

Fund Allocation and Utilization in the Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority, Rivers State, 2009–2025.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined fund allocation and utilization in the Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority (GPHCDA), Rivers State, between 2009 and 2025, within the broader context of policy implementation challenges in urban development planning. The Greater Port Harcourt Master Plan was conceived as a comprehensive framework for transforming the state into a world-class, sustainable, and economically vibrant city through phased development, infrastructure renewal, and integrated urban management systems. Despite its ambitious design, concerns have persisted regarding the effectiveness of its implementation, particularly in relation to financial management and institutional performance. The study adopted a correlational research design, drawing data from 360 staff members of the GPHCDA via a structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed a moderate-to-high extent of fund allocation and utilization in the Authority, with a mean score of 3.43. The result of hypothesis testing indicated a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between fund allocation and utilization and policy implementation ($r = 0.801$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that improved financial allocation and effective utilization significantly enhance the implementation of the Greater Port Harcourt Master Plan. However, the study also identified challenges such as inadequate disbursement practices, weak accountability mechanisms, and corruption-related inefficiencies that constrain optimal policy outcomes. The study concluded that sustainable urban development in Greater Port Harcourt is highly dependent on transparent, timely, and efficient management of public funds. The study among others recommends that the Rivers State Government should ensure adequate and timely release of funds for the implementation of the Greater Port Harcourt Master Plan.

Keywords: Fund, Allocation, Utilization, Policy Implementation and Urban Development.

INTRODUCTION

The development of public policies, programmes, plans and projects implementation are born out of human desire for positive change in man's social, cultural, economic and physical environment. As a result of this and in the midst of Port Harcourt (the treasure base of the nation Nigeria and the garden city) been stripped of its beauty due to rapid increase in population, distortion of city plan and poor management, uncontrolled and unplanned spatial expansion and infrastructure decay and inadequacy (Johnbull, and Ikiriko, 2021). Therefore, the Rivers State government saw the need to prepare a master plan which spans across eight (8) local government areas namely Port Harcourt (Old Port Harcourt), Parts of Oyigbo, Okirika, Ogu/Bolo, Obio/Akpor, Ikwerre, Etche and Eleme local government areas respectively covering an area approximately 1,900 square kilometres (9,190,000 hectares of land) with a projected population of about two million people (Ede,Owei and Akarolo, 2011). The Master plan had a two-pronged focus; one was to set out the path to urban renewal and transformation of the old cities, and secondly provide direction for the development of the New Cities in accordance with the vision. This is to be achieved in two areas: urban renewal of the old cities and building of new cities for the 21st century with high urban quality and planned open spaces that will become a worthy global player that will be an example to other African countries (GPHCMP, 2008). The lifespan of the master plan was for fifty (50) years. The key anchors of the GPHC master plan are the Port Harcourt International Airport, the Old Port Harcourt City and the Onne Sea port. The master plan is an aggregate of land use master plan, transportation master plan (Roads master plan, public transport plan, and freight transport plan), water master plan, waste water master

plan, storm water master plan. Energy master plan, integrated waste management plan and social services infrastructure master plan (Cookey-Gam, 2013). The GPHC master plan was to be implemented in phases commencing with the first phase of A, B, C and D and spanning from the Port Harcourt International Airport Omagwa junction across to Prof, Tam David West Boulevard and extends to part of Igwuruta. The layout for the phase 1 area comprised clusters of neighbourhoods: low, medium and high densities, mixed use complexes, schools, churches, golf course and estates, internal road network and storm water drains occupying a total land mass of 1,692.07 HA (16,920.7sqkm).

This idea is actually holistic and comprehensive with a world class city in view. The idea was to modernize the old city (Port Harcourt) and re-awaken it to its original garden city status, improve the standard of living of all people living in the city by providing better living environment that are properly serviced with good access to social services and infrastructure, create a modern business hub that will accelerate economic growth and development supported by appropriate economic policies and governance; and attract private sector investment and participation in infrastructure, housing, retail, offices and other commercial facilities. The Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority (GPHCDA) (2008) was therefore a regulatory body established by law on the 2nd of April, 2009; and as the Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority Law No 2, of 2009. Its mandate was to facilitate the implementation of the Greater Port Harcourt City Master Plan and develop a new city called the Greater Port Harcourt City. It is worthy to note that the implementation of such positive idea (referring to the GPHC Master plan) does not just happen. Sir Isaac Newton in his first law of motion stated that a body continues in its present state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line unless an external force acts on it. In his third law, he opined that action and reaction are equal and opposite. The Stated laws pointed to the fact that there are forces that determines action and reactions; and that the applied velocity of these forces will determine the result - the success, the level of policy implementation and/ or the failure of the project or plan. The Greater Port Harcourt City (GPHC) master plan as a development plan, an official document of the Rivers State government domiciled with the Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority (GPHCDA) (2008) for adequate implementation will definitely meet with these relevant forces. These forces in this paper are tagged ‘explanatory factors’.

The place of implementation of the GPHC master plan in the planning process therefore cannot be underestimated. Implementation which definitely takes into account several activities (provision of finance, use of finance, procurement, stakeholders’ engagement, establishment of relevant bodies, monitoring and regulation teams, planning, physical construction works etc) is connected with the execution of the plan (Government of Rivers State of Nigeria, 2008). Implementation of the Master Plan determines the level of development of the geographical area it is meant to address. A Master Plan is usually designed for a specific period of time, between ten and thirty years. It consists of an inventory of existing development in the geographic area of interest as well as proposals for future development in Rivers State. Howbeit, Master Plan prepared for urban area development, the improvement of older part of a city or for the development of new town areas is a policy documents (Keunta, 2010); that influences the growth of urban population, land use, infrastructure development and service provision. Failure to implement plans has long been considered a significant barrier to effective planning (Berke, Backhurst, Day, Ericksen, Laurian, Crawford & Dixon, 2016). Calkins (2019) names the lack of plan implementation as new plan syndrome, explaining that plans are continuously redone or updated without regard to the implementation status of the original plan, the lack of understanding of the degree to which plans are implemented and of the determinants of effective implementation have hindered planners from making better plans.

In Nigeria and indeed many developing countries, the practice of comprehensive physical planning is common. This popularity is evident from the numerous Master Plans which have been prepared for various towns in the post-civil war era (i.e., as from 1970) in Nigeria, especially following the creation of States in 1967. The first attempt to produce a comprehensive urban Master Plan in the country was Koenigsberger’s Master Plan for Metropolitan Lagos, prepared in 1962 (Ede, *et al*, 2011). This was followed by Travallion’s Master Plan for Kano prepared in 1963. In 1967, Max Lock produced the Kaduna Master Plan. Between 1970 and 1980 Master Plans were prepared for urban centres in a number of states created in 1967 and 1976 (Ede, *et al*, 2011). These cities include Jos, Benin City, Sokoto, Yola, Maiduguri, Calabar, Ilorin, Owerri, Bauchi, Akure, Minna, Makurdi, Port Harcourt, and Abuja. In addition to these, many State governments prepared Master Plans for

towns in their respective states. For instance, in Rivers State, the post-civil war period of the 1970s witnessed an extensive preparation of Master Plans for towns in Rivers State. In Port Harcourt, physical planning began with the application of the Garden City concept by the colonial administration in laying out the old Township and Government Reservation Area (GRA), followed by the first Master Plan prepared by Professor Elon, an Israeli (Obinna, Owei, O.B & Mark, 2010).

They (Johnbull, and Ikiriko, 2021) further retaliated that as the city continuous to grow rapidly with expansion in economic activities and population, it became quite obvious that the initial planning schemes were not adequate to respond to the dynamics of population growth and spatial expansion of Port Harcourt. Responding to this, the first military administration of Rivers State under Commander Alfred Diète-Spiff quickly launched a major planning initiative, first to designate the headquarters of the administrative divisions of the State as urban centres and then secondly to prepare Master Plans to guide their development. A total of nineteen Master Plans were therefore prepared. The Port Harcourt Master Plan of 1975 was prepared by Swedish Consultants: Specialists Konsult. It was the last one of this generation of Master Plans (Owei, Obinna, & Ede, 2010). A second generation of Master Plans was initiated by the administration of Chief Melford Okilo between 1979 and 1983. Under a hastily created Directorate of New Towns and Conurbations, Master Plans were prepared for Boro (Kaiama), Oyigbo, Woji, Abua, Ekeremor and Bori New Towns, though the initiative died as the administration was ousted on December 31, 1983. The most recent response by the Rivers State Government is the focus of this study – The Greater Port Harcourt City Master Plan (GPHCMP) (2008) geared towards building “a thriving city, economically vibrant and diverse, world class Cities, a garden city whose citizens enjoy an enviable quality of life, a sought-after tourist destination, a model city, an inspiration and a monument to what can be achieved through determined and coordinated effort” (Rivers State Government, 2008). The whole project was a call to duty with the mission to build a world class Garden City, thriving economically, operating efficiently, prosperously and assuring its residents a quality of life envied for its peacefulness, comfort and sustainability. The place of implementation in the planning process cannot be overemphasized. The impact of a policy, project and programme can hardly be felt in the face of inadequate and inappropriate disbursement of fund for implementation. Politics and public policy are the major factors that determine urban development; Master Plan for urban development is one of the policy documents (Keunta, 2010). It influences the growth of urban population, land use, infrastructure development and service provision. Implementation of the Master Plan determines the level of development of the geographical area it is meant to address. A Master Plan is usually designed for a specific period of time, between ten and thirty years which fund is core. It consists of an inventory of existing development in the geographic area of interest as well as proposals for future development. Furthermore, the new city is expected to be funded by the Rivers State Government and by public private partnership initiatives. The intention is to allow for urban growth through strategic planning, and the densification the old city, whilst gradually integrating both cities as one single unit. While not attempting an evaluation of the Greater Port-Harcourt City Project (as doing so may be premature) one may want to opine that politics have an over bearing influence on the overall development of the city (Robinovitz, 2019). How real this has been will be the focus of the subsequent sections of this work.

Relatively, over time the definitive nature of the idea of sustainable development has changed. From the relatively simplistic idea of meeting basic needs, to the current, of meeting the entire hierarchy of human needs, to provide an acceptable quality of life for all. Sustainable cities can accommodate growth and change well, whilst simultaneously being improved by these processes. According to Owei, *et al*, (2010) this implies that development is managed in an integrated manner with relation to social, economic and environmental requirements. A sustainable city is much more than green practices and environmental conservation - it is a holistic concept pertaining to the creation of a place that provides adequate shelter, innovative economic opportunities and safety in terms of cultural freedom, resource conservation and development management. Sustainable cities are liveable; they are attractive to their users and residents. However, the challenges associated with policy implementation depend largely on the problems passed on to the implemented by policy formulators and those that are inherent within the implementation stage itself. In Nigeria, however, the most serious challenge is the ability of the government to eradicate inefficiency at all levels (Kofoworola, 2017). Genuine commitment to the eradication of inefficiency in the public service involves not only the empowerment of the various agencies charged with responsibility of converting inefficiency with little interference by the government in their activities, but also the prosecution of the perpetrators no matter, their social, economic and political standing in

the society. Lastly, the challenge is to the various civil society organizations, other professional bodies and private individuals to pressurize the government for better public policy that will ensure the progress of the country, through the various constitutional means and other democratic norms and traditions. Plans are the synthesis of the gamut of the aspirations and visions of stakeholders made into strategic policies, programs and projects documented (in text and graphics) for implementation by a government statutory agency(s) within a timeframe which is evaluated periodically. Plans are of different layers including but not limited to Master Plans. The tripod of planning is all important part of the actualization of the goal(s) of any plan, however, one of the fundamental aspects of achieving the goals as set out in a Master Plan for a specific spatial space is the implementation of such a plan by the established implementation agency. The implementation of a Master Plan which is the document (that contains public policy(s), programmes and projects) is a major determinant of urban development and the government of the day has a major role to play. According to Keunta, (2010), Politics and public policy are the major factors that determine urban development. Master Plan for urban development is one of the policy documents used to influence the growth of urban population, land use, infrastructure development and service provision.

Specifically, the study seeks to; ascertain the extent of fund allocation and utilization in Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority, 2009-2025; to what extent does fund allocation and utilization enhance policy implementation in Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority, 2009-2025?; Ho: There is no significant relationship between fund allocation and utilization and policy implementation in Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority, 2009-2025.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Planning theory Proposed by Taylor Nigel 1998

Behavioural relationships and assumptions that define the body of knowledge of urban planning, however, there are nine procedural theories of planning that remain the principal theories of planning procedure today:

- a) the Rational-Comprehensive approach, the Incremental approach,
- b) the Transformative Incremental (TI) approach,
- c) the Transactive approach,
- d) the Communicative approach,
- e) the Advocacy approach,
- f) the Equity approach,
- g) the Radical approach, and
- h) the Humanist or Phenomenological approach Taylor (1998).

The planning philosophy of the firm engaged for Greater Port Harcourt adopted the rational comprehensive planning model or rational planning, sometimes referred to as synoptic approach which adopted the top-down approach synonymous with this model in the preparation of the Greater Port Harcourt Master Plan.

The synoptic approach is defined as a conscious, comprehensive, rational planning effort in which top executives formulate the organization's goals, oversee their implementation, and measure their progress while at the same time making adjustments to the goals as changes in environmental and organizational conditions. The rational model is perhaps the most widely accepted model among planning practitioners and scholars and is considered by many to be the orthodox view of planning. As its name clearly suggests, the goal of the rational model is to make planning as rational and systematic as possible. The rational planning model is a model of the planning process involving a number of rational actions or steps. Taylor (1998) outlines five steps, as follows:

- a) Definition of the problems and/or goals;
- b) Identification of alternative plans/policies;
- c) Evaluation of alternative plans/policies;
- d) Implementation of plans/policies; and
- e) Monitoring of effects of plans/policies.

The rational planning model is used in planning and designing neighbourhoods, cities, and regions. It has been central in the development of modern urban planning. The model has many limitations, particularly the lack of guidance on involving stakeholders and the community affected by planning, and other models of planning, such as collaborative planning, are now also widely used. Though rational planning fails to provide an avenue for public participation, in both theory and practice, this shortcoming opened rational planning to claims of elitism and social insensitivity.

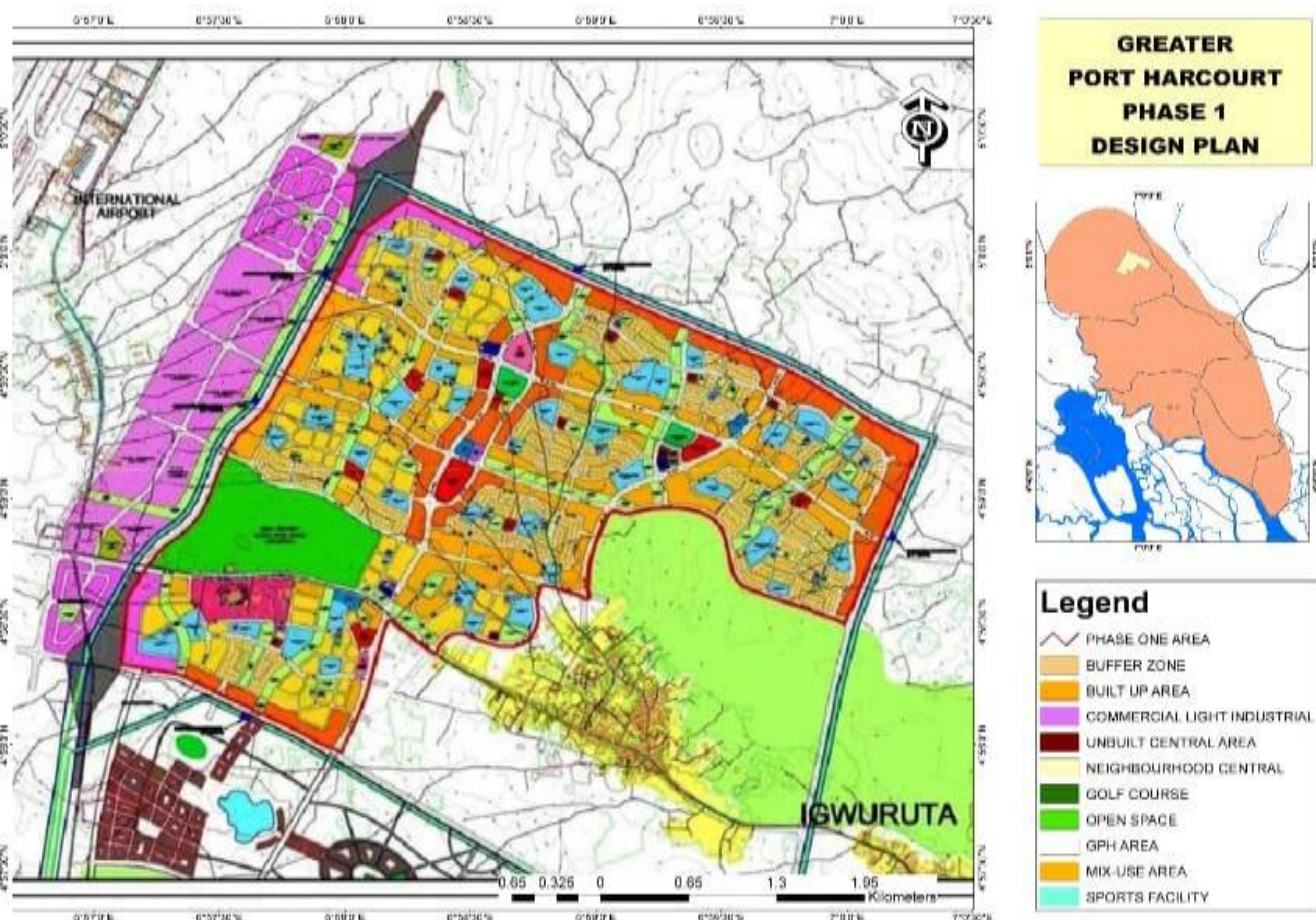
Planning (or land-use planning) connotes a decision making process with respect to the ordering and regulating of land use in an efficient and ethical way, and preventing conflicts among land-use Urban planning is a technical and political process concerned with the development and use of land, planning permission, protection and use of the environment, public welfare, and the design of the of the urban environment, including air, water, and the infrastructure, passing into and out of urban areas, such as transportation, communications, and distribution networks. Planning can be referred to as a set of methods designed to prepare information in such a way that decisions can be made more rationally (Friedmann & Hudson, in Marios,2019). Nigel Taylor opines that planning can significantly affect the lives of large numbers of people, and since different individuals and groups may hold different views about how the environment should be planned, based on different values and interests, it is therefore also a political activity. Lars (2011) argues that planning is a critical method for achieving political goals, which of course makes urban planning, and its practices, such as urban governance and urban design, inherently political instruments and partly a means of politics. Lars (2011) went further to argue that ‘even though it is often said that planning also generates goals for politics, these goals can hardly be accepted as politics unless politically sanctioned. And even if such sanctioning in planning practice often is circumvented, this must surely be seen as a flaw in planning rather than a formative characteristic thus, planning clearly is political but cannot, or rather should not, be understood as politics. The top-down approach associated with the rational planning movement by using the planning process to establish a uniform landscape and architectural style based on an idealized medieval village. The City had status and was visually attractive to the extent that it was known as the Garden City of Nigeria, but it is arguable whether such an appellation still fits its present state. The ways some urban features disconnect are apparent for Port Harcourt, so it is a generally held opinion of a need to reinstate values that can uphold the former status, create good and healthy living environment, and achieve sustainability and plan for the future. The objective of the Urban Design Framework is to create a new and exciting urban environment where citizens feel safe, their lifestyle is uplifted and investments are protected through the application of known urban design principles (Ede, Owei and Akarolo; 2018).

