This is a critical factor impeding individuals to participate in decision making process in planning for urban development. The attributes of cultural factors are; public orientation, ethnic diversity, trust, and individuals' efficacy (Harvey, 2010). Lack of adequate and effective public orientation regarding a particular programme is a hindrance in PPP.

This implies that lack of familiarity with the programme affects the interest of people to participate. Similarly, experience is also a challenge, because individuals who have no required skill and qualification may not see the need to participate even if the programme will have impact on their life and property. Difference in diverse ethnic group poses challenge in PPP in developing countries, especially in the ancient cities where one ethnic group (ie., religion, tribe, political party, race etc) claims supremacy of power in political administration of the city (Ghartey *et al.*, 2016; Sharon *et al.*, 2016; Jackson *et al.*, 2015). For example, if a leader of one ethnic group is co-ordinating a programme, other non-members may not see the need to participate because of ethnic differences which is very common in many cities of African countries, like Nigeria. Lack of trust in government and self-efficacy are cultural barriers affecting individuals to participate in urban planning process (Muse, 2014; Dabney, 2013). The scenario of lack of trust usually emerge when government have been recording failure in development process.

Socio-economic factor: This is a contextual factor affecting PPP in planning for urban development. Individuals are confronted by the elements of socio-economic factor, namely; education status, problem of marginalization, economic power, and time constrain. In the contemporary world, especially in the developing countries, lack of western education by some citizens makes them feel that they have no qualification to participate in some public oriented programmes initiated by government. For example, decision making forum in planning for the location of hydro-power station or international air-port which may involve relocation of some settlements may not encourage some citizens to participate even if it will have impact on their socio-economic activities. Individuals without education background may not have the feeling to participate, because they perceived government-based programme is made for high class citizens (Chirenjeet *et al.*, 2013). Problem of marginalization is a common phenomenon especially in a

democratic system of government (Volker, 2016; Muse, 2014). Marginalization poses barrier on individuals to participate in PPP. In a community or region neglected by government or traditional authorities regarding development of socio-economic activities, people are more likely to participate passively or non-participation and vice-versa (Azizan 2012; Ziersch, 2011; Nguyen *et al.*, 2015). In addition, time and money are socio-economic hindrance in PPP. Many scholars argued that time schedule in PPP are very significant to guarantee adequate participation of citizens (Nguyen *et al.*, 2015; Harvey, 2010). For example, in an ancient city where the basic economic activities of inhabitants are agriculture; any programme scheduled in the rainy season will not attract attention of people to participate. Similarly, if time scheduled for PPP is on busy working days or working hours, it will not guarantee significant number of participants from the local residents. Poverty which is linked to economic power is observed as an obstacle in PPP. This implies that PPP which requires high financial implication in the course of participation is more likely to have weak support by the low income earners who are the majority of beneficiaries (Franklin & Richard, 2016).

Environmental factor: A study has revealed that environmental factor which also refers to local-based factor contributes to the challenges confronting individuals to participate in PPP for urban development in developing countries (Ndalinfatin *et al.*, 2015). The attributes of environmental factor are; status of urban amenities, cohesion among urban residents, and security of life and property. The condition of existing urban infrastructure has potentials to influence individuals' interest to support and participate in PPP. This implies that individuals are more likely to support government programme if urban infrastructures are effectively maintained, such as; health services, education institutions, transportation facilities, water and power supply and vice versa. In any human community, credible cohesion or unity among citizens always makes it easier

for government to have the attention and support of citizens in planning process (Bloomberg & Sanford, 2012; Garcia, 2011). This implies that without cohesion among people, it will be difficult for government to have the attention of people to support any development programme even if it will have impact on them.

In general, however, local-based factor is directly impeding citizens in participating and institutional-based factor is reinforcing the impact of local-based factor. This implies that institutional-base dfactor reduces individuals' interest to participate, limits access to information, and consequently deteriorating the liberty and integrity of the programme in developing human communities. This study therefore, focused on examining relative impact of local-based factors with the view to identify the critical factors affecting citizens in the ancient cities of developing countries with particular reference to Bida, Nigeria.

Methodology

Quantitative method based on semi-structured survey questionnaire was employed in data collection. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the participants. 344 questionnaires were administered to the planning officers, traditional leaders, youth leaders, and household heads. Standard multiple regressions were used to analyze data on the perception of people regarding micro factors affecting PPP in Bida-Nigeria. In this study, independent variables are the micro factors while dependent variable is the PPP. In determining relative impact of micro factors hindering participation, Beta value of standard multiple regression was adopted. This implies that the magnitude of Beta value signifies the extent of impact a factor has on PPP (Table 1). As earlier mentioned, the higher the Beta value the greater is the correlation of that variable with dependent variable.

