

Additionally, information can be defined as processed data which are presented in an understandable and meaningful format. Evidently, effective communication is the bond which aids a project team to achieve its goals while miscommunication poses a threat to project success. Ghazala and Vijayendra (2003) identified the causes of poor communication in the construction industry as: linguistic barriers, cultural barriers, poor feedback and unclear communication channels amongst others. The first two causes listed are dominant in projects that involve multicultural collaboration.

Feedback shows how project participants react to certain information and task, and it is essential to complete communication. Emphasis on the quality and timing of the feedback is therefore very essential, especially when it requires immediate attention (Green 2008). Lastly, communications channels which are not clear can pose a problem to the parties exchanging information, therefore an acceptable communication route for every project needs to be established.

Various reasons could be attributed to the causes of government project failure in Nigeria. These identified causes include, poor financial capacity, inaccurate cost estimates, corruption, incompetence and lack of knowledge, poor. It has been established that disempowerment of the local communities is a resultant effect to local communities in regions where these projects failed. Low empowerment has been established in loss of employment opportunities which develop capacity with the community within which the projects are undertaken. Alternatively, economic deprivation of the local community of the vital infrastructural development has been established to be a resultant effect of these project failures within these communities. Therefore, through the failure of these projects, the local Nigerian community intended to benefit from them gets to lose its intended empowerment enshrined in the aims of these projects which are inherently structured for altruistic reasons.

Statement of the Problem

It has been observed that in spite of abundant natural, physical and human resources that Nigeria is endowed with, there is still high rate of underdevelopment in Nigeria especially in the rural areas. In Rivers State, majority of the people live in the rural areas and they depend mainly on agriculture. They operate fragmented and marginal holdings while some others concentrate on petty trade. Despite the obvious role of farming and trade in the economy of the state, rural people tend to remain poor. In general, they share several characteristics such as low levels of educational attainment, a relatively large number of children, relatively low access to material

resources, physical and social infrastructures, higher susceptibility to community-wide exogenous shocks such as weather induced crop losses and natural disasters. However, it must be noted that rural communities also vary greatly with regard to the condition of their rural economies and rural development needs.

Communities in Andoni, Tai, Gokanah and Khana Local Government Areas of Rivers State, Nigeria have been involved in community development projects over the years, but their participation output seemed not to have yielded any dividends of prosperity. It was further observed that systematic research aimed at understanding factors influencing level of participation status of the above named communities through participation in community development projects seemed to be lacking. These communities need improvement in the quality of their living standards. This, therefore, was of great concern, hence the decision to investigate the status of the four communities in the Senatorial zones through their participation in development of their rural areas. At this juncture, it became pertinent to see to what extent did the people of selected communities participate in the development of their communities through development activities. The factors influenced people's participation in community development projects. The ways in participation affect their living standards of people. What were the major obstacles to effective participation in development projects in the study area?

Aim/Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to assess community involvement and government developmental programmes in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought the following:

1. Community involvement and governmental project planning in Rivers East
2. Community involvement and governmental project execution in Rivers East.
3. Benefits of community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers East.
4. Constraints of community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers East.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study

1. What is the impact of community involvement and governmental project planning in Rivers East?
2. What is the impact of community involvement and governmental project execution in Rivers East?
5. What are the benefits of community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers East?
3. What are the constraints of community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers East?

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey research design was considered suitable because the study elicited data and information from respondents on community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers State.

This study was conducted in South East Senatorial zone and wards. Unit of inquiry includes population of councilors, community members and ward leaders. From this group data was collected on the level of awareness of political leaders and community members on the importance of community members to participate in different development activities like construction of schools, dispensaries and road construction. The most important unit of inquiry was community members, this is an important unit of inquiry as it is the centre of the researcher because they are the main beneficiaries of development projects hence the researcher was to collect data directly from them.

LGA	Projected population (2014)	Wards
Andoni	275,718	11
Eleme	249,421	10
Gokana	299,002	17
Khana	384,443	19
Opobo–Nkoro	197,974	11
Oyigbo	160,311	10
Tai	153,921	10

Sample size and sampling techniques

Sample size: Sample size is the specific number of items to be selected in the sample from where by the targeted population or total population which the researcher used. The researcher used a sample of 80 individuals this helped to obtain fairly accurately the characteristic of the population. This included community members, Councilors, local government officers and ward leaders. Rivers South East has a total of 88 wards out of which was purposely selected because the sample was homogeneous that is the sample was more or less the same. Also the study area was reached easily by the researcher. The total of development projects in Rivers South East ward was 5 including the road construction, school buildings and a market place .

Sampling techniques: The purpose of the study was to examine the importance of community participation in development projects in Rivers South East wards. Judgmental and convenient sampling was used to obtain key people who provided information about community participation in development projects. At local government level five people were selected, the chairmen and counselor who deals with the provision of funds for development projects with cooperation from the planning unit. At ward level four people were selected the Chief, Village head, Youth Head and Women Leader. Both Convenient type of sampling and purposive or judgmental was used to get information from citizens.

Methods of data collection: The nature of research design determines the data collection method. In this study the researcher used data collection method such as interviews, documentary sources and observation. The use of more than one data collection method enabled the researcher to combine strength and correct some of the deficiency's technique. In so doing it increased the validity and reliability of data collected (Bond, 2006).

Data analysis and interpretation: Data collected from the respondents were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and t-test statistics were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The decision for hypotheses was; if the calculated value of t (t-cal) is less than or equal to the critical value of (t-crit), accept the null hypotheses, otherwise rejected null hypothesis. The computation of the mean, standard deviation and t-test was carried out with statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

Results

Research Questions 1: What is the impact of community involvement on governmental project planning in Rivers East?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of community involvement on governmental project planning

S/NO	Item	Community Heads			LGA Administrators		
		X	SD	RMK	X	SD	RMK
1	Projects meet their operational performance goals	4.22	.856	A	4.03	.929	A
2	Projects meet their technical performance goals	3.58	.706	SA	4.02	.876	A
3	Projects meet their schedule objectives	4.09	.785	A	4.22	.932	A
4	Projects stay within budget limits	3.98	.719	A	4.39	.840	A

5	Project results meet stakeholders expectations	4.17	.921	A	4.03	.982	A
6	Stakeholders are satisfied with project results	4.11	.994	A	3.98	.744	A
7	Programs implementation reflect the strategy	4.27	.877	A	3.88	.982	A
8	Programs impact exceeds stakeholders expectations	3.93	.863	A	4.07	.923	A
9	Programs achieve cost-benefits objectives	4.34	0.86	A	3.63	0.59	A
10	The budget allocation between projects in the portfolio reflects the strategy	3.55	0.67	A	3.86	0.49	A
Grand Mean		4.02	0.83	A	4.01	0.83	A

Data in Table 1 revealed that Community Heads had a mean range of 3.55-4.34 and standard deviation range of 0.67 - 0.99. While the LGA Administrators had a mean range of 3.63-4.39 and standard deviation range of 0.49 - 0.98. The standard deviation shows the homogeneity of the respondents. The mean shows that the respondents agreed on the impact of community involvement on governmental project planning in Rivers East.

Research Question 2: What is the impact of community involvement on governmental project execution in Rivers East?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of community involvement on governmental project execution

S/NO	Item	Community Heads			LGA Administrators		
		X	SD	RMK	X	SD	RMK
1	Sets out the objectives and targets for the project	4.23	.834	A	4.07	.838	A
2	Links the project objectives to business objectives and company policies	4.40	.821	A	4.09	.808	A
3	Defines the scope and context for the project	4.09	.722	A	4.04	.947	A
4	Sets out the organisational design for the project	4.18	.658	A	4.19	.766	A
5	Describes the agreed plans for project execution	4.05	.924	A	4.12	.982	A
6	Outlines the key project management mechanisms and processes to ensure successful delivery of project objectives	4.19	.953	A	4.39	.774	A
7	Allows consistent communication	3.99	.881	A	4.19	.860	A

	across the integrated team for the project's plans and processes to execute the required scope						
8	Provides a reference document for project team members	3.95	.990	A	4.26	.856	A
9	Stakeholder Communications Plan	3.98	1.03	A	4.32	.776	SA
10	Work Breakdown Structure	4.19	1.04	A	4.21	.725	A
	Grand Mean	4.13	0.89	A	4.19	0.83	A

Data in Table 2 revealed that Community Heads had a mean range of 3.98-4.40 and standard deviation range of 0.65 - 1.04. While the LGA Administrators had a mean range of 4.40-4.39 and standard deviation range of 0.72 - 0.94. The standard deviation shows the homogeneity of the respondents. The mean shows that the respondents agreed on the impact of community involvement on governmental project execution in Rivers East.