A Master Plan is a comprehensive document aimed at strategically developing areas of need as perceived by stakeholders in that locality. City development underpins the conception and subsequent implementation of any Master Plan. An example of such is the Greater Port-Harcourt City Master Plan. The Master Plan (GPHCMP) is a 50-year strategic plan designed to integrate the old and new Port Harcourt City. The integrated Master Plan consists of transport, road, water, storm water, wastewater, land use, social infrastructure and energy (gas and electricity) plans developed to be implemented in three phases. All phases of the development (including existing and future projects referred to as ‘GPHC Development Projects’) are scheduled to be completed by 2060 (ERML, 2019). The vision of the plan is to transform the Greater Port-Harcourt Area into a world class city that is internationally recognised for excellence, and for the area to become the preferred destination for investors and tourists, (ERML, 2019). Spatially, the plan covers an area of approximately 1,900 km² spanning eight Local Government Areas. It includes all of the old Port-Harcourt city and parts of Oyigbo, Okrika, Ogu/Bolo, Obio/Akpor, Ikwerre, Etche and Eleme Local Government Areas (LGAs) (ERML, 2019; GPHCDA, 2010). The New City will be an extension of the Old Port Harcourt City and will allow for urban growth through planning and de-densification of the Old City, while gradually integrating both cities into one single unit (GPHCDA, 2008, 2010).

The Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority (GPHCDA) is the authority responsible for implementing the GPHC Master Plan. GPHDA was established by the ‘The Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority Law’ No. 2 of 2009 (GPHCDA, 2010). GPHCDA has been charged with the responsibility of facilitating the implementation of the GPHC Master Plan and developing the New City (GPHCDA, 2010). The objectives of the plan are primarily economic; that is, to enhance the standard of living

and well-being of people in the city by transforming it into a functional, efficient, world class city with first-rate infrastructure and delivery of quality services (ERML, 2019; GPHCDA, 2010). The successful implementation of the Master Plan is projected to yield improved commerce options as well as increased investment opportunities. Apart from yielding economic benefits, previous studies have argued that economic development should also be placed in the environmental context for protecting environmental quality (Glasson, Thriewel & Chadwick, (2020); Ede, Owei, & Akarolo, 2011; UNECA, 2011; Akukwe and Ogbodo, 2015). The comprehensive Master Plan comprises the land-use plan and other sectoral plans. Implementation of the entire Master Plan has been phased, commencing from Phase-1 through Phase 2 to the Phase-4 projects. Phase-1 layout is located in the northern axis of the Master Plan near the Port-Harcourt International Airport and is sub-divided into four manageable sub-phases A, B C and D (see Fig. 2). Phase-2 layout is located in the eastern axis near Etche LGA, while Phase 3 Project is located in the south-eastern part of the Master Plan near Onne Seaport at Eleme. All phases will be connected by the Priority Road (M1 North-South Link Road), which is a dual-carriage freeway (ERML, 2019). The main anchors are Onne Seaport, Port-Harcourt Harbour and the Omagwa international Airport.

Generally, the land use plan consists of high, medium and low-density residential areas; commercial and industrial areas; cemetery; dumping site; International airport; University; open spaces, including riverine areas, golf courses, parks, gardens with landscape elements; rivers; metropolitan node; roads including major, minor and other roads as well as future growth areas. Facilities include 24- hour electricity supply infrastructure; a network of good roads/streets and public transportation system; drainage and storm water management system; engineered sanitary.



