Community Development and Socio-Economic Well-Being of Rural Dwellers in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects

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Abstract

The study examined the correlation between community development projects and socio-economic well-being of the people of Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Cross sectional survey research design was adopted while data were collected from 1,060 respondents. The participatory development theory and system theory were employed as theoretical framework. Data were collected using both primary and secondary sources of data collection for the study. Chi square analysis was used to test the hypotheses. These formed the bases for the four null hypotheses: communal self-help, involvement of community organizations, and utilization of local development resources and supporting of skill acquisition. It was hypothesized that each of the dependent variables did not bear any statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable of socio-economic well-being. The findings revealed that communal self-help effort have contributed toward the development of the area in terms of the availability of projects embarked upon by their self-help association. It was also revealed that support of skill acquisition significantly affected socio-economic well-being of the people. The study recommended that communities should endeavor to form more development association to assist in mobilizing the local people in development. Youths should be mobilized through economic empowerment programs in order to position them for participation in development engineering to take place in the communities. Community development policies of the government should incorporate the philosophies of self- help development.

Keywords: *Community development, socio-economic well-being, rural dwellers, self-help, community organizations.*

Introduction

Community development was meant to increase the rate of socio-economic wellbeing of the people (Abdulraham, 2009). This began to exist in foreign countries during the 1950s and these drew expansively in Africa and Nigeria in particular. Since the last two decades especially in the 1980, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of community development in the Third World countries (Udoh, 2014). Third World countries have been known to experience a high level of under development. Among these countries, including Nigeria, the high degree of under development and poverty is mostly witnessed and experienced among rural dwellers. This prevalent state of rural underdevelopment has been a matter of utmost concern to most governments and development experts in the country. Efforts at developing rural dwellers and their communities have been in existence since the inception of the world, meaning that community development is not new in Nigeria, and indeed in Akwa Ibom State as well as Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District. (Udoh, 2015). In Nigeria the welfare act was enacted in 1940 and

these also emphasizes the use of communal effort as a strategy for mobilizing and organizing human and material resources towards the improvement of lives in communities (Udoh, 2004).

Most community development programs have always targeted improvements in issues such as improved health, educational attainment, level of employment, personal self-esteem, freedom of association, safety and freedom from terror of physical impairment and expansion in community development activities (Nkpoyen, Mbat and Bassey, 2015). Also, socio-economic wellbeing could as well include improved life in terms of health, literacy, housing, finance and nutrition (Udoh, 2015). Specifically, government interventions have aimed at protection from the degradation and insecurity of ignorance, illness, disability, unemployment and poverty especially in rural areas.

However, not much has been achieved in this direction by either government or nongovernmental organizations in sub-Saharan Africa over the decades as there has been no significant improvement in the livelihood of rural dwellers especially the quality of life of rural dwellers (Nkpoyen, Mbat and Bassey 2015). The well-being of the people, therefore, involves creating and widening of potentials for economic development, enhancing the quality of life; accessing empowerment opportunities, facilities and amenities; improving standard of living and positive transformation in general aspect of lives (Okereke, 2009). Community development simply means an arrangement designed to better the living conditions of the rural people through their participation in community development activities.

Imoh, (2002) is of the opinion that community development came to the fore during the period of the missionaries as a self-help effort adopted to encourage communities to build and maintain schools, health centers, civic centers, markets, drainage construction etc. Self-help came on the ground that having discovered that government funds are inadequate and cannot satisfy the needs of the rural dwellers due to lack of funds (Abegunde, 2009). However, community development specialists are of the view that for community development to thrive, issues like community participation, self-help and the recognition of community leaders should be considered (Udoh, 2015). The challenges of rural community development efforts in Nigeria might be as a result of neglect by government at all levels to ignore those issues raised above. Ekong (2003) are of the opinion that, government initiated rural community development projects in Nigeria are as a result of political interests in which they use to get local political patronage. Most often than not, most of the projects are located in places where they have more faithful party loyalties.

