

Christian Aid and Citizen's' Participation in Community Development Kaduna State, Nigeria

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Citizens' participation in governance and development activities is a fundamental mechanism for building and strengthening local competence towards service delivery. However, the Nigerian experience of citizens' participation is only limited to electioneering and voting activities. Hence the investigation into the influence of Christian Aid on citizens' participation in the development of communities in selected local governments in Kaduna State. The cross-sectional survey research design was adopted and the target population comprised the 3,682 community members of registered community development associations in Jaba, Soba, and Kaduna South Local Government areas of Kaduna State. A random sample of 669 was determined using a random sampling approach. Validated questionnaire was used to collect data, with 94.02% return rate from the respondents. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze respondents' demographic characteristics and simple regression analysis was employed to test the hypothesis of the study. The result ($\beta = 0.593$, $t = 18.427$, $p < 0.05$) revealed that the activities of Christian Aid had significantly stimulated citizens' participation in development of communities in Kaduna State.

Keywords: Citizens' participation, Development, Development agencies, Participation

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Introduction

In past decades, the study of citizen participation in governance and development discourse has continued to gain ascendancy as a fundamental mechanism for building local competence towards service delivery and development of communities. Citizen participation refers to citizens' role in holding the government accountable and responsive to the needs of the citizens towards community development. Citizen participation takes different forms, including citizens' identification of needs, monitoring of projects/programmes and performance assessment. Hence, constructs such as co-production, citizen's engagement, participatory governance and deliberative democracy have been used to explain the theoretical and practical importance of citizen's participation in public affairs (Ababio, 2007; Sebola, 2017; Sebola & Fourie, 2014).

Some authors have observed that the involvement of citizens in local governance stimulates the provision of relevant developmental projects and delivery of services (Molesworth, Sécula, Eager, Murodova, Yarbaeva & Matthys, 2017). While others have equally viewed it as a mechanism for curbing corruption (Mtapuri, 2016; Neshkova & Kalesnikaite, 2019), some authors have further explored its instrumental drive towards realizing good governance in the quest to achieving sustainable development especially at the local level (Guido, 2008). Despite the identified importance and benefits of citizens' participation in relation to local development and its emblazoned in academic discourse, the extent of citizens' involvement in public affairs in Nigeria has not gone beyond electioneering and voting level. The absence of citizens' involvement in development issues has enabled the government to plan and seemingly execute programmes and projects, and thus creating fertile grounds for corruption and misappropriation of funds and resources necessary for development. In addition, the development of Nigeria, especially the local communities, has been stunted in social amenities and infrastructures that support citizens' livelihood and wellbeing. Adah and Abasilim (2015) observed that many Nigerians do not have access to safe drinking water, good health care facilities and good primary education. Also, only 49 percent of rural residents have access to safe drinking water according to Adah and Abasilim (2015).

Previous studies have examined citizens' participation and gover-

nance (Pandeya, 2015); Sebola & Fourie, 2014) and citizens' enlightenment and participation in development process (Ako & Ojo, 2019) as a panacea for citizens' participation. However, the role of development agencies that elicits citizens' empowerment and capacity for effective participation in development issues in their communities has not been fully investigated. Hence, this study examined the influence of development agencies on citizens' participation in the development of communities in selected local governments in Kaduna State. Specifically, the paper's assumption is that development agencies have no significant influence on citizen's participation in the development of selected local governments in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Review Of Literature

Development Agencies

Development Agencies are development-oriented organisations that often improve the social, economic and productive conditions of the people (Ulleberg, 2009). Ulleberg (2009) continued by stating that these agencies are found both as small community-based organisations at village, district levels, and as large professional organisations at both states and National levels or international. In addition, Murdie and Kakietek (2012) averred that development agencies exist as organisations that promote and instigate the drive potential necessary for economic development in the states. Furthermore, Matei and Apostu (2013) perceived development agencies as entities that are not only motivated with the desire for good governance and local development, but also help to unite both governments and stakeholders for coordination and guidance in designing development strategies. Matei and Apostu (2013); Murdie and Kakietek (2012) agreed that development agencies educate citizens and encourage collaboration among community groups and government authorities to promote citizens' participation and government responsiveness to communities' priorities. In line with the above submission, Roig, Gomez, Chow, Barringer and Vasquez-Yetter (2017) viewed development agencies as watchdogs, advocates, capacity builders, citizenship champions and definers of standard. De Beer and Swanepoel (2011) posited that these agencies provide an atmosphere that encourages a bottom-up process of local governance, and thus promote and shape local socio-political participation that stimulates development outcomes.

Development Agencies' roles and Citizen Participation

In every society, there are some structural underpinnings and pre-conditions that either promote or limit the kind of stakeholders' interaction that is fundamental for strengthening participatory democracy (Ng'oma, 2016). Hence, most countries that practice democracy do not experience the same successes and dividends that it brings. Thus, the activities of development agencies promote stakeholders' interaction and involvement in governance and democratic processes for developmental outcomes in any community (Osiobe, Osiobe, & Olushola, 2019). Interestingly, enabling environment that stimulates effective participation of citizens in sustainable local development activities has been identified as a key factor (Roig, Gomez, Chow, Barringer & Vasquez-Yetter, 2017). Nigerian society, as in most other sub-Saharan African countries, is hierarchical and characterized by social relations that are rooted on personalism, particularism and patronage that impede citizens' participation in government (Michalopoulos & Pappioannou, 2012; Raleigh, 2014). Hence, most development agencies strive to modify some of these fundamental environmental factors, such as structural preconditions, power relations, and socio-cultural norms that limit the level of citizens' participation in the society by instilling in the citizens some democratic values and principles that promote participation (OECD/Mountford, 2009). These development agencies encourage the local authorities to cooperate and involve citizens in governance, and also equip them with the prerequisite skills to work with the local authorities and hold them accountable for the general wellbeing of the citizens (Ako & Ojo, 2019).

The activities of development agencies in strengthening institutional framework for effective citizens' participation in local development have also been recognized by Golubovic (2010); Keping (2018); Pandeya (2015). This institutional framework is a set of formal organizational structures, rules, conventions, regulations, procedures, and informal norms (Roig, Gomez, Chow, Barringer and Vasquez-Yetter, 2017). And so, the institutional framework helps to determine how an entity, like the local government, carries out the responsibility to listen and respond to the concerns of the citizens successfully. In this case, the reinforcement of democratically oriented institutional framework elicits structures that engender requisite expertise, attitudes, and behavior relevant for the active involvement of citizens in the development of their communities (Muriu, 2013).

Fashola (2017) has also observed that development agencies are instrumental to the development of communication channels that are fundamental to citizens' involvement in development process. The absence of these channels in any society inhibits effective citizens' participation in developmental activities since the citizens have no medium of expressing their concerns. Mtapuri (2016) observed that communication channels are avenues that the citizens audibly use to express their voice and monitor government officials, and thus making them to become accountable to the public. He added that such channels by which citizens express their concerns are public fora, elections, court system, citizens' representatives, media, and civil society organizations (Sebola, 2017). When the authorities for the promotion of lopsided interests hijack these channels, the opportunity for the ordinary citizens to determine their expectations become very difficult. And also, social exclusion and allocation of resources to non-priority areas that benefits only the elites, local elites and interest groups become customary. Based on this, the development agencies work assiduously to equip the citizens with the enabling capacity and access to communication channels for the provision of contextual information that compels government to formulate development-oriented policies for citizens' wellbeing. Hence, the development agencies work diligently with citizens and the local authorities to develop a philosophy that encourages citizens' involvement in local development for the general good of their communities.

Development Agencies in Nigeria

Christian-Aid is an international agency that has been working in Nigeria since 2003, and has a reputation that respects local partners (Christian Aid Annual Report, 2013/14). According to Christian Aid Annual Report (2013/14), this organization/agency is owned by the British and Irish Churches with the belief that all people are created equal, with inherent dignity and infinite worth. The aim of this organization according to this Annual Report (2013/14) is to empower the poor and marginalised people to make informed decisions and participate meaningfully in their own development, asalso also to increase government accountability and responsiveness. In a bid to ensure that its aims are accomplished, Christian Aid has registered legal entities in a number of countries where it has programs. These entities are consolidated as branches of Christian Aid in every country as long as they continue to operate within the delegated authority framework of the Christian Aid.

Their branch in Nigeria is known as Christian-Aid Nigeria. The head office in Nigeria is in Abuja, while other offices are in Anambra and Kaduna. This Christian-Aid Nigeria works in partnership with Christian Aid international to help democratize local communities in Nigeria.

Having been funded by the Department For International Development (DFID), Christian Aid UK, Christian-Aid Nigeria and other local organizations in Nigeria carried out a program tagged Voice to the People (V2P) in Kaduna State. These organisations are non-profit, self-governing groups outside the domain of government in the area of funding and the general management processes that reflect the social and cultural dynamics of Nigeria society. The foreign organisation collaborated with these local agencies in Kaduna State to accomplish the goals of the programme (V2P) in the state.

Kaduna State is the oldest State in Nigeria, and was formally part of the North-Central State created in 1967 before changes created a regional system comprising nineteen States. In 1987, this State was divided into two: Katsina and Zaria. As a result, old Katsina province became Katsina State, while Zaria province became Kaduna State. With an area of 44,408.3 square kilometers, it has been observed that Kaduna has a population of 10,578,000 (Bununua, Ludina & Hosni, 2015). Fashola (2017) explained that the activities of the development agencies contributed to the development of Kaduna State in the areas of deliberative democracy and good governance, and promotion of good health care and educational services. In addition, he averred that the programme, "Voice to the People" was embarked upon by the development agencies in order to empower the community members in some of the local governments in Kaduna State to develop the prerequisite skills that can elicit good governance and community development.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on theory of change propounded by Comte (1798–1857) cited in Serrat (2017). It explains how "activities are understood to produce a series of results that contribute to achieving the final intended impacts" (Rogers, 2014. p. 1). The theory emphasized that intentional strategy leads to the achievement of development outcomes/results. Hence, Stein and Valters (2012) explained that it is a theory that frames development plans and evaluation to achieve positive outputs. Mayne (2015) contributed that theory of change is an

intervention that is undertaken to bring about a positive difference in outcomes and impacts of interest which covers policies, programs, and projects. In addition, Anderson (2014), Serrat (2017), agreed that it is a theory that explains how a group of stakeholders expect to reach a commonly understood long-term goal.

Although this theory has been criticized on the bases that it failed to embrace practicality (Arensman, Waegningh, & Wessel, 2018), the theory was adopted in this study because of its implication that the constructive engagement of all stakeholders in development projects brings about a positive change in the development of their communities. Hence, it implies that the deliberate equipment of all stakeholders with the relevant informed skills for effective participation in development will stimulate relevant developmental outcomes at the community level in Nigeria. In line with the tenets of change theory, the development agencies create enabling environment for the promotion of deliberative stakeholders' interaction and participation that produce the needed consensus and support for community developmental achievements. The consensual agreement of the government to involve the citizens and the development of citizens' competence, and institutional framework are preconditions and indicators that are fundamental to the success of citizens' participation in development programmes in Nigeria.

Based on the arguments in the literature, the following hypothesis was formulated to determine the relationship between development agencies and citizens' participation in community development:

Research hypotheses:

H₀₁: Development agencies have no significant effect on citizens' participation in community development.

H₂: Development agencies have significant effect on citizens' participation in community development.

Methodology

The adopted research design was a cross-sectional survey research design. The target population was 3,682 community members and members of registered community development associations in Jaba (1,190), Soba (801), and Kaduna South (1,871) Local Government areas in Kaduna State. The choice of Kaduna State and the selected local government was based on the effective work of the development agencies

in promoting citizens' participation in governance in the communities. Also, community associations were chosen because the development agencies worked with registered associations to advance their development programmes in different communities. A sample size of 669 was determined using a random sampling approach. Validated questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents and the response rate was 94.02%. Having used descriptive statistics to analyse biographical characteristics of the respondents, inferential statistics was employed to test the hypothesis of the study. Ethical principles were adhered to without any manipulation of the respondents and data.

Data Analysis and Presentation of Results

Table 1: Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Categories	Kaduna State	
		Frequency (629)	Percentage (100%)
Gender	Male	495	78.7
	Female	134	21.3
Age	20-29	108	17.17
	30-39	137	21.78
	40-49	144	22.89
	50-59	140	22.25
	60and above	100	15.89
Educational Qualification	Religion studies	103	16.4
	Sch. Cert.	110	17.5
	WAEC/Grade II	142	22.6
	OND/NCE	137	21.8
	HND/Degree	134	21.3
	PG Education	3	0.5
Occupation Distribution	Farmer	247	39.3
	Trader/Artisan	121	19.2
	Public/Civil ser.	261	41.5
	Unemployed	-	-

The results in Table 1 reveal that majority of the respondents were males with 78.7%, while 21.3% were females. This statistics revealed that majority of the respondents who participated in this study comprised of the males, while the females are in minority. Respon-

dents with age scores of 21.78%, 22.89% and 22.25% constituted the majority with age bracket within 30-39, 40-49 and 50-59 respectively. In addition, 17.17% and 15.89% of the respondents fell within the categories of 20-29 and above 60 which constituted the minority. This means that the respondents were not only matured enough to participate in this study, but were also within the age brackets where people are most active and have cumulative experiences in developmental activities.

The questionnaire also required the respondents to indicate their educational qualification. As a result, 16.4%, 17.5%, 22.5%, 21.8%, 21.3% and 0.5% of the respondents respectively indicated that they obtained certificate in the areas of Religious studies, primary school leaving certificate, WAEC/Grade II, OND/NCE, HND/Degree, and postgraduate education. This educational qualification background of the respondents revealed that they were knowledgeable enough to understand the items in the questionnaire.

In the category of occupational engagement, 39.3%, 19.2% and 41.5% of the respondents indicated that they were farmers, trader/artisans, and public/civil servants. This statistics revealed that these respondents were not idle in their various communities at the point when this study was carried out, but were involved in different occupations that the society recognised.

Table 2 (page 90) presented the results of the regression analysis for development agencies as a predictor of citizens' participation in development activities in the communities in Kaduna State. The result revealed that development agencies have a moderate positive correction with citizen participation ($R = 0.593$). The result further showed that the R Squared ($R^2 = 0.351$) has a p-value that is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). The implication of this is that development agencies' role explained 35.3% variations in citizen participation in Kaduna State. The other variables that are not captured by this model explained the remaining 64.7% changes in citizen participation. This constitutes a gap that can be filled by further studies. The ANOVA test in this analysis showed that the significance of the F-statistics (0.000) is less than 0.05, ($F(1,627) = 339.572$, $p < 0.05$) meaning that development agencies had positive and significant influence on citizens' participation in the development of communities in the selected local governments in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Table 2 Showing Results for the Influence of Development Agencies on Citizens' Participation in Development in Kaduna State

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	0.593 ^a	0.351	0.350	2.10715	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Development Agencies					
ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	1507.723	1	1507.723	339.572	0.000 ^b
	2783.924	627	4.440		
	4291.647	628			
a. Dependent Variable: Citizens' Participation					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Development Agencies					
Coefficient					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	
(Constant)	10.259	0.624		16.449	0.000
Development Agencies	0.559	0.030	0.593	18.427	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: Citizens' Participation					

Discussion

This study investigated the influence of development agencies on citizen participation in the development of communities in Kaduna State, Nigeria. And the aligned stated hypothesis was that development agencies' activities do not have significant effect on citizens' participation in community development. The findings of this study revealed that development agencies' activities significantly influence citizen's participation in the development of communities in Kaduna State. This means that the relative level of citizens' participation in governance and local development in Kaduna State could be attributed to the role of development agencies in creating enabling environment for the stakeholders (local governments and community members) to interact and cooperate together for the common purpose of developing their communities. From the findings, it is explicit that the role of development agencies in promoting enabling environment, stakeholders' interaction, communication channels, institutional framework and building of citizens' capacity stimulates citizens' participation in the developments of communities in Kaduna State.

The findings of this study aligned with the previous study carried out by Golubovic (2010) that found that activities of Development agencies/Organisations can be a powerful force in enhancing citizen participation in public policy. In agreement with this study's findings are the findings of Roig, Gomez, Chow, Barringer and Vasquez-Yetter (2017) who discovered that Development agencies/Organisations' activities promote citizens' ability to voice their needs and concerns intelligently. Our findings are in line with the tenets of the theory of guided change, developed by Auguste Comte (1798–1857) cited in Serrat (2017), on which this study is anchored. This theory advocates that for a change to be experienced, the preconditions and the road maps to achieve the desired goal need to be put in place. Development Organizations can help guide citizens and government to create a reliable platform for development in any community.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The findings have highlighted the importance of investigating citizen participation as an outcome as opposed to many studies that have examined it from its instrumental dimension. This study has revealed that in Kaduna State the intervention of Christian

Aid enhanced citizens' participation in the affairs of the community. This study recommended that development agencies, Civil Society, and NGOs should empower the citizens to develop the competence and knowledge necessary to advance a community development character of demand, scorecard, and performance assessment mechanism for the development of their communities.

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