

Relationship between Social Status of Members of Community Based Associations and Their Level of Participation in Development Projects in Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study determined the relationship between social status of members of Community Based Associations (CBAs) and their level of participation in development projects in Kwara state, Nigeria. Two objectives were raised, and two hypotheses tested. The study used survey as well as correlation research designs. The population of the study was 15,000 members of 496 CBAs in Kwara State but only 1170 were selected as sample for the purpose of the study and 1008, respondents who completed the instrument adequately were used for the analysis. The sample was selected using multi-stage sampling technique. An instrument 'tagged' social status and participation questionnaire (SSPQ) was used to collect the data analysed. The instrument was validated and tested for reliability using odd-even reliability technique. A reliability coefficient of 0.761 obtained was found to be statistically significant at $P < 0.05$. Multiple correlation analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. All decisions were taken at probability level of 0.05. The study found that the variables of social status explained 10.07 percent of the variation in the level of participation with level of education, age and social relation making significant contributions to the variation in the level of participation of members of CBAs in development project. The second finding was that the relationship between social status and level of participation was statistically significant at $F(6,1001) = 20.076$. Based on the findings recommendations were made. Among others, it was recommended that community based association members should be provided with opportunities for them to further their education in order to be better informed to understand and contribute to discussion more intelligibly.

Keywords: Social Status, Community Based Associations, Participation, Development Projects, Kwara State

Introduction

Community development is recognised as a process by which the efforts of the people are harnessed with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of the communities and to enable them contribute fully to national progress. The collaboration is more needed now that resources for the provision of infrastructural facilities and services are shrinking in Nigeria and internationally. It is also true that government alone cannot provide these services to all its citizens. In other words, the use of nongovernmental associations and or private organisations is increasingly becoming popular in the provision of social welfare amenities and services as well as community development process. This utilization of people in community development efforts is considered as community participation.

However, participation is considered as a concept that varies with its application and definition. Hence, the World Bank (1995) sees it in three different ways: as a matter of principle; practice; and, as end in itself. Perhaps for the different views, participation has been defined in different ways. For instance, Westergaard (1986:14) defined participation as "collective efforts to increase and exercise control over resources and institutions on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from control". While Armitage (1988) defined participation as a process by which citizens respond to public concerns, voice their opinions about decisions that affect them and take responsibility for changes to their community; the World Bank (1995) defined it as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, and the decisions and resources which affect them. It seems participation of a group or association in projects that affect their well-being is in providing resources (symbolic and non symbolic) and by participating in the execution of the projects.

Perhaps considering the various definitions of participation, Shaeffer in Uemura (1999) clarifies different degrees or levels of participation and provides seven possible definitions of the term, including:

1. Involvement through the mere use of a service (such as enrolling children in school or using a primary health care facility);
2. Involvement through the contribution (or extraction) of money, materials and labour;
3. Involvement through attendance (e.g at parents meeting at school, association meetings) implying

- passive acceptance of decisions made by others;
4. Involvement through consultation on a particular issue;
 5. Participation in the delivery of a service, often as partners with other actors;
 6. Participation as implementers of delegated powers, and;
 7. Participation “in real decision making at every stage”, including identification of problems, the study of feasibility, planning, implementation, and evaluation.

As a follow up to the definition of participation and in terms of community participation, Bamberger (1986) provided five objectives of community participation to elucidate its importance and activities entailed. The objectives are:

1. Sharing project costs during project’s operational stages;
2. Increasing project efficiency through beneficiary consultation during project planning or beneficiary involvement in the management of project implementation or operation.
3. Increasing project effectiveness through beneficiary involvement to help ensure that the project achieves its objectives and that benefits go to the intended groups.
4. Building beneficiary groups through ensuring that participants are involved in project planning and implementation or through formal or informal training and consciousness-raising activities.
5. Increasing empowerment by increasing the control of the project by members of the community or association.

In all communities, participation has gone beyond usage of services provided by government or development agent to communities contributing and having control over decisions, priorities, plans and implementation through existing groups to achieve collective goals. That is to foster increased and sustainable development greater involvement of the communities should be ensured and this is often through existing structures and institutions, especially community-based organisations (CBOs).

Specially, social variables of members’, marital status, family size, gender and educational status are suggested to influence participation in community development projects of CBAs (Adekola, 2004). Besides, health condition, attitudes, needs disposition and members’ self-concept which are indicators of psychological factor are also considered important in determining whether or not the individual would participate in programme design and execution (Effiong, Ejue and Iyaji, 2006). Similarly, Adekola (2004) in analysing the influence of selected demographic and socio-cultural factors on participation of urban dwellers in solid waste management found out that education is a significant prerequisite for participation in group decision making. In other words, participants or members of CBAs must have knowledge, experience and or expertise in order to be able to contribute meaningfully to decision making process.

Still on social factors and participation, Iponmwonbs (2008), examined the conditions under which local residents and other stakeholders may be encouraged to participate in Joint Forest Management Project in Edo state. The author collected information from 469 respondents on their socio-economic characteristics, including ethnic background, marital status, gender, attitude and annual income. The data obtained were subjected to descriptive, chi-square, ANOVA and multiple regression analyses. Of the social factors, ethnic background, marital status and gender significantly impacted local interest in tree planning and forest conservation.

Also Angba and Itari (2012) carried out a study to determine the factors that influence farmers’ participation in social organisations in Obubra LGA in Cross River state. In achieving the objectives of the study, a multi-stage random sampling technique was used to select a total of 60 respondents. The results indicated that the farmers participation was much more affected by social factors rather than economic factors. Precisely, their participation was affected by mutual distrust among members and lack of confidence in their leadership. In addition the chi-square test result indicated a significant relationship between educational level among other variables and participation. In conclusion, the authors recommended that organizational environment that will encourage effective participation should be encouraged.

In another study Akinboye, Ayanmuyi, Kuponiyi and Oyetoro (2007) examined the relationship between youths occupation, level of education, access to information and participation in community development projects. The data collected were analysed with the aid of frequency counts, percentages and chi-square test. The finding revealed significant relationship between youths participation, occupation, level of education and access to information.

More particular on educational level and participation in community project Oyebamji (2000) found out that the degree of education and health trainings at the local level promoted people’s perception and adoption of modern preventive health practices, and the various health training programmes mounted at the community levels improved the efficiency and effectiveness of members who participated in such programmes than those who did not. The finding was as a result of a study of the level of participation of community members in primary health care project initiated by the communities in 18 local government areas of Osun state.

Regarding age and participation there is a relationship between age and participation. For a long time it

was assumed that the ability to actively participate in community projects, especially in educational programmes, reaches a maximum early adulthood, and then decreased rapidly. However, research showed that differences within age cohorts are much larger than differences between age cohorts. It is even suggested that abilities and participation are determined more by previous educational level and occupational status than by age. Older people tend to be less active, but often more meticulously and with more intensity than younger people (Lernfähigkeit, 1979). However, old age is often confounded with a constellation of conditions unfavourable to participation, such as a low level of initial schooling and few occupational opportunities (Schulenberg et al, 1978). In addition, different educational needs are associated with different stages in life. In general, the share of older participants is increasing. This is partly due to change in provision, but also to the fact that the new generations of older people are better educated than previously (Van der Kamp 1990).

Furthermore, the work of Settle, Alreck & Bekh (1979) identified social class determinants of participation in leisure activity. The authors' surveyed 975 metropolitan West Coast adults responses to obtain their participation rates in competitive and non competitive sports. The participation level was cross tabulated with five socio-economic variables of self-rated social class, education income, occupational class and occupational growth and with five demographic variables of age, sex, marital status and family life cycle. The results revealed that demographics were better predictors than economic factors and education was by far the best determinant of participation.

It appears that members' participation is a function of many factors (including age, gender, marital status, family size, family type, educational background). In other words, for effective participation these factors should be recognised, monitored and controlled, to foster better and improved participation. Besides, the relationship between social status and participation of community members in development projects has been inconclusive and inconsistent (Akinyemi, 1990; Adekola, 2004; and Kwaya, 2004). Therefore, the problem of this study is, what is the degree of relationship between social status of members of association and their level of participation in projects? It is conceived that addressing these questions would suggest the direction on how to enhance members participation in community development activities.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to determine;

- (i) Which variables of social status explain variation in the level of participation.
- (ii) Relationship between social status and the level of participation.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are tested:

Ho₁ Variables of social status will not significantly explain variation in the level of participation

Ho₂ There is no significant relationship between social status and the level of participation.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey design to examine the relationship between social status and participation of members of CBAs in development projects in Kwara state, Nigeria. The survey design is considered appropriate as it affords the opportunity of studying large and small populations by selecting and studying samples chosen from the populations to discover the relative incidence, distribution, and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables (Osuala, 2001:96).

