

Effects of Community's Participation in Community Development in Nigeria: A Case Study of LEEMP in Benue State

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Abstract – The study examined the effects of Community's Participation in community development projects in Benue State, Nigeria. A total of 225 beneficiaries of LEEMP were selected through multi-stage sampling techniques. Primary data was used for the study which was garnered through a well structured questionnaire and interview sections with LEEMP beneficiaries. The socioeconomic characteristics and level of participation of beneficiaries were analyzed descriptively. Logit regression model was used to analyze the factors affecting beneficiaries' level of participation and the relationship between the level of participation of beneficiaries and success of LEEMP was analyzed using correlation. The study shows a strong relationship between the level of participation of the beneficiaries and the success of the project. The study also established that there is development of human and material resources, which enhances the living standard of the people. This implies that LEEMP community driven development (CDD) is a method that enables projects to be built around the felt-needs of the people through the citizen's mobilization of both human and material resources within themselves. Due to the high illiteracy level in rural areas there is a need for capacity building of the people and especially the vulnerable groups to enable them participate more in similar rural development project.

Keywords – Community, Participation, Development, LEEMP.

I. INTRODUCTION

Participation means the active involvement of communities in need assessment, determination of priorities, planning and execution of projects. It is also refers to the contribution of potential beneficiaries to the realization of a project for their own development (Mansuri and Rao, 2004). Community-based participatory approach to development is described as an umbrella term for anti-poverty programmes that involves the beneficiaries in their design and management. The key factor in participation is the incorporation of local knowledge into projects' decision-making process (Ekpo and Olaniyi 1995). Participation is fruitful for sustainable change in an active process by which beneficiaries or client groups influence the direction and execution of development projects in order to enhance their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance and other cherished values.

Participation is a crucial factor in community development. According to Sule (2006), participatory development or development through community participation, is a concept that is rapidly receiving recognition especially in most developing countries of the world since development is meant to enhance the total well being of the individuals in the first instance, and the

socio economic advancement of the nation at large, any planned development programme has to take into account the generality of the citizens of that country.

Rural people must be involved in decision-making process, implementation and execution of community development programmes. Their participation in the programmes would bring about the desired support. In his assertion on the need for social mobilization, Ega and Ejembi (2001) asserted that in most rural Nigeria communities, the most serious problem is the feeling of apathy and helplessness among rural people about poverty, disease, illiteracy, conflict resolution environmental degradation and other natural disaster, just to mention a few issue. Rural dwellers quite often wait for external solutions and are unaware of the value of their knowledge and skills for effecting social change and communal problem solving.

Ega and Ejembi (2001) went further to provide a recipe for participation in community development. Consultations with rural people provide major opportunities for the incorporation of their experiences and knowledge into development efforts. It also enables them to willingly contribute resources towards the success of development programmes. Certainly the resources needed for development is enormous and substantial proportion could be mobilized from within the local communities.

Local government, organization as well as social workers are encouraged, to consult rural dwellers on the need for participation in community development and to achieve this however, it must involve social mobilization as Ega and Ejembi (2001) noted that most local governments have programmes for community development and social mobilization responsible for encouraging rural communities to initiate self-help projects and social mobilization. Generally social mobilization calls for strong dedicated, discipline development conscious leadership.

Another view of participatory development is that which was summarized in the Innoceni Global seminar report; community participation is to empower the rural masses with the knowledge and means to decide their own priorities, to improve their skills, to meet their own needs, and to find their own fulfillment (UNICEF, 1990). In endorsing the above view, Paul (1986) defined community participation as a process whereby beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of development projects rather than merely receiving a share of the project benefits. He further emphasized that community participation objectives are empowerment, building beneficiary capacity, and increasing project cost-sharing.

Community development involves the articulation of the felt need of the people in the development process. According to Nweke (1981), effective and sustainable community development can only come by through the active participation of all and sundry. Ezeh and Madukwe (1999) stressed that the predicting factors of participation in community development include race, income, education, marital status and age. Ekong (1988) also asserted that apart from variable which help to indicate the intensity of individual involvement, other factors such as socioeconomic characteristics (sex, age, level of education and personal occupational status) have equally been found to relate to participation.

