

## PARTICIPATION OF RURAL DWELLERS IN COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME IN ONDO STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

The study investigated participation of rural dwellers in Community-Based Natural Resources Management Programme (CBNRMP) in Ondo State, Nigeria. Data were gathered through structured interview schedule from 120 rural dwellers participating in CBNRMP. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the hypothesis set. Results of the study showed that the mean age of rural dwellers participating in CBNRMP in the study area was  $56.2 \pm 16.8$  years. Many (56.7%) of them were married and spent an average of  $12.3 \pm 9.5$  years in formal school. The majority (83.3%) of the respondents took farming as main occupation, also many of the respondents got information about CBNRMP through extension workers (66.7%) and television/radio (60.0%). Majority (71.7%) of the respondents had favourable perception of CBNRMP. There were positive and significant association between respondents' participation in CBNRMP and their age ( $r = 0.512$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ); years of formal education ( $r = 0.483$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ); perception of CBNRMP ( $r = 0.542$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ); occupation ( $\chi^2 = 33.483$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ); marital status ( $\chi^2 = 32.851$ ;  $p \leq 0.05$ ); source of information about CBNRMP ( $\chi^2 = 31.612$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ). Rural dwellers' participation in CBNRMP was high in the study area. It was recommended that conducive atmosphere that enhances meaningful participation of beneficiaries should be encouraged the more and challenges militating against participation of rural dwellers in CBNRMP should be adequately addressed by the stakeholders of the programme.

**Keywords:** Participation, Rural dwellers, Natural resources, Perception

### INTRODUCTION

Participation is a rich concept that varies with its application and definition. The way participation is defined also depends on the context in which it occurs. For some, it is a matter of principle; for others, practice; for still others, an end in itself. Participation can be taken as the mean as well as the end by itself. The distinctions between these are neither clear-cut nor mutually exclusive, but they do represent two different purposes and approaches to promote participatory development. Participation as a means simply see participation as the process whereby local people cooperate or collaborate with the externally introduced development collaborates in accomplishing development project (Nelson and Wright, 1995). In this way, participation becomes the means through which the initiatives implemented more effectively. The government or donors are the one who initiate development processes and use community resource to provide service to the people (Mulwa, 2008).

Participation as an end is regarding participation as a goal in itself. This goal expressed as the empowering of people in terms of their skills acquisition, knowledge and experience to take greater responsibility for their development. The concept of participation as an end aimed at ensuring that people are responsible in solving their own social-economic problems (Gaventa and Barrett, 2012; Department for International Development DFID, 2010). There is still hot debate

among practitioners and in the literature about whether participation is a means or an end or both; in this study, participation is taken as both.

### Community-Based Natural Resources Management Programme (CBNRMP) in Ondo State: Explorative review

Community-Based Natural Resource Management Programme (CBNRMP) was promoted by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Federal Government, but funded by the IFAD, Federal Government, Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), participating States and Local Government Areas for a period of eight (8) years. The goal of CBNRMP was to improve the livelihoods and living conditions of at least 400,000 rural families (households) in the nine Niger Delta States. The programme started in the year 2005 in Ondo State and was scheduled for completion on 2013 but had a two-year extension at the request of the Federal Government of Nigeria, which brought the completion date to 2015 (IFAD, 2006, CBNRMP, 2014).

Projects are carried out based on the need of the people in the communities using bottom-top approach; the communities identify their pressing needs that the programme intends to proffer solution. There are Community Base Animator Teams (CBAT) which consist of six (6) people 3 male (one youth) and 3 female (one youth). The programme (for training/capacity building) has



been using the concept of Training-of-Trainers (ToT) through a step down process in which primary beneficiaries pass on what they know after they have been “trained” to others in their community or commodity group. The enterprises/projects supported by CBNRMP operate within the crop, livestock, fisheries, processing and vocational trade sectors (on-farm, off-farm and non-farm) (CBNRMP, 2014).