Research Questions 3: What are the benefits of community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers East?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on benefits of community involvement on government developmental programmes

S/NO	Item	Community Heads			LGA Administrators		
		X	SD	RMK	X	SD	RMK
1	It will lead to better designed projects	4.23	.881	A	4.34	.797	A
2	Better targeted benefits.	4.44	.926	A	4.16	.902	A
3	It is more cost effective.	4.11	.858	A	3.70	1.059	A
4	It will lead to more equitable distribution of project benefits	4.26	.897	A	3.86	1.025	A
5	It will lead to less corruption.	4.09	.989	A	4.17	.891	A
6	It strengthens the capabilities of the citizenry to undertake self-initiated development activities	4.18	.889	A	4.25	.830	A
7	It improves the match between what a community needs and what it obtains	3.97	.954	A	4.26	.809	A
8	Participation which allows these people to have a voice in determining objectives	4.04	1.017	A	4.32	.827	A
9	support project administration and to make their local knowledge	3.88	.880	A	4.02	.979	A
10	Participation will extend the coverage, bringing more people within the direct influence of development activities	3.61	0.99	A	4.02	1.06	A
	Grand Mean	4.08	0.93	A	4.11	0.92	A

Data in Table 3 revealed that Community Heads had a mean range of 3.61-4.44 and standard deviation range of 0.88 - 1.02. While the LGA Administrators had a mean range of 3.70-4.34 and standard deviation range of 0.79 - 1.06. The standard deviation shows the homogeneity of the respondents. The mean shows that the respondents agreed on the benefits of community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers East.

Research Questions 4: What are the constraints of community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers East?

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation on constraints of community involvement on government developmental programmes

S/NO	Item	Community Heads			LGA Administrators		
		X	SD	RMK	X	SD	RMK
1	Political intervention in project selection	3.57	.692	SA	3.81	1.039	A
2	Locally elected representatives personal interests	3.56	.732	SA	4.11	.859	A
3	Lack of dissemination of project related information	4.28	.750	A	4.35	.719	A
4	Poor Centralization of decision – making	4.93	1.004	A	3.95	.932	A
5	Lack of Transparency	4.16	.941	A	4.42	.844	A
6	Lack of Leadership qualities	4.95	.875	A	4.09	.860	A
7	Socio-Economic Factors	4.25	.931	A	4.32	.736	A
8	Literacy levels	4.99	1.088	A	4.31	.790	A
9	Politico-Cultural Factors	4.05	.990	A	4.42	.625	A
10	Political Interferences	4.31	0.88	A	4.19	0.83	A
	Grand Mean	3.57	.692	SA	3.81	1.039	A

Data in Table 1 revealed that Community Heads had a mean range of 3.56-4.99 and standard deviation range of 0.69- 1.08. While the LGA Administrators had a mean range of 3.81-4.42 and standard deviation range of 0.71-1.04. The standard deviation shows the homogeneity of the respondents. The mean shows that the respondents agreed on the constraints of community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers East.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study showed the homogeneity of the respondents. The findings all indicates that community where there is collaboration in which people, voluntarily, or because of some persuasion or incentives; agree to collaborate with an externally determined development project have

impact on community involvement on governmental project planning in Rivers East. This is in line with Hussein (2013) who explained that participation is the collaboration, in which people, voluntarily, or because of some persuasion or incentives; agree to collaborate with an externally determined development project, often by contributing their labor and resources in return for some expected benefits. Project planning: is part of project management, which relates to the use of schedules such as Gantt charts to plan and subsequently report progress within the project environment. It is used to organize different areas of a project, including project plans, workloads and the management of teams and individuals. Community participation: is a social process whereby specific groups with shared needs, often but not always living in a defined geographical area, actively pursue identification of their needs, make decision and establish mechanism to meet these needs (Nibyiza, 2015).

The findings of the study revealed that the act of putting into action what was planned is the most vital stage of the project cycle which involves the procurement of equipment and resources, recruitment of personnel and allocation of tasks and resources within the project organization and the involvement of community have impact on governmental project execution in Rivers East. This is in agreement with Olukotun (2017) who stated that implementation is perhaps the most vital stage of the project cycle involving the procurement of equipment and resources, recruitment of personnel and allocation of tasks and resources within the project organization. Under the project implementation plan, resources are mobilized, activities determined and control mechanism established so that the project inputs can produce project outputs in order to achieve the project purpose. Hence local people's participation at this stage is conducive to the successful operation of projects.

The findings of the study revealed that there are benefits of community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers East. The findings are in line with Richardson (2018) who pointed out the importance of community participation as follows: the approach helps the project to be sustainable as communities themselves learn how to adopt and correct changes resulting from the project; partnership or participation helps to protect interest of the people concerned; it enhances dignity and self-reliance among people, that is, they are enabled to obtain and do things by themselves; communities become aware of the project implementation as they have a great store of wisdom and skills. They understand their local needs and the nature of their environment better than outsiders; participation makes local people to act as multiplier of new project which they achieve. They can easily transmit the new knowledge they acquired to other communities, thus cause a rapid increase in growth of the new idea; participation promotes a sense of ownership among the community of equipment used in the project, and even projects itself. For example, they will protect and maintain the project through

their own means e.g. school buildings; it also enhances empowerment to community members by building their capacity to identify, define, solve and implement various social and economic issues that affect their lives; and participation creates sense and attitude of self-reliance; this especially happens when the project developer leaves the project to the indigenous community.

The findings of the study revealed the constraints of community involvement as the influence of demographic characteristics (age, gender, occupation, and location of residence) had on community' preferences about involvement in the project development, the study also explained that other possible factors besides socio-demographic characteristics forms constraints of community involvement on government developmental programmes in Rivers East. This is in accordance with Chambers, (2004), identified two broad categories of barriers to participation. These are structural barriers which comprise socio-cultural, economic, political and administrative barriers and non-structural barriers emanating from project planning and implementation problems (Stone & Stone, 2010).

Conclusion

Community involvement is very crucial because it creates awareness among stakeholders, people become aware of their material resources, their leadership, their technical expertise and the kind of help they are likely to need from outside, people should be mobilized through education and training on the importance of their projects and to make them feel that projects belongs to them, with mobilization, various village resources should be identified and daily recognized within the rules and institutions that creates predictable and transparent framework of both private and public sector. In this manner, people will be in a position to make decision on matters concerning their social development. Involvement of people in ongoing project gives them power to make decisions pertaining to their social development, where people enjoy awareness of all the processes related to their social economic needs and inclinations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

The researcher recommends that communities should be given the opportunity of make decisions about project selection because it is good to participate in project with their good senses and the project selected by them could be the ones to be implemented.

The researcher recommends that communities considered as project beneficiaries should have a regular training in order to increase their understanding about the project and gaining skills and

knowledge about the project maintenance. This is because if the beneficiaries are not equipped with skills on project management and maintenance the sustainability of the project can be challenged and overpowered. It advisable that community involvement should not only consider the project in the case study but should consider all the projects funded.

The researcher recommends that before the implementation of any project the implementers should identify factors that can influence and prevent household from participation and give chances to them in decision making during project selection.

Conclusively, the level of participation of community members in project planning and implementation should be increased so as to attain high level of sustainability of such projects.

Reference

- Akinbile, L.A., Oladoja, M.A., Awoniyi, F.M., & Adisa, B.O.,(2006). Effects of community participation on perception of sustainability of rural water projects in Oyun localgovernment area of Kwara State, Nigeria. *Journal of Food, Agriculture & Environment* Vol.4 (3&4), 257-261.
- Alesina, A., & Eliana F., (2000). Participation in Heterogeneous Communities. *Quarterly Journal of Economics* .
- Arthur, A. S. and Michelle, R. D. (2002). *Community Involvement: Theoretical Approaches and Educational Initiatives*. Wiley-Blackwell Publishers. ISBN: 978-1-405-10793-8.
- Asaduzzaman, M. (2008). *Governance in Practice: Decentralization and People's Participation in the Local Government of Bangladesh*. University of Tampere Press.
- Bizoza R. A & Havugimana J.M., (2011). Land use consolidation in Rwanda. A case study of Nyanza District , Southern Province. National University of Rwanda
- Blair, H. (2000). Participation and Accountability at the Periphery: Democratic Local Governance in Six Countries. *World Development*. Volume. 28, Issue 1, pp21-39.
- Catherine F.W. (2010). Women participation in project planning and implementation: A case of Tasaf project in Rufiji District – Tanzania
- Chambers, R. (2004, April). Institute of Development Studies. Retrieved March 21, 2022, from [www.ids.ac.uk: http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/research/pranotes04.pdf](http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/particip/research/pranotes04.pdf)
- Chambers, R. (2012). *Provocations for Development*. Bourton on Dunsmore: Practical Action Publishing.

- Chandan, K. P. (2014). Practicing Participatory Rural Appraisal – A Comprehensive Approach for Learning from the People. *Advances in Extension Education and Rural Development. Volume II. India: Agrobios.*
- Chirenje L. I., Giliba R. A. and Musamba, E. B. (2013). Local Communities' Participation in Decision Making Processes through Planning and Budgeting in African Countries. *Chinese Journal of Population Resources and Environment. Volume 11, Issue 1. Pp 10 – 16.*
- Danny B., Frances H., Marilyn T., Pete W. and Mandy W. (2004). *Making community participation meaningful: A handbook for development and assessment.* Published for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation by The Policy Press. England.
- Davids I., Theron F. and Maphunye, K. (2005). *Participatory Development in South Africa: A Development Management Perspective.* Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Ghazala, M. and Vijayendra, R. (2003). *Community Based and Driven. Development: A Critical Review* Development Research Group. The World Bank Development.
- Green K.O. (2008). *A Seat at the Table: A Study of Community Participation in Two Healthy Cities Projects: Critical Public Health. Volume 18. Issue 3.* <https://doi.org/10.1080/09581590801959337>.
- Hussein, A. (2013). *Determinants of Community Participation in the Implementation of Development Projects: A Case of Garissa Sewerage Project.* University of Nairobi.
- Karangwa, L. (2013). *Celebrating Sustainable affordable Water and Sanitation Services: Milestones of WASH project.* Kigali: SNV, Rwanda.
- Kinyashi, Z. S. (2008). *Analysis of Community Participation in Projects Managed by Non-Governmental Organizations: A case of World Vision in Central Tanzania.* UK: IDS: Institute of Development Studies.UK.
- Long, C. (2001). *Participation of the Poor in Development initiatives: Taking their rightful place.* UK: Earth Scan Publication.
- Mezegibe, E. A., (2011). *An Assessment on the Role of Community Participation on Rural Water Supply Project: The Case of Debatie Woreda, Benishangul Gumuz Regional State.*
- Mwesigye, H. (2011). *Role of community participation in the design and Implementation of community interventions.* Kampala: my brog.
- Njumwa, K. (2010). *Community participation as a tool for development: local community's participation in primary education development in Morogoro, Tanzania. A Case of Kilikala and Mindu Primary Schools.* University of Agder.

- Ofori, B. (2008, January). Strategies for community participation in dam development. Issue Paper . Accra, West Africa Regional Office, Ghana: International Water Management Institute.
- Olukotun, G. (2008). Achieving Project Sustainability Trough Community Participation. *Journal of Social Science* 17(1), 21-29.
- Olukotun, G. A. (2017). Achieving Project Sustainability Through Community Participation. *Journal of Social Sciences*. Volume 17, Issue 1, pp 21-29.
- Richardson, G. P. (2018). Using a Group Decision Support System to Add Value to Group Model Building. *SystDyn Rev*. Volume 26, Issue 4, pp 335-346.
- Sheikh, N. (2010). People's Participation in Development Projects at Grass-root Level: A case of a Lampur and Jagannathpur Union Parishad. North South University, Bangladesh.
- Shukor, E. A. (2011). A review on the success factors for community participation in the solid waste management. *International Conference on Management* (pp. 963-976). Skudai Malaysia: Unversity of Technology Malaysia .
- Sonowabo, P. (2009). Community Particiption in Solid Waste Management in High - Density Low-Income Areas: The case of C-Section in Duncan illage. University of Hale.
- Stone, L. S. and Stone, T. M. (2010). Community-Based Tourism Enterprises: Challenges and Prospects for Community Participation; Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust, Botswana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*. Volume 19, Issue 1. pp 197-114
- Thwala, W. (2010). Community participation is a necessity for project success: A case study of rural water supply projects in Jappes Reefs, South Africa. *African Journal of Agricultural Research* Vol. 5(10)., 970-979.
- Tosun, C. (2006). Expected nature of community participation in tourism development. *Journal of Tourism Management*, 27(3), 493-504.
- Twebaze, J. (2010). Community Monilization in Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programs:How Effective is It? “A case of Wakiso District- Uganda. Kampala: Makerere University.