

Participatory Rural Development in Nigeria: An Assessment of the 3I's Initiatives in Ondo State

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ABSTRACT

Genuine rural development in a developing society depend largely on the participation of the rural dwellers on the policy formulation and implementation, especially in the area of development project. The rural people play a vital role in the economic and political develop of the nation. In spite of the facts that the bulk of economic produce as well as vote come from the rural area but the development is nothing to write about because the rural people are not involved in the policy formulation and implementation by the pass administration in the state. This paper will critically assessed the 3I's initiation (infrastructure, institution and industry) of the immediate passed administration in Ondo State with a view to know the impact of the policy on rural development. The study will adopt both primary and secondary data. The findings of the paper will be helpful to the present administration in Ondo State and the Ministry of Community Development when planning for developmental projects in the rural area in the state...

KEYWORDS: *Development, Participation, Rural Development, Institution and Industry*

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, rural development has been in the front burner of several developmental attempts aimed at improving the quality of life and living standard of the rural areas and the teeming population in developed and developing countries alike (Brown and Wocha, 2017). This trend has gradually developed into a new paradigm shift from old ways of primitive agro-based economy to modernization of lifestyle and activities which are geared towards developing and upgrading the rural areas.

Chambers (1982) observed that rural development is a stratagem that enables specific group of people who may be underprivileged in rural areas gain for themselves more of what they need. By implication, this assertion most times leads to participation of the rural dwellers. Rural development is the process of improving the economic wellbeing and the quality of life of a people living in sparsely populated and comparatively remote areas in any given society. The focus of rural development is directed at finding ways to improve the lives of the rural population which is geared towards encouraging participation.

Nelson and Wright (1995) opined that the concept of participation is frequently applied by people with varied ideological standpoint embellished with diverse connotation

Participating rural development is not a new phenomenon as far as rural development is concerned and it has gathered considerable significance as a contemporary development paradigm in both developed and developing countries. It has

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been discussed, talked and written about since the 1950s or even before (Guil and Shah, 1998; Nelson and Wright, 1995). Mary Scholars, authors and development agencies argue that genuine people's participation in rural development can increase the efficiency, effectiveness, self-reliance, coverage and sustainability of development projects and programmes (Kumar, 2002; Oakley, 1991). There is a wide spectrum of views on the concept of achieving it. Ngujiri (1998) submits that, "despite the increase in the number of NGOs, participatory methodologies, and after many years of poverty alleviation, poverty continues to be rife and communities continue to languish in it". There is now a growing recognition that if participation in one form or other is an objective of development projects and programmes, it must be evaluated (DFID, 1995; FAO, 1997; Karl, 2000).

In Nigeria, as elsewhere, the discourse is largely based on the assumption that rural communities can completely articulate their own needs and opportunities and that government, NGOs and participatory methodologies can effectively respond to them. It is also assumed that both rural communities and development agencies can act in democratic and participatory ways in the process of development.

The rural areas of Nigeria are characterized with low level of socio-economic activities, low purchasing power, lack of infrastructural and social amenities (Abdulraham, 1999; Alabi and Ochoi, 2010). In most rural areas in Nigeria, like

any other rural setting in the developing nations, basic infrastructures, where they exist at all, are too inadequate for any meaningful development. In spite of the fact that these rural areas serve as the source of food and raw materials for the urban areas, yet they have continued to witness increasing poverty and marginalization (Akinola, 2007; Egbetokun, 2009; Lawal, 2014). The need to integrate communities into development activities in Nigeria has been necessitated by the realization that despite the huge amount of money expended on rural development, most people in the rural areas still live below poverty line (Malinga, 2011; Gnade, 2013). One way to explain this is that, since independence the government of Nigeria has placed emphasis on the provision of infrastructure and services as a deliberate move to correct the imbalance between urban and rural areas, however, there has been no or limited involvement of rural people in the planning and implementation of these projects.

Rural development is one of the numerous subsets of activities that comprise the essential elements of rural transformation. These include local governance, health and educational services, agriculture and other economic activities. All these endeavours occurs in a dynamic environment, in which various economic, actors, individuals, communities, enterprises, local and national governments play discrete contemporary and sometimes overlapping roles, the impact of this process depends upon the extent to which these factors interact effectively with each other. Without an adequate policy environment, they can be stymied by excessive government management and lack of incentive for achieving cost effect and durable service delivery. Moreover, if adequate sector level policies and institutions are not in place, then investment in infrastructure may provide only transitory benefits.

It is however important to note that community participation can provide different benefits, for beneficiaries of a project, the communities, organization and to the professionals. While the citizen may perceive it in terms of their overall empowerment, the professionals may look only at the advantages it offers to their project success. On the other hand, the success of community development programmes has been found to be extensive influences by people's ownership and participation.

Theoretical and Empirical Review

The concept of Participation and its Origin

Participation is not a static process, it is dynamic in Nature and can hardly be measured by any known parameter. Participation originates and shapes experiences of individual participating in decision-making processes for a collective developmental purpose (Brown and Wocha, 2017).

The concept of community/rural participation has in recent times gained momentum but its origin could be traced to the era of the Greek Philosopher Aristotle. The intent of Aristotle was to contribute to good life and human happiness with the aim of encouraging people to participate in state affairs to fulfill and develop human disposition.

In the United Kingdom, the concept of Public participation according to the cabinet Office (1999) has its origin traceable recently to the creation of responsive public services, consumer orientation in the 1980s and community development initiatives in the 1970s.

However, the concept of participation enriched all embracing notion that has various connotations between its definition and application. Its definition on the contextual application and the principle being applied at that point in time. Another school of thought views it from the lens of practice and the third school of thought views participation as an end itself (Mundial, 1975).

In the rendering of Brageret *al* (1987) participation is an avenue to educate the citizenry and to intensify their competence in decision-making. It is pertinent to state that the decision-making in this context serves as the driving force used by the citizenry to influence decisions that affect their lives, well-being and in most cases it serves as arena to transfer political power. Participation is "collective efforts to increase and exercise control over resources and institutions on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from control" (Westergaard, 1986, P. 14).

Furthermore, Webb and Hatry (1973) opine that "community participation indicates an active role for the community, leading to significant control over decision while consultation is taken to mean 'sharing of information but not necessary power'.

Similarly, Oakley and Marsden (1984) assert that community participation entails decision-making in a community development process which enables the communities, families and individuals take up roles that would enable them develop capacities to make meaningful contribution towards welfare and development.

In the contribution of Cohen and Uphoff (1980) participation entails the involvement of a people in decision-making process with respect to what would be done for them, how they would be part of the implementation of such decisions reached and the contribution of various resources to participate in specific organization or activities. Nassar admitted to sexually penetrating all of the victims in the Michigan cases with his ungloved fingers, during what they called "treatments."

An investigative reporting by Indystar stay in August 2016, Part of its "out of Balance" investigation first shed light about abuses by official at USA Gymnastics. Soon after RechaelDenhollander reached out to Indystar to tell her story and thereafter, Lodged criminal complaints against Nassar for Sexual abuse.

There is a nexus in all the definitions and assertions with respect to participation because it points towards the fact that some group of persons are involved in organizing and making decision for themselves and by themselves. This has made participation a public affairs. Since decisions are made by representatives of group dynamics and nuances are put into consideration in ideal situations. The inherent objectives of public participation includes:

1. To strengthen the existing interpersonal relationships among members of the group (community)
2. To improve the decision-making process for the people and by the people.
3. To ensure adequate representation of a diversity of social groups in decision-making.
4. To aids, elucidate and stabilize effective communication between stakeholders (community) and development agencies and government.

5. To encourage local ownership, commitment and accountability with respect to community development matters.
6. To understand the group dynamics and nuances in community participation efforts.