The population of this study comprised 15,477 members spread across 469 Community Based Associations (CBAs) registered with Kwara State Ministry of Social Development.. The sample of 1170 members were randomly selected using multi stage random selection techniques. In the first instance, the names of the associations were arranged in alphabetical order. From the list, random start equi-distant random sampling technique was used to select 234 (50%) associations. Then the first five members of each association that volunteered to participate in the research were eventually considered. The sample consisted of 607 males and 463 females; in the age range, 36 members were below 20 years, 420 were between 20-29 years, 348 were between 30-39 years; 228 were between 40-49 years, and 38 were 50 years plus; with respect to marital status, 608 were married while 462 were single; and regarding the family size, it ranges from one to 15. They were all members of the selected CBAs

A questionnaire designed by the researcher tagged social status and participation questionnaire (SSPAQ). The questionnaire divided was into three sections: Section A, B and C. Section A covers social data; section B contains items measuring the respondents relationship with other members of the CBA; Section C consists of items on self-rating of participation. Section A contains eleven items such as age, marital status, family size, level of education, means of transportation, sources of water and monthly income as examples. The Section B contains five (5) items such as "members rally round members need" "members talk to one another with respect just to mention these two. Response to these items are taken on five point Likert type scale. Section C is on self rating on participation. This section contains eleven items. The items include "I do not hesitate to give my

financial contribution when needed” Whenever there is discussion, I make my knowledge available”, “I always look forward to attend our meetings”, just to mention these three. In order to ensure that the contents of the instruments are valid, items were drawn taking cognisance of the objectives of the study. Furthermore, copies of the instruments were given to experts in community development and community education in the Department of Continuing Education and Extension Services, University of Maiduguri and in the Department of Adult Education and Community Services, Bayero University Kano. The validated instruments were tested for reliability using odd-even technique. A reliability coefficient of 0.789 was obtained found to be statistically significant at $P < 0.05$. Hence the instrument was considered reliable.

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Head of Department of Continuing Education and Extension Services, University of Maiduguri, addressed to the Chairpersons of the various community based associations in Kwara State seeking permission to carry out the study. The administration of the instrument was done by the researcher and three trained research assistants. The research assistants were trained the researcher on how to administer the questionnaire. The researcher made sure the selected assistants were familiar with the interpretation of the content of the instrument in the language of the immediate environment of the respondents. This is necessary in case a respondent does not understand English. Of the 1170 copies of the questionnaire administered, 1008 were completed as expected.

The hypotheses were tested using multiple correlation analysis, regression analysis or analysis of variance as deemed fit the nominal data were transformed into interval data by awarding 1 to 5 to ‘strongly disagree’, ‘agreed somehow’, ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ as the case may be.

Results

Hypothesis 1 Ho₁: Variables of social status of age, family size, marital status, sex, level of education, will not significantly explain variation in level of variation.

Multiple Regression Analysis was applied to the data collected through the questionnaire administered. The result of the analysis is presented in table 1

Table 1: Explanatory Power of variables of social status of variation in Participation

Social Characteristics	Standardized Coefficients(Beta)	Ranking	R Square
Gender	0.049	5	
Age	0.118*	3	
Marital Status	0.062	4	0.0107
Family Size	0.025	6	
Level of Education	0.367*	1	
Social Relation	0.124*	2	

Significant at $P < 0.05$

Table 1 presents explanatory power (beta coefficients) of social characteristics in explaining variation in participation of members of CBAs in community projects. The beta coefficients of the variables of level of education (.367), social relation (.124), and marital status (.118) are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, while those of age (.062), gender (.049) and (.025) are not statistically significant at the same probability level of 0.05. The table also shows that altogether the variables explained 10.7 percent of the variation in the level of participation.

Hypothesis 2 (Ho₂): There is no significant relationships between social status and level of participation of CBAs in community projects.

Multiple Correlation Analysis and Analysis of Variance were used to used to analyse the data collected through the questionnaire. The results of the analyses are contained in tables 2 and 3 respectively.

Table 2 Multiple Correlation Coefficients of Variables of Social Status and Participation

		Sex	Age	Marital status	Family size	Level of education	Social relation	Participation
Sex	Pearson Correlation	1	-.051	.028	-.059	.073*	.224**	.050
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.108	.378	.060	.020	.000	.113
	N	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008
Age	Pearson Correlation	-.051	1	-.406**	.438**	.213**	.141**	.062*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.108		.000	.000	.000	.000	.049
	N	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008
Marital status	Pearson Correlation	.028	-.406**	1	-.197**	-.439**	-.138**	-.045
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.378	.000		.000	.000	.000	.150
	N	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008
Family size	Pearson Correlation	-.059	.438**	-.197**	1	.026	-.027	-.010
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.060	.000	.000		.411	.383	.740
	N	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008
Level of education	Pearson Correlation	.073*	.213**	-.439**	.026	1	.335**	.290**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	.000	.000	.411		.000	.000
	N	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008
Social relation	Pearson Correlation	.224**	.141**	-.138**	-.027	.335**	1	.094*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.383	.000		.000
	N	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008
Participation	Pearson Correlation	.050	.062*	-.045	-.010	.290**	.004	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.113	.049	.150	.740	.000	.911	
	N	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008	1008

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 : One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	992.194	6	165.366	20.066	.000 ^a
	Residual	8249.520	1001	8.241		
	Total	9241.714	1007			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social-relation, Family size, Sex, Marital status, Level of education, Age

b. Dependent Variable: Participation

Table 2 shows that of the six independent variables or predictors of social relation, family size, sex, marital status, level of education, and age, only age (0.062), social relation (.094) and level of education (0.290) significantly and positively related to dependent or criterion variable of level of participation at 0.05 level of significance.. Also, while family size (-0.010) and marital status (-0.045) had negative relationships to level of participation, the relationships between social relation (0.004) and sex (0.050) to level of participation were positive. In the two latter cases the relationships were statistically insignificant. In all, table 3 reveals that all the characteristics collectively, as social status, significantly relate to level of participation.

Findings

The summary of findings is as follows:

1. All the variables of social status explained 10.7 percent of the variation in the level of participation with level of education, marital status and social relation making statistically significant contributions.
2. There was a significant relationship between social status and level of participation at $F(4, 1003) = 20.07$. The relationships between the level of education, age and level of participation were positive and statistically significant; relationships between family size and marital status were negative and insignificant statistically and those between social relation, gender and participation were positive but insignificant.

Discussion

The study investigated the relationship between socio status of members of CBAs in Kwara State and their level of participation in development projects. Hypothesis 1 tested for explanatory power of the variables of age, marital status, family size, level of education and social relation. The findings indicated that level of education, social relation and marital status were significant and strong predictors of level of participation. The result is an agreement with that of settle Alreck & Bekh (1979) and Mohammed (2010). According to settle, Alreck & Bekh (1979), marital status, family life cycle and other demographics were better predictors than economic factors and education was the best determinant of participation. That education is adjudged as the best predictor is not unexpected because one cannot give what he or she does not have. In other words, members of CBAs must have knowledge, experience and expertise in what is being discussed or project to be employment in order to contribute meaningfully to such discussion or appreciate the projects. Similarly, Cookson (1986) observed initial educational attainment as the most powerful predictor of participation while age and gender were non-significant. That gender effect was not significant could suggest as observed by Mohammed (2010) that male and female equally participate in community project. Lastly, the variables of social status explained 10.7 percent of the variation in participation level leaving 89.3 percent unexplained.

Hypothesis 2 stated that there is no significant relationship between social status of member of CBAs and their level of participation in development projects. The finding revealed there was a significant relationship between social status of members and their level of participation in projects as shown by the value of the F -ratio which was 20.07. The finding is agreement with most studies. Particularly, the result of the study by Angba and Stan (2012) indicated that participation was much more affected by social factor rather than economic factor. Also among the variable test carried out indicated a significant relationship between educational level and participation. Similarly, Palmer, Perkins & Qingwen (2011), focused social capital, found a consistent and significant association between social capital and all the three types of participation considered. Following the significant relationship between social factor and level of participation, hypothesis four (4), tested for the explanatory or contributory power of the variables of social status examined in this study.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study it could be concluded the level of participation was related positively and significantly to the members' social status, especially to their family size and relationship among themselves.

Recommendation

Since community based association members social status significantly related positively to level of participation. Particularly, attention should therefore, be given to: promotion of education and learning among members through adult and nonformal education; younger members should be encourage to participate by making them to realise the social benefit of participation and for older members to close rank with younger one and make them to have sense of belongingness.

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