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THE IMPACT OF COMMUNAL EFFORT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

YEMISI L. OLALEYE

Department of Social Work, Faculty of Education University of Ibadan, Ibadan. Nigeria
***Corresponding author:** yemisi1957@yahoo.co.uk **Tel.** +2348037139098

ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of communal effort on sustainable development. Communal effort is a process which starts from identification of felt need(s) peculiar to specific environments or communities. It is essential to identify and treat separately the elements of communal effort and the weight or bearing of each element on the sustainability of rural development projects and particularly rural-urban development projects. Communal effort can be viewed as a concept vital to the success of rural-urban development projects thus leading to the sustainability of such projects. The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey. A random sampling technique was used in selecting the study population. 300 respondents were randomly drawn from three local government areas in Ogun State. Questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study established that there was significant relationship between communal effort in identification of need and sustainable project development. It was also revealed that there was significant relationship between communal effort in project planning and sustainable development project. The study revealed that there was significant relationship between communal effort in implementing or executing project and sustainable development project. There was also significant relationship between communal effort on equal distribution of benefits supply and sustainable project development. The study therefore, recommended that rural-urban communities be given more political education on improving their attitudes towards project development in terms of active participation and involvement in all facets of project development.

Key Words: Impact, communal effort, sustainable, development, projects, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Effects of communal effort in sustaining development projects cannot be overstressed as recent discourse on community development issues has given it much prominence. In Nigeria, it has been observed that quite a number of development projects which were initiated by the government (federal, state and local) and non-government organizations do not stand the test of time. In many parts of Nigeria, sustainability of development projects is still an elusive goal. Communal effort is fundamentally required for achieving sustainable development at the local level. It reflects the need for the development of more active communities in their own right that is people seeing a need and acting upon it as advocates, pres-

sure groups or self help groups. (Moriarty, 2003).

Development agencies mostly face challenges of translating sustainability into the practicality of project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Where a physical asset is created as a result of a project, assessing its sustainability can be relatively straight forward (Schouten, 2006). However, it is rarely the physical asset created which is the end point of intervention. A new spring, for example, may be built, have a management group and provide clean water, but if the intended beneficiaries are unable to access and utilize the water; the benefits of the asset become questionable. More complex therefore, is assessing the sustainability of outcome and the desired impacts of output than the physical assets created. As much as communal effort has been widely accepted as a factor of sustaining development, the diverse use and application of the concept make it controversial and expose it to more critical analyses (American Indian Development Associates, 2001).

The top-down approach to development has had marked adverse effect on sustainability of project. The approach was influenced greatly by models of dependency and intervention based on short-term solutions and palliatives in terms of crises and emergencies. Development projects were imposed on people depending on the intervening organization's perception of what they felt was the people's need. In fact, the situation is such that citizens are treated as passive instead of active participants as they are not opportune to play active roles in issues affecting their lives. Little wonder then that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1998) wrote that organization prescribed to the people the "song" that they wanted them to "dance to" rather than "dancing with" the people to the song that the people had chosen. The Nigerian government had for long adopted this method, using fire brigade approach which is short-termed and exclusive rather than developing long-term programmes inclusive of the citizen – the beneficiaries.

Communal effort draws on the energy and enthusiasm that exists within the communities to define what that community wants to do and how it wants it to operate (Harriman, 1995; Rahman, 1993; and Smith, 1998). Communities have a right to participate in decision-making processes and articulate their own concerns and priorities. It then suggests clearly that success in development projects stands on the active participation of the beneficiaries or target-community who should be an integral part of the conception and or planning, organizing, implementing/ executing, monitoring and maintaining/ evaluating in order to ensure continued benefits from the project (Thwala, 2001).

Peet and Hartwick (1999) posited that the corruption and ineffectiveness of the various governments in addressing the problems of its citizenry on poverty, inequality and service provision led to the formation of alternative development or Non-governmental Organization (NGO). Rejecting the failed orthodox approaches to development, the NGOs cut the government out, working instead with target populations to bring services directly to people in need (Mdee, 2008; Parnwell, 2008 and Robb, 2004).

