

ABSTRACT

The Role of Investment Strategies and E-Commerce in Poorly Accessible Regions of Nigeria as Tools for Economic Uplift.

by

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The direct and indirect or spatial impacts of transportation and concomitant investments in poorly accessible regions need to be evaluated in order to more realistically prioritize developmental funds in less developed regions. The case of the rural parts of Nigeria in West Africa is examined. In the study, the methodology of System Dynamics after (J.W. Forrester of MIT) and the technique of simulation are used to evaluate the overall impacts of transportation in an agricultural region of that developing nation, Nigeria. Benefits from production instead of traffic volume are quantitatively evaluated in the benefit/cost ratio, whereas population shifts in terms of rural in-or-out migration over time is assessed as the primary spatial impact using simulation technique. The approach used in this study is designed to show whether the impacts from the investment strategies are strongly based on the marginal costs of transportation, per se, or more on the removal of “hindrance” to the expansion of production and productivity and the reversal of urban migration. A number of investment strategies in roads, drainage, irrigation, mechanization, and fertilizer will be investigated and analyzed in order to determine their most favorable socio-economic characteristics in terms of population level, regional income per capita, out migration and unemployment. Finally, educational packages in digital divide with specific reference to e-commerce technology will be developed and introduced via seminars.

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Current Status: Field work not complete.

U. S. A.

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**Field
Trip Report
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**A TRIP REPORT DETAILING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS DURING
THE FIELD RESEARCH PERIOD FOR THE RESEARCH ON “THE
ROLE OF INVESTMENT STRATEGIES IN POORLY ACCESSIBLE
REGIONS OF NIGERIA AS TOOLS FOR ECONOMIC UPLIFT**

A competitive proposal on the above subject matter was submitted to SAGA/ Research Grants Office on February 28, 2003 and on May 21, 2003 a letter was received from Dr. Mesfin Bezuneh, Director for Competitive Research Grants announcing that the above research proposal had been chosen for funding. Based on the acceptance of the award from the Competitive Research (CRG) Program Of SAGA, travel arrangements were made for a round trip to Nigeria with the African Institute for Applied Economics based in Nigeria have been chosen as the host institution for the above research effort.

One of the requirements for successful proposals required a minimum stay of two months for the proposal writers. As a full time Professor at Grambling State University, and in order to meet the minimum overseas stay, I had to travel during the Summer of 2003. Due to the short notice, it was difficult getting a competitive flight rate from the airlines leaving from the small town of Monroe, Louisiana to Atlanta , Georgia to connect with the overseas flight.

Anyway, I took a Northwest Airline on E-Ticket # L77J67 on May 29, 2003, to Atlanta, Georgia where I connected with Air France # 301 to Paris. On May 30, 2003 and on Air France number 854 and at 10:55 AM, we departed France and arrived in Lagos, Nigeria at 4:15 GMT. The trip from Atlanta to Paris and then to Lagos was smooth, however, on reaching Lagos, one of my luggages did not arrive. I stayed at the Marriot Hotel on Number 25 Fatai Irawo Street, Ajao Estate, Lagos, until my luggage arrived and I had the opportunity to pick it up from the airport at Lagos.

Note that prior to my travel to Nigeria and on May 21, 2003, I purchased an insurance coverage from Travelex Insurance Services in the amount of \$80.00 to cover my trip. On June 2, 2003, I took a local flight (Sosoliso Airlines) to Enugu, the host city in Nigeria. At the Enugu Airport, I took a taxicab to the Hotel Metropole where I lodged for the duration of the research activities. Enugu Airport is in Emene town which is about twenty five miles from Enugu.

Realizing the importance of Communication and the fact that the telephone system in Nigeria was very inefficient, I bought a cellular phone at Lagos to enhance my research activities. The Cellular phone vendor was MAN and its network operated via phone cards in units of pre-determined amounts as will be reflected in the statements of expenses to be submitted.

At my hotel, I telephoned the Director of the host institute (A.I.A.E) and I told him about my arrival and my desire to meet with him. The Director gave me a warm welcome and I later went to work on June 3, 2003 at the Institute. Professor Charles C. Soludo introduced me to his fellow staff members. He gave me an office equipped with computers and air condition. Within the first week, Professor Soludo scheduled a seminar during which I had to present to his staff members the details of my proposed research project.

In consideration of the location of Enugu state with respect to the other states of Nigeria, I suggested at the seminar that Enugu state be used as the target area for the proposed research. Figure 1 above shows the map of the entire region of Nigeria with its thirty eight states that includes its federal capital territory. The state of Enugu is shown in blue shade. Enugu state is essentially located on much of the highlands of the towns of Awgu, Udi, and Nsukka, and also on the rolling low lands of the Ebonyi River basin to the west. The state occupies an area of 12,791 square kilometers and that constitutes about 1.39 percent of the total land area of Nigeria. The state is bounded by seven other states as Figure 1 above depicts. Note that in the West, the state is bounded by Anambra state, in the East, it is bounded by Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, in the South, by Abia and Imo states, and in the North, by Benue and Kogi states. Based on the 1991 census of population, the state has a population of 3,161,295 residents. Figure 2 shows the details of all the various towns in Enugu with the names of all the headquarters of the various local governments show in small circles.

Furthermore, Enugu renders herself a state of interest for the research because the state which used to be known as coal city is not anymore, but an agricultural state with many of her peasant farmers living in the rural areas. Enugu coal had a lot of sulphur and as such makes it less desirable for energy. Enugu, essentially, would serve as a typical sample of choice, such that the procedures used in