



Article

Reconciling the Two Publics? State/Society Harmonization through Participatory Budgeting in Anambra State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

The existence of both the primordial and modern public spheres in Nigeria in which individuals share simultaneous membership but with differential attachments, trust and obligations to both spheres mirror the tension of state and society. In the differential obligations and degrees of acceptance of both publics, the primordial public enjoys a higher preference and therefore more participation. However, a recent civil society intervention in Anambra State not only led to a systematic horizontal cooperation of ensembles in the primordial public but also a vertical linkage between them and state departments, for participatory budgeting. Deploying the method of process tracing, this paper explores whether participatory budgeting in the state has resolved the tension and distrust in state/society relations. Using Anambra State experience of participatory budgeting, we propose a grounded theory of state-society nexus. Evidence from the field indicates that what is opened up yet for vertical integration of primordial and civil segments of the two publics is only a fractional slice of the annual budgets. Nonetheless, vertical integration has pulled together several otherwise apathetic primordial groups into active participation in the civic sphere and offers optimism that the primordial and civic publics could be united for democratic popular participation and accountability.

Keywords

Two Publics, Reconciling, Participatory-budgeting, Anambra State, Harmonization.

Introduction

One of the essential contexts of citizen inclusion in governance is the budget process. Popular knowledge of the income and expenditure of the government and their ability to ask relevant questions or engage the state for corrective actions in the face of inconsistencies around public finance issues translates to effective citizenship and potential for the deepening of democracy. To build a citizen-centered governance the Workers Party in Porto Alegre Brazil in the 1980s took the radical measure of involving the citizens in the budgeting processes and gave rise to participatory budgeting (Souza, 2001) which has become the contemporary best practice in democratic public finance management.

The important act of opening a framework of citizen action is useful for newly democratizing African states because, such agency role was encumbered by the nature of colonial state and its post-colonial survivor in which the citizen is alienated from the state through systematic exclusion from participation. Essentially, there is a psychological division of the state into two realms as Ekeh (1975) argued. One of

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such realms is that of the modern state represented by the terrain of politics and public service while the other realm is that of the traditional institutions of existence which structures the life of ordinary citizens including how they respond to matters that are connected with the sphere of authority. Basically, the modern state in Nigeria commands a minimal or no legitimacy before the ordinary people hence its processes like participation in civic life or even the role of citizen oversight on government are done as a matter of either compulsion in cases like taxation or convenience in regard to duties like election. In thinking about participation in the budgetary process, the citizen does not feel concerned. To re-emphasize, the attitude of indifference draws from the alienation of citizens from the modern state.

To explain the alienation of the members of the political community from the state, the idea of bifurcation of the colonial state into two realms of citizens and subjects, had been advanced by Mamdani (2002) to show denials of rights of members of the same political community (referred to as subjects) while according privileges to others as citizens. A related theoretical reflection on the postcolonial state by Ekeh (1975) categorized the two realms of the African states as the two publics. According to him, there is a disconnection between state and society in Africa because, in the consciousness of the African, there exists two publics with contrasting moral imperatives. One of the publics is the modern or civic public which is expressed in the modern structures of governance that came with colonial contact. Some of its appurtenances include the institutions of civil service, the police, prison system, the judiciary and the legislative arm of the state. The other public is the traditional public in which primordial groupings, ties and sentiments determine people's public behavior. The latter had been the basis of organization of society prior to colonial contact. The institutions that express the traditional public may include the clan, age grades, women groups, traditional stool of the society, ethnic groups (authors' illustrations), etc. Between these two publics, the citizen of the new order established by colonialism is more in sync with the traditional or primordial rather than the civic or modern public which they regard as alien. Thus the citizen of the modern African state, belongs to both the primordial or traditional public and the civic or modern public but with greater inclination towards the primordial public.

The civic public does not have deep connection with the individual, hence there is no shared moral imperative between the citizen and the institutions of the modern public. But the traditional public is taken to be an integral part of the person's life and is supported and enabled even at personal costs. Indeed, a person entrusted with public office in the traditional public will never risk his hand in the till. In contrast, the same individuals who simultaneously share membership of the two publics and strives to maintain integrity in the traditional public, if given an opportunity, may rob the modern public. They feel no moral obligation to be accountable to the modern or civic public. In fact, successful despoliation of the modern public is done without any sense of moral burden because it is believed that the wealth which is robbed from that modern public would in some ways benefit the traditional public (see Ekeh, 1975). In consequence, the post-colonial Nigeria citizen hardly feels any obligations to participate in budget governance because such a role is considered to belong to privileged managers of state power.

Based on the foregoing narrative, there exists a modern state which everybody belongs to *de jure* but nobody protects. Its functional relevance is the distributive function in which care and protection are expected from the state but with no sense of obligation or duty from the citizen to support the government (Osaghae, 2003). Public neglect therefore leaves the affairs of the state without the popular vigilance that is necessary to support governance accountability. Nonetheless, the commencement of participatory budgeting in Anambra State with the use of a method which penetrates organizational centres of the primordial public appears to have stimulated unusual interests in governance among citizens who were initially indifferent and apathetic. It is therefore pertinent to find out if the extension of participatory opportunities to important primordial institutions via an emerging budgeting regime and the interest it has prompted provides a framework for harmonizing the primordial and modern publics. Thus we interrogate the idea of the two publics side by side with the emerging participatory budgeting in Anambra State.

The Local Context of Politics, Society and Participation in Anambra State

Citizens do not see that the public sector supports a model of state that cares and is therefore treated with disregard and apathy. To illustrate, among the Igbos of Nigeria (Anambra State is almost completely Igbo), a distinction is made between *olu obodo* (community work) and *olu oyibo* (Government work) which respectively correspond to Ekeh's primordial and civic publics. Community work is done with commitment while government work is done as a mere perfunctory routine. It is in this regard that the administrator of the East Central State had in 1972 admonished the people to reject the conception of the state as a foreign institution standing outside the community and whose money, property and goals are not the direct responsibility and the concern of the community. He then advised that they should accept what they regard as government work (*olu oyibo*) as *olu obodo* i.e. community work (Oyediran and Gboyega, cited in Osaghae, 2003).

The reason why the modern state did not penetrate sufficiently to achieve citizens' trust is that colonialism, instead of supporting the emergence of generalized democratic citizenship, inadvertently created two layers of membership of the political community namely, citizen and subject. Citizenship rights were racialized and made a privilege of the colonialists while the subject status defined the colonized people (Mamdani, 2002). Under such conditions, the subjects either ignored participation in the civic public or made resistance the defining character of their engagement with the state. The period following colonialism continued with exclusionary practices against the broad masses of the citizen suggesting a betrayed popular expectations of democratic inclusion from political independence (see Nzongola-Ntalaja, 1997). The changes brought about in the post-colonial order were mostly around personnel of government whereas the structure of privileges which favour the elite remains intact (see Ake, 1996, Chabal, 2009). African elites that replaced the colonialists ran exclusionary, undemocratic governments that failed to nurture civic participation as an important component of governance. Hence citizens do not see that they have roles in governance, budgetary processes, needs identification and prioritization and demand for accountability. Unable to see their relevance in governance and development or feel the impact of governance in their everyday lives, the citizens retreated further into the primordial space in which they find a caring community.

In spite of the above narrative, a new practice is emerging around governance, budget administration and accountability in Anambra State, Nigeria. Budgeting has recently been decentralized to a level of participation that includes Anambra State Town Union Associations (ASATU) and other subsidiary Community Based Organisations (CBOs) which in most instances are dense network of groups within the primordial space. The Town Union is a very important group that is absent in formal coordination of government business, yet is the most important hub for organizing peoples' lives among the Igbos of the South-Eastern Nigeria. Recently, ASATU has been permitted a level of participation in budget planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in Anambra State.

The above innovation is in the nature of participatory budgeting (PB) introduced through the facilitation of Voice to the People (V2P) initiative. The V2P funded by an NGO, Christian Aid Nigeria, had interest in creating conditions for widening the democratic space by stimulating public interest in governance through participatory budgeting. Prior to this, a generalized lack of interest defined popular attitude to the sphere of budget, public policy and governance.

Out of the 181 communities in Anambra State, V2P was witnessed by 56 spread across the three senatorial districts in the state. V2P led to mutual cooperation between the town unions and other types of primordially oriented civil society contexts, and the state. Such a development is believed to be creating a new order of relations between state and society which departs from the apathy, indifference and distrust which had been the common attitude of the citizens. In that connection, this paper seeks to expand the conceptual frame of the two publics by Peter Ekeh (1975) in the analysis of the vertical integration of state and society in Anambra State in the framework of participatory budgeting and

accountability, with a view to drawing implications for the emerging state-society relations which appear to alter the citizens' abandonment of the civic public (the state) in preference for primordially constructed spaces. Centrally, we argue that the emerging matrix of relations between the two publics appear to be characterized less by tensions and distrust due to the new order of relations arising from a regime of participatory budgeting.

A Note on Methods

The overarching approach for this work is the process tracing methodology. Beach and Pederson (2013) defined process tracing as tools to study causal mechanisms in a single case design. Process tracing tries to follow the causal processes that connect phenomena in social research. The authors advanced three uses of process tracing, namely, theory-testing, theory-building and explaining outcome. Two of the three uses are relevant for us here namely, explaining outcome and theory building. At the earlier phase of the research, we apply process tracing for explaining the outcome of vertical integration (a process that connects primordial spaces of town unions and groups with the governmental spaces to increase participation in budget and its implementation) on accountability and governance. In the second phase of this work, we seek a theoretical lens for looking at the vertical integration and its linkage with harmonizing the civic and modern publics.

The area of study, Anambra state is located in South eastern Nigeria with twenty-one Local Government Areas, three senatorial districts and a population of 5.5 million (National Bureau of Statistics (2016). It has 21 local Government areas, 181 communities which are divided into three senatorial zones.

In terms of design, we focused on Anambra State as a case and started by building a process that supports accountability through the stimulation of public participation. We connected various traditional spheres of citizens' existence with the government especially the spheres that are useful for their everyday lives but were not part of public governance and accountability systems. To achieve the above plan, we set up with the support of a funder, a vertical integration model that connects the primordial sphere (local contexts of community organizing like town unions women and youth groups in which citizens have greater confidence) with the modern sphere of government in which they do not have a lot of trust. The integration was done around the context of budgeting. Citizens were supported to draw up through their traditional system of organizing (town unions), Community Charter of Demands (CCD) that articulates their input into government budgeting. Secondly, ordinary citizens were taught how to understand the budget and track areas that affect them. To monitor and track the budgets, the communities were enabled to set up Community Based Monitors (CBMs). The idea was to build a network among community based organisations as well as link them to state actors in order to increase the ability of the community groups to make inquiries related to the provision of services as contained in the budget. The aim of this was to set up a broad-based system of demand and accountability. A successful advocacy with the focal state authority (Anambra State), made the government to open spaces for the primordial centres of citizen activities especially the town union organisations to be linked with state actors for systematic input into the annual budget.

To find out the outcome of the above design, we applied Key Informant Interviews with a spatial spread to represent the three senatorial districts of the state (Anambra North, Anambra Central and Anambra South each comprising seven Local Government Areas). The respondents were traditional rulers, president generals of town unions, women and youth leaders, two members of the state parliament, information officers at the local government, top government officials at the state executive and legislature. We also did Focus Group Discussions that concentrated on the relevant Community Based Organisations including union of daughters of each clan, members of age grade, titled men and members of the traditional rulers' cabinet. In all, we obtained 18 key informant interviews with 6 from each of the senatorial districts and 6 FGDs with 2 taking place in each of the three senatorial districts. Practical findings from the field were supplemented with Document analysis. Materials from the field were

qualitatively analysed and presented in a narrative approach. We found that as a result of the vertical integration process in Anambra State, there is increased citizen voice in the planning and monitoring of government projects in the state; institutionalization of the Community Charter of Demand as part of the government budgeting process; expansion of the participatory space in local governance especially for women and other excluded groups; increase in community perception of their ability to influence the government and attract its attention and increasing perception of improvement in quality of service delivery.

Vertical Integration and Harmonization of Two Publics: A Conceptual Proposition

Based on the outcome of the vertical integration model explained above, we set up a proposition that if vertical integration successfully links up primordial structures of community organization, stimulates participation and accountability, then the bifurcation between the primordial and civic publics increasingly becomes reconciled. We not only interrogate the theory of the two publics in this work, but also use the theory-building process-tracing to explore our assumption that vertical integration and participatory budgeting increases the convergence between the two publics. Theory-building process tracing is one in which if an intervention A, is believed to have led to an outcome B and on the basis of outcome B, an extended effect happens on a different phenomenon C. In this case, our proposition is on the effect of the interaction of A and B on another phenomenon C, which is the nexus of primordial and civic publics.

To be more explicit, we are extrapolating from the interaction of given variables namely vertical integration and participatory budgeting on accountability on the one hand. Then on the other hand we want to relate the result of this process on easing the of tension between traditional and modern spheres of the society. Our manner of grounded-theory building draws from one of Anderson and Kragh's (2010) two approaches for qualitative theory building namely extrapolation. Extrapolation permits the use of insights from an original theory to critically open up alternative broad framework for looking at empirical materials (see Alvesson and Kareman, 2007 cited in Anderson and Kragh, 2010). This is done after presenting the field findings of the results of vertical integration on participation on and accountability.

We explore the easing of tensions between the two publics by analyzing information from FGDs and interviews in terms of how the citizens perceive the emerging relationship between state and society. Typical inclination of the respondents would be the basis of decision about the trend of relations of the two publics. We regard the emerging conclusion as a grounded theoretical statement on participatory budgeting and state-society relations only in regard to our study's frame of reference.

State-Society Relations and Participatory Budgeting: the State of Knowledge

Participatory Budgeting (PB) according to Goldfrank (2007) was championed by a few parties between 1990 and 2005 as a step towards reinventing socialism but later turned to a best practice in mainstream international development community's toolkit for reducing poverty and practicing good governance. PB expanded between a dozen cities in Brazil to 250 cities and later, 2500 in Latin American states. It is in the view of Goldfrank (2007), a process through which citizens contribute to decision making over at least part of a government budget. The author further analysed other definitions as revolving around emphasis on factors like individual participation, combination of direct and representative democracy, deliberation (not merely consultation), redistributive character of PB towards the poor

The brief history of PB which was rendered by Goldfrank (2007) goes back to the 1970s and 1980s when the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB) started the practice of presenting their budget for public deliberation. However, the consistent use and popularization of PB in Brazil was done by the Workers Party (PT) when it won the 1989 election in Porto Alegre. Generally, the adoption of PB by PT is tied to the transformation of the Latin American left in the 1970s and 1980s. The transformations included a

change from the view that socialism is inevitable to a notion that it is an open-ended process to be constructed. Democracy was no longer seen in simplistic terms as a ploy for bourgeois domination, but as crucial to any socialist project. Also, the guiding construct for the left became 'radical democracy' (also called deepening democracy and democratizing democracy). In their campaign proposals, one finds four key elements in the concept of radical democracy that guided their approach to participatory budgeting: 1) Direct citizen participation in government decision-making processes and oversight, 2) Administrative and fiscal transparency to prevent corruption, 3) Concrete improvements in urban infrastructure and services and focus on the poor and 4) Changing political culture, conceived as the transformation of city residents into citizens or from political objects of clientelist practices into political subjects cognizant of democratic rights.