Method of Community Participation

The United Nations Research Institute on Social Development (UNRISD) Approach asserted that the most important and original aspect of UNRISD is the focus on people, power and organization of disadvantage groups, hitherto bypassed in development. The significance factor in this approach was not that it concentrated in the poorest of the poor but that it emphasized questions of power and organizations and also viewed the allies and adversaries of the hitherto excluded as included in the scope of investigation (Chowdhery, 1996).

1. Self –Reliance & Self help
2. Identification of Suitable Stakeholders
3. Needs Identification and Goal Determination.
4. Information Dissemination
5. Consultation
6. Involvement of Community in Decision Making
7. Frequent Interactions
8. Ownership and Control
9. Partnership

The concept of Rural Development

The concept of rural development is a comprehensive aspect, which takes into consideration, number of factors. This term is used to mean organizing things, which brings about changes in the existing conditions in favour of a better state. For several decades, the concept of rural development focused solely upon economic changes. But at a later stage, the concept got extended to take into account, economic, political, social, cultural, technological and psychological frame of the society (Kapur, 2019). The term 'rural development' is for major concern, particularly when one is focused upon promoting effective growth and development of the country. In most African countries, rural areas are still in the backward state and numbers of programs and schemes need to be formulated to bring about improvements. The term 'rural development' can be used in a divergent state. As a concept, it can promote overall development of rural areas. It has been acknowledged on a comprehensive basis that improvement in the overall quality of the life of the rural individual can lead to augmentation of rural communities. Apart from enhancing the overall quality of lives of the individual, the other areas that need to be taken into consideration are, agriculture, farming practices, industries, factories, craftsmanship, skills and abilities of the artisans, health care facilities, medical centers, socio-economic infrastructure and financial and human resources.

Rural development is a strategy to enable a specific group of individual to acquire opportunities for themselves for the purpose of sustain better livelihood for themselves and their families. The poverty stricken and underprivileged sections of the society cannot accomplish their desired goals and objectives on their own

Overview of 3I's Initiatives in Ondo State

The political change in the mantle of leadership in Ondo State, the sunshine state precisely February 23, 2009, brought DR. OlusegunMimiko of the Labour Party (LP) to power as the 6th Executive Governor of the State. With his assumption in office, the Governor, rather than designing

road map to progress, quickly swung into action by launching a development initiative aptly termed 3Is initiative, which means infrastructure, institution and industry. The Governors, having observed a long neglect and funder mental disconnect of rural people from governance decided to recognize and create space for those people to participate in governance process (Lawal and Oluwatoyin, 2014).

The 3Is initiative is a programme designed to engender development in the rural development in the rural communities in Ondo State.

According to Lawal and Oluwatoyin, (2014) the programme was first of its kind in the state in particular, and in Nigeria in general. It focused on rural and community development using the participating community driven bottom-up with down support approach. The initiative allows the rural people to participate and decide the project of their choice. It does not give room for imposition of projects on the people, the people themselves prioritize their needs via need assessment procedures and this enable them to claim ownership of the projects. Consequently, they are willingly to protect, maintain and sustain such projects.

The first "I" represents infrastructure, which deals with assessment of need and the subsequent provision of infrastructure. The second "I" represents Institutions, which deals with the setting up of community representative and their capacity building training for the representatives so as to monitor and safeguard the projects. The third "I" which represents Industry stands to empower the rural people financially to ensure the growth of SMES i.e, small and medium scale enterprises. The 3Is initiative is designed as a means to an end rather than end in itself because it is all encompassing and embracing.

Participating Rural Development in Nigeria and 3I's Initiative in Ondo State: A critical Assessment.

The notion of participatory rural development as conceived by the state governor, OlusegunMimiko is expected as: development of the people, development for the people and development by the people. The inadequacy of (top-down model), which has a pattern of centralized control and administration by which the objectives and means of implementation are determined by government or international agencies led to the introduction of (bottom-up approach) otherwise known as 3Is initiative in Ondo State.