Landfill for solid waste disposal; surveillance; and efficient security systems among other things (ERML, 2019; GPHCDA, 2010).

A review of literature indicates that planning as a profession has indeed progressed from a technical and neutral activity, to a more inclusive process in which the planner is considered an active agent in the planning preparation process. The changing philosophy and/or paradigm in planning are in response to the changing socio-political

milieu in which planning is conducted. The rational comprehensive theory is one of the major models in planning theory that has since been developed. It is based on a normative model which values higher rationality in the face of multiple organizational and political pressures. (Grant, 2015) Development of Rational Comprehensive (Synoptic) theory can be traced back to Auguste Comte (1798-1857). Comte applied the methods of observation and experimentation to the field of sociology and believed that persistent social problems might be solved by the application of certain hierarchical rules and that with the aid of science of sociology mankind would progress towards a superior state of civilization. (Raine, 2015), Comte's ideas were later developed by Max Webber who argued that the process of rationalization, once unleashed upon the world, transformed social life forever and for the better and that rationalization led to new practices that were chosen based on their efficiency (Lippman & Aldric, 2012).

In the traditional 'rational' model planning, is seen as a linear process of problem identification, research option, analysis and then decision-making based on an apolitical analysis of facts. This idea of value-free and non-political has since changed to the perspective where planners are actively involved in the decision and implementation of policies that have diverse implications on the welfare of the people. Further development on the comprehensive theory were made in the early 1970s by Faludi (1973) who viewed planning as a 'decision making process aimed at solving some of the varied problems which society face' He argued that planning should be rational by evaluating comprehensively all possible action in the light of their consequences; and ensuring that these considerations include alternative goals and that planning should also respond flexibly to new situations. Inherent in the foregoing argument is the fact that all activities directed towards allocation and reallocation of scarce resources are essentially political. Rational decision making model tend to ignore this dimension of social planning. Decisions in the political arena are influenced far more by the perception of the situation than by any rational concept of objective reality (Raine, 2015). Critics argue that the lack of political interest and commitment to implement policies, challenges the planner's agenda of rationality in planning. In this scenario, planners are no longer seen as an unbiased technocrat with no interest attached. This is because planning as activity is emotionally laden hence the planner may not be completely separated from the society that he operates in. In trying to examine the seeming interaction between planning and the socio-political environment, some theorizations have been attempted. Rabinovitz (2019) using the local planning environment in the United States came up with the 'power pyramid' theory of decision making. According to the theory, decision-making mimics the 'Hunter community' power structure where only the elites constituting of a few business men made all the important decisions. Robinovitz (2019) identified four distinct planning environments corresponding to different planning theories yet stipulates the different changing roles. Further improvement explaining the relationship between politics and the planning environment was made by Dahl (2021) who came up with 'Yale poly-archaic power theory' this theory describes how different interest groups exact overbearing influence when it wants to do so in the decision -making process. Using the above models, Faludi (1973) came up with the 'variable-pattern model' which was a hybrid of the previous models. The bottom-up approach recognizes input from individuals and governmental entities at various levels, not just the 'higher-ups'. The principal-agent theory emphasizes agreements between those who develop and those who implement policy. The policies introduced by successive administrations have done little or nothing to pull the country out of this moody dirty water called corruption, it is as if the more they try, the worse it becomes. Nigerians have gradually normalized corruption but cry more about its damaging and devastating effects on the country's economy and national development. Many believe that the consistent failure of formulated policies plays a huge part in the developmental crisis in Nigeria. The functions of the Nigerian State are through the instruments of public policies, and so every policy must be intentional in what it is meant to achieve in the end and such achievement must align with the general interest of the governed. Adebayo (2020) emphasized that public policy all over the world is aimed at solving a public problem and enhancing the well-being of the people.

Conceptual Insights

Concept of Public Policy

Public policies are as old as governments. Whatever be the form, oligarchy, monarchy, aristocracy, tyranny, democracy etc., - whenever and wherever governments have existed, public policies have been formulated and implemented. To cope with the varied problems and demands of the people the government has to make many policies, these policies are called public policies (Crney, 2012). Public policy is an institutionalized proposal to

solve relevant and real-world problems, guided by a conception and implemented by programs as a course of action created and/or enacted, typically by a government or nonprofit organisation, in response to social issues. Beyond this broad definition, public policy has been conceptualized in a variety of ways (Newcomer, et al 2015). A popular way of understanding and engaging in public policy is through a series of stages known as the policy cycle. The characterization of particular stages can vary, but a basic sequence is: agenda setting – formulation – legitimation – implementation – evaluation. Officials considered as policymakers bear responsibility to reflect the interests of a host of different stakeholders. Policy design entails conscious and deliberate effort to define policy aims and map them instrumentally. Academics and other experts in policy studies have developed a range of tools and approaches to help in this task (Carney, 2012). According to Anderson(1975), what makes policies public is that they are developed by governmental bodies and officials. Thomas Dye(1977), simply defined public policy as whatever governments choose to do or not to do.

Public policy can be distinguished from other types of policies as follows(Anderson, 1975).

- a. Public policy is purposive or goal-oriented action rather than random or chance behavior.
- b. Public policy consists of courses or patterns of actions by governmental officials.
- c. Public policy is what governments actually do, not what they intend to do or say they are going to do.

Public policy involves some form of overt government action to affect a particular problem; it also involves a decision by government officials not to take action, to do nothing on some matter on which governmental involvement is sought.

Different Conceptions of public policy

Public policy can be conceptualized in varying ways, according to the purposes of the speaker or author, and the characteristics of the situation they are concerned with.

One dividing line in conceptions of public policy is between those that see it primarily in terms of ideas (principles and plans of action) and those that see it as a collection of empirical phenomena (the things that are done, and their outcomes). The first of these conceptualizations is suitable when the matter of concern is relatively simple and unambiguous, and the means of enactment are expected to be highly disciplined. But where the matter is complex and/or contested – where intentions are confused and/or disguised – it may not be possible to define the policy ideas clearly and unambiguously. In this case it may be useful to identify a policy in terms of what actually happens.(Stanley, 2016)David Easton in the USA of the 1950s provided an illustration of the need he found to broaden his conceptualization of public policy beyond stated ideas: "If the formal policy of an educational system forbids discrimination against Negroes but local school boards or administrators so zone school attendance that Negroes are segregated in a few schools, both the impartial law and discriminatory practices must be considered part of the policy." Easton characterized public policy as "a web of decisions and actions that allocates values"(Easton, 1953, in Stanley, 2016). Other definitions of public policy in terms of a broad range of empirical phenomena include that of Cairney (2012): "the sum total of government action from signals of intent to the final outcomes".

An example of conceiving public policy as ideas is a definition by Titmuss: "the principles that govern action directed towards given ends" Titmuss' perspective was particularly one of social contract ethics (Nawarat and Medley, 2018).. More recently, Antonio Lassance has defined public policy as "an institutionalized proposal to solve a central problem, guided by a conception" (Lassance, 2020: 7) Lassance's perspective and concerns are grounded in a theory of change or program theory which he believes can be empirically tested. One of the most known and controversial concepts of public policy is that of Thomas R. Dye, according to whom public policy is whatever governments choose to do or not to do (Dye, 1972: 2). Although widely used, Dye's concept is also criticized as being an empty concept (Newcomer et al, 2015). Dye himself admitted that his concept discourages elaborate academic discussions of the definition of public policy - we say simply that public policy is whatever governments choose to do or not to do(Newcomer et al, 2015) In an institutionalist view, the foundation of public policy is composed of national constitutional laws and regulations. Further foundational aspects include

both judicial interpretations and regulations which are generally authorized by legislation. Public policy is considered strong when it solves problems efficiently and effectively, serves and supports governmental institutions and policies, and encourages active citizenship(Nawarat and Medley, 2018). Peters (2015) defines public policy as "the set of activities that governments engage in for the purpose of changing their economy and society", effectively saying that public policy is legislation brought in with the aim of benefiting or impacting the electorate in some way. Dente (2013) explains public policy as "a set of actions that affect the solution of a policy problem, i.e. a dissatisfaction regarding a certain need, demand or opportunity for public intervention. Its quality is measured by the capacity to create public value Public policy as a system of "courses of action, regulatory measures, laws, and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity or its representatives (Newarat and Medley, 2018)¹ Public policy is commonly embodied in "constitutions, legislative acts, and judicial decisions (Newarat and Medley, 2018). Transformative constitutions of Global South considers judicial actions for Public policy as paramount, since the political forces that facilitate legislative decisions may run counter to the will of the people (Pelliseru, 2017)

Public Policy Making

Politics and policy making are interwoven and the study of politics is not complete without the examination of what government actually does, hence the study of the activities of government is an important aspect of policy science; and therefore, the study of Government falls within the purview of public policy(Eugene, N. 2005). When public policy is studied, we therefore want to comprehend for instance the circumstances that make it difficult for government to implement its own policies and the wishes of the people and also want to understand the environmental factors that hinder the implementation of government policies, which are the constraints in policy implementation (Ozor,2004). He adds further that public policy therefore could be conceptualized as a long series of more or less related activities that government pursues at a particular time while public policy implementation has been described as one major problem confronting developing countries. Contributing to this, Egonmwan (1991) avers that the successful implementation of public policy is difficult in the first world countries as it is more difficult in reform oriented governments in the third world countries that are consequently stripped of all technicalities, but the implementation problem in the developing countries is the problem of widening gap between intentions and results. This can best be understood when viewed against a theoretical framework as explained below: That the Marxian theory of public policy is focused on the economic strength of the society, and that in the Marxian perspective, it is the sole determinant of the political super-structure (Maheshvaranda, 2003). The argument is that the mode of distribution of any society determines social relations while the mode of distribution is simply how people produce what they owned which is the tool or instrument. Social role is the kind of relationship that exists between the producer and the owners of the means of production (supplier and buyers). Referring to the Marxists, Maheshvaranda (2003) maintains that society is divided into two: those who produce (suppliers of labor) and those who appropriate what is produced (capitalists). This he states is equally applicable in international system where some regions of the world are suppliers of raw materials and cheap labor to other regions, and that Marxists looked at development in terms of historical stages through which the society was divided into antagonizing classes, while development started under the primitive stage or mode of production where the means of production is jointly owned by all and the result was that there was no division (class) and conflict in that society. Contributing to this, Omoke (2008) regards it as proposed course of action of a person, group, or government within a given environment providing obstacles and opportunities which the policy was proposed to utilize and overcome in an effort to reach a goal or realize an objective or purpose, which the primary function of the state in the capitalist society is therefore to maintain or serve the interest of capitalism by creating conditions favourable to profitable primitive accumulation. However in order to avoid revolution or to reduce conflict between classes which the workers may embark upon, the State is involved in creating conditions for social harmony by providing policies that legitimize the capitalist society while those who hold the means of production therefore, use the instrument of ideology to sensitize the working class about the viability of private property and equally use ideology to convince people that there will be upward socio-economic mobility. Resulting from these tendencies, they make it difficult for people to understand that they are extremely exploited. Public policies in capitalist society could be categorized according to their intentions and that it is either the policy is serving the purpose of accumulation or legitimization, with example of accumulation policies as privatization whereby people want to enrich themselves easily, subsidies, fiscal and monetary policies, etc. while example of legitimization policies, include social welfare, free education, free

health care, increment of workers salary, etc. Using this theory, one will attempt to ask why has government continued to pursue a particular course of action or, why is policy implementation problematic in Nigeria, but in clearing this however, Obi (2007), points out that politics is the competition among groups to make public policy conducive to the realization of their interests and ideologies and that the role of the ruling class is determinant in what the state does and what the state chooses not to do in the value allocation process.

Public Policy Implementation

Public policy implementation refers to any action taken by the government that impacts its citizens; the history of public policy implementation is intertwined with the history of government. Examples of public policy implementation practice range from the creation of laws and regulations around the death penalty and firearms to the assessment of policies governing civil rights and health care (Tadeinin Rhama & Setiawan, 2020). The modern-day government finds its roots in the ancient city-states of areas now known as China, India, Mexico, Egypt, the Middle East, and Mesopotamia. It evolved as a response to war: invading barbarians attempting to conquer settled communities, or warring factions attempting to overtake the others' land and resources. Public policy analysis combines policy analysis with programme evaluation. It involves determining which of various policies is most likely to meet a given goal. The term public policy implementation actually refers to two distinct fields: analysis for public policy, which refers to the process of research and other information gatherings in order to create policy, and analysis of public policy, which explains why certain policies exist. The two primary approaches to public policy analysis: the analycentric policy process, and the meta-centric policy process. The analycentric process focuses on individual problems and attempts to create the most efficient allocation of resources on a micro-level. The metacentric policy process focuses on political processes and attempts to solve problems by changing the relative power of certain groups – in other words, shifting the type of public participation that occurs during political processes. The Implementation of Public Policy is best understood by considering the process of making public policies as an operation that has several sub-processes merged together (Okafor in Oluwande & Ezeokoli, 2017).

A policy is a combination of aims and specified activities that can help end a certain problem once implemented. Alternatively, Oluwande and Ezeokoli (2017) defines a policy as the things/actions that the government has deemed right and or wrong for people. One approach to public policy analysis is to scrutinize various deficiencies in the implementation phase and the policy formulation phase. In case deficiencies are found in each phase, it means that the policymaking process negated some vital aspects that would ensure that every step taken in the formulation and implementation phases is consistent with the desired final goal and objective of the policy. Failure to include it in both phases makes it difficult for the people formulating and implementing the policy to detect certain deficiencies. Such deficiencies may truncate into the failure of the policy to deliver the anticipated outcomes upon full implementation. Once policies are formulated, the next phase involves their implementation.

Public policy implementation refers to the exercising of a specific policy decision as directed by the law, court, or any administrator's prescriptions (Saka & Isiaka, 2017). Implementation of public policy involves three steps:

- a) interpretation,
- b) organization, and
- c) application.

Once a policy is developed, it is assigned to a particular individual, group, or agency. The goals are translated into rules and guidelines, and resources and personnel are then coordinated to achieve those goals. There are three major theoretical models for public policy interpretation: the top-down approach, the bottom-up approach, and the principal-agent theory. In the top-down approach, policies are set at a higher level, and then communicated to subordinates who handle the implementation process (Adams, 2017).

In practical terms, there is palpable optimism that with diligent implementation of the public policy enhances transparency and accountability in the management of public funds towards Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority. The practice expectedly captures additional revenue to effectively fund more capital projects that lift the social welfare of Nigerians, (Aliogo, 2021). As laudable as the directive on Greater Port

Harcourt City Development Authority suggests, it is fraught with challenges which this administration may want to address for it to serve its purpose. In an economy, notorious for late passage of budgets, a treasury single account regime may hamper disbursement for capital projects and operational projections of MDAs, unless as some argue, a certain percentage of government receipts are retained for smooth operations by these MDAs, (Amenaghawon & Ilo, 2016).

Besides, most of the applied strategies to solve the problem of financial corruption in the country have not functioned expectedly. Thus, in seeking to ensure that corruption is limited to its barest minimum in Nigeria, President Buhari-led democratic administration has evolved at least three new strategies – Treasury Single Account (TSA), the Bank Verification Numbers (BVN), and the whistle-blowing policy. The first two succeeded in reducing the avenues of looting of national treasury and other forms of funds-related corruption in the country affect the implementation of Greater Port Harcourt City Development (Li, & Li, 2015). Public policy implementation has been described as the major problem confronting Nigeria in its effort to achieve national development. Implementation often turns out to be the graveyard of many policies. From experience, little attention is paid to the subject of policy implementation by policy makers. It is often taken for granted that once a policy is adopted by government (Li, & Li, 2015), it must be implemented and the desired goals achieved. And in most cases little or no attention is paid to the problems and complexities associated with execution of policies. Large amount of energy and resources are spent on designing and preparing plans for all kinds with little or no thought given to the complex chains of reciprocal interactions and variables required and this can be seen usually in the widening gap between intentions and results.

The situation of public policy implementation in Nigeria is best described by George Honadle and Rudi Klauss, (cited from Cookey-Gam, 2010) Implementation is the nemesis of designers, it conjures up images of plans gone awry and of social carpenters and masons who fail to build to specifications and thereby distort the beautiful blue prints for progress which were handed to them. It provokes memories of good ideas that did not work and places the blame on the second (and Second Class) member of the administration team. This is a typical situation in Nigeria, where the intention of designers of Policies is often underline by constellation of powerful forces of politics and administration coupled with prevalence of high level corruption. The resulting short-comings, difficulties and failures that have attended major policies in developing countries have help to direct attention to the need for planning explicitly, management of policy implementation in which adequate attention is paid to such factors as political variable and institutional capacity to execute and operate development projects. It also led to the emergence of theories and models particularly during the period of the United Nations second development plan decade in 1970, when emphasis shifted from plan formulation to plan feasibility. These theoretical constructs have been designed to help policy makers (Cookey-Gam, 2010), especially toward better understanding of the problems of policy implementation.