Selections of Local Government Areas (LGAs) to benefits in Ondo State were based on the poorest ones and the communities that participated were the extreme poor communities in terms of basic social and economic facilities. Nine (9) out of eighteen (18) LGAs in Ondo State were involved, which covered 27 communities.

The importance of rural areas cannot be over emphasized in the developing nation’s economy because rural areas predominantly provide food for teeming population and raw materials for agricultural based industries. Also rural area serves as a place of refuge during crisis and most urban dwellers go there to relax. In general, the rural areas engage in primary activities that form the foundation of any developing nation’s economy. Unfortunately, in some developing nations like Nigeria, the rural area has suffered long time neglect in such a way that has created wide gap between the rural and urban areas most especially in the area of social and economic opportunities, physical development and available infrastructural facilities.

The situation of rural areas above calls for its development that involves the transformation of the rural areas into a socially, economically, politically, educationally and materially desirable condition, with a purpose of improving the quality of life of the rural population (Jibowo, 2000; Ekong, 2010).

Recently, CBNRMP that makes participating rural dwellers assume central role in project identification and implementation was put in place between the year 2005 and 2013 in selected LGAs of Ondo State. Adisa (2013) recorded increase in level of improvement in socio economic status of CNBRMP’s beneficiaries. There is need to examine participation of beneficiaries that warranted this increase in level of socioeconomic improvement in the study area.

The main objective of this study was to investigate the participation of rural dwellers in Community-Based Natural Resources Management Programme (CBNRMP) in Ondo State, while the specific objectives were to;

- i. describe the socioeconomic characteristic of CBNRMP’s participating rural dwellers in the study area;
- ii. investigate rural dwellers’ perception of CBNRMP;
- iii. examine the level of participation of rural dwellers in CBNRMP; and

- iv. analyse the challenges militating against participation of rural dwellers in CBNRMP in the study area.

The research hypotheses are as stated;

- i. There is no significant relationship between rural dwellers’ participation in CBNRMP and their socioeconomic characteristics;
- ii. There is no significant relationship between rural dwellers’ participation in CBNRMP and their perception of the programme.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Ondo State, one of the NDDC members in Nigeria. Multi stage sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study. At first stage, four (4) out of nine (9) participating LGAs were randomly. The selected LGAs were Idanre, Ondo- East, Okitipupa and Ile-Oluji/Okeigbo. Fifty per cent of rural communities participating in the programme were proportionally selected from each of the selected LGAs making twelve communities. The selected communities were Olorunredo, Kajola-ojurin, Ebijaw, Ikota, Ibutitan, Elemo, AraromiFasawe, Ayede-oja, Kajola-usama, Owena Egbeda, Abalaka and Oniyewu. Finally, one hundred and twenty rural dwellers were proportionately selected and were interviewed for the study. Duly validated and pretested structural interview schedule were used to elicit information from the respondents. Data were summarized with percentages, means and standard deviation, while Chi-square and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were employed to make inferences from the hypothesis.

The dependent variable for this study was conceptualised as participation of rural dwellers in CBNRMP in Ondo State. It was measured by listing and scoring the natures of participation of rural women at each stage of community based development activities (Problem identification, Decision-making, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation stage) against a 4-rating scale of Very often (4), Often (3), Occasionally (2), Never (1). The respondents’ perception of CBNRMP was determined by asking the respondents to indicate their view using 10 declarative sentences on a 5-point scale of Strongly Agreed (5), Agreed (4), Undecided (3), Disagreed (2), Strongly Disagreed (1).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results in Table 1 revealed that majority (60.2%) of the respondents were at their old age, while 7.5 percent were youth; the mean age of the respondents was 56.2 with standard deviation of 16.8. This implies that the respondents comprise few active people, which might be because of high rate of rural-urban migration. Furthermore, it was revealed that there was marginal (48.3:51.7) difference in number between male and female

among the respondents, indicating that the programme is gender sensitive. The table also showed that the mean of years spent in formal schools was 12.3 with standard deviation of 9.5; this revealed that majority could read and write which would affect their participation in CBNRMP positively, also vast majority of the respondents were Yorubas since the study area falls in Yoruba land. Vast majority (83.3%) of them were farmers by occupation while few engaged in trading and public service; in addition, many (66.7%) of the

respondents had information about the programme from extension workers. The table also revealed that many (56.7%) of the respondents was married; this implies that high percentage of married was involved in the programme. This finding was in consonance with earlier reports of Adisa and Jibowo (2006) that that reported that high percentage of married in the rural communities of Osun State are involved in the community based development projects.