The Study Area

This ancient city was founded around 15th century located in the middle belt of Nigeria. It has 51km² land area with a

population of 289,985 in 2012 and growth rate of 3.42% gives an estimation of 329,655 persons in 2016 (Mohammed & Kawu, 2013; NPC, 2010). It is a metropolitan city made up by diverse ethnic groups and socio-economic activities ranging from primary, secondary and tertiary economic activities (Yahaya, 2003). Bida, however, being an ancient traditional city is characterized by dual city concept, dual power and political authority, mixed land use and systems overloading, homogeneity and urban composition. The characteristics of Bida, however, have resulted in conspicuous challenges hindering sustainable development, namely; environmental challenges, administrative challenges, and socio-cultural challenges (Mohammed & Kawu, 2013). These aforementioned predicaments of Bida are exacerbated by lack of initial development plan, inadequate development control, and behavioural attitude of inhabitants in the city (Yahaya, 2003).

Despite the complex challenges earlier mentioned, cities of this magnitude such as Bida, however, perform significant role in the contemporary societies, namely; tourism centres, administrative headquarters of rural communities, potential sources of market for rural/urban economy, and sources of rural infrastructural development among others (Pourjafaret *al.*, 2014). This study upholds that old cities could be developed through public participation programme in planning and management of socio-economic activities. The practice (PPP) of engaging citizens in decision-making process for urban planning will enable government knows all the conservative problems, needs, and preference of the people in the old cities. Owing to the genesis why Bida and indeed old cities are difficult to be developed, couple with the significance of adopting PPP in urban planning, the needs to identify the critical challenges impeding citizens to participate in the programme becomes very imperative.

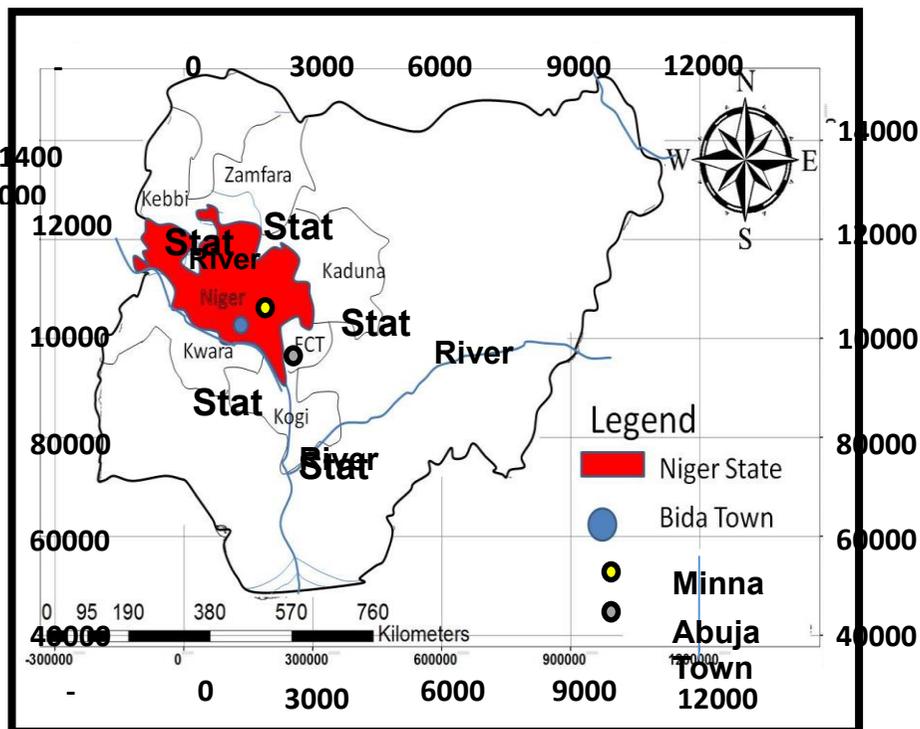


Figure 1: Map of Nigeria showing the position of Bida

Results and Discussion

The literature search has identified ten (10) micro factors hindering citizens from participating in planning for urban development (Figure 2). These factors are; public orientation, ethnic diversity, public trust, economic status, time constrain, marginalization, education status, public cohesion, amenities status, and public security. Among the groups of respondents, majority (32.00%) have concurred that public orientation, ethnic diversity, public trust, marginalization and time constrain respectively are the critical challenges of PPP. However, greater proportion of

respondents has diverse view on the remaining factors identified in the literature. This study has revealed that public orientation has the highest Beta value of 0.224 and infrastructure status has the least Beta value of 0.002 (Table 1). This indicates that public orientation has the most significant correlation with PPP and invariably is the strongest barrier hindering citizens from participating in planning for urban development and amenities status is insignificant to affect PPP for urban development.