After Nigeria‘s political independence in 1960, the federal and state governments had propounded policies in order to transform rural areas. Such policies includes the establishment of farm settlement schemes, the operation feed the Nation in 1976, the River Basins and Rural Development Authorities in 1976, the Green Revolution Program, the Directorate for Empowerment Strategy (NEEDS) 2004 etc.
The gap between the rural and urban areas has continued to increase in an alarming rate as a result of ineffective implementation of these policies (Udoh, 2008). Although effort had been made to ensure availability of development in communities of Ikot Ekpene senatorial district, there is no positive result in the area of wellbeing. This is traceable to community development problems and the problems of socio-economic wellbeing.

Based on these reasons, the researcher was motivated to investigate community development and the socio-economic wellbeing of the
rural dwellers of Ikot Ekpene Senatorial district. Despite all the orchestrated policies and program m of successive government in Nigeria, the problem of rural backwardness and underdevelopment has remained unresolved. The evidence of the persistence of rural backwardness is amply manifested in agricultural stagnation, hunger, poverty, disease, ignorance, unemployment, poor conditions of the rural people and their areas stem from

government‘s faulty conceptualization and execution of community development policies and programs, (Talbot, 2005).

Thus therefore, in view of the social insecurity, social deprivation, level of poverty, high level of illiteracy, unemployment, bad road network, the ruler‘s attitude toward community development, the process of delay in executing projects in the communities of Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District. That people‘s full participation towards development programs could be complementary role towards it political, social and economic emancipation. If some of the problems facing the rural communities are carefully studied and diagnosed, then accurate measures can be taken towards reducing it, if not complete rustication. (Okereke, 2009).

According to (Iniodu 2000), the formulation of community development policies and the execution or implementation of the accompanying community development programs in Nigeria, and indeed Akwa Ibom State appear to have taken the ―top-down approach‖. Most of them were designed at the national or state levels on the belief that government knows what is best for the citizens at the grassroots. These handed down development policies and programs for rural areas had no rural inputs at the planning stage, and therefore did not reflect the real needs of the rural dwellers. In factmany of the programs never reached the rural poor or have their impacts felt.

In the absence of a thorough analysis of needs, the result is that unwanted projects are planned and executed in ways quite unsuitable for illiterate rural dwellers. In Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State, most of the people are farmers who work from sun rise to sun set, operate artisanal fishing. Despite the obvious role of farming and fishing in the economy of the state, rural people tend to remain poor. In general, they possess attributes such as social insecurity, social deprivation, high level of poverty, unemployment, low level of educational attainment, large number of children, low access to social infrastructure, low purchasing power, lack of nutrition and poor housing. However it must be noted that rural communities vary greatly with regard to the condit ion of their wellbeing and community development needs (Udoh, 2015).

It has been observed that despite the availability of the abundant natural, physical and human resources that Akwa Ibom is endowed, there is still high rate of poverty especially in the rural areas of Ikot Ekpene senatorial district. Despite each successive government goals in community development, the current state of rural communities in Ikot Ekpene senatorial district is characterized by poor and unavailable social, physical and institutional infrastructures, perceived deprivation, lack of well-equipped hospitals, no good roads network, lack of good drainage system, no markets to sell their farm produce, lack of electricity, lack of pipe borne water, lack of well-equipped schools, lack of security personnel to curb the enormous social vices going on in the communities, lack of skill acquisition centre for those who cannot acquire formal education, lack of lack of storage facilities to store farm produce for the next planting season, employment opportunities for the teaming graduates of Ikot Ekpene senatorial district (Udoh, 2015).

Past efforts in food production, health care, population control and other related community development programs have not succeeded without the active involvement or participation of rural people who will ultimately benefit from these programs (Udoh, 2015). It is a fact that well formulated community development programs that do not incorporate the different communities‘ interests and aspirations, is an invitation to failure. Generally speaking, for community development effort to fail has many reasons as lack of people‘s participation and inadequate communication between community leaders and the people are outstanding in this regard.

The rural dwellers who benefit in community development do not participate in the assessment of their needs and identification of

problems to be addressed by such efforts. Rural dwellers perceptions of problems and solutions are often overlooked, while their storehouse of information and experience is usually neglected. They are thus regarded as mere recipients, while their felt needