



ATTITUDE OF RURAL HOUSEHOLDS TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the attitude of rural households to Community Development Projects in Ogun state Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 120 rural household heads. Data were collected with an interview schedule and analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, mean and correlation. Results reveal that 55.8% of the respondents were male, 53.3% had secondary education and the mean age was 38 years with an average household size of 6 persons. Findings also reveal that the implemented Community Development Projects (CDPs) indicated by more than 60% of the households included borehole, installation of a transformer, security post and entrance gate. Most (64.0%) of them had an undesirable attitude to the CDPs. The strategies used to accomplish these CDPs with the mean score above 2.0 were clear goal setting, delegation and participatory evaluation. The main problems encountered in CDPs were the unwillingness of members to contribute financially (86.7%), lack of cooperation (80.8%) and distrust among members (75.0%). There was a significant relationship between strategies used ($r = 0.85$, $p < 0.05$) and attitude to CDPs. It was concluded that many of the rural households had undesirable attitude towards CDPs and it is significantly related to strategies used in the project handling and implementation. Therefore, it is recommended that factors which predispose people to undesirable attitude towards CDPs should be resolved at the community level to win peoples' trust and cooperation so as to improve their attitude in projects that can transform their rural communities.

Keywords: Community Development Projects, Attitude and Rural households

INTRODUCTION

Development is a gradual process which brings about changes, growth, advancement and transformation in aspects of human life. This cut across the physical, environmental, social and economic parts of the populace. Development targets to increase the level of living and quality of life of the people meeting their needs and solving the immediate problems in their locality. The interpretation of development could be complex based on the perspective of different people. According to Chambers (1997) development is a "good change" but this is not as straightforward as it sounds. Thomas (2004) refers to the meaning of development as a process of historical change which was first conceptualized as a process of structural societal change. The word development could be explained in three ways, which include seeing development as a vision, as a historical process that takes place over long periods of time due to inevitable processes and as actions to change things for better (Thomas, 2000). Most of the developments are as a result of deliberate efforts of either authorities or group of people with the mandate to transform their locality. The government authorities are saddled with the responsibility of development in both urban and rural areas. Burki *et al* (1999) pointed out that the development experiences from some parts of the world, for instance, the Caribbean, East Asia and East European countries were due to the decentralization which was chosen as an important component of their development agenda. The essence of creating local government all over the world is to facilitate the development of the

grassroots and the provision of service delivery to the rural area (Ajayi, 2000)

In the developing countries, most of the times the government fails in their responsibility of providing development to improve the lives of the people. According to Nwachukwu and Nzotta (2010), the rate at which infrastructure construction projects fail or abandoned is retrogressive in most developing economies. Even where development is provided by the government, the concentration is mainly in the urban and the access to modern facilities, basic amenities such as drinking water, good feeder roads and electric power supply are limited in the rural areas (U.N. Habitat, 2003). Due to the shortage of these facilities and amenities, people especially in rural areas, put efforts and resources together to construct structure and projects collectively that can improve their standard of living. Monaheng (2000) opined that the people-centred development approach put people's well-being in the centre and the welfare of the earth as their ecological base as a means of realizing the needs of the people. In order to provide development that will meet the felt need of the people especially at the grassroots, the participation of the people in the communal projects is inevitable. Swanepoel and DeBeer (2006) asserted that Community Development is neither an individual nor few persons' activities, but rather a collective activity involving a group of people sharing mutual social challenges, concerns, and Community Development needs.

United Nations (2014) defines Community Development as a process in which community members take collective action to create solutions

to their collective problems. It is a comprehensive term given to the practices of local leaders, advocates, citizens and experts in various aspects of communities, with aims of improving and building stronger and more resilient local communities. Lenihan (2012) opined that if governments really want citizens and stakeholders to take ownership of issues, they must engage the public in a real dialogue where all parties work through the matters and agreed on the plan of action together. Olukoshi and Nyamnjio (2005) pointed out that the common explanation why certain projects did not have communal support is because of the top-down approach to development most African leaders adopted while planning and power are left in the hands of certain elites of various sectors.