We can find in the history and philosophy of PB that its originating political environment tends to be more mature in terms of rendering the dialectics of class forces more visible because, it is an ideological product of radical workers party (PT) which intends to counter the authoritarian mainstream politics of the central government in favour of the citizens. The originators of PB were interested in an alternative social project that would gradually mature to upset the status quo in Brazil. Nigeria's case is different in terms of ideological maturation of class struggle. In the Nigerian case, PB is an imported phenomenon through the agency of International Development Partners which utilize local civil society platforms to promote popular voice and encourage participation. Its aim is to empower the citizens by working through community (mostly primordial) organisations that command higher trust than the government and also more capable of mobilizing the people. In effect, it does not like the initial experiment of Porto Alegre, have a strategic aim of altering any social project. Instead it aims at promoting citizens voice in demand for accountability, efficiency of resource use, curbing corruption and building a culture of good governance. These are not outside of the original aims in the case of Brazil. But the point here is that in Anambra state, promoting these elements is facilitated not by the left, but by mainstream NGOs that seeks to advance the liberal democracy project through the culture of participatory good governance.

The power and legitimacy of democracy draw from participation. But the emergent representative model which is susceptible to elite capture usually raises the bar of adequate participation for ordinary people beyond elections especially with respect to critical decision making.. Several writers on participatory budgeting including Baiocchi and Ganuza (2014), Sintomer and Roche (2008), Cabannes, (2004), Wampler (2000) share the consensus that PB is a mechanism to restore a level of direct citizen participation in the policy process.

For Schneider and Goldfrank (2002), PB has done more than the simple expansion of the political power of the lower-class groups because it advances the popular vision of democracy in which citizens participate directly in decision-making. Popular actors are invited to the budget process and they make direct impact on the allocation of resources. Nonetheless, Baiocchi and Ganuza (2014) raised the important concern about the smooth development of the communicative dimension of PB but not the empowerment aspect. They expressed the communicative dimension as the open democratic meetings for project identification and prioritization while the connection of those meetings to centres of decision making is the empowerment aspect. Their central message in this regard is that PB only broadly discusses issues of popular need, yet handles only a minute slice of the budget.. In a comparative study of Bolivia, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Peru, Goldfrank (2007) found in the case of Bolivia, that community demands are not effectively transmitted into budgets. Thus, when we think about PB in terms of direct citizen participation in decision making and oversight, its limited capacity tend to make it appear like a populist mechanism to keep the masses busy.

Wu and Wang (2011) had a similar finding on PB in Wuxi of the Jiangsu province of China in which funds to be decided by citizens cover only a small amount of short-term construction projects often determined within governments. It started as an experimental stage in Anambra State in 2017 with a

three-year total budget allocation of ten billion, eight hundred and eleven million, five hundred and twenty-four thousand three hundred and twenty-two Naira (N10,811,524,322). Out of this amount the 2017 budget has a share of N3,600,000,.2018 budget allocation to PB projects is N3,603,600,000, while the 2019 budget was allocated N3, 607,924,322. (Anambra State, 2017). In each of the above three years referred above, the PB projects received less than 5 percent of the budget share for each of the budget years in focus.

Not only that, PB revolves around less than 5 percent of the budget in each of the first three years of its experiment, its future progress is tied to favourable disposition of elected officials and other vested interests. In fact, the policy that supports PB in Anambra state gives it a lifespan of three years from 2017 to 2019 in the first instance. As the Latin American experience shows, vested interests are likely to present obstacle to the expansion of PB beyond a certain portion of the budget and even its success. So, the progress of PB is likely to remain at promoting limited direct democracy and this is not far from the case in some Latin American experiments outside Porto Alegre.

In terms of administrative and fiscal transparency to prevent corruption, the story of PB has a mixed outcome. De Sousa Santos (1998) found that the middle class in Porto Alegre overcame its fear and became involved in PB due to its freedom from corruption in the use of municipal resources and improvement in the kind of municipal services that are of interest to the middle class. But some challenges of corruption have yet to disappear. For instance, Wampler (2000) cautioned that politics in Brazil which is the cradle of PB continues to be dominated by patronage practices, exclusion and corruption though there is an admission about reduced levels of corruption through transparent processes, effective use of resources and redistribution in favour of the poor. No doubt, a corruption-free process is likely to be attractive. This is fundamentally because, part of why some citizens resort to apathy is the belief that the public sector is a space of corruption which is captured in favour of entrenched forces.

Nigeria shares significant similarity with Latin America regarding the dearth of transparency. Ekeh's (1975) earlier referred account of popular distance from the civic public is a consequence of a political practice characterized by, nepotism, corruption and prebendalism all of which continue to be reinforced by the limited instrumental value of the state in carrying out its functions. Ekeh's society-based approach according to Osaghae (2003), shows that the state is soft, weak and ineffective due largely to its private realm which constitutes the source of societal morality. The form and character of the state depend largely on the nature and functions of civil society and its relationship with the state.