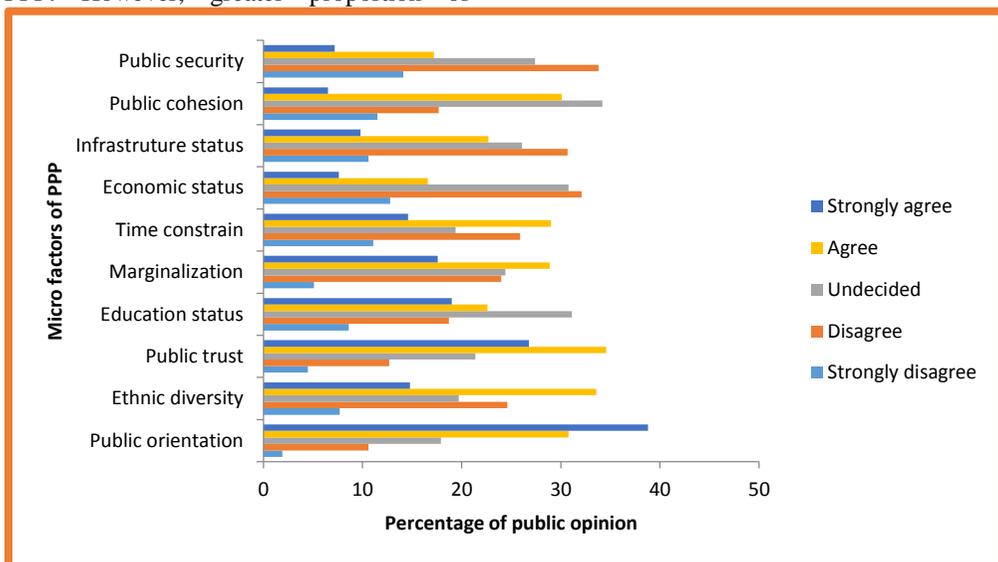


Figure 2: Factors and Perception on Micro factors Affecting Citizens in PPP

Table 1: Coefficient Matrix on Micro factors Hindering Public Participation

Factor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	tt	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
Ethnic diversity	248	093	.212	2.920	.004	066	431	.792	1.263
Public trust	098	101	.050	.450	.369	.101	297	.790	1.265
Public orientation	483	097	.244	4.964	.000	291	674	.841	1.175
Education status	467	099	.157	2.682	.008	.134	453	.852	1.163
Marginalization	046	102	.136	1.657	.099	.155	247	.863	1.159
Economic status	035	105	.087	.969	.332	.171	241	.784	1.276
Time constrain	005	094	.137	2.589	.010	.181	190	.870	1.150
Public cohesion	305	104	.022	.347	.653	099	510	.712	1.405
Public security	257	099	.017	.332	.740	062	453	.732	1.367
Infrastruturure status	142	086	.002	.217	.960	.027	310	.751	1.331

Findings on relative impact of micro factors hindering citizens to participate in PPP have revealed that public orientation with 0.224 Beta value is the first factor. This implies that public orientation makes the strongest unique contribution in hindering citizens to participate in PPP, while other factors made less contribution considering their Beta value (Table 2). It is followed by ethnic diversity, education status, time constrains, and the least is amenities status. Many studies on factors of PPP have shown that public orientation is the principal factors affecting citizens to participate in planning

process especially in the old cities of developing countries (Hug, 2914; and IAP2, 2014). Many individuals have interest to participate in the programme, but lack of experience is affecting their moral to participate in planning for urban development. This study have confirmed the view of many researchers, that public orientation is the principal factors affecting citizens from participating in planning process especially in the old cities of developing countries (Hug, 2914; IAP2, 2014).

Table 2: Ranking of the Relative Impact of Micro Factors on PPP in Bida-Nigeria

Factor	Standardized Coefficient (Beta Value)	Impact Ranking
Public orientation	.244	1
Ethnic diversity	.212	2
Education status	.157	3
Time constrain	.137	4
Marginalization	.136	5
Economic status	.087	6
Public trust	.050	7
Public security	.022	8
Public cohesion	.017	9
Infrastructure status	.002	10

Conclusion

This study has identified micro factors impeding citizens to participate in decision making process of PPP in Bida-Nigeria. In summary, the study reveals ten distinct factors and further ranks their impacts accordingly. However, in Bida public orientation is identified as the most conspicuous and critical factors affecting the programme as revealed in Table 2. The study upholds that other factors have less impact regarding inadequate and ineffective citizen participation in government-based PPP. Consistent with evidence in this study, citizen involvement in planning for physical projects such as selection of site for residential housing estates and dualization of major road is facing challenges in Bida town, thus, there is need to embark on effective enlightenment programmes on public participation in planning. Public participation programme have potentials to sensitize citizens about the significant of citizen's involvement in planning process and invariably would mitigate the challenging factors affecting PPP. Findings

in this study would be of help to the practitioners, law makers and academic institutions in promoting adequate and effective public engagement in decision making for urban development in the developing countries. In conclusion, government-based PPP in Bida is facing challenges and makes it difficult for the programme to achieve its goal in physical development planning. Thus, government must take necessary action to mitigate challenges affecting the programme in Bida town and Nigeria at large.

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