

Re-Inventing the Organizational Structure of Environmental Management Agencies of Nigerian Cities: Towards Sustainable Service Delivery in Anambra State

Kingsley Efobi^{1*} Christopher Anierobi²

1. Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Nigeria, Enugu campus, PMB 01129, Nigeria
2. Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Nigeria, Enugu campus, PMB 01129, Nigeria

* E-mail of the corresponding author: okey.efobi@unn.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

Studies have established that factors such as manpower, funding, equipment, and even changes in administration have significant influence on the performance of environmental management agencies but hardly had the Organizational structure been spotted. Despite an increasing annual government budget for efficient service delivery of these agencies; there is hardly anything to show for it, thereby raising questions on the issue of sustainability. This study examined the Organizational structure of the environmental management agencies in the cities of Awka and Onitsha in Anambra State, Nigeria with a view to determine the extent to which their composition and operations have been effective at addressing urban environmental problems. The study revealed that the performance of urban environmental management agencies on their mandate delivery was poor and that their organizational structure was indicted at X^2 value = 0.595 and probability value = 0.898.

Key words: organizational structure; environmental management agencies and sustainability

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to combat the environmental problems of man, various agencies were set up by the government of different nations of the world such as Canada, Japan, U.K, U.S and France among others. The National Environmental Policy act (NEPA) was promulgated in 1969 by U.S.A government and an environmental protection agency (EPA) was set up to monitor the progress of the Act. In like manner, the Nigeria government set up the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA), for protection and development of the Nigeria environment with their state counterparts to be known as the State Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) (Umeh and Uchegbu, 1997). In 1990, the United Nations came up with the sustainable development policy which aims at meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs (UN, 1990). In the United Nations economic and social council report of 1997, it was revealed that worldwide environmental problems especially pollution and degradation have increased three fold in the past twenty years and worse for the developing nations for which a fivefold increase was noted. (UNDP, 2001). Thus, this calls for an urgent action by the management agencies to ensure a sustainable environment for all.

2.0 Structural Formation of Environmental Management Agencies and the challenges of Urban Environmental Management problems in Nigeria

Organizational structure of any agency determines the efficiency of that agency in the fulfillment of its mandate in service delivery since it galvanizes the operations therein. The structural formation of environmental management agencies varies from country to country. Valeria et al, (2008) observed that the efficiency in service delivery is tied to this structural formation based on the prevailing institutional framework of that country. In the Nigerian context; the public agencies have their tiers from the federal level to the state level and down to the local government areas. The various departments and sections in these agencies are composed of different headships and functions which are mostly controlled by bureaucratic forces with the ministers, commissioners, directors and so on in charge of the service delivery. Funding is usually from the government budgetary allocations and sometimes from internally generated revenues in the form of levies and service charges by the agencies on consumers. (Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2006).

The recent arrangement of partnership between the government agencies and the private formal sectors aimed at enhancing the organizational structure, had been as a result of inefficiency and inadequacy in the environmental management service delivery of the public agencies as observed by Anold et al (1995). The most recent break through in environmental management has made waste reduction through re-use, recycling and restoration a modern technique that poised as a great anchorage to all environmental management efforts. This technique also

reduces the incidence of deforestation and exploitation of the natural ecosystem, thereby preventing erosion, flooding and other menace. It prevents pollution and emission of green house gases that cause global warming hence reducing flooding, acid rains, deterioration of the built environment among others (Oepen, 1993 and Valeria et al, 2008). In the light of these, the partnership with the private formal sector has gained a new dimension by involving the informal sectors (Scavengers), donor agencies and community-based organizations (CBOs) thereby providing means of livelihood to many families (UNCH, 1996).

One can thus generalize that the structural frame work pursued by the present day environmental management agencies in Nigeria is the federal, state and local governments as well as private formal sector, informal sector, donor agencies and community based organizations;(CBOs),(UNCH,1996,Oepen,1993 and Valeria et al,2008). Though this is mostly obtained in developed and some developing countries, it is a new trend in majority of the developing countries like Nigeria where less attention is paid to the private informal sector (scavengers), NGOs and the CBOs hence a need for more collaborated effort so as to ensure a satisfactory service delivery; (Anierobi, 2010; Anierobi et al 2013 and Efobi et al 2013).

In the management efforts of environmental management agencies many factors come into play. These factors when properly utilized would lead to efficiency in the management level of the environment while if misplaced, misused or abused would pose a serious constraint to the efficient performance of environmental management agencies. Some of these factors among others as viewed by Anold et al (1995), Bartone et al (1991), Oepen (1993) and Umeakuka and Mba (1999) and Anierobi (2010) include: (a). Finance (b). General Institutional Framework and Organizational structure (c) Management Personnel (d) Legislation and Regulations (e) Attitude of the Masses (f) Attitude of Government (g) Technology. These factors which should form the focal points of the organizational structure of environmental management agencies if efficient service delivery is to be achieved seems to be receiving haphazard attention especially in Nigeria cities hence the desired efficiency eludes them. This study looks into the experiences of Awka and Onitsha the capital cities of Anambra state, Nigeria.

3.0 The experiences of Awka and Onitsha in Anambra State, Nigeria

Awka is the administrative headquarters of Anambra state. The city houses many universities and tertiary institutions of learning, industries, commercial centers among other land uses. Onitsha is the commercial heart, not just for Anambra state but for West Africa as a whole. The city possesses the largest market in West Africa, so many industries, commercial centers and higher institutions of learning as well as other land uses. Environmental management problems such as flooding, erosion, waste management and others have grown over the years with the growth of human activities (UN-Habitat, 2008). These have led to the emergence of a concerted effort in the form of institutional support and resource mobilization by both the federal and state government as well as donor agencies like the United Nations, USAID among others, though presently at a very low ebb. The state ministry of Environment uses the Anambra State Environmental Protection Agency (ANSEPA) as the implementation body to which it gives general supervisory and policy guide on environmental management in the state. This agency is saddled with the mandate of protection, management and development of the environment of the state. Its organizational structure shows the state ministry of Environment as the supervision/policy making body and the board of directors for policy making; the managing director for policy implementation. Its operations cover solid waste management, ecological/erosion control, pollution control and environmental health. Hence, the health department, environmental pollution and control departments, ecological/erosion control department as well as horticulture and landscaping department carry out these functions and are manned by departmental heads as stipulated by law. The equipment used by the agency includes pail loader, tippers, tractors, shovels, head pans, baskets, trash bags, etc while the dumping method at borrow or holes is used for the solid waste disposal without sorting, recycling nor other modern techniques. The sources of funding are government subventions, self-funding through environmental sanitation rates and levies via litigation and congestion levy. This fund is basically utilized in the management of the agency staff, equipment and logistics so as to ensure efficiency and functionality in service delivery to the people.

4.0 DISCUSSION

The study revealed that the organizational structure of the agency is characterized by bureaucracy, inflexibility, administrative bottlenecks and role conflicts. It failed to articulate the incorporation of private formal sector, the informal sectors and community based organizations (CBO) in its environmental management service delivery and this impedes its performance. The environmental experts mean rating of the agency's performance is shown in table 1 and figure 1. Out of the total mean score rating of five (5) marks; the nine (9) randomly selected Environmental professional experts varied. While the Town planners, Environmental managers and other professionals scored 40% performance rating for Awka and Onitsha respectively, Civil engineers gave the highest score of 60% for Awka and Onitsha respectively. This earned the agency a total mean score of nine (9)

which is just 45% out of the total obtainable mean score of twenty (20) to make a hundred percent (100%). From this result, ANSEPA performance is thereby rated poor. Also, at X^2 value = 0.595 and probability value = 0.898; the rating of ANSEPA's performance in Awka and Onitsha by the environmental experts did not differ significantly. The study further revealed that ANSEPA's major preoccupation is on solid waste management and without some modern methods and techniques.

The devised intervention rate put solid waste disposal at 58.2%, flood control at 15.0%; erosion control at 7.2%; pollution control at 14.2% and 5.4% to the removal of damaged vehicles from the roads so as to avoid traffic congestion. This leaves much room for improvement. The agency should therefore adopt modern methods and techniques of environmental management in order to boost its operations.

Table1: ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERTS' MEAN RATING OF ANSEPA'S PERFORMANCE IN SERVICE DELIVERY TO ANAMBRA STATE.

(2 Expert per profession and the mean score recorded)

s/n	Environmental professional experts	Awka mean rating score (5)	Percentage mean reating score (%)	Onitsha mean rating score (5)	Percentage mean rating score (%)
1	Town planners	2	40	2	40
2	Environmental managers	2	40	2	40
3	Civil engineers	3	60	3	60
4	Others:(Architects, surveyors, estate managers)	2	40	2	40
5	Total mean score	9	45%	9	45%

SOURCE: RESEARCH SURVEY, 2010.

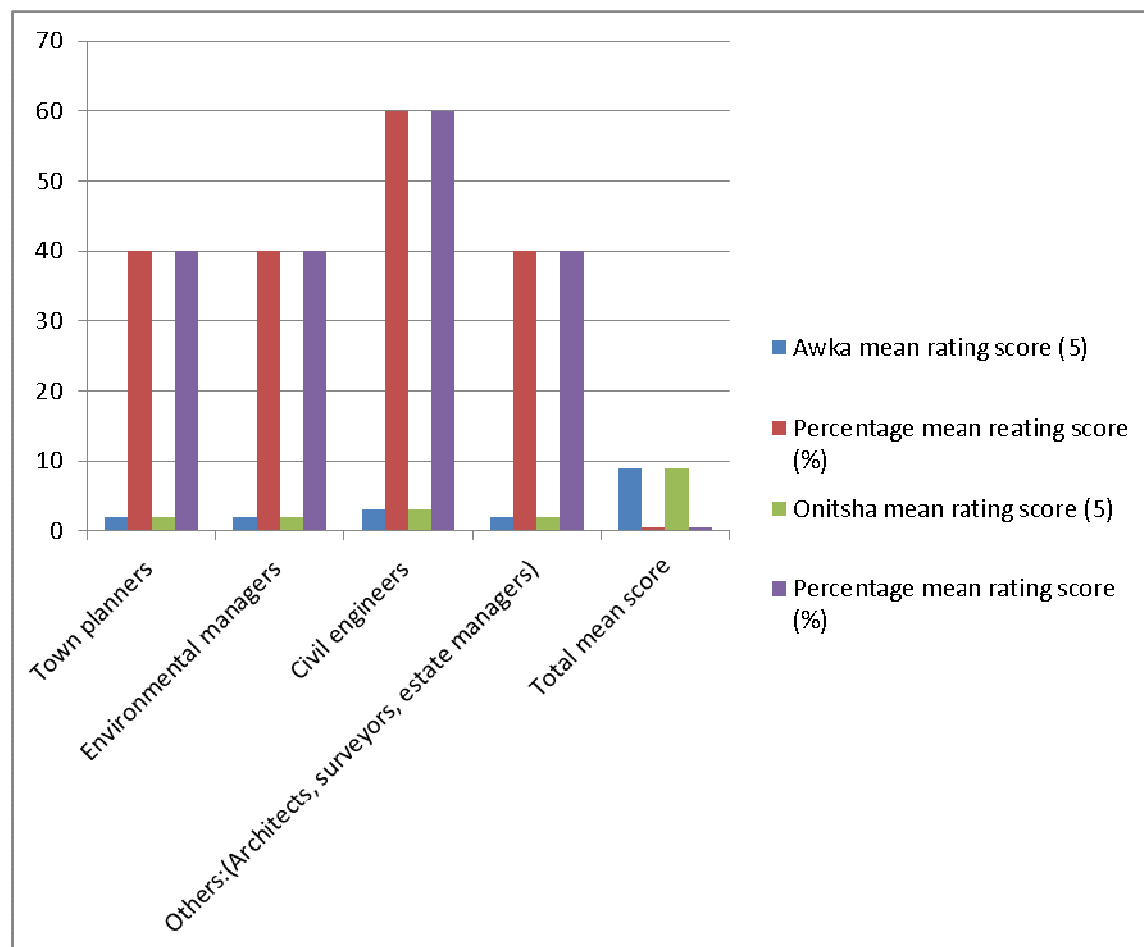


FIGURE 1: ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERTS' MEAN RATING OF ANSEPA'S PERFORMANCE IN SERVICE DELIVERY TO ANAMBRA STATE.

SOURCE: RESEARCH SURVEY, 2010.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The study recommends a review of the ANSEPA edict of 1998 so as to foster a proper public sector reform that would incorporate effective partnership and holistic urban and rural environmental management mechanism while introducing an enhanced and operational organizational structure free of bureaucracy and which bring about the involvement of the private formal, informal sectors (scavengers or waste pickers), NGOs and community based organizations whose operations are much more cost effective and efficient hence creating employment and reducing poverty. The use of appropriate environmental management technology such as compactors and others as well as the re-use, recycle and reduction techniques should be fostered. Measurement tools and proper record keeping as well as data bank should be devised for determining prevalence rate of environmental problems.

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