The Local Empowerment and Environmental Management Project (LEEMP) are designed to establish an institutional mechanism for transferring investment resources to communities in order to enable them finance their own development priorities (LEEMP, 2006). LEEMP is being implemented in Adamawa, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Enugu, Katsina, Imo, Niger and Oyo States, selected on the basis of established criteria. The LEEMP has two external fund sources: the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank and Global Environmental Facility (GEF). In addition, Federal, participating state governments and participating communities contribute to the project (LEEMP, 2006). The project is anchored on community-driven approaches to development which entail that communities prioritize their own development needs through a participatory process with the assistance of Multidisciplinary Implementation Team.

Despite the obvious moral and theoretical justification of local participation in rural development planning, the concept has not been seriously investigated in Nigeria. This study, therefore sought to determine the; Socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiaries; ascertain the level of participation of the beneficiaries in LEEMP community development projects; determine factors affecting LEEMP beneficiaries level of participation and the relationship between the level of participation of beneficiaries and success of LEEMP.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Benue State, Nigeria, located on Longitude $6^{\circ} 35^E$ and $10^{\circ}E$ and Latitude $6^{\circ} 30N$ and $8^{\circ} 10N$. It has an estimated population of 4.22 million. A total of 225 beneficiaries of LEEMP were selected through multi-stage sampling techniques. In stage one, three local government areas were selected from the nine participating local government areas in the state through simple random sampling. Stage two involved the selection of five communities from each of the three local government areas, giving a total of 15 communities. Stage three involved the selection of 2% of the population of the communities, giving a total number of 225 respondents as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Sampling Size

Zone	LGA	Targeted Community	Population of Community	Sample Size 2% of Population
A	Tarka	Twar	756	15
		Uyoarako	1021	20
		Salem	503	10
		Anchiha	1018	20
		Konkyar	762	15
B	Katsina-Ala	Aba-Mbahav	766	15
		Ushosambe	1021	20
		Achough	516	10
		Virgir	500	10
		Turan	751	15
C	Apa	Alifeti	767	15
		Akpete	753	15
		Oladoga	761	15
		Auke	773	15
		Oiji-Jos	755	15
		Total		225

Primary data was used for the study which was garnered through a well structured questionnaire and interview sections with LEEMP beneficiaries. The socioeconomic characteristics and level of participation of beneficiaries were analyzed descriptively. Logit regression model was used to analyze the factors affecting beneficiaries' level of participation and the relationship between the level of participation of beneficiaries and success of LEEMP was analyzed using correlation. The models are explicitly specified below:

In $P/1-P = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + u$
Where P = value of the level of participation of beneficiaries of the project between 0 and 1.

Participated = 1

Did not participate = 0

α = constant

β_i = (where $i = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5$)

X_1 = age in years

X_2 = income in Naira

X_3 = education in years

X_4 = sex (Male = 1, Female = 0)

X_5 = family size (in numbers)

u = error term

The probability of participation is expected to decrease with age, this is because aged people are conservatives. The probability of participation is expected to increase with income because the higher the income, the higher the chances of one participating in any programme. The probability of participation is expected to increase with educational level because the more enlightened people are, the more receptive they are to changes. The probability of participation is set to increase as male gender increases because cultural practices hinders female gender, the male have less restriction to participate in programme. The probability of participation is expected to increase as family size increase because the higher the chances of having someone to participate in the programme.



The correlation coefficient is a measure of the degree of linear association between two variables, X and Y; or the degree of covariability (joint linear movement) of two variables, X and Y. The values that the correlation coefficient may assume vary from -1 to +1.

