

Determinants of Community Dwellers' Participation in Self-help Community Development Projects in Ido Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the determinants of community dwellers' participation in self-help development projects in *Ido* Local Government Area of *Oyo* state in Nigeria. Three wards out of ten that constituted *Ido* local government were randomly selected. Purposive sampling was used to select one community from each of the three wards due to existence of self-help projects in those communities. Random sampling was used to select 37 respondents from *Ido* community, 37 were also selected from *Omi* while 36 respondents were selected from *Akufo* given the total sample size of 110. Data were collected through structured questionnaire and interview schedule. The study revealed that 66.4% of the respondents were male, 65.8% had formal education, majority (73.6%) fell within 19-49 years while 66.9% had income between 1,000 – 20,000 naira. Three projects; school, borehole and market were prominent in the selected communities. Activities undertaken by respondents were: awareness creation, identifying community felt need and ensuring sustainability of projects. The study revealed significant relationship between respondents income and participation in self-help projects. Positive correlation existed between the activities undertaken by respondents, attitude of respondents and participation in community development projects. Thus, income, activities and attitude of respondents determine the participation of community dwellers in self-help community projects. More income generating activities, positive attitude toward self-help projects and involvement of the entire community in all self-help projects is essential.

Keywords: *Determinants, community, self-help projects, participation*

Introduction

Community is a group of people with notable characteristics such as identifiable location, sharing common interest and perspective in terms of value, norms, needs and they also engage in joint action that bring people together to develop the community (Metzger, 2001). Community development however seeks to empower individuals and group of people by providing these groups with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities. Participation in community is based on the believe that there is no government no matter benevolent,

paternalistic or well meaning which can boast of the capacity to provide all the multifarious needs of all its citizen. Hence, the quickest and surest ways to enhance rural development lies in the active participation and commitment of the people. Community development is a process by which efforts of the people themselves are united with those of government authorities, NGOs and other development agencies to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of the communities and to integrate the communities into the life of the nation in order to enable them to contribute

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fully to the national progress (Adewale, 2008 and UNDP, 2001).

Participation is an active process whereby beneficiaries of development projects are involved in the direction and execution of the development projects rather than merely receiving project benefit (Medgley, 2001). Participation in community self help development project according to Bihis-Tolentino (2004) offers individuals the opportunity of contributing to uplift the community, gives the sense of responsibility and belonging as well as helps to speed up development process. Community development emphasizes self help projects and attention to felt needs. In Nigeria today, government alone can no longer cope with all the developmental needs of every community. Therefore, self-help community development projects are

organized and implemented by communities themselves. However, the nature and extent of participation of community dwellers which is usually vary is an important factor in the outcome of any developmental project embark upon. It is against this backdrop that the research seeks to investigate the determinants of community dwellers' participation in self-help community development projects. The specific objectives of the study were: to determine the socio-economic characteristics of respondents, to identify self-help projects embarked upon in the study area, to identify activities undertook during self-help projects, to examine the level of participation in self-help projects as well as to examine the attitude of respondents towards self-help projects.

Methodology

The study was conducted in *Ido* local government area of Oyo state. It covers an area of about 800km². The population is about 259,000 people (NPC, 2006). The local government covers a considerable number of communities among which are: *Omi, Falade, Fasan, Onikoko, Akufo, Alaro, Abidogun Tokunbo* etc. The major occupation of the inhabitant is farming and the area is suitable for crop production and animal husbandry. Other occupations are food processing, fabrication and civil services. Yorubas are the predominant tribe residing in the area.

Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

The local government is divided into ten wards; three wards were randomly selected. Purposive sampling technique was used to select one community from each of the three wards because of the existence of self-help projects in those communities. List of

participants in the community development projects were obtained from the local government secretariat from which respondents were randomly selected. Population of the study was 220; however, 50% of the population was selected in each community using proportionate sampling. Thirty seven respondents were selected from *Ido* being the headquarter and 37 were also selected from *Omi* being the second largest community while 36 were selected from *Akufo* given the total sample size of 110 respondents. Data were collected through the use of interview schedule and structured questionnaire. Five point Likert scale of strongly-agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree were used for the attitudinal statement while 3-point Likert scale of always, occasionally and never was used to compute level of participation in self-help activities. The attitudinal score was computed on both item

by item and scoring analysis. Based on the score obtained, respondents were classified

as having favourable or unfavourable attitude towards participation.

Findings and Discussion

The age distribution of respondents (Table 1) revealed that majority (73.6%) fell within 19-49 years of age while 26.4% fell within 50 years and above. This implies that respondents were in their active age in terms of domestic obligation and participation in community development projects as noted by Adeniran (2003). More male (66.4%) were involved in self-help development projects compared to 33.6% of females. This is in line with Olawoye *et al.* (2003) who reported that women particularly those in the northern states of Nigeria are not allowed to participate in development projects because they were kept in purdah.