Project control is the element of a project which keeps it on tract, on-time and within budget. Control systems are needed for cost, risk, quality, communication, time, change,

procurement and human resources (Steinle, Bruch & Lawa, 1995). Projects can be controlled using the following listed methods in order to reinforce the defined performance and formal goals as postulated by Becker, Kugeler and Rosemann (2003).

According to Johnson (1998), Pearce, Atkinson and Duborg (1994), sustainability is the ability of a development project to maintain or expand a flow of benefits at a specified level for a long period after project inputs have ceased. In the narrowest sense, the project is the physical infrastructure established and maintained or operated by the participating institution. Sustainability is a function of resiliency which is the ability to bounce back or recover after a diversity or hard times, and to be capable of building positively on the lessons learnt from the experiences of the hardships.

Communities face enormous challenges as their social, economic and environmental resources are depleted and destroyed. Sustainable development represents a holistic way to achieve recovery and enhance the quality of life for everyone in these communities by developing local assets to revitalize economies, limiting waste and pollution, improving the status of disadvantaged people, conserving natural resources and promoting cooperation and efficiency. To ensure that local communities are strong, healthy, productive and viable, they require environments and good places to live in. Such places should reconcile human freedom and responsibility in harmony with the environment. Effective linkages should be built in communities to be able to coordinate life-sustaining activities on a very wide scale.

Challenges facing sustainable development continue to grow unabated despite efforts made at proffering solutions. Many African countries as well as others in the developing world have developed programmes and designed projects to combat development challenges facing them. It is, however, disappointing to observe that the progress made is negligible. Poverty level is still severe, marked by deteriorating quality of life, threatening the livelihood of millions of people, Awori, (1996) noted that the approaches used in development were lacking in people-centredness which is rich in indigenous knowledge, aspirations, skills, wisdom, cultures and local governance systems. In many cases, when development projects are adopted, they may not in the long-run satisfy the needs they were initially planned to service despite the participation of the target community.

Based on the foregoing, this study, therefore, sought to fill the gap by focusing on the extent of communal effort as panacea to sustainability project development ; also to review the existing relationship between communal effort in identifying need(s) and sustainability of development projects. Also the study helped to determine relationship between communal effort and implementation/execution and sustainability of development projects and to explain the relationship between communal effort on equal benefits distribution and sustainability of development projects.

The main objective of the study is to examine communal effort as panacea for the sustainability of project development. The specific objectives are: to examine the relationship between communal effort in identifying need(s) and sustainability of development projects; examine the relationship between communal effort in project planning and

sustainability of development projects; examine the relationship between communal effort and implementation/execution and sustainability of development projects; examine the relationship between communal effort on equal benefits distribution and sustainability of development projects.

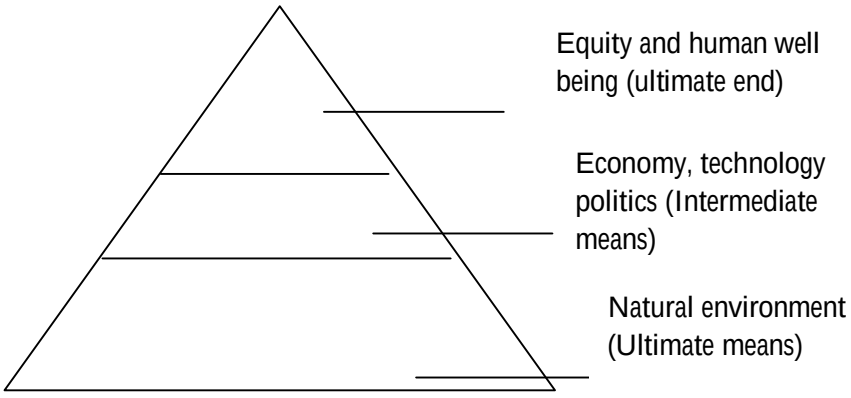
Herman Edward Daly's Theory of Sustainability

Herman Edward Daly in 1996 recorded sustainability are three Es representing environment, equity and economy. He used a triangle to describe the relationship between the Es. He used the term 'ultimate mean's to refer to the environment and placed it at the foundation of the triangle. He used the term 'ultimate ends' to refer to equity in terms of human wellbeing and placed it at the apex of the triangle. In the middle, he placed 'intermediate means or ends' to refer to the economy along which he included technology, politics and ethics as these too translate 'means' to 'ends'.

Daly's theory attempts to prioritize and integrate social responses to environmental and cultural problems. He believed that growth would solve mankind's problems but favours qualitative growth which connotes development and steady state economy which can be sustained long-term. Daly's triangle emphasizes that the natural environment is the precondition for human life. The framework illustrates that the economy is not an end unto itself; but serves as a vehicle for achieving ultimate ends. The economy succeeds to the extent that it conserves and restores ultimate means (the environment) and enables us to achieve ultimate ends (well -being).

Herman Daly's theory is relevant to the study as it illustrates that the economy or the intermediate asset produced is not an end but a means to an end, the end being the benefits enjoyed or a state of wellness in the long run from development projects from the natural environment; such as provision of water. This can further be illustrated by the construction of roads. The completed road network does not constitute benefits or the end. The end is the benefit enjoyed by travelling peacefully, comfortably and timely on the road which should be enjoyed for a

Herman Daly's Triangle of sustainability

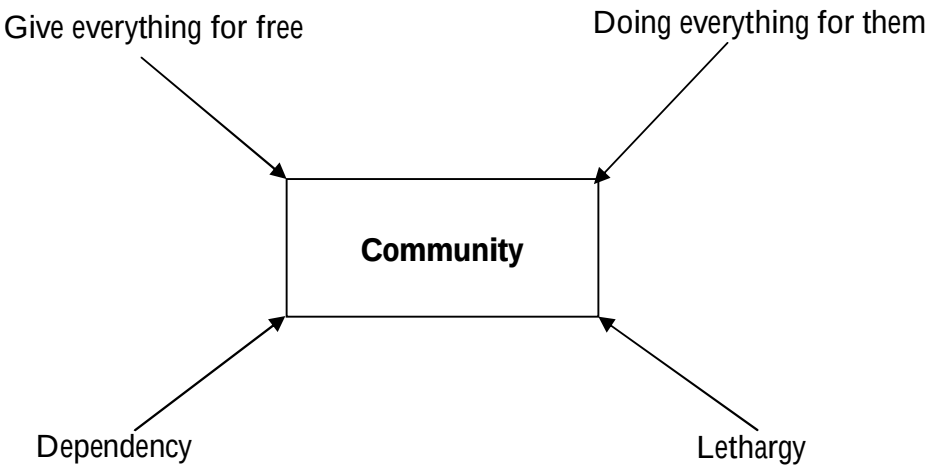


Source: www.sustainablesonona.org/keyconceptdalystriangle.hmtl

Narayanana Reddy's Model

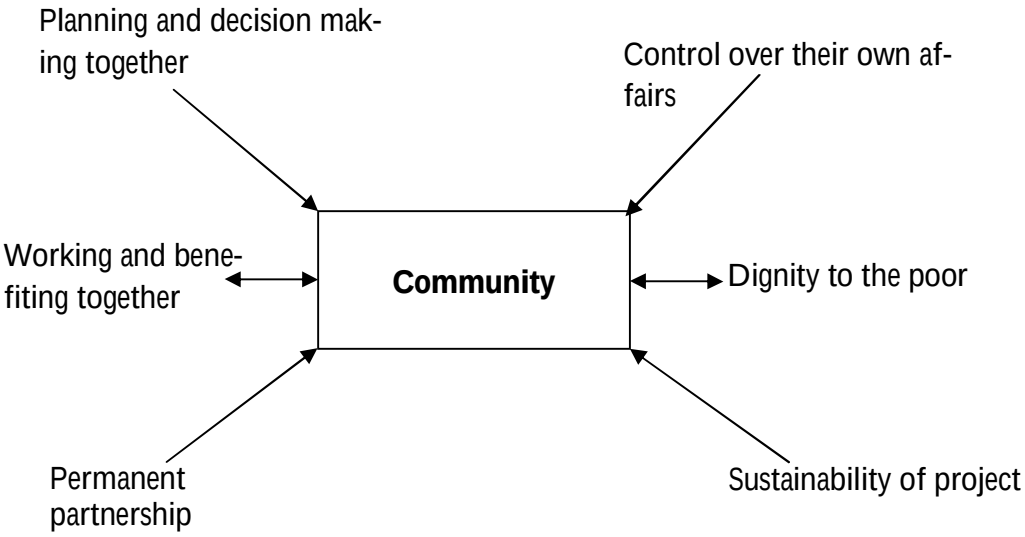
Narayanana Reddy (2002) established participation as a tool for achieving something more meaningful than mere physical benefit. She went further to demonstrate participation with two models; Top down and Partnership.

Top-Down Model



Source: Top-Down Model by Reddy (2002).

Partnership Model



Source: Partnership Model by Narayanana Reddy (2002)

Partnering with the community in taking decisions on felt need(s), deciding on course (s) of action on planning, working together on all aspects of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects will produce mutual benefits to the communities and project sponsors. The symbiotic relationship will build a permanent partnership such that even when the project initiators take their exit, the project asset will not collapse and will continue to produce benefits to the target.

The partnership built will result in the community taking control of their own affairs and there occurs equity across all community subgroups and classes. This cooperative arrangement will ultimately lead to the sustainability of development projects in the community. The model is relevant to the study as it employs the partnership model to attain sustainability of development projects even after exist of the initiator-partner.

Research Hypotheses

Ho_1 There is no significant relationship between communal effort in identification of need and sustainability of project development .

Ho_2 There is no significant influence of communal effort in planning on sustainability of project development

Ho_3 There is no significant relationship between communal effort in implementation/ execution and sustainability of project development.

Ho_4 There is no significant relationship between communal effort on equal benefit distribution and sustainability of project development.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study to elicit information on communal effort as a determinant in the sustainability of development projects.

Population of the Study

The target population of the study was drawn from three local government areas of Ogun State, namely; Ijebu North, Odo-Iyewa and Abeokuta.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A multi-stage sampling technique was adopted in selecting three rural communities – Abeokuta, Ijebu North, and Odo-Iyewa local. Three hundred respondents were randomly selected from the three local government areas. The sample cuts across respondents of both sexes, varying ages, educational and economic backgrounds. Proportionate sampling technique was used to select one hundred respondents from these three local government area in Ogun state. Thus three hundred respondents were selected for the study.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was a self-designed questionnaire tagged "Communal Effort as a Determinant in the Sustainability of Development Projects" (CEDSDP). It consists of open and closed-end questions developed from the synthesis of related literature. It is designed to collect information from respondents consisting of three sections A, B and C measured on a four point likert scale and nominal scale. Section A: Analyses the demographic characteristics of the respondents made up of eleven items. Section B: Is made up of thirty two items to find out the level of participation of respondents in the existing water supply project and find out

intended level of participation to sustain future water supply. Section C: Examines the control and ownership of the development projects and the effects of the project on community standard of living.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

After constructing the instrument, the researcher measured the validity using face and content validity to review each item to assess its relativity to the stated objectives. The questionnaire was tested for content and face validity as well as reliability by qualified Community social workers, rural developers and change agents who suggested modifications of items relevant to community participation, sustainability and projects development in rural-urban area.

Based on their comments, some items were reworded, while some were modified to ensure that there were no ambiguities. Cronbach Alpha and Kuder Richardson (KR21) were used to provide reliability estimate of the instrument. KR21 was used for items that were dichotomously scored, while Cronbach Alpha was used for 3 and 4 point items scales. In order to achieve this, a pilot study was carried out with a sample of 50 subjects in Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria. The result of reliability coefficient was r = 0.68. This result indicates that the instrument used for data collection is reliable.