When r is +ve, X and Y increase or decrease together; $r = +1$ means perfect positive correlation between X and Y. when r is -ve, X and Y move in opposite directions; if $r = -1$, there exists a perfect negative correlation. When r is zero, then X and Y are uncorrelated.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings of the study are as presented below;

Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

The results in Table 1 shows that 72.9 percent of the respondents were males and the other 28 percent were females. Large proportions of the respondents (65.6%) were within the age bracket of 31-50 and were mainly farmers (62%). Majority of the respondents (61% above) were educated which shows that the people in the study area are quite young and expected to be productive. The finding in this study agrees with that of Nwachukwu and Ezeh (2007) who reported that people within this age group formed the bulk of the productive work force. The relatively youthful age composition of the people in the study area suggests a high tendency for dynamism and innovativeness and 76% of the respondents were married, with about 56% having a household size of 8-10 persons per household.

Table 2: Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

Characterisitic	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	163	72.9
Female	62	27.9
Total	225	100.0
Age		
20-29	29	13.1
30-39	93	41.9
40-49	97	43.7
50-59	6	1.4
Total	225	100.00
Sex		
Male	160	72.1
Female	62	27.9
Total	222	100.0
Marital status		
Single	52	23.4
Married	169	76.1
Divorced	4	.5
Total	225	100.00
Occupation		
Farming	108	48.6
Civil servant	69	31.1
Self employed	43	19.4
Others	5	.9

Total	225	100%
Educational attainment		
Non-formal education	19	7.2
Primary	61	27.5
Secondary	73	32.9
Tertiary	72	32.4
Total	225	100%
Household size		
2-4	8	23.1
5-7	48	21.6
8-10	84	38.0
11 above	39	17.3
Total	225	100%
Social organization		
0	14	6.3
1-2	125	56.3
3-4	36	16.2
5 and above	47	21.2
Total	225	100%

Level of Participation in LEEMP Activities

It is evident from Table 3 that with regards to the levels of participation of beneficiaries in LEEMP programme, the respondents in target communities strongly agreed with positive responses of participation in various aspects of the project to a great extent with mean responses being significantly high (≥ 3.05). The respondents strongly agreed that they were involved in needs identification; writing of community development plan; designing of micro projects; costing of micro projects; implementation of the projects; contribution of money towards the counterpart for LEEMP projects; seeking external support for the project; contribution of food for workers on site; donation of land towards the project; attendance to review meeting; were able to say what they needed; procurement of tools and materials; keeping records of all income and expenditure; launching and publicity arrangement.

It is apparent that the majority of the respondents participated in LEEMP programme to some extent. This finding is in line with the explanation of Peace (1988), which maintained that mobilization through effective integration of human, and natural resources and participation within the rural community take various forms and generally institutionalized into the socio-economic practice of the society. Paul (1986) stated that community participation is a process whereby beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of development projects rather than merely receiving a share of the project benefits. Osuji (2004) indicated that citizen participation in terms of development as the engagement of project community members in decision-making processes, planning of developmental programmes in their areas. This is also supported by the findings of Anyanwu (1999) who reported that participation implies that the workers have to supply the necessary and needed stimulus needed for the project's success.

Table 4: Respondents Participation in LEEMP Project.

Types and levels of participation	Mean	SD
Need Identification	4.45*	8.53
Writing of Community Development Plan.	3.96*	1.297
Designing of micro project	3.96*	1.280
Costing of micro projects	3.93*	1.198
Implementation of LEEMP project	4.18*	1.047
Contribution of money toward counterpart funding for LEEMP projects	4.33*	1.038
Seeking external support	3.97*	1.181
Contribution of food for workers on site	4.36*	.973
Land for the project	3.33*	1.547
Attendance for review meetings	3.88*	1.278
Community perception of need	4.40*	.849
Procurement of tools and materials	3.79*	1.424
Recording of income and expenditure	3.69*	1.374
Launching and publicity arrangements	3.67*	1.344

≥ 3.05 = significant; 2.95 not significant * significant* high level of participation

Factors Affecting Beneficiaries Level of Participation In The LEEMP Programme

The results in table 5 show that at 5% level of significance, the hypothesis that age, income, had no significant influence on the level of participation was rejected by Wald test of joint significant of parameter, implying that there is a significant causal relationship between participation and the selected socio-economic characteristics variables.