Community Development Projects (CDPs) even though it is communal, not individual, the process still requires the individual's commitments in terms of time, energy and resources. Since the resources of the people are involved, accountability and transparency cannot be ruled out so as to build the confidence of the people in the process of the CDPs. How the project is being initiated, strategies and approached used in the implementation as well as the problems emanated in communal projects among other factors could influence the attitude of the people towards the projects. The attitude of the people affects their commitment to the project in terms of contribution in both financial and non-financial resources. In order to obtain a positive outcome for CDPs, the issues instigating the attitude of the peoples should be explored and addressed. In this view, this study examined the attitude of rural households to Community Development Projects (CDPs) in Ogun state Nigeria. The study specifically assessed the CDPs, strategies used and problem encountered in implementing the projects, and whether the attitude of the rural households towards CDPs is desirable or not. The hypothesis was tested for the relationship between strategies used in implementing CDPs and attitude of the rural households to CDPs.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Ogun state in the southwestern region of Nigeria. It is a rainforest zone with a land mass area of 16,406,226 km² which lies on latitudes 7° 01' and 7° 18', longitudes 2° 45' and 3° 55'. The annual rainfall is between 1000mm and 2599mm. The population of Ogun state was estimated by the 2006 Census to be 3,728,098 (National Population Commission, 2006). The state shares boundary with the Republic of Benin on the west and Ondo state on the East, while it is Oyo state in the North and Lagos State as well as the Atlantic Ocean on the South. Ogun State is a 'gateway' to Nigeria from other coastal

West African countries like Benin and Togo Republic, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Liberia among others. The study area has received assistance from the State government via the Community Development Councils and Community Development Associations to carry out Self- Help projects that can meet the need in their communities. In recent times, the World Bank partner with the Ogun State government on World Bank Assisted Community and Social Development Projects which is met to further boost development in communities across the State and this makes the location suitable for this study.

A multistage sampling procedure was used to select 120 respondents for the study. The selection procedures were as follows: Simple random sampling method was used to select two senatorial zones out of the three zones in Ogun State at the first stage. Fifty percent of the Local Government Area (LGA) from the chosen senatorial zones were selected for the study which make six LGAs at the second stage. Two wards were selected using random sampling to make twelve wards at the third stage. At the fourth stage, a random selection of one rural community in each of the wards was done. Finally, from the frame of the list of rural households in each community, a random selection was carried out to select ten rural household heads respectively from the rural communities which added up to 120 rural household heads. An interview schedule was used to elicit information from rural households.

Measurement of variables

- i. Community Development Projects were measured at nominal level using Yes =1 and No = 0
- ii. Problems encountered in implementing Community Development Projects were measured at nominal level using Yes =1 and No = 0
- iii. Strategies used in implementing CDPs were measured using a scale consisting of "All the time", "Most of the time", "Sometimes" and "Never" which were assigned 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.
- iv. The attitudes were measured using a Five-point Likert scale of fourteen items: Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) which were assigned a score of 5 to 1 respectively. A total attitude score was obtained from the aggregate of the attitude scores of each of the respondents while the mean composite index of the attitude was used to further transform the attitude into two categories of desirable and undesirable attitude.

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages. The inferential statistical tool used to test the hypothesis



was Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to determine the relationship between the strategies used and the attitude of rural households to CDPs. The total attitude score was used for the computation of the hypothesis since it is compatible with the selected statistical tool for the hypothesis testing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socioeconomic characteristic

Table 1 presents the socioeconomic characteristics of the rural households' heads. The result reveals that 55.8 percent of them were male with an average age of 38 years. More than half (52.5%) were married and had an average household size of 6 persons. The implication is that the married and their family members are more settled in the study area, they will definitely require basic amenities to support their living. If these amenities are not provided, the dwellers might have to suffer for lack of these amenities. The respondents were young considering their average age, they are likely to still reproduce more offspring who will need basic facilities and services for their survival. Ngugi *et al* (2003) opined that households with couples, married, and actually living together were more likely to participate in

community project and activities than those married and living separately for whatever reasons, those whose marriage partners were deceased or those that were single.

Many (53.3%) of the rural households heads had secondary education, this could enhance their understanding of the process of developing the study area. The level of education helps in prioritizing required development project and assist in accessing available opportunities that could aid the Community Development Projects. It is also important that in community-based projects all segments of the community, especially the youth, adequately participate in the projects from the planning stage, and have some basic knowledge and skills to run and sustain the project (Frank, 2006). The success of the CDPs cannot be achieved without financial commitment either contributed or sought from external sources. The result in Table 1 also showed that the average income of the respondents was ₦68,534.00 per annum; the implication is the respondents may find it difficult to financially contribute to the CDPs because of the low income they are earning. Bremerand Bhuiyan (2014) asserted that tenure status and income level influence community participation in community-led infrastructure development.

Table 1. Socioeconomic characteristics of the rural households

Variables	Modal frequency (Percentage)	Mean
Age (years)		38 years
Sex	67 (55.8%) Male	
Marital status	63 (52.5%) Married	
Household size		6 persons
Level of education	64 (53.3%) Secondary education	
Income per annum		₦68,534.00

Implemented community development projects in the study area

Entries in Figure 1 indicate the projects carried out via the communal efforts. It reveals that about 70 percent of the rural households pointed out that digging of borehole was one of the CDPs. The borehole was to supply water for the community since water is essential for their living both for domestic and livelihoods use. UN Habitat (2011) reported that over 76% (3 in 4) in peri-urban areas and nearly half are without regular access to potable water. Another CDPs executed was the installation of transformer (67.6%). This is to access electricity which could be used to power the pumping machine in the borehole as well as other activities within the communities. The communal assets and properties of the people call for the

cautiousness for security in the community. This could be the reason for the entrance gate (65.8%) that was constructed so as to prevent illegal entry into the community and the building of security post also indicted by 60.8 percent of the respondents so as to monitor both properties and lives in the community for protection.

The security post serves as an office for any type of security system been operated in the area. The security gadget could be kept at the post and also strategic security plans can be mapped out at the security post before the security personnel set out for their duties. Although other CDPs were carried out in the study area, the main focus and concentration were on the challenges of water supply, provision of electricity and security of lives and properties.

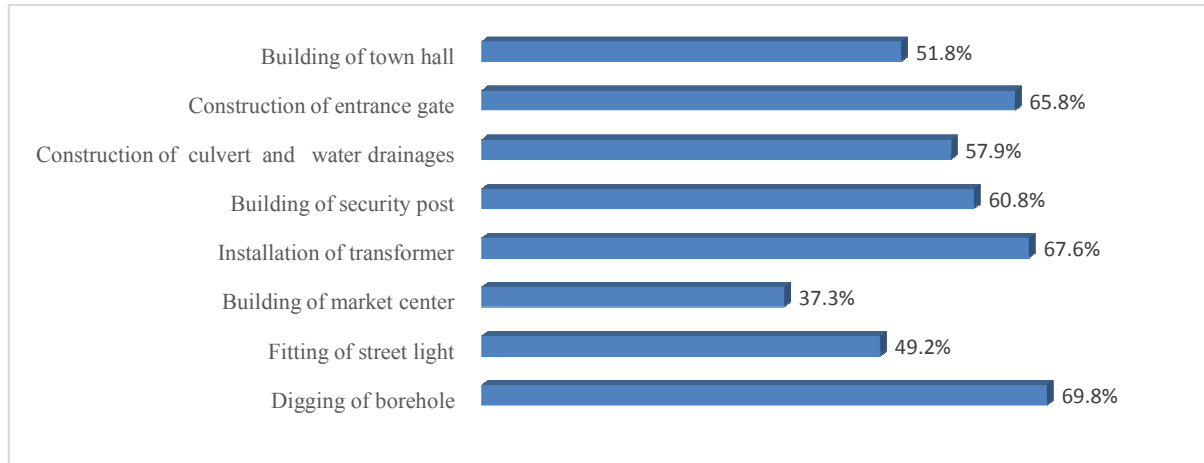


Figure 1. Distribution of community development projects carried out in the study area