In further analysis of Ekeh by Osaghae, the author argued that in the bifurcated publics, two elements distinguish the primordial public. One is the strong sense of ownership by its constituents who fiercely resist state intrusions other than those that are of immediate benefit. The other is that the primordial public is considered moral and operates on the same moral imperatives as the private realm. At the same time, the primordial private and public spaces discountenance the civic public. Citizens whose lives revolve between the private realm and the primordial public therefore, do not expect that state policies count.. Thus the PB initiative in Anambra state envisions a transcendence of mass indifference to the civic public and its policy processes.

The participation of the people in identifying and prioritizing their own project, monitoring its implementation and forming the core team for its monitoring and evaluation was central to the acceptance of participatory budgeting (see Amakom, Fashola, Gay and Shutt, 2017). Popular participation not only ground governance on popular will, but also promotes transparency to limit or prevent corruption. In a more developed practice as Wampler (2000) reports in the case of Porto Alegre, contract bids are also monitored by participants in the PB process so that the best bid in terms of funds and quality of work wins in each project contract. Besides, bribes for contract and implementation were also reigned in.

One important point that needs to be raised here is that the difference between the Anambra State experiment of PB with those of the Latin America is that the most important basis of popular mobilization was used in Anambra, namely, Association of Town Unions (ATUs) and in the case of a few urbanized communities, major community associations and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) were used. ATUs exert important hold on individuals in Eastern Nigeria where Anambra is located. In fact, among the Igbo, it is not only a strongly established primordial organisation, but it is one which commands substantial loyalty from its members.

The rationale for loyalty to the primordial organisations is that such associations undertake social responsibility for its members, undertake community development, and intervene in special instances where their members have problems. In short, it fills the gaps of social provisioning and protection left by the state. Command of loyalty by the town unions and other primordial units derive from both ties of kinship among members and its protective functions for members. So, when such associations whose members have little trust for the government are invited to be part of a process of resource allocation as it affects them, it seems to be a way of assisting the association with part of its functions for the community.

In a study of PB in selected Brazilian cities, Cabannes (2004) found that it led to change in citizens' tax-paying habits evidenced by increase in tax revenues. If participatory budgeting does not translate to such changes in Anambra state including general improvement in other ranges of participation like voting, then the age-old notion that the individuals from the primordial public would have no qualms about taking from the civic public for the benefit of the primordial public (see Ekeh, 1975) still holds true. It is the participatory activities of the citizens towards the long survival of the system in the civic public that lifts them from political objects of government and public policies to rights-bearing democratic citizens.

To sum it, PB has had an extensive coverage in literature in terms of its impacts on direct citizens participation in decision-making, administrative and fiscal transparency to cut down on corruption, redistribution of resources in favour of the poor, improvements in infrastructure and transformations in political culture (Bassoli, 2012; Rogers, 2010; Marquetti, Schonerwald and Campbell, 2012; Krenjova and Raudla, 2013; McNulty, 2012; Avritzer, 2006). However, it is clear that Latin American and Western emphasis of the discourses are not able to understand and properly account for the policy process with regard to the effects of bifurcation between state and society in the African public sphere. The existence of both the primordial and modern public spheres in Nigeria in which individuals share simultaneous membership but with differential attachment, trust and obligations to both spheres is problematic and needs to be understood as a nuanced case in the experiences of PB. In fact, in the differential obligations and degrees of acceptance of both publics, the primordial public enjoys a higher order of preference and therefore more participation. The loss of participation in the civic public corresponds with active participation in the primordial public. The absence of political trust in the civic public corresponds with trust in the primordial public. The net loss for the state therefore is a net gain for the traditional authority system. In accounting for PB therefore, analysis that fail to grasp these dynamics of politics in Nigeria would concentrate on urban politics and class driven discourses which can only superficially explain the Nigerian and some African failures of participatory governance. Understanding the tensions related to the divides between the primordial and civic public and how they play out in political decision-making is one factor that bears emphasis in explaining the character of PB in Nigeria.

Civil society, Vertical Integration, Horizontal Alliances: Network Governance in Bridging the Primordial and Civic Publics in Anambra State

The Anambra experiment corroborates Wampler's (2000) claim that NGOs can assist in the establishment of PB in oversea countries or set up conditions that could lead to it. Prior to the establishment of PB in Anambra state, everything about budgeting was direct concern of the primary

stakeholders comprising all the ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of Government and the State Executive Council; the State Legislature. Planning, budget and budgeting were coordinated by two Ministries (Finance and Economic Planning). During this period, the Ministry of Finance was in-charge of recurrent expenditure while Ministry of Economic Planning was responsible for capital expenditure aspect of the budget. But reforms towards inclusive and participatory budgeting started around 2006 through the intervention of a consortium of donor partners led by the EU Support for Reforming Institutions (EU – SRIP), the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and DFID funded State Partnership for Accountability Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC). To adjust for the movement towards inclusive budgeting and governance, the Budget Department of the State moved from the Finance Ministry to the Ministry of Economic Planning. The EU-SRIP facilitated the formation of a coalition of NGOs namely, the Coalition for Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance (COTAGG) and began to promote PB. Such a coalition of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are deemed to be closer to the people and therefore to understand their needs. During the campaign of COTAGG the state government was encouraged to develop a budgetary calendar which it made available to all stakeholders (see Amakom, Fashola, Gay and Shutt, 2017).

The COTAGG on the one hand and the intervention from EU-SRIP, the World Bank and the UNDP on the other hand inevitably received government's attention, and led to the formation of the Anambra State Stakeholders Forum which later transmuted to Anambra State Participatory Budget Forum (ASPBF). The forum was an annual event with members of Anambra state Association of Town Unions (ASATU) which is an umbrella association for all communities in the state. In the forum, the Presidents Generals (PGs) of the town unions interacted with top government officials from the Ministry of Economic Planning and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) office.

In spite of the above initial efforts, there were still some gaps in establishing PB and these include the top-down nature of the process, the faulty assumption that NGOs and PGs can adequately represent the people especially without any clear evidence that there were consultations between them and the people they represented; confinement of government involvement to the Ministry of Economic Planning and the absence of any policy to involve the Local Government.

The top-down character of the process at this period and its limited coverage produced minimal impact. Besides the umbrella organization of the CSOs in the state was high-jacked, thus causing the coalition to crumble. The CSOs as a matter of fact, were not yet sufficiently empowered because they depended on donor funds and were susceptible to the effects of political power. More so, most local NGOs that had close interaction with the State Government started seeing themselves as part of the Government rather than as popular vanguards for transparency, efficient use of resources and public accountability.

The above early experiences of PB had their weaknesses but nevertheless, provided the needed background for vertical integration. Vertical integration according to Fox and Aceron (2016) tries to address power imbalances by emphasizing the coordinated independent oversight of public sector actors at local, sub-national, national and transnational levels. In the Nigerian example, it involves coalition between both civic and social actors who have common focus on a goal. The specific instance of Anambra includes varieties of CSOs like NGOs, Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), Professional Associations (PAs), which work together for policy change and more efficient services. In the process, local and state level watchdogs were created in the form of Community Based Monitors (CBMs), given capacity and enabled to network and engage with local, state and national level governments and bodies. This was done by connecting civil society groups with different levels of government in a kind of vertical state-society relationship which seeks to overcome the culture of disconnection of civic groups from the policy and governance.

The integration of civic groups and state institutions in Anambra state took place at two levels. First, there was a horizontal integration of the network of local civil society. These are dense network of CBOs existing in the primordial spaces and performing different functions for the communities. Such groups include “Umu Ogbo” (Age Grade), “Umuada” or “Umuokpu” (Clan Daughters), “Ogbo na-achi Obodo” (The Ruling Age Grade), different youth groups (girls and boys alike), Community or Town Unions among others. The existence of such a mass of organized groups within the local villages suggests that the primordial communities have robust spaces that promote social capital but have been largely unharnessed as relevant resources for participatory mobilization in the civic public. These groups were encouraged to participate in deliberations that culminate in the Community Charters of Demand (CCD). Evidence of participation of such groups in the meetings that culminate in the CCD must accompany the submission of the document to the government’s budget office. The second level of integration is the vertical one in which articulations of community needs made by the various civic groups are submitted to the government through the town unions. What stands out among these groups is that prior the horizontal and vertical integration, each group focused on its functions in the community and hardly worked together as coalitions for a common purpose.

Other groups that were found to exist in the communities include different FBOs that belonged to different churches, fraternities and cooperatives of different genres, all of which work for the good of the community, but operate independent of one another. The existence of the groups in their separate worlds was the case before V2P intervention. V2P was able to bring the local CBOs and FBOs together and trained them on how to hold persons in public positions accountable. The point of pulling the disparate groups together was to achieve horizontal integration to support the vertical linkages established between state offices and societal groups. At the beginning, members of the groups doubted the remote possibility that they could hold government accountable. But the V2P capacity building trainings and the results it achieved when the people experimented on demands for services and accountability using their various group platforms was quite contrary to their doubts (see Amakom, Fashola, Gay and Shutt, 2017). Interestingly, the CCD of the various communities is now used as a budget planning tool by the State Ministry of Economic Planning.

The various identified groups in the society which were horizontally connected decided to create smaller committees to handle different sectors such as: health, education, agriculture, water and sanitation and other committees which were considered relevant, depending on the needs of the communities. Different committees are responsible for visitations to Local Government Councils for presenting sectoral demands. When such demands are beyond the Local Government, the Committee involved is referred to the relevant Ministry at the State level mostly in the common areas of education, health, water and sanitation and agriculture. Within a few months, some of the communities observed that the missions of the committees were being responded to in the form of the implementation of some of the projects they requested for.

The need for project monitoring led to the establishment of Community Empowerment Network (COMEN). It is a CBO which is a product of different capacity building on monitoring projects through V2P intervention. COMEN is present in all 21 Local Governments in Anambra state and mobilizes CBOs and FBOs and others across all communities. In terms of project monitoring activities, the group has expanded from monitoring projects across all communities at the Local Government level to monitoring state and federal level projects.