Before the administration of Governor OlusegunMimiko, most of the project put in place in rural areas by the previous administration who were moribund and non-functional owing to the fact that such projects were imposed on the people and were not basic to their needs and that materials time they were convinced were also completed through the 3Is Initiative of Ondo State government

The 3Is Initiatives of the OlusegunMimiko administration was able to carried out and replicated in all the 18 Local Government and over 300 communities in the state. Various projects ranging from provision of clean and portable water, electricity, construction of lockup shops and open markets, health centres, building of town halls, renovation of schools, establishment of cottage industries e.t.c. (Ondo State Ministry of Community Development & Cooperatives, 2012).

The 3Is Initiatives gave the people the opportunity to participate in governance and development process. The hitherto neglected rural people now have a sense of

belonging in governance process. People at their own level can identify their own development needs and priorities without any form of imposition. This is equated to empowerment approach. The implication of this is that citizens are not mere passive recipients of the development process but also active participants. And development works better for them if done “bottom up” rather than from the top down.

According to Sharma *et al* (2011) participation enables the citizen to influence government to develop responsive policies and implement responsive programmes and services that can affect their lives positively.

Aside this participatory opportunity, the programme also impacted on the lives of the people of these various communities in different areas of life.

Data Presentation and Discussion of findings

Table 1: Characteristics of the respondents

SENITORIAL DISTRICT	SELECTED LOCAL GOVT.	SELECTED TOWN	RESPONDENT'S OCCUPATION	RESPONDENT'S GENDER		Total		
				MALE	FEMALE			
ONDO NORTH	OWO	AGOPANU	POLITICIAN	4	0	4		
			PUBLIC SERVANT	5	1	6		
			FARMING	6	0	6		
			TRADING	2	4	6		
			ARTISAN	4	2	6		
			Total	21	7	28		
		AMURIN	POLITICIAN	1	2	3		
			PUBLIC SERVANT	0	6	6		
			FARMING	4	1	5		
			TRADING	0	7	7		
			ARTISAN	0	6	6		
			Total	5	22	27		
		ONDO CENTRAL	IFEDORE	IGBARA-OKE	POLITICIAN	2	0	2
					PUBLIC SERVANT	3	2	5
FARMING	5				0	5		
TRADING	0				3	3		
ARTISAN	2				2	4		
Total	12				7	19		
ILARA-MOKIN	POLITICIAN			1	1	2		
	PUBLIC SERVANT			0	5	5		
	FARMING			2	2	4		
	TRADING			0	3	3		
	ARTISAN			0	4	4		
	Total			3	15	18		
	ONDO SOUTH			ILE-OLUJI OKEGBO	IGBO-ELEDUMORE	POLITICIAN	3	0
PUBLIC SERVANT		3	1			4		
FARMING		3	0			3		
TRADING		0	5			5		
ARTISAN		3	0			3		
Total		12	6			18		
USAMA OWODE		POLITICIAN	1		1	2		
		PUBLIC SERVANT	0		4	4		
		FARMING	3		0	3		
		TRADING	0		4	4		
		ARTISAN	0		4	4		
		Total	4		13	17		

Source: Field survey, 2020

Data presented in table 1 is the personal observations that were generated through questionnaires from interview conducted with the residents of the sampled communities in the three senatorial district of Ondo state. Such that two towns were randomly chosen from a local government under each senatorial district. These communities include, Ago panu and Amurin from Owo local government, Igbara-oke and Ilara-mokin from Ifedore local government and Igbo-eledumare and Ujama-owode from Ile-oluji/Okegbo local government. Purposely to achieve the objectives of this study, some question was suggested to be answered by the respondents and the frequency, percentage mean and standard error of their responses are presented in table 2 and fig 1-5.