Strategies for the community development projects implementation

In order to attain the planned community projects, several approaches and strategies were used. Ghemawat (2002) asserted that management of a project is concerned with the implementation of a strategy. It is an old word that has to do with a plan of action geared towards the achievement of a particular goal. Strategies that were mostly used and ranked first and second were the participatory evaluation of CDPs and clear goal setting. The participatory evaluation of CDPs by members of the community gave them a sense of belonging and confidence in the project implementation. Ajayi and Otuya (2006) asserted that sustainable community development cannot take place through force or order, but is most likely to happen when all

actors participate and share their ideas, visions and responsibilities equally and democratically in steering and implementing their community development projects. The participation of people in CDPs grows their commitment, especially in financial support. This is because their participation makes it easier for them to monitor how their contributed resources are utilised for the communal project. The clarity of goal per project is another strategy that was used to execute CDPs. Once the goal is clear and transparent, the people become less suspicious about the projects. The success of development project depends on the availability of good machinery for monitoring and evaluation, it is necessary in order to make prompt adjustments during the project life and to ensure compliance to targeted objectives (Ozor and Nwankwo, 2008).

Table 2: Strategies used for the community development projects

Strategies used	A%	M%	S%	N %	Mean Rank
Participatory evaluation of CDPs implementation	35.8	38.3	20.8	5.0	3.05 1 st
Clear goal setting about CDPs	33.3	40.0	21.7	5.0	3.02 2 nd
Delegation of the projects' workload	1.7	67.5	18.3	12.5	2.58 3 rd
Encouragement of full attendance to decide on the project	32.5	6.7	38.3	22.5	2.49 4 th
Inclusion of influential people in the committee	17.5	22.5	26.7	33.3	2.24 5 th
Long duration for the payment of CDPs' dues	7.5	5.0	67.5	20.0	2.00 6 th
Supply of labour required for CDPs by members	19.2	1.7	37.5	41.7	1.98 7 th
Sourcing for material needed from members	4.2	1.7	43.3	50.8	1.59 8 th

A= All the times, M= Most of the times, S= Sometimes N= Never

Other strategies with a mean score above 2.0 include delegation of workload, encouragement of full attendance to decide on CDPs, the inclusion of influential people. The delegation of the obligations helps to overcome the delay in the projects. Schaad and Moffett (2002) opined that when authority is delegated between two subjects the general intent of the delegating subject is to give the receiving subject the power to act on its behalf. Full attendance of the members when decisions are to be made about the CDPs gives broaden view about

the projects and it will enable people to bring suggestions on how to tackle difficulty that is likely to come up during the process of implementing the project.

Most of the times, influential people in a community can be sought after either for a link or support. The inclusion of such influential people in the CDPs committee makes it easier for them to use their influence to seek opportunity for the success of the projects. The influential people that are part of the project's committee will not want the project



to fail probably because of their name, position and integrity. Ozor and Nwankwo (2008) opined that local leaders were able to play important role in community development because of their high level of intelligence, being a cosmopolitan, good level of education, good connections, and their high influence on the people.

Problems of Community Development Projects implementation

Entries in Table 3 show that most (86.7%) of the rural households indicated that people are reluctant to contribute money for CDPs. Funding is an important factor in the execution of projects. Communal projects require a financial contribution of many people, when people are unwilling to contribute, it slows down the process of implementing the project and could lead to an abandonment of the project. Ugboh (2007) opined that insufficient funds have prevented many good ideas that were developed in communities. Lack of cooperation among members is another main (80.8%) problem encountered in implementing CDPs. Once the members of the community cannot reach consensus on what project they want to carry out, it becomes difficult to progress on the project. Plateau and Gaspard (2003) opined that

communities are believed to have a better knowledge of the prevailing local conditions, and a better ability to enforce rules, monitor behaviour and verify actions related to interventions that favour CDPs.