Specifically, education, sex and family size have positive and significant influence on the probability of participation of the respondents. These suggest that increase in education, family size, and involvement of the male will result to increase in the probability of participation of the respondents in the programme. This is because larger families have available family labour necessary for community development work. Increases in years of educational attainment of respondent's increases the probability of their participation in the LEEMP programme. This is likely because educated individuals are more recipient to ideas and embrace change more quickly than the non-educated individuals.

The result is consistent with the findings of African Development Bank, (ADB, 2005) who reported that participation of men and women folk in public and private sphere are influenced by cultural environments and has been used to legitimize differences in gender status, values, and roles to justify unequal gender relations in a manner that to a large extent favours the male gender. The result in this study agrees with the finding of Obinne (1994) who noted that education is a factor that influences individual's adoption of a programme and therefore considered as an important variable that enhances their acceptance and participation of a programme.

Determination of the relationship between the level of participation of beneficiaries and success of LEEMP

The correlation analysis of participation and success of LEEMP programme shows that there is significant relationship between participation and successful implementation at 5% level of significance ($r = 0.95$; $p \leq 0.05$). Consequently the null hypothesis that there is no significance relationship between the beneficiaries' level of participation and the success of the project is therefore rejected. This result indicates that the more the people participate in the programme the greater the success of the programme. The success of the programme increases with increase in the participation of the beneficiaries in the programme. This findings is in agreement with Idachaba (1985) who reported that in a country like Nigeria where over 70 percent of it's citizens are rural based, no meaningful development can take place without involving the silent majority who have long suffered neglect and deprivation by successive government. Olaleye (2010) reported that participation implies that the workers have to supply the necessary and needed stimulus needed for the project's success. Olaleye (2010) further reported that there is a significant relationship between participation and community development. The result also conforms with Anyanwu's (1999) view that participation implies that the workers have to supply the necessary and needed stimulus needed for project's success.

Table 5: logit estimation results of the factors affecting the probability of participation among the respondents.

Variables	Maximum likelihood estimate	Standard error	Wald Statistics	eβ
Age	-0.01	0.04	0.06	-101
Income	0.00	0.00	0.58	1.00
Education	0.09	0.04	4.93*	1.10
Sex	0.94	0.41	5.29*	2.56
Family Size	0.12	0.05	5.34*	1.12
Constant	0.90	1.45	0.00	-2.45
Log likelihood:	-86.49			
Wald test of joint significance of coefficients	: $X^2_{cal} = 11.58$; $X^2_{5\%cv} = 11.07$			

IV. CONCLUSION

The study unveils that education, income, sex, household size and membership of a social organization influenced respondents' level of participation and subsequently the success of the project. The study shows a strong relationship between the level of participation of the beneficiaries and the success of the project. The study also established that there is development of human and material resources, which enhances the living standard of the people. This implies that LEEMP community driven development (CDD) is a method that enables projects to be built around the felt-needs of the people through the citizen's mobilization of both human and material resources within themselves.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the phase II of the LEEMP in Nigeria is recommended. Policy makers should de-emphasize top-down flow of information. This approach has the great disadvantage of reducing interaction between policy makers and the rural dwellers as well as participation. Community Driven Development Approach (CDD) should rather be used as this medium offers the rural people the opportunity to actively involved in the entire process of conception, identification, and execution of any poverty alleviation programme that will benefit them.

Due to the high illiteracy level in rural areas there is a need for capacity building of the people and especially the vulnerable group to enable them participates more in similar rural development project. An effective monitoring and evaluation team should be established so that the management can keep beneficiaries informed of the policies and plans affecting them and communities members can react promptly with their views about management's proposals and actions change may be managed properly with an understanding of the feelings of those affected by it, and an efficient system of communication is needed to understand and influence these feelings.

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