Table 1 Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Age (in years)	Freq (%)	Education	Freq (%)
19-49	81 (73.6)	Formal	72 (65.8)
50 above	29 (26.4)	education	38 (34.2)
		No formal	
Sex	Freq (%)	Religion	Freq (%)
Male	73 (66.4)	Christianity	29 (26.4)
Female	37(33.6)	Islam	74 (67.3)
		Traditionist	7 (6.4)
Occupation	Freq (%)	Income (in Naira)	Freq (%)
Farming	37 (33.7)	1,000-10,000	33 (30.0)
Trading	29 (26.4)	11,000-20,000	34 (36.9)
Others	44 (39.9)	Above 20,000	14 (12.6)

In the same Table 1 above, the result revealed that, 65.8% had formal education against 34.2% without formal education. High percentage of respondents with formal education may affect their attitude positively towards participation in self-help projects. Olawoye *et al* (2007) reported that very low formal education level of local

people limit participation and understanding in development projects.

Larger percentage of respondents were Muslim (67.3%), 26.4% were Christian and 6.4% were traditionist, this implies that there is no religious barrier to community development in the study area since there has been self-help projects implemented with the cooperation of all religious practitioners. Table 1 also shows 33.6% of the respondents were farmers while 26.4% were traders. The study also revealed that about 1/3 of the respondents have approximated income of 1,000-10,000 (30.0%) and 11,000-20,000 (36.9%). This implies that the income of the respondents is low. Considering respondents membership in social groups, the study shows that 60% of respondents belong to one social group or the other, this is very important because awareness and active participation can be stimulated through social groups and the realization that they can do something to improve their circumstances both individually and collectively as noted by Ozor and Uwankwo, 2008 could be additional reason for belonging to a group.

Identification of Self-help Activities

On the identification of self-help projects in the respondents' communities, the study revealed three prominent projects in all the selected communities (Fig.1) with 40% of the respondents identified school, 38.2% identified borehole water and 31% identified market as the self-help projects in their communities. The identified self-help projects could be regarded as respondents felt-needs.

Self-help Activities Undertaken by Respondent

Investigation on the activities that community dwellers undertook during self-help projects (Table 2) shows that more than half (52.7%) were involved in creating awareness about development activities, 54.5% ensures that project benefit the entire community while 50.9% ensure sustainability of the self-help projects. Frequency of participation revealed that 24.5% always created awareness, 31.8% always involved in felt-need identification, 26.4% always participated in planning, 11.3% always participated in organization process,

while 33.6% always involved in implementation process. This low participation in different stages of self-help projects may affect the overall outcome of the projects. In addition, 31.8% attended meetings always, 24.5% always contributed money for the project, 18.2% always contributed materials, 33.6% always worked during self help projects, 41.8% always involved in ensuring that project benefit the entire community, With this result, the project may lack proper implementation because self-help projects are the work of everyone in the community (Peck, 1998).

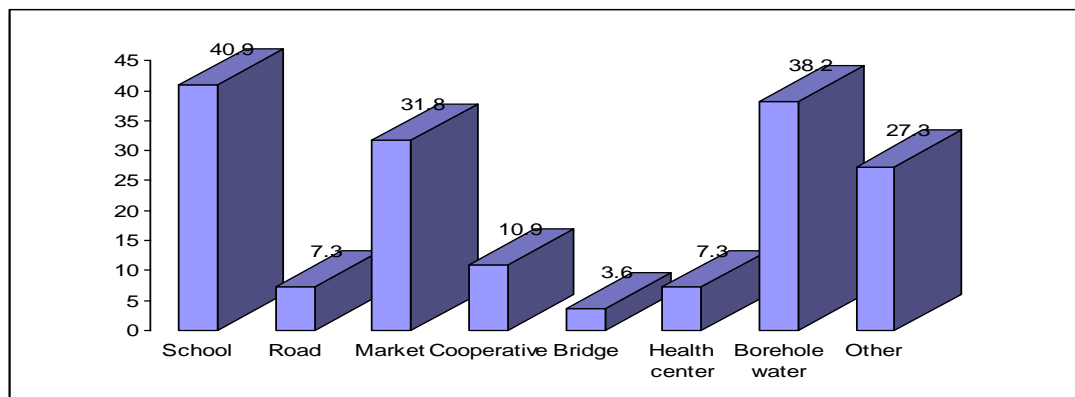


Figure 1 Identified self-help projects in the community

Table 2 Self-help activities undertaken by community dweller

Activities	Always	Occasionally	Never
Awareness creation for community development	24.5	28.2	47.3
Generation of development ideas	23.6	18.2	58.1
Felt-need Identification	31.8	13.6	59.0
Participation in planning of projects	26.4	20.0	53.6
Organization process	11.3	7.3	80.1
Attendance at meeting	31.8	21.8	46.4
Contribution of money for projects	24.5	27.0	48.2
Contribution of material for project	18.2	16.4	65.4
Participation in project implementation	33.6	23.6	42.7
Supervision of work during project implementation	17.3	22.7	59.1
Project benefits to community	41.8	12.5	45.5
Sustainability of projects	19.1	31.8	48.7

Attitude of Respondents to Self-help Projects

Respondents attitude towards self help projects was measured with eighteen attitudinal statements using five-point Likert scale of strongly-agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly-disagree with 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 scores respectively for

the positive statement while reverse order was used for the negative statement. The obtainable score ranged from 18 (minimum score) to 90 (maximum score). The classification and description of respondents' attitude based on the score is presented in the Table 3.

Table 3 Overall Attitudinal Score of Respondents, Classification and Description

Variable	Scoring method	Probable score	Observed score	Categories	F	%	Mean
Attitudinal statement	Rated Score	18-90	45-75	UF (<55)	35	31.8	55
				Mean (55)	15	13.6	
				F (>55)	60	54.6	

UF-Unfavourable; F- Favourable

The lowest score obtained by respondents was 45 while the highest score was 75. More than half (54.6%) of the respondents had favourable attitude towards self-help projects while about 1/3 (31.8%) had unfavourable attitude towards self-help project. It could be due to the fact that some of the respondents were illiterate lacking the knowledge of the benefits that can be derived from self-help projects.

The result on item by item analysis showed that 70.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that community should come together to identify felt needs, 78.2% strongly agreed that there should be accountability in self-help projects and 56.4% strongly agreed that creating awareness about self help projects is necessary. Meanwhile, 47.1% strongly disagreed that government effort is enough for the community, also 40.9% strongly disagreed that only the rich should involved in self-help projects. In essence, participation in community development has been identified as the key concepts in development with the emphasis on the

direct involvement of ordinary people in local affairs.

Hypothesis Testing

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between selected socio-economic characteristics (e.g. age, sex, marital status, income, education etc) of respondents and participation in self-help community development projects.

Testing the relationship between socio-economic characteristics of respondents and participation in self-help projects (Table 4) revealed significant relationship between income and participation ($\chi^2 = 6.338$; $p = 0.012$). It implies that economic power of people will help them to participate in support of Bwalya *et al.* (2008) that participation implies empowering people to mobilize their own capacities, be a social actors, make decisions rather than passive subject. Sex, level of education, marital status as well as religion have no significant relationship with participation in self help projects thus every member of the community needs to be actively involved in achieving a particular goal regardless of

their personality (male or female, educated or not, married or single, young or old). The result conformed to the assertion of Mc

Laughlin (2000) that community exists as a result of social interaction, common goal, shared values and norms but not personality.

Table 4 Chi-square result of relationship between socio-economic characteristics of respondents and participation in self-help projects

Variables	χ^2	Df	p-value	Decision
Sex	1.574	1	0.210	NS
Income	6.338	1	0.012	S
Marital status	0.28	2	0.986	NS
Religion	0.801	2	0.670	NS
Level of Education	10.634	8	0.223	NS

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between activities undertook, attitude of respondents and participation in self-help projects

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis (PPMC) in Table 5, indicates positive correlation between activities that respondents undertook and participation in self-help projects ($r = 0.529$, $p = 0.00$) which means that more involvement of respondents in self-help activities will lead to more participation. However, lack of specific role/activity to play in self-help project might make people not to participate or not always participating thus respondents' activities during self-help projects determine their participation level. The analysis also revealed positive

correlation between attitude of respondents towards self-help projects and participation in self-help projects ($r = 0.123$, $p = 0.019$). That is, the more favourable their attitude towards self-help projects the more their level of participation. Thus, the kind of attitude (positive/negative) that respondents have towards self-help projects will determine their level of participation.

Table 5 Relationship between respondents attitude, activities undertook and participation in self -help project

Variables	Df	r	p-value
Activities	109	0.529	0.00
Attitude	109	0.123	0.019

Correlation is significant at 0.05

Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn from this study base on the findings is that respondents were in their active age and the prominent self-help projects carried out in the area were building of school, market and boreholes construction. Also, few respondents participated regularly in most of the self-help activities while income, activities and attitude of community dwellers towards self-help projects

determine their level of participation in any community development projects.

Local government should establish more income generating activities such as job creation, market establishment and opportunity to diversify in order to be economically empowered community dwellers so as to be able to contribute financially to self-help projects. Effective mobilization of community dwellers by the community/opinion leader/ traditional ruler

to have positive attitude towards self-help projects should be encouraged. Since personality has no relationship with participation in community development projects and the project is for the benefit of

all the community dwellers therefore the entire community should be made aware of the projects and their full involvement in any self-help projects activities be encouraged.

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