Table 2: Responses of Community Members Regard Contributions of 3I's Initiative Projects in Three Senatorial District of Ondo State

		YES (%)	NO (%)	UNAWARE (%)	Mean	S.E
1	Did your community members have sense of belonging in the planning and process of 3I's initiative projects	38 (29.9)	54 (42.5)	35 (27.6)	1.98	0.068
2	Are your community members involved in the implementation of 3I's initiatives project in your community	37 (29.1)	67 (51.8)	23(18.1)	1.89	0.060
3	Did implementation of those projects have any positive impact on your community	86 (67.7)	25 (19.7)	16(12.6)	1.45	0.063
4	Did 3I's initiative projects contribute to the wellbeing of the members of your community	51 (40.2)	61 (48)	15 (11.8)	1.72	0.059
5	Does the project still functioning effectively in your community	58 (45.7)	52 (40.9)	17 (13.4)	1.68	0.062

Source: Field survey, 2020



fig 1:Percentage of responses to question 1



fig 1:Percentage of responses to question 2

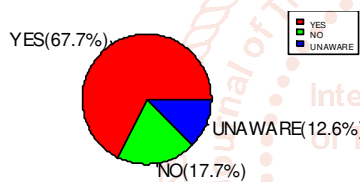


fig 1:Percentage of responses to question 3

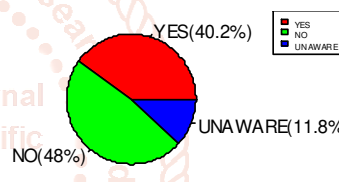


fig 1:Percentage of responses to question 4

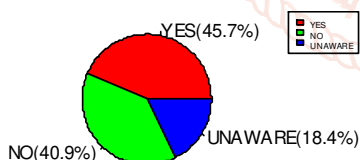


Fig 1 Percentage of responses to question 5

Discussion of Findings

One hundred and forty (140) questionnaires were given to sample number of community member from these six communities considered in the study which only one hundred and twenty-seven (127) were collected from the respondents. In the last column of we have the number of respondents, corresponding to their local government, community and occupation of who answered the questionnaires, such that 28, 27, 19, 18,18 and 17 community member respectively are from Agopanu, Amurin, Igbara-oke, Ilara-mokin, Igbo-eledumare and Usama-owode. Examined the responses of the community's members from the six (6) communities in table 2, the impact of the 3I's initiatives projects on various communities shows that 67.7% of the respondents declared "Yes" in support, 19.9% declared "No" against and 12.6% declare "Unawareness" that the 3I's initiative projects has positive impact on their communities with mean 1.45 and standard error 0.063.

Therefore, there is a solid and accurate opinion that the 3I's initiative projects have positive impact on those communities. Further, it is revealed through the responses of the community's member that 29.9% declared "Yes" in support, 42.5% declared "No" against while 27.6% declared "Unawareness" that the people of the communities has sense of belonging in planning and processing of the 3I's initiative projects in their community with mean of 1.98 and standard error of 0.068. More so, 29.1% declared "Yes" in support, 51.8% declared "No" against while 18.1% declared "Unawareness" that the implementation of the 3I's initiative projects involved the community's members. With these, there is a verdict that the community's members are not participate in the formulation and the implementation of 3I's initiative projects. Nevertheless, the highest number (45.7%) of the respondents still declared "Yes" in support that the 3I's initiatives projects are still functioning in their various community.

Summary

Communities have suffered so much setback in past from government and her agencies but this approaches 3'I initiatives have bridged the gap that was once the order of day in getting the needs of the met by the government but rather introduced a well-articulated controlled accuracy measurement by all actors in the communities development project delivery.

The outcomes of the research has reviewed that the 3'I initiatives have positive impacts on the rural communities development. However, efforts are still needed to be geared up by all the actors in their contributions towards communities developmental projects. Above analysis has reviewed that if the 3'I initiative is properly monitor; it will promote sustainable developmental projects in the communities.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Rural dwellers should be involved in all stages of development planning in other to ensure that all projects are well integrated to better the community interest

The people in the communities should be actively engaged or involved in developmental programmes and projects in their community's right from the conception of such project. This will help government to be assured that the project will meet up with the needs of the people and it will be maintained for a long period of time.

The government should set up an independent body to evaluate the output of the job done at the conclusion of the project.

Lastly, Government should seek people's opinion and view before embarking on any projects in such communities.

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