METHOD

The study employed a correlational research design, which was considered suitable for investigating the relationship between the study variables. Data were collected from staff across various departments of the Authority, including the Administrator's Office, Legal, Publications, Finance, Development Control, Administration, and Projects departments. The population of the study consisted of 360 staff members of GPHCDA. Since the population was considered manageable, the study adopted a census (purposive) sampling technique, whereby the entire population served as the sample size. Consequently, 360 questionnaire were distributed and successfully retrieved, representing a high response rate and ensuring adequate representation of the target population. Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized. Primary data were obtained directly from staff through a structured questionnaire titled *Greater Port Harcourt Policy Implementation and Service Delivery Questionnaire (GPPISDQ)*, while secondary data were sourced from official staff records. The questionnaire comprised demographic information and items measuring policy implementation strategies, service delivery outcomes, and challenges affecting implementation. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. To ensure validity, the instrument underwent face and content validation by the research supervisor and two experts in the field, whose recommendations were incorporated into the final version. Reliability was established through a pilot study

involving 40 staff members who were not part of the main sample. Using the Cronbach Alpha method, a reliability coefficient of 0.80 was obtained, indicating satisfactory internal consistency of the instrument. Data collection was conducted over a three-month period with the assistance of three research assistants. Data analysis involved the use of Mean and Standard Deviation to answer research question, while Spearman Rank Order Correlation and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were employed to test the hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance using SPSS version 22.0.

Data Analysis

Research Question: To what extent does fund allocation and utilization enhance policy implementation in Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority, 2009-2025?

Table 1: Showing Respondents' Rating of the Extent Fund Allocation and Utilization Enhance Policy Implementation in GPHCDA

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage	Scale point	Mean	SD	Decision
No Extent	15	4.2%	1			
Low Extent	42	11.7%	2			
Moderate Extent	138	38.3%	3			
High Extent	111	30.8%	4			
Very High Extent	54	15.0	5			
Total	360	100%		3.43	1.03	Moderate-to-High Extent

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The Table 1 Above indicates that majority (69.1%) of the respondents chose moderate extent, while 30.8% chose High extent. However, only 15.9% said Low and No Extent Mean value is 3.43, and on a 5-.point scale this falls between extent 3.0 and high extent 4., hence Moderate-to-High-Extent.. Standard Deviation (SD) figure of 1.03 indicates responses clustered fairly close to the mean.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between fund allocation and utilization and policy implementation in Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority, 2009-2025.

Table 2: Correlation analysis of Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority regarding the extent fund allocation and utilization enhance policy implementation between 2009-2025.

Variables	n	$\bar{X}$	Df	p-value	r-cal	r-crit	Remark
GPHCDA Fund Allocation	360	3.43					
			358	0.001	0.801	0.0112	Significant
Policy Implementation	360	3.34					

Field data, 2025 (GPHCDA=Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority)

Table 2 showed the correlation analysis of Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority regarding fund allocation and utilization and policy implementation in 2009-2025. With the degree of freedom 356 at 0.05 level of significance, the r-calculated value of 0.801 and r-critical of 0.0112. r-calculated is greater than r-critical and p-value of 0.001 is less than 0.05. The results indicate that there is significant relationship between fund allocation and utilization and policy implementation; $p < 0.05$ ($P = 0.001$). Thus, the value of fund allocation and utilization is statistically significant ($p < .05$) which means an increase in mean index of fund allocation and utilization will increase staff policy implementation by a positive unit mean index value of .801(80.1 percent).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Fund Allocation, Utilization and Policy Implementation

The study ascertains the extent fund allocation and utilization enhances policy implementation in Nigeria: A study of Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority in Rivers State 2009-2025. However, the study further found out the impact of a policy, project and programme can hardly be felt in the face of inadequate and inappropriate disbursement of funds for implementation, the adequacy of funds budgeted and appropriated for the implementation of the GPHCD master plan, the avenues or activities that those funds were used for. Also, the failure to implement plans has long been considered a significant barrier to effective planning and insufficient fund, systemic corruption by Rivers State politicians in the appropriation budget against GPHCDA master plan, couple with the fund allocated to GPHCD master plan that have not been accounted for since the inception of the plan. On the 2nd of April 2009, the Greater Port Harcourt City Development Law establishing Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority (GPHCDA) came into force. GPHCDA is a regulatory body with mandate to facilitate the implementation of the Greater Port Harcourt City Master Plan and build the New City called the Greater Port Harcourt City (Cookey-Gam, 2011). According to the pioneer Administrator of the Authority, the whole project was a call to duty with the mission to build a world class Garden City, thriving economically, operating efficiently, prosperously and assuring its residents a quality of life envied for its peacefulness, comfort and sustainability. In Cookey-Gam (2011) views was adequate fund budgeted and appropriated for the implementation of the GPHCDA master plan and how much was released and the various avenues or activities that those funds were used for.

The summary of the finding is provided hereunder:

The study showed that there is significant relationship between fund allocation and utilization and policy implementation; $p < 0.05$ ($P = 0.001$). Thus, the value of fund allocation and utilization is statistically significant ($p < .05$) which means an increase in mean index of fund allocation and utilization will increase policy implementation by a positive unit mean index value of .801(80.1 percent)

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that fund allocation and utilization play a critical role in enhancing policy implementation within the Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority (GPHCDA). The finding revealed a significant positive relationship between fund allocation and utilization and policy implementation, indicating that adequate and properly managed financial resources substantially improve the execution of development policies, projects, and programmes. Conversely, inadequate funding, poor disbursement practices, lack of accountability, and corruption in budget appropriation hinder effective implementation of the Greater Port Harcourt Master Plan. Therefore, the success of policy implementation largely depends on transparent, sufficient, and efficiently utilized financial resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Government should ensure adequate and timely release of funds for the implementation of the Greater Port Harcourt Master Plan. Also, strong financial monitoring and accountability mechanisms should be established by the Rivers State Government and its partners to prevent corruption and mismanagement. Furthermore, regular audits and transparent reporting systems should be enforced by the state authorities to guarantee effective utilization of allocated resources.

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