Analysis of the Data

Data collected from the survey were edited and analyzed using descriptive statistics for the demographic section and inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation to test the hypotheses.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Respondents based on local Government Area

Name of Local Government	Frequency	Percentage
Ijebu North	98	32.7
Odo Iyewa	92	30.6
Abeokuta	110	36.7
Total	300	100.0

Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of the respondents based on their local government areas, 98 (32.7%) of them were in Ijebu North, 92 (30.6%) of them were in Odo Iyewa, while 110 (36..7%) of them were in Abeokuta.

Table 2 indicate that 35 (11.6%) of the respondents were aged between 18-25 years, 41 (13.7%) of them were aged between 26-33 years, 60 (20%) of them were aged between 34-41 years, also, 105(35%) of them were aged between 42-49 years, 48 (16%) of them were aged between 50-57 years. It is also shown that 169 (56.3%) of the respondents were males, while 131 (43.7%) of them were females. It can be seen from Table 1 that 158 (52.7%) of the respondents were Muslims, 136 (45.3%) of them were Christians, while (2.0%) of them were Traditionalists.

Table: 2 Analysis of the Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18-25 years	35	11.6
26-33 years	41	13.7
34-41 years	60	20.0
42-49 years	105	35.0
50-57years	48	16.0
58 and above	11	3.7
Total	300	100.00
Sex		
Male	169	56.3
Female	131	43.7
Total	300	100.00
Religion		
Islam	158	52.7
Christianity	136	45.3
Traditionalist	6	2.0
Total	300	100.00
Educational Levels		
Non-Literate	105	35.0
Primary School	54	18.0
Junior Secondary School	13	4.3
Senior Secondary School	99	33.0
Technical School	11	3.7
Tertiary Education	18	6.0
Total	300	100.00
Marital Status		
Single	75	25.0
Married	179	59.7
Divorced	6	2.0
Widow	34	11.3
Separated	6	2.0
Total	300	100.00
Occupation		
Studying	54	18.0
Farming	143	47.7
Civil Service	6	2.0
Self Employed	83	27.6
Not Employed	14	4.7
Total	300	100.00
No. of Children		
1-2	85	28.4
3-4	142	47.3
5-6	48	16.0
6 and above	25	8.3
Total	300	100.00

In addition, 105 (35%) of the respondents were non-literate, 54 (18%) of them had gone to primary school, 13 (4.3%) or them went to Junior Secondary School, also, 99 (33%) of them went to senior secondary school, 11(3.7%) of them went to Technical School, while 18 (6%) of them went to Higher Institution. Table 1 revealed that 75 (25.0%) of the respondents were single, 179 (59.7%) of them were married, 6 (2%) of them has separated, also, 6 (2%) of them had divorced, while 34 (11.3%) of them were widow. 54 (18%) of the respondents were studying, 143 (47.7%) of them were farmers, 6 (2%) of them were civil servants, also, 83 (27.6%) of them were self employed, while 14 (4.7%) of them were not Employed (Table 1). The table also shows that 85 (28.4%) of the respondents had between 1-2 children, 142 (47.3%) of them and between 3-4 children, 48 (16%) of them had between 5-6 children, while 25 (8.3%) of them had 6 children and above.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Showing relationship between Communal Effort in Identification of Need and Sustainable Project Development

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev	N	R	P	Remark
Communal effort in identification of need	19.5000	2.3413	300	.585**	.000	Sig.
Sustainable project development	12.6000	1.6781				

**Sig. at 0.05 level

It is shown in the Table 3 that there was significant relationship between communal effort in identification of need and sustainable project development ($r = .585^{**}$, $N = 300$, $P < 0.05$). Null hypothesis is rejected, and its alternative rejected. It is clear, therefore, that the sustainable project development had a very strong relationship with communal effort.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Relationship between communal Effort in Project Planning and Sustainable Project Development

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev	N	R	P	Remark
Communal Project planning	19.5000	2.3413	300	.637**	.000	Sig.
Sustainable project development	9.4867	1.5135				

**Sig. at 0.05 level

Table 4 shows that there was significant relationship between communal effort in project planning and sustainable project development (r = .673**, N = 300, P < 05). The null hypothesis is rejected, and its alternative accepted.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation Relationship between Communal Effort in project execution and sustainable Project Development.