Rural people are sometimes sceptical about the communal project which they believed is a way of extorting peoples' resources. This could be the reason for doubting the process of CDPs and their scepticism affects their attitude towards the communal projects, the implementation process and project committee. The peoples' unwillingness to contribute money for the CDPs creates another problem, which leads to inadequate funding (67.5%). If the members of the community are willing to contribute then there will be enough fund to complete the project embarked by the community. When the felt need of the community cannot be met due to inadequate fund both from internal and external sources, the people tend to have an unfavourable disposition of the process for the CDPs and it influences their attitudes towards the communal projects. The inability of many projects to generally satisfy the desires and aspirations of the end user is also an instance of project failure (Nwachukwu and Nzotta 2010).

Table 3: Problems encountered in implementing Community Development Projects

Problems	Frequency	Percentage
Unwillingness to contribute financially	104	86.7%
Lack of cooperation of members	97	80.8%
Distrust among members (Skepticism)	90	75.0%
Inadequate funding for the projects	81	67.5%
Leadership crises and misappropriation of fund	75	62.5%
Poor planning and delay of actions	74	61.7%
Clashes of interests and ideas	52	43.3%
Influential peoples' control over the projects	41	34.2%

Even when fund for the project is collected, its misappropriation (62.5%) is another problem which leads to leadership crises, and it hinders the progress of the CDPs. The community fund can be misused or even embezzled by the leaders who have access to the fund, sometimes, the purpose of the fund can be changed with little or no consultation with the members of the community. This act of misuse of fund creates crises especially when those that are not convenient with the misappropriation disagree with the leadership. Meanwhile, some of the leaders want to dictate where the project will be sited, solely supply the materials required and disburse the fund, all these causes disagreement among them. Adams and Zulu (2015) opined that the management model of a community project is plagued by corruption, financial mismanagement, and political interference. The crises arise from the clashes of interests and ideas, the plan of actions that

supposed to be a collective representation is hijacked by a few influential people and that can defeat the purpose of the communal project.

Rural households' attitude towards community development projects

Findings in Table 4 show that the respondents agreed that the CDPs did not meet their expectations and duration for the project implementation was too long with a mean score above 3.5. The implication is that the hope of the people about the CDPs was not realized, then people tend to look for an alternative solution to solve their problems. This could also be the reason for undesirable attitude shows by the rural households in the study area. Lasker and Weiss (2003) affirmed that every individual is crucial for development in rural areas; children, youth, men, women and community leaders. Every member is considered important for the flourishing of a community-based project (Leavy and Smith, 2010).

Table 4: Attitudes of rural household heads towards community development projects

Attitudinal statement	SA%	A%	U%	D%	SD%	Mean
CDPs did not meet my expectations	35.8	35.8	17.5	7.5	3.3	3.93
Implementation duration of the project is too long	12.5	60.0	6.7	17.5	3.3	3.61
CDPs are necessary for the community	1.7	62.5	20.0	6.7	9.2	3.41
Only a few people take advantage of the CDPs	4.2	65.0	14.2	1.7	15.0	3.34
CDPs give household heads more sense of responsibility in the community	36.7	15.8	12.5	6.7	28.3	3.26
The price of materials for the projects are inflated	16.7	24.2	30.8	19.2	9.2	3.20
CDPs makes life comfortable for the community	7.5	51.7	9.2	12.5	19.2	3.16
Many of the CDPs generate strife and clashes	-	49.2	20.0	25.0	5.8	3.13
CDPs are used as means of extorting money	7.5	24.2	25.0	36.7	6.7	2.89
It is satisfying that CDPs provide temporary job	22.5	6.7	13.3	47.5	10.0	2.84
Cooperation/bonds for CDPs lasted for short period	-	31.7	8.3	32.5	27.5	2.44
My money will rather be used for a personal project rather than CDPs	65.0	9.2	15.0	10.8	-	2.23
The projects make the people of the community to be more united	9.2	1.7	15.0	46.7	27.5	2.18
CDPs have not been very useful to households in	27.5	48.3	9.2	15.0	-	2.12
The Community could have been better without the CDPs	3.3	1.7	6.7	45.0	43.3	1.77
There is free access to all the CDPs	8.3	2.5	2.5	41.6	45.0	1.75