As a broad mobilizational space for civil society engagement with the state, COMEN currently partners with President Generals (PGs) of the Anambra State Association of Town Unions (ASATU), women leaders, traditional rulers, women in government, State House of Assembly (provincial parliament), House of Representative Members (Members of the lower chamber of the National Parliament) and Senators (Members of the upper chamber of the National Parliament) from Anambra state. Indeed, the

role of COMEN is one of the typical illustrations of the vertical and horizontal integration for engagements on better service delivery and transparency. It not only coordinates the groups including the CBOs and the FBOs in various communities, it equally connects with the government on core issues of governance as it affects the citizens.

One classic illustration of COMEN's work in relation to budget and projects in Anambra state is that through their input in governance, an approval of 20 Million Naira was approved for every community in Anambra state in 2017 for projects agreed and prioritized in the Community Charter of Demands (Anambra State, 2017). COMEN has monitored the entire projects to ascertain whether: 1) the projects implemented in each community is the same as submitted in the CCD. 2) the quality specified in the contract has been met. Communities are only able to access their share of further allocations only if local COMEN in that community certifies the usage of the earlier funds beginning with the first N20 Million. In this regard, communities now submit reports on projects in their domain to COMEN's Local Government coordinator for endorsement. It is the approval of such report that qualifies the community for funding in the next round of disbursement from the State Government. In a programme evaluation interaction, a member of women Action Committee in Awka town noted that the project "opened the eyes of the people in the area of governance (Personal Communication, 2016). A woman leader in Ebenebe captured their experience in this way,

...since our engagement with government, everybody has now become interested in government affairs. So whenever there is a call for meeting, everybody responds without asking for money...we articulate our community needs and put them in the charter of demand. So far, government has built health centre for us but it has not been well-equipped... the people are now aware of their rights and demand for it. We have understood that government is us and we are government... (Personal Communication, 2016).

The awareness created in the populace to place demands on the government and decentralization of community development funding through government's 'Choose your project' initiative tends to resonate well with communities as they directly decide what project they need and actually supervise it. As a result, it has continued to be part of the government's budget after the first three experimental years (2017 to 2019). In the 2020 Approved Budget, the state government has made another three-year budgetary allocation the PB called to run from 2020 to 2022 (see Anambra State Government, 2020). Besides, the legislative arm of the state not only supports 'Choose your Project' initiative, but also instructed the Ministry of Local Government Affairs to supervise its implementation (Anambra Broadcasting Service, nd).

Vertical and Horizontal Integration versus the Two Publics

The intervention to actuate the interest and energy of the people in matters related to governance, participation and accountability in Anambra is novel because it builds on social forces domiciled in the primordial public whose latent energy has been ignored at the expense of generalized popular participation in the policy and governance processes. For the first time, groups that are too powerful to be ignored in local traditions and FBOs were brought into the loop of budget planning and project monitoring. To illustrate the power of some of the groups in local communities or home town, the "Umuada" or "Umuokpu" (translates daughters of the land) institution is highly respected among the Igbo of Nigeria and their decisions bear enormous weight. The same applies to those of the elders, the king and the traditional council. Apart from the power of traditional institutions within local villages, the town union which is the umbrella organization in a town is another important power centre because in each community, it coordinates members of such community who are based in their local villages as well as those who have migrated into urban townships for livelihoods. Indeed, members who live in various urban centres form branches of the town union in those urban communities and remain united under one president general. Members are usually committed to their obligations to this group and are easily mobilized for its purposes. As a result, the office of the President General (PG) of the town unions is one of influence and power as far as community mobilization is concerned.

The V2P programme tapped from the hidden energy of these groups and anchored its intervention of capacity building and empowerment on citizenship education with focus on the centrality of participation. It also gave them the relevant competences to demand for both services and accountability. Not only that, the potency of the democratic agency of the popular masses was enhanced by making them understand how they could constitute problem-solving networks for articulating input and demands into the political system. Besides, the networks are vertically linked with the state budget process via the CCD or the realm of the civic public. Indeed, a response at Umumbo community in Anambra State demonstrate an unusual confidence of approaching the government by a rural community as a response suggests:

We were able to visit our representative in the House of Assembly.... Regarding our school, the students do not have seats and their teachers were few. This changed after the visit. We have no road, but now, they have started construction... (FGD, 2016).

We volunteer two possible explanations for the receptivity of the programme to integrate different groups to work together for confidence building on the people about their agency potentials on government, transparent and efficient use of public resources in a formation where groups in society are not known for political trust on the state. The first has to do with the role of capacity building of the V2P programme. For the first time, a people largely unaware of their rights and powers were provided with education on citizenship rights and how to exercise such rights, principally by using the group framework which they found out, works well. The second is the possibility of an outplay of the common notion of the state in Nigeria which is that, it is a distributive centre where resources from national receipts are allocated and therefore the mobilized local groups in this project may actually be more interested in obtaining their own share of the pie. If the latter is the case, then PB would have only succeeded in expanding the distribution spaces of national resources.

Harmony of the Two Publics? Towards a Grounded Theory

In making a theoretical statement about the nature of state society relations that the nature of intervention for participation in Anambra State has brought about, we propose that if ensembles from the primordial and civic publics engage in sustainable institutionalized active interaction on public finance concerns, with increasing integration of voices from below in public decision-making, then the two publics are trending towards harmony. Since the integrated civic networks contribute to budget processes, it has opened a channel of potentially sustainable harmonious relationship between the primordial and civic public.