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their socioeconomic characteristics, n=120**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard deviation
<b>Age (years)</b>				
< 30	9	7.5		
30-50	36	30.0	56.2	16.8
> 50	75	62.5		
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	58	48.3		
Female	62	51.7		
<b>Years of formal education</b>				
>12	53	44.2		
7-12	33	27.5	12.3	9.5
1-6	21	17.5		
No formal education	13	10.8		
<b>*Occupation</b>				
Farming	100	83.3		
Trading	52	43.3		
Public service	15	12.5		
<b>*Source of information about CBNRMP</b>				
Extension workers	80	66.7		
Television and radio	72	60.0		
Neighbors	55	45.8		
<b>Marital status</b>				
Married	68	56.7		
Widowed/widower	24	20.0		
Single	28	23.4		
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Yoruba	111	92.2		
Igbo	3	2.6		
Others	6	5.2		

Source: Field survey, 2016 \*Multiple choices

**Perception of respondents about CBNRMP**

The result in Table 3 revealed that perception means score was 72.7 with standard deviation of 1.8. This analysis shows that many (71.7%) of the respondents had favourable perception of CBNRMP. It could, without doubt therefore, be inferred that the favourable perception of the

respondents about CBNRMP should lead to full participation in its activities; this could result into development of the study area in no small measure. This result is in line with Adisa *et al.* (2003), which reported similar favourable perception of community-based development among rural dwellers in Osun State.

**Table 3: Distribution of the respondents by perception about the programme, n=120**

Perception statements	SA	A	DA	SD
Information dissemination about the project is inadequate.	0 (0.0)	4 (3.3)	49 (0.8)	67 (55.8)
The project implementation is good the way it has always been carried out.	30 (25)	86 (71.7)	4 (3.3)	0 (0.0)



Perception statements	SA	A	DA	SD
The project agency has carried the people in the community along properly.	54 (45)	61 (50.8)	5 (4.2)	0 (0.0)
The project needs improvement in some areas.	26 (21.7)	57 (47.5)	34 (28.3)	0 (0.0)
There is proper utilisation and monitoring of the project by the rural people.	58 (48.3)	58 (48.3)	4 (3.3)	3 (2.5)
The project focus on the identify need of the people.	41 (34.2)	71 (59.2)	8 (6.7)	0 (0.0)
The project was only enforced on the people.	0 (0.0)	5 (4.2)	44 (36.7)	0 (0.0)
The project has impact positively on the well being of the community.	69 (57.5)	50 (41.7)	1 (0.8)	0 (0.0)
The staff agencies are not easily accessible and capable of ensuring project success.	6 (5)	15 (12.5)	70 (58.3)	71 (59.2)
The project is a waste of resource by the government	0 (0.0)	95 (79.2)	25 (20.8)	29 (24.2)

SA = Strongly Agreed, A = Agreed, DA = Disagreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed  
Mean = 72.7

Standard deviation = 1.8

Source: Field survey, 2016

### Participation of respondents in CBNRMP

Result in Table 3 revealed that the participation of rural dwellers in CBNRMP ranges from problem identification to evaluation/monitoring. Many (54.4%) of the respondents participated often as initiators, while few (38.1%) participated in evaluation/monitoring at the beginning of the programme. This finding is in agreement with that of Okunade *et al* (2005) who reported that the rural dwellers participated at

every stage of community based development activities at different levels from problem identification, decision-making, planning for action, implementation and evaluation/monitoring stage. The finding also corroborates that of Deji (2007) who reported that the participation of rural dwellers is inevitably significant to the success and sustainability of rural development projects and that the level of their participation determines the extent to which the project succeeds.

**Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to participation in CBNRMP, n= 120**

*Participation	VO	OF	OC	N
Problem identification	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
Initiator	49(40.8)	65(54.4)	17(14.4)	7(5.6)
Opinion giver	22(17.6)	59(47.2)	25(20.0)	44(35.2)
Information seeker	47(37.6)	63(50.4)	29(23.2)	11(8.8)
Information giver	68(54.4)	39(31.2)	29(23.2)	14(11.2)
<b>Decision-making</b>				
Attending meeting	69(55.2)	69(55.2)	12(9.6)	0(0.0)
Committee member	84(67.2)	66(52.8)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Debate and discussion	34(27.2)	97(77.6)	11(8.8)	8(6.4)
Conducting opinion poll	32(25.6)	64(51.2)	47(37.6)	7(5.6)
<b>Planning of action</b>				
Arranging meetings	60(48.0)	77(61.6)	13(10.4)	0(0.0)
Source of input	84(67.2)	53(42.4)	13(10.4)	0(0.0)
Work organisation framework	55(44.0)	95(76.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
<b>Implementation</b>				
Fund	97(77.6)	53(42.4)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Equipment/materials	77(61.6)	73(58.4)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Personal labour	48(38.4)	80(64.0)	15(12.0)	7(5.6)
Hired labour	37(29.6)	68(54.4)	38(30.4)	7(5.6)
<b>Evaluation/monitoring</b>				
Beginning	0(0.0)	31(24.8)	64(51.2)	55(44.0)
Middle	0(0.0)	18(14.4)	47(37.6)	85(68.0)
End	72(57.6)	7(5.6)	71(56.8)	0(0.0)

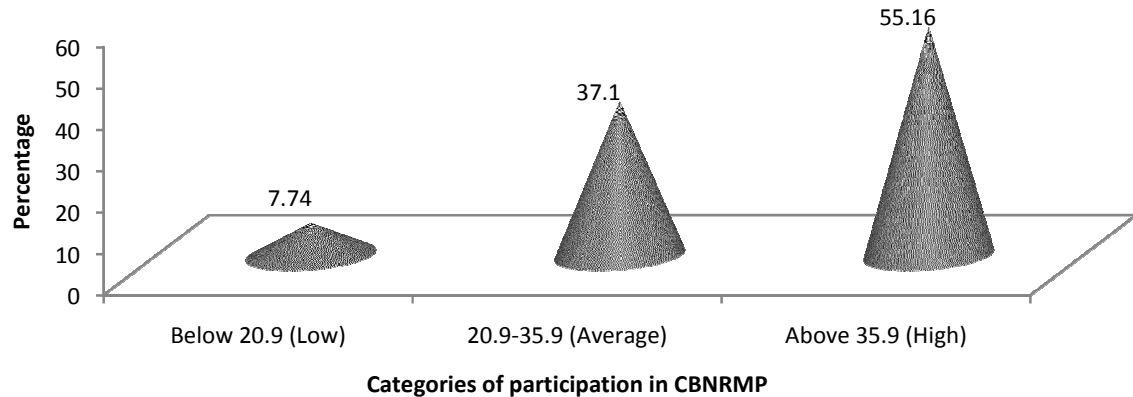
\* Multiple responses VO=Very Often, OF=Often, OC=Occasionally, N= Never

Source: Field survey, 2016

**Categories of respondents’ participation in CBNRMP**

Results in Figure 1 revealed that the respondents’ participation in CBNRMP was high.

This may lead to increasing programme’s effectiveness, efficiency and flow of benefits to the beneficiaries.



