



Assessment of Households' Participation in Community and Social Development Projects (CSDP): A Case Study of Imo State, Nigeria

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors. Authors ENO, CCA and PCU designed the study, wrote the protocol, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Authors ENO and PCU managed the literature searches, analyses of the study performed the spectroscopy analysis and authors AOA and PCU identified the species of plant. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed households' participation in Community and Social Development Project in Imo State, Nigeria. Specifically, it described the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, determined the participation of the respondents in the project and ascertained the perceived effectiveness of the project. Multistage sampling technique was used to select 216 respondents, while structured questionnaire was used to elicit data from them. Data were analyzed using percentages, bar charts and mean statistics. Hypothesis was tested using analysis of variance at 5% significance level. Results showed that majority (68.1%) of the respondents were male while 79.2% and 97.2% were married and educated respectively. It also revealed that the respondents participated more in drainage system project (48.4%), modern oil mill (39.6%) and market structures (35.3%). Furthermore, the result showed that oil mill (88.4%), water boreholes (88.4%), erosion control (86.6%), drainage systems (86.6%), construction of school blocks (83.3%) and

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health centres (81.5%) were perceived as effective projects in the area. The result of the hypothesis tested revealed that there were no significant differences in the levels of participation of community members in CSDP in the three agricultural zones of the state. It was recommended that the project should be replicated in other parts of the country since it had bearing on the welfare of the people. Women, youth and the vulnerable should be given an opportunity to participate in similar project in the future.

Keywords: Assessment; households; participation; community and social development projects; Imo State; Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the number of people in absolute poverty has been in the decline for around 25 years, yet in Africa it is still increasing [1]. The challenge of poverty reduction in Africa is of a different order from that elsewhere and will require different strategies. Other low-income regions are growing rapidly, and there the issue is how to diffuse growth. In the middle-income regions, redistribution of wealth could radically reduce absolute poverty [1]. Africa has not been growing and its income level is low for redistribution to reduce poverty [2]. This situation tends to be more pronounced because majority of the people are living in rural areas [3]. This [4] supports by observing that poor people especially those living in rural areas, who are dependent upon agriculture and live in tropical ecologies face harsher conditions than others. As [5] pointed out factors like harvest failure, limited opportunities, low capabilities, conflict, inequality, exclusion and adverse incorporation heighten the level of poverty in this area.

In response to this worrisome situation characterizing Africa, a lot of programmes have been designed and implemented by several governments targeting the development of rural areas. According to [6] such efforts in Nigeria included the Nigeria Agricultural Land Development Authority, NALDA (1991), the National Accelerated Food Production Project, NAFFP (1972), the Operation Feed the Nation OFN (1975), the River Basin Development Authority, RBDA (1978), the Green Revolution GR (1980), the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure DFRRRI (1986), Better Life for Rural Women (1987), the Family Economic Advancement Programme, FEAP, National Poverty Eradication Programme, NAPEP, Special Programme on Food Security, SPFS, the Fadama Development Programme and the Local Economic and Environmental Empowerment Programme, LEEMP which has metamorphosed

into the Community and Social Development Project (CSDP) etc.

Among the major reasons behind the failure of most of the previous programmes was top down and non-participatory approach [6]. A study by [7] show that policies aimed at promoting national economic competitiveness and state-run public investment programmes are essential but insufficient for poverty reduction. Most governments are slow to deliver basic services and are often ineffective in reaching the poor. According to [8] demand is better articulated when communities contribute to investment costs and control investment choices. Many poverty reduction projects in developing countries were not sustainable because of their supply-driven and top-down nature, which neglected community partnership and ownership of development projects [7].

This perhaps led to the establishment of the CSDP as a strategy for promoting rural development. The CSDP is a World Bank sponsored programme in collaboration with the federal and some state governments anchored on Community Driven Development (CDD) approach which offers the opportunity to fill the critical gap of achieving lasting and immediate results at the grassroots. It is participatory and based on bottom-up approach [9]. One of its cardinal points is to tackle development problems of the rural populace [9] since meaningful community development can take place through active participation of the people joined with technical assistance from government or other development agencies [10]. The community members take the bulk of the decisions regarding the choice of projects to be executed in their community, manage and ensure their maintenance for sustainable use by the community [9].

Determining these will enable the stakeholders to know the achievements and failures of the project and also offer an opportunity for

improvement of the programme. It is against this backdrop that the following research questions are being asked: what are the socioeconomic characteristics of the community members? What is their level of participation in CSDP? And what is their perceived effectiveness of CSDP?

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to assess households' participation in community and social development programme in Imo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Describe the socioeconomic characteristics of the community members;
2. Determine the participation of community members in CSDP; and
3. Ascertain the perceived level of effectiveness of CSDP.

2.1 Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the level of participation of community members in CSDP projects in the three agricultural zones of the states.

2.2 Methodology

The study was carried out in Imo state which is one of the five states in the southeastern part of Nigeria. Administratively, it is divided into three agricultural zones namely Owerri, Okigwe and Orlu and is composed of 27 local government areas. It lies within latitude 4° 45' and 7° 15'N and longitude 6° 5' and 7° 25'E. It is bounded on the east by Abia state, on the west by Delta state, on the north by Anambra state and on the south by Rivers state and covers an area of about 5,100 square kilometer [11]. The population of the state stands at 2,485,499 persons [12]. The state has two distinct seasons, the rainy season which lasts from March to October and the dry season which lasts from November to February. The annual rainfall varies from 1,900 mm to 2,200 mm and the mean annual temperature is about 20°C. The relative humidity is about 75°C [11].

The vegetation is dominated by economic trees like iroko, mahogany, obeche, gmelina, bamboo, rubber and oil palm. But due to high population density, most parts of the state have been cultivated and degraded. The livestock kept are goat, sheep, poultry, pineapple, maize, banana/plantain, palm tree and chickens.

Multistage sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. The first stage was the purposive selection of the three existing agricultural zones in the state to ensure effective coverage and representation of communities. The second stage was the selection of two LGAs each from Owerri and Okigwe zones using simple random sampling technique and the purposive selection of two LGAs from Orlu zone purposively because there are only two LGAs that make up Orlu agricultural zone, thus giving a total of six LGAs. The fourth stage involved the selection of three communities from each of the selected LGAs participating in CSDP using simple random sampling technique to give a total of 18 communities. The fifth and final stage involved the purposive selection of 12 members (the chairman and secretary and other 10 members) from each of the selected 18 communities giving a total of 216 members which constituted the sample size for the study.

Data were collected from the respondents with the aid of a structured questionnaire and focus group discussion. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The hypothesis was tested using ANOVA model expressed as:

$$F = \frac{MSSB}{MSSW} = \frac{SSB / (n-k)}{SSW / (k-1)}$$

$$SSB = \sum_{j=1}^k (X_j - \bar{X})^2$$

$$SST = SSB + SSW$$

Where,

F = value by which the statistical significance of the mean differences would be judged,

SST = Total sum of squares of the levels of participation of community

SSB = sum of squared deviations between the levels of participation of the community members

SSW = Sum of squared deviations within the mean levels of participation of community members

M_j = Mean level of participation of community members from agricultural zones j

M = Grand mean level of participation of community members

M_{ij} = the i th level of participation of community members from agricultural zones j

n_j = sample size of community members from agricultural zones j

n = number of observations in the three agricultural zones

k = number of agricultural zones in Imo state.

projects as educated people are more likely to access information from print and electronic media about projects that can add value to quality of living and poverty reduction.

3.3.1 Age

Entries in Table 1 reveal that a greater proportion (38.9%) of the respondents were within the age bracket of 41 – 50 years while the remaining 34.7%, 12.0%, 10.7% and 3.7% were within the age bracket 51 – 60 years, 31 – 40 years, 61 years and above and below 30 years respectively. The mean age was 49.0 years. This implies that the respondents were still young and within their economic productive ages. Age is a major factor that influences adoption. Youths are venturesome [13] and could participate actively in any developmental project.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Socioeconomic Characteristics

3.1.1 Sex

Data in Table 1 show that majority (68.1%) of the respondents were male while the remaining 31.9% were female. This implies that the project was dominated by male in the study area. This could be as a result of local customs that deny women participation in social organizations. Local customs that relegate women or forbid their participation in public activities can limit their contributions to community development. Moreso, some women in rural communities are not engaged in substantial income generating activities and may thus be discouraged from participating in community development projects those that involve the payment of money.

3.4 Primary Occupation

Results in Table 1 further show that majority (37.5%) of the respondents were into farming while the remaining 24.5%, 17.6%, 11.6% and 8.8% were traders, artisans, civil servants, and fashion designers. This implies that farming is the predominant occupation in the area although people engaged in other occupations.

3.2 Marital Status

Table 1 show that majority (79.2%) of the respondents were married while the remaining 10.6%, 7.9%, 1.9% and 0.4% were widowed, single, divorced and separated respectively. Marriage could influence participation in community development projects. The low number of single and widowed showed that important segments of the population were not adequately mobilized to participate in the programme. This however could work against efforts towards the reduction of rural poverty.

3.5 Monthly Income Level

Entries in Table 1 show that a greater majority (63.4%) earned 31,000 – 50,000 naira monthly with the remaining 25.0%, 10.2% and 1.4% earning 10,000 – 30,000 naira, above 50,000 naira and less than 10,000 naira monthly respectively. The mean monthly income was 38,268.52 naira. This implies that the respondents earn some money at the end of the month and this could encourage their participation in community development projects as they can afford to pay the levies if such need arises.

3.3 Number of Years Spent in School

Data in Table 1 show that majority (97.2%) of the respondents acquired one form of formal education or the other while the remaining 2.8% received none. The acquisition of formal education will afford community members the opportunity to participate in developmental

3.6 Membership of Social Organizations

Data in Table 1 show that a majority (91.2%) of the respondents were members of social organizations while the remaining 8.8% were not. Membership of social organizations offers members of communities the opportunity to engage in collective actions. Social organizations provide platforms for collective identification of needs and the pooling of resources to provide them.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to socioeconomic characteristics

Socioeconomic characteristic	F	%	M
Sex			
Male	147	68.1	
Female	69	31.9	
Marital status			
Single	17	7.9	
Married	171	79.2	
Separated	1	0.4	
Divorced	4	1.9	
Widowed	23	10.6	
No. of years spent in school			
0	6	2.8	
1 - 6	39	18.1	
7 -12	102	47.2	
13 - 18	64	29.6	9.3
18 and above	5	2.3	
Age (Years)			
≤ 30	8	3.7	
31 – 40	26	12.0	
41 – 50	84	38.9	
51 – 60	75	34.7	49.0
≥ 60	23	10.7	
Primary occupation			
Farming	81	37.5	
Artisan	38	17.6	
Civil Servant	25	11.6	
Fashion designer	19	8.8	
Trader	53	24.5	
Monthly income level (Naira)			
< 10,000	3	1.4	
10,000 – 30,000	54	25.0	
31,000 – 50,000	137	63.4	
≥ 50,000	22	10.2	
Membership of social organization			
Yes	197	91.2	
No	19	8.8	
Membership status			
Ordinary member	15	6.9	
Regular member	26	12.0	
Financial member	103	47.7	
Committee member	49	22.7	

Source: field survey data, 2012

3.7 Membership Status

The result in Table 1 further reveal that a greater proportion (47.7%) of the respondents were financial members while the remaining 22.7%, 12.0%, 10.7% and 6.9% were committee members, regular members, executive members and ordinary members respectively. Financial membership is an asset to every organization as it will have enough funds generated by members to carry out its objectives.

3.8 Participation in Community and Social Development Projects

Entries in Table 2 show that greater proportion (43.6%) of the respondents were ordinary members of CSDP while the remaining 31.9% and 24.5% were committee members and executive members respectively. This result shows that most members of the organization were involved in the mainstream and are

therefore involved in the planning and implementation of projects. According to [14] the occupation of important positions in organizations offer members the opportunity of building their leadership abilities.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to their participation status in community and social development projects

Participation status	F	%
Executive member	53	24.5
Committee member	69	31.9
Ordinary member	94	43.6

Source: field survey data, 2012

3.9 Type of Community Development Project Participated in by the People

Data in Table 3 show that the respondents (48.4%) were more actively involved in drainage system project. In the same vein, 39.6% and 35.3% of the respondents were involved in modern oil mill and market structure projects respectively. The relatively higher involvement of the respondents in these projects could be as a result of their importance to community members in such ways as erosion control, improvement in

the quality and price of their produce and the provision of channel for the marketing of the produce. People's participation in projects is more likely to be high when the projects have direct bearing on their well-being. According [14] active participation in a project by the target beneficiaries will promote and sustain the success of the project.

3.10 Participation Status

Result in Fig. 1 show that a greater proportion (47.3%) of the respondents participated as members of the CSDP while the remaining 40.7% and 12.0% were volunteers and advisers. This implies that the project was dominated by people who willingly joined in the project as an avenue for improving their conditions. This perception would encourage active participation by the people which might involve the provision of resources needed for the success of the project. It will also enhance collaboration between the members and other stakeholders. However, since a greater proportion of the participants were members, they are more likely to influence the selection and execution of projects with a view to enhancing their well being.