Figure 2 showed the categorisation of the overall attitude of the rural households towards Community Development Projects (CDPs) in the study area. More than half (64.0%) of the rural households had an undesirable attitude towards CDPs, this implies that many of the rural households will have detrimental attitude and behaviour towards the communal project. The attitudes of the people have significant impact on their acceptance, commitment and participation in any project be it government, communal or foreign intervention. Community members need to be

considered without partiality for them to be actively involved in the project activities, sharing experiences and expertise among themselves, and for everyone in the community to benefit (Hall, Clark and Frost, 2010). The effectiveness and success of CDPs process can be achieved if more people exhibit desirable attitude towards the projects in the community. In the study area, the few that had desirable attitude could be the ones that pushed forward the implementation of CDPs while others were dragged along due to their negative attitude.

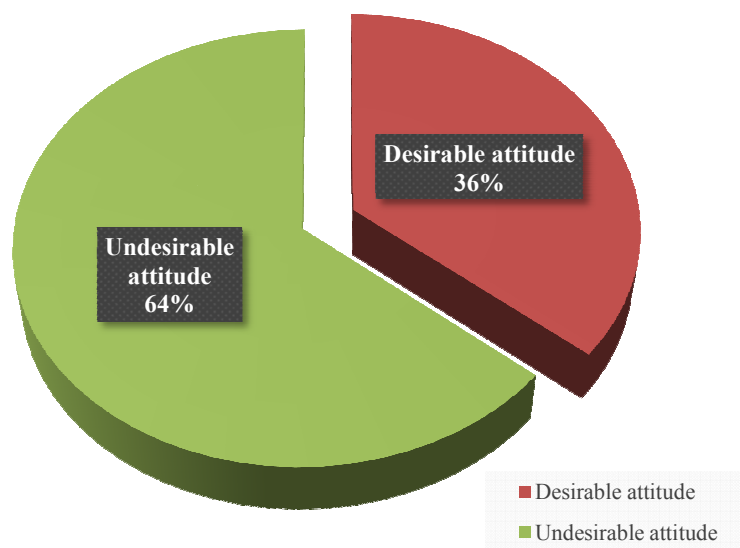


Figure 2: Categorisation of rural households' attitude to community development projects



Test of hypothesis

Entries in Table 5 showed that there is a significant relationship ($r = 0.85$ $p < 0.05$) between the strategies used and attitude of the rural households towards Community Development Projects. The result shows that there is a positive relationship between the two variables. This means that the better the strategies used in the implementation of CDPs in the rural communities, the more improved is the attitude of the people to

CDPs. This implies that the strategies used in the implementation of CDPs are noteworthy factors that could determine the attitude of the people towards CDPs. The more acceptable strategies are used, the more the likelihood that the people will exhibit a desirable attitude towards the CDPs. The undesirable attitude could hinder absolute participation in the CDPs which can lead to delay or failure of the projects.

Table 5: Correlation result of the relationship between strategies and attitude to CDPs

Variables	r value	p-value	Decision
Strategies used * attitude to CDPs	0.85	0.015	S

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcome of the study, it was concluded that most of the rural households in the study area had an undesirable attitude towards Community Development Projects. The main problem encountered in the implementation of CDPs was the unwillingness to contribute financially for the project while participatory evaluation of CDPs implementation process was the most used strategies in the study area. It was also established that the strategies used in implementing the project are significantly related to the attitude of the rural households towards the projects. The strategies used in implementing the project is an important factor in a desirable attitude towards CDPs. If the rural households' attitude is undesirable towards CDPs that are supposed to be their collective project, then, their attitude to the government-owned project could be awful. Therefore, it is recommended that community leaders, program planners and foreign organisation that have an interest in transforming rural area via CDPs should choose participatory and people inclusive approaches in the development process. The government should also encourage a bottom-top approach in rural development to bring about pro-poor growth and policies that can socially fortify the rural communities in the country.

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