To consider how vertical integration that builds on effective citizenship from below, impacts on relations between the traditional and modern publics, we draw from the respondents' view on the changing attitudes of the people in matters that relate with engaging with the state. Centrally, demands for services and responsive outcomes create a sense of care by government and the ownership of the government by the citizens. Then on the part of the government, we find out whether the institutional conditions that prompted participation in budgeting is structured to have a long survival with a need to truly encourage citizen input in budgeting and public policy.

Regarding changing attitude of the citizens towards the modern public, it was observed in one of the study communities that "Igwe" (the traditional ruler) and his cabinet began to see that they can actually partner with the government in bringing development to their people. It was also a surprise to the women in one of the FGD sessions to see that men shared the feelings of women on maternal mortality. With such shared feeling, maternal mortality was easily included in their CCD and their health committee was linked with the Local Government Authorities and the State Ministry of Health for follow up. Ultimately, the Community was given a health centre. In another FGDs an annual meeting of women groups across Igbo communities of South eastern Nigeria called "August Meeting" was brought in focus. Prior to vertical integration, this meeting discussed issues of development that affect their communities. But with

vertical integration and its accountability mechanisms, that meeting has broadened its scope to include how to hold duty bearers in government accountable as well as how to collaborate with other community groups for development. Also, a KII respondent from another community points to a similar trend in August meetings in her own community by informing that in their own August meeting, the women now focus on discussing how development funds they raise is used as counterpart funds to support government around demands made by the community. Indeed, an interviewee whose statement resonates the responses of several others in the study remarked that their eyes were opened and they realised they should not feel helpless in bringing the desired change they have yearned for ages, but should confidently reach out to the government.

The deliberative governance system of the traditional Igbo society is still the dominant practice in their community organization. This pervades the men, women and youth groups and it is the core method of decision making on developmental issues. So it is found a novel initiative that government which had been distant from them in terms of understanding what their problems are, supports the setting of structures that not only unite all the traditional groups within each community, but also connect them to the budget making process through the mechanism of the CCD. Besides, the same government also encouraged community-driven structures like COMEN through which communities could reach out and ask questions, make demands and even make input in monitoring the quality of infrastructure built for them. The general reactions elicited from the FGDs and KIIs suggests a mental attitude of increasing ease on the part of the citizens in relating with the government. This development no doubt connects with a sense of inclusion in budget decision-making and monitoring of the budget process.

It is possible that sustained inclusion of the citizens in the budgeting process holds the capacity to maintain their enthusiasm and trust in government. However, this excitement would be more objectively demonstrated when they translate to increasing performance of civic responsibilities which is yet to happen. Besides, sustainability of the practice is regime dependent. Even though the experimental three years is over and the PB is still continuing, there is yet a state law to make it a requirement of budgeting apart from a mere resolution of the State House of Assembly which does not make it a binding law. In fact, monetary grants for 'Choose your Project' initiative was increased from 20 million Naira annual grant to 25 million Naira in the 2023 budget speech (Odogwu, 2022). This demonstrates an inclination towards building on the participatory budgeting initiative which started with a different regime. But to ensure long survival, more progress could be achieved with increased legal/policy institutionalization that makes it more than a populist design of the ruling party.

Conclusion

A new kind of state/society relations evolving in Nigeria's South-Eastern state of Anambra is an outcome of donor driven interventions that supported a network of groups in traditional communities to unite for problem solving interactions and use the platforms of such interactions to make input and demands on the political system. The interaction is on budgeting and was based on the idea that participatory budgeting as evidenced in Brazil represents a global best practice that should be disseminated. Laying the background for PB through the vertical and horizontal integration brought about by an empowering programme of V2P. The V2P initiative touched off a changing order of relations in which groups that had been apathetic towards the modern public sphere of the state but remained vibrant in their primordial spaces were actuated, networked with similar groups and integrated to policy processes of the state.

Involved in the integration are groups substantially drawn from local communities that qualify as ensembles of what Ekeh (1975) referred to as the primordial public. The cooperative behavior of the groups and the prospects of its continued participation in the process raised important questions around the theory of the two publics in which Ekeh had expressed an essential tension between the modern and primordial publics. Thus, the study wanted to find out if the vertical integration for PB is resolving this tension and harmonizing the two publics.

Drawing from an extensive fieldwork of Amakom, Fashola, Gay and Shutt (2017), it is found that there is a cooperation of groups which should be part of civil society but had abdicated their essential civic roles due to the nature of state/society relations. The general abdication of the civic public by most of the primordial groups created a participation gap by a critical mass of the people. But V2P intervention in Anambra witnessed an actuation of this primordial realm for civic relevance. commencement of activities that ranged from dialogues for common problem-solving, contributions to budget formulation, participation in monitoring project implementation and demands for infrastructure and services. One way to probe whether the vertical and horizontal integration in Anambra is a seamless one that resolves the tensions between the two publics is to empirically gauge the feelings of the people around their new found relationship with the state. The oral responses suggest increasing confidence of holding the government accountable and even a sense of citizenship. Supporting local communities to gain voices and capacity offered a new methodology that suggests a prospect of sustained good relations with multiple spin offs in favour of increasing democratic state-society nexus.

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