

Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Agricultural Extension Society of Nigeria

Number: Twenty-Second Annual Conference

Theme: Mainstreaming Entrepreneurship in Agricultural Extension Practice in Nigeria

Date: 23rd -26th April, 2017. **Venue:** University of Port Harcourt, River State, Nigeria

ISSN: 1595 – 1421. <http://aesonnigeria.org/ConfProc> . **Email:** editorinchief@aesonnigeria.org

Participation of Community Association in Enhancing Community Development in Selected Local Government Area of Oyo State

<https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jae.v22i1.2S>

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Abstract

The study assessed participation of community association in enhancing community development in selected Local Government Areas of Oyo State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select thirty associations from the study areas. Five members were selected from each association randomly making a total of one hundred and fifty respondents. Data obtained were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Majority of the respondents (78.0%) had moderate level of participation. About 85.0% of them had moderate positive attitude towards participation. T-test result showed that there was a positive significant difference in the levels of participation in community development across the study area ($t = 18.276$, $p = 0.05$). It is therefore recommended that governmental and non- governmental agencies should assist rural community association enhancing better community.

Key words: *Participation, Development, Community*

Introduction Community development is not new in Nigeria, it has been carried out by villagers, voluntary organization, association and various government functionaries long before the idea become formalized and institutionalized (Ekong, 2002). It is not a matter of inner emotion; it is one that demands towards, visible and tangible manifestation of human wellbeing on the parts of members of a community.

Furthermore, community development involves efforts on the part of the people in a community. This effort is shown in active participation of the people in the programme designed for their wellbeing in their own community. This participation may take the form of expenditure of time, energy, financial and physical resources (Maryoux, 2005). It also involves the resources of some outside authority, governmental or non-governmental. Such resources have to be managed by the people for the solution of their community problems.

The major goals of community development according to Ekong, (2002) are to induce social change to balanced human and material betterment, for strengthening the institutional structure in such a way as to facilitate social change and the process of growth; to ensure the fullest possible popular participation in the development process

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and promote social justice by permitting less privileged groups to give expressions to the aspirations and to participate in development activities. It is clear that development starts with people, but not things. When development is on things, all human resources remain latent and society can be poor amidst the most opulent material resources.

On the contrary, when a society is properly oriented, organized and disciplined, it can then be prosperous on the basis of natural wealth. It is recognized that development effort cannot be sustained without active participation of all people concerned without regard to gender, age or wealth. This is because the process of participation to a considerable extent is determined by, among other things, the institutional structure of decision making and implementation and also by orientation of people. Such institutional structures and orientation grow and crystallize in a society over a long period of time.

The fact that people live close to one another does not necessarily mean that they have much to do with each other. There may be little interactions between people and neighbours. It is the nature of the relationships between people and the social networks of which they are a part that is often seen as one of the more significant aspect of 'community (Delta, 2002).

Community life means activities undertaken voluntarily by people pursuing common interests, improving shared condition or representing joint concerns (Delta, 2002). These activities often take place locally but may equally happen through different types of common interest, need or identity such as ethnicity, age, gender, faith or any other that people may think are important.

Several studies have been conducted on the role of community association in community development. Give examples of such studies and state why you are embarking on this one.

The general objective of the study was to assess the participation of community association in enhancing community development in selected Local Government Areas of Oyo State.

Specifically, the objectives of the study were to;

- (i) describe the socio-economic characteristics of the community association members; and
- (ii) examine the attitude of members towards participation in community development.

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Hypothesis:

- (i) There is no significant difference in the levels of participation in community development across the study area.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Ogbomoso North and Ogo –Oluwa Local Government Areas of Oyo state. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select thirty (30) community associations from the selected study areas. Five members were selected randomly from each association to make a sample size of one hundred and fifty respondents.

Descriptive statistical tool such as frequency table was used to describe the socio-economic characteristic of the respondents and inferential statistical tool; t-test was used to analyse the data.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by socio-economic characteristics. Table revealed that larger proportion (80.7%) of the respondent were within the ages of 21-40 years. This means that majority of the respondents were in their middle age which according to Ironkwe, (2005) were the productive and economically active age. Just above average (59.3%) of the respondents were male. This means that men participate in community association more than the female counterparts. About 69% of the respondents were married. The finding conforms to Jibowo, (2002) that most adults in the society are married. Less than half respondents (44.0%) had no formal education. This agrees with that of Maryoux, (2005) that the activities introduced in many participating development programmes frequently require formal education.

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Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to socio-economic characteristics

Socioeconomic Characteristics	Percentage	Mean
Age (years)		
21 – 30	34.0	34.8
31 – 40	46.7	
41 – 50	17.3	
>51	2.0	
Sex		
Male	59.3	
Female	40.7	
Marital status		
Married	68.7	
Separated	4.7	
Widowed	1.3	
Divorced	1.3	
Single	24.0	
Educational level		
No formal education	44.0	
Primary education	31.0	
Secondary education	18.7	
Tertiary education	6.0	
Years of membership (years)		
1-4	42.0	5.77
5-8	36.0	
9-12	12.0	
>12	10.0	

Level of Participation

Table 2 presents respondents according to their level of participation. Majority (78.0%) had average level of participation score, 22.0% had high level participation score and none have low level participation score. This means the respondents in the study area had high sense of commitment towards development in their community. If they are sensitized, they will be willing to go extra mile in community

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development project. This finding conforms to Delta, (2002) that the professional practice of community development over many years has aspired to empower people, to overcome exclusion and to enable people to control their local condition.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their level of participation.

Level of Participation	Percentage
Low participation (<4)	0
Moderate participation	78.0
High participation (≥ 15)	22.0
Mean = 9.33 SD = 5.45	

Levels of attitude towards community development project.

Table 3: revealed distribution of respondents according to their levels of attitude towards community development project. Majority (84.7 Percent) of respondents had moderate level of attitude. This means that the respondents are willing to participate, if they are well motivated or encouraged. This conforms to Delta, 2002 findings that community activities is neither bought nor coerced but it is truly voluntary.

Table 3: Distributions of respondents according to their level of attitude

Level of Attitude	Percentage	Mean
Low positive attitude ($X \leq 28$)	7.3	33.8 (sd=5.67)
Moderate positive attitude (29 – 39)	84.7	
High positive attitude ($\bar{X} \geq 40$)	8.0	

Level of participation

Table 4 shows that mean score of level of participation to community development in Ogbomoso North was 7.86 while that of Ogo- Oluwa was 11.6. This implies that community associations in the urban area were being assisted in carrying out developmental project while those in the rural area were not. This conforms to Delta, (2002) that urban areas are easily assessed, so they received more assistance than the rural area dwellers.

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Table 4: Mean score of level of participation of respondents in community development

Study Area	Mean	Standard Deviation
Ogbomoso North LGA	7.8556	6.0495
Ogo-Oluwa LGA	11.5500	3.4268

Difference in the Levels of Participation in Community Development

It shows that there was a positive and significant difference in the level of participation in community development across the study areas ($t = 18.276$, $p \leq 0.05$).

This is consistent with prior expectation because the people in urban areas received assistance from agencies while the rural areas dwellers are not cared for but bore their burden themselves.

Conclusion and recommendation

The study concluded that lack of support for association' members affected their participation although they are willing and ready to participate from their participation score and level of attitude if encouraged to do so.

Community associations should be supported financially and materially in the implementation of major community development projects by governmental, non-governmental groups and philanthropists. Also, governmental agencies should render assistance to rural dwellers in enhancing community development project.

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