Mean= 28.4, Standard deviation= 7.5

**Figure 1: Cone chart showing distribution of respondents by categories of participation in CBNRMP**

Source: Field survey, 2016

**Challenges militating against respondents’ participation in CBNRMP**

Result in Table 4 revealed that vast majority (88.8%) of the respondents indicated that gender inequality/discrimination was one of the main challenges militating against their participation in CBNRMP; this was ranked highest while

insufficient time to participate (20.8%) ranked least among the challenges. This finding corroborates that of Deji (2007) who reported that there are socio-cultural factors associated with participation of rural women in community development projects in Nigeria.

**Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to challenges encountered during participation in CBNRMP. n=120**

*Challenges	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Gender inequality/ discrimination	111	88.8	1 <sup>st</sup>
Inadequate education	47	37.6	12 <sup>th</sup>
Low level of government assistance	107	85.6	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Inadequate resources	67	53.6	7 <sup>th</sup>
Lack of communal cooperation	54	43.2	9 <sup>th</sup>
Insufficient information about programme	48	38.4	11 <sup>th</sup>
Insufficient skill to participate	91	72.8	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Poor planning	38	30.4	13 <sup>th</sup>
Unfairness in distributing works and benefits	81	64.8	6 <sup>th</sup>
Mismanagement of programme fund	63	50.4	8 <sup>th</sup>
Improper programme coordination/supervision	51	40.8	10 <sup>th</sup>
Domination of local elites	88	70.4	5 <sup>th</sup>
Insufficient time	26	20.8	14 <sup>th</sup>
Cultural beliefs	91	72.8	3 <sup>rd</sup>

\* Multiple responses

Source: Field survey, 2016



**Hypothesis testing**

Table 4 reveals that at 0.01 level of significance, occupation ( $\chi^2=33.483$ ); sex ( $\chi^2=29.502$ ); and source of information about CBNRMP ( $\chi^2=31.612$ ) had significant association with participation in CBNRMP. Furthermore, at 0.05 level of significance, the respondents' marital status ( $\chi^2=32.851$ ) also had significant association with participation in CBNRMP. Whereas ethnicity ( $\chi^2 =4.370$ ) had no significant association with

participation in CBNRMP. The contingency coefficient revealed a weak association between sex (C=0.036), marital status (C=0.037), occupation (C=0.038), source of information (C=0.037), and participation in CBNRMP, based on Kerlinger (1986), which described C value of 0.28 as moderate relationship, and greater values as higher association. Thus, ethnicity of the respondents has nothing to do with participation in CBNRMP

**Table 4: Results of Chi-Square analysis of the relationship between socio economic characteristics of respondents and participation in CBNRMP, n= 120**

Variables	$\chi^2$ Value	df	p-value	C
Sex	29.502	2	0.001**	0.036
Occupation	33.483	4	0.001**	0.038
Source of information	31.612	2	0.001**	0.037
Ethnicity	4.370	5	0.635	0.017
Marital status	32.851	5	0.003*	0.037

Source: Field survey, 2016

\* Significant at 0.05 level of significant DF- Degree of Freedom

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level of significant C- Contingency coefficient

Result in Table 5 revealed that at 0.01 level of significance, respondents' age (r= 0.512), years of formal education (r= 0.483) and perception towards CBNRMP (r=0.542) had significant relationship with participation in CBNRMP. Thus, increase in

respondents' age and years of formal education, together with favourable perception towards CBNRMP could increase participation in CBNRMP.

**Table5: Correlation analysis showing relationship between socioeconomic characteristics, perception of the respondents and participation in CBNRMP, n= 120**

Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)	Coefficient of determination (r <sup>2</sup> )	of Decision
Age	0.521	0.271**	Significant
Years of formal education	0.483	0.233**	Significant
Perception towards CBNRMP	0.542	0.294**	Significant

Source: Field survey, 2016\*\*Significant at the 0.01 level

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that the level of rural dwellers' participation in CBNRMP was high in the study area. It was recommended that conducive atmosphere that enhances meaningful participation of beneficiaries should be encouraged and challenges militating against participation in CBNRMP should be resolved, since high participation in CBNRMP was linked to its effectiveness and efficiency.

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