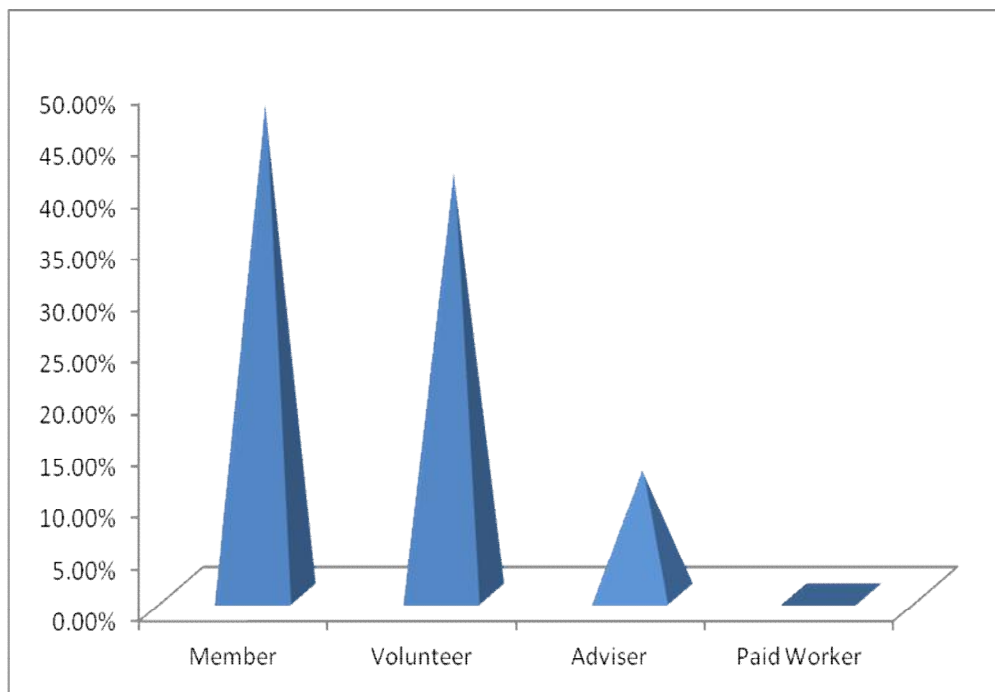


Fig. 1. Participation status in CSDP

3.11 Areas of Participation by the Respondents

Data in Table 4 reveal that the respondents participated more in the organization and execution of all the areas/stages of project development than in their initiation except for financial contribution, commitment of talents and influencing of others where the respondents participated more in their initiation. Usually, organized groups have committees comprising a few members of the group who are well-informed and enlightened and who most times conceive or initiate ideas and direct the activities of the group. This result is in line with the findings of the study by [16] who reported that community members participate in different stages of a project.

3.12 Perceived Effectiveness of Community and Social Development Project

Data in Table 5 show that modern oil mill (88.4%), water boreholes (88.4%), erosion control (86.6%), drainage systems (86.6%), school blocks (83.3%), health centres (81.5%),

construction/rehabilitation of roads (79.2%) market structures (78.3%), rural electrification (70.9%), lock up stores (57.5%) and community farm projects (54.2%) were perceived by majority of the beneficiaries as the highly effective projects in the CSDP project. This implies that the CSDP project is successful and effective in the study area since 11 out of 15 projects under the CSDP project were perceived as highly effective. This could be attributed to the adequate involvement of the beneficiaries in the identification and selection of projects that really met their needs

3.13 Test of Hypothesis

Result in Table 6 reveal that the ANOVA test produced an F-value of 1.414 which was not significant at 5% level of probability when compared with the F-critical value of 3.04 at 5% for $V_1 = 2$ and $V_2 = 213$ degrees of freedom. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was accepted and alternative hypothesis rejected since there are no significant differences in the levels of participation of community members in CSDP projects in the three agricultural zones of Imo state.

Table 3. Distribution of CSDP members according type of community development projects participated in

Types of projects	Project initiation	Project organization	Project execution
Lock up stores	4(3.1)	7(12.5)	2(6.7)
Markets structures	19(14.6)	6(10.7)	3(10.0)
Rural electrification	3(2.3)	3(5.4)	2(6.7)
Water boreholes	11(8.5)	5(8.8)	3(10.0)
Erosion control	5(3.8)	3(5.4)	1(3.3)
Health centres	8(6.2)	2(3.6)	2(6.7)
Construction of school blocks	5(3.8)	1(1.8)	1(3.3)
Construction/rehabilitation of roads	9(6.9)	4(7.1)	2(6.7)
Community farm project	3(2.3)	1(1.8)	1(1.33)
Modern oil mill	18(13.9)	7(12.4)	4(13.3)
Drainage systems	27(20.8)	8(14.3)	4(13.3)
Solid waste management	6(4.6)	3(5.4)	1(1.33)
Bus stop	4(3.1)	2(3.6)	1(3.3)
Information communication technology centres	2.(1.5)	1(1.8)	1(3.3)
Construction of civic centres	6(4.6)	3(5.4)	2(6.6)

Source: Field survey data, 2012, figures in parenthesis represent percentages

Table 4. Distribution of respondents according to area of participation in CSDP

Area of participation	Initiation	Organization	Execution
Identification of projects	6(2.8)	94(43.5)	116(53.7)
Planning	9(4.2)	103(47.7)	104(48.1)
Mobilization of resources	5(2.3)	136(62.9)	75(34.8)
Choice of project sites	8(3.7)	73(33.8)	135(62.5)
Monitoring/evaluation	3(1.4)	64(29.6)	149(69.0)
Implementation	5(2.3)	71(32.9)	140(64.8)
General decision making	7(3.2)	93(43.1)	16(53.7)
Attendance of organization meeting	8(3.7)	89(41.2)	119(55.1)
Financial contribution	123(56.9)	64(29.6)	29(13.4)
Commitment of material resources (e.g. land)	12(5.6)	85(39.5)	119(55.1)
Commitment of time	0(0.0)	81(37.5)	135(62.5)
Commitment of talent	71(32.9)	102(47.2)	43(19.9)
Volunteering ideas/information	10(4.6)	57(26.4)	149(69.0)
Involvement in actual work	5(2.3)	83(38.4)	128(59.3)
Mobilization/motivation of others for group work	8(3.7)	93(43.1)	115(53.2)
Influencing others	94(43.5)	89(41.2)	33(15.3)
Serving in project committees	10(4.6)	86(39.8)	120(55.6)

Source: Field survey data, 2012, figures in parenthesis represent percentages

Table 5. Distribution of respondents according to their perceived effectiveness of CSDP

Community development projects	Perceived effectiveness		
	Low	Moderate	High
Lock up stores	23(10.6)	69(31.9)	124(57.5)
Market structures	15(6.9)	32(14.8)	169(78.3)
Rural electrification	28(12.9)	35(16.2)	153(70.9)
Water boreholes	6(2.8)	19(8.8)	191(88.4)
Erosion control	7(3.2)	22(10.2)	187(86.6)
Health centres	6(2.8)	34(15.7)	176(81.5)
School blocks	8(3.7)	28(13.0)	180(83.3)
Construction/rehabilitation of roads	16(7.4)	29(13.4)	171(79.2)
Community farm projects	37(17.1)	62(28.7)	117(54.2)
Modern oil mill	6(2.8)	19(8.8)	191(88.4)
Drainage systems	11(5.4)	18(8.3)	187(86.6)
Solid waste management	73(33.8)	65(30.1)	78(36.1)
Bust stop	42(19.4)	93(43.1)	81(37.5)
Information communication technology centres	83(38.4)	104(48.1)	29(13.5)
Construction of civic centres	75(34.7)	98(45.4)	43(19.9)

Source: Field survey data, 2012, figures in parenthesis represent percentages

Table 6. Result of analysis of variance test for differences in levels of participation of community members in CSDP in the three agricultural zones of Imo State

Sources of variation	SS	DF	MS	F-Cal
Between groups	6369	2	3184.5	1.414 ^{ns}
Within groups	479826	213	2252.7	
Total	486195	215		

$F_{.05}$, $V_1 = 2$, $V_2 = 213 = 3.04$, $ns = F$ – calculated value not significant at 5% level, source: field Survey data, 2010

4. CONCLUSION

In a bid to close the widening gap between the urban and rural areas, the CSDP was introduced. This project was designed to integrate the community-driven development (CDD) approach

which presumes the importance of involving community members at every stage of a developmental effort. This puts community members at the forefront of any community development effort, giving them a new set of power, right, ownership and obligation which

enable them to ensure the sustenance of any project. The CSDP in Imo state was perceived as very effective, fast at delivering results and it seems to be sustainable. However, it has put a lot of responsibilities upon community members who were before now paying a non-challant attitude to developmental projects executed in their communities. The community members were found to participate actively at all stages of the selected projects. However, they performed more in projects that have direct bearing on their economy.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

1. Women should be encouraged to participate in CSDP projects considering their contributions to economic development. This could be achieved through the introduction of measures that would enhance their participation.
2. Projects capable of improving the economic status of the people should be selected. This can be achieved through adequate involvement of the people or their representatives in all the stages of project identification.
3. Roles and responsibilities should be shared among members participating in the project to instill in them.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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