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	R	P	Remark
Communal effort in project execution	19.5000	2.3413	300	.294**	.000	Sig.
Sustainable project development	12.2200	1.8824				

It is shown in Table 5 that there was significant relationship between community participation in project execution/ implementation and sustainable potable rural water supply projects (r = .294**, N = 300, P < .05). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected, and its alternative accepted.

Table 6: Pearson Relationship between Communal Effort on Equal Distribution of Benefit and Sustainable Project Development.

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev	N	R	P	Remark
Communal effort on equal distribution of benefit	19.5000	2.3413	300	.530**	.000	Sig.
Sustainable project development	14.9567	2.1502				

**Sig. at 0.05 level

Table 6 revealed that there was significant relationship between communal effort on equal distribution of benefit distribution and sustainable project development(r = .530**, N = 300, P < .05). the null hypothesis is rejected, and its alternative accepted.

DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis (Ho_1) established that involving communities in identifying communal effort as a need is related to sustainable project development. It then means that regardless of age, sex, religion, educational level, marital status, occupation or family size; getting communities involved in identifying a social need will facilitate the sustainability of the project satisfying the need. The above result supports the finding of Demeke (2009), that the wish or demand for need of any communal effort is expressed through their contributions of cash, labour, local resources, and time for project development.

Hypothesis 2 (Ho_2) revealed that allowing communal effort or contribution in the planning of projects such as proffering solutions or giving answers to how, when and where of the intended project influences sustainable project development. According to Igboeli (1992), supports that rather than imposing development projects on the community, its members should be allowed to participate meaningfully in the planning and execution. He added that most communities once they are involved in project initiation, design and implementation will see to the actualization and sustenance of the project.

The third hypothesis 3 (Ho_3) confirmed that the contribution of the communities in the implementation or execution of projects is related to and determines the sustainability of project develop. This embraces contributions in kind such as communal effort in physical work, supervision, donation of materials, and cooperation; while cash can also be donated as counterpart fund in some cases. This is constant with the findings of Igboeli (1992) that once communities are involved in project initiation, design and implementation, they will see to the sustainability of the project.

Hypothesis4 (Ho_4) proved that communal effort on equal distribution of benefits distribution is related to the sustainability of project development. Such benefits include access to good road on a fair and just consideration, comforts derived from the use of water, and the 'feeling of wellness' which accompanies the supply of the potable water. This result supports the findings of Mdee (2008) that communal effort can be used to achieve material benefit in the form of pointed development projects (such as sewage, water supply delivery, etc.) or can lead to the social development of the people (e.g. empowerment, independence, etc.).

CONCLUSION

It is perceived that if communities are educated, enlightened and motivated to form strong Community Based Organizations (CBOs), full involvement and contribution of the community members should be more implemented resulting in stronger sense of ownership, feeling of accomplishments on success of projects resulting in sustainability of projects. Much effort should be made to empower communities with the technical, administrative and management skills to control projects. The government ought to depoliticize rural development projects and stop politicking with the welfare of the people particularly the rural-urban community which is the nation's food store and cushion against national famine.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to im-

prove sustainability of project development.

The rural populace should be educated on improving their attitudes towards development projects. They need to see themselves as the chief architects or major partners in the development of their areas in terms of demand for and the supply of their social needs.

Women should be encouraged to come out through literacy and other empowerment programmes to show interest in their living patterns and participate in their environmental development. Real partnerships should be formed between the communities and their benefactors (either governmental or non-governmental).

Government should properly control and hand-over projects to the community leaders that will be responsible for the sustainability of projects.

Development agencies should train the communities for maintenance and repairs through capacity building and impress their total exit on the communities as they should learn to take control of the development projects as their own.

Communities should be motivated and encouraged towards the community to take their present and future in their hands. Elicit independency in them. Let there be constant interactions so that the fears and concerns of the communal effort in sustaining the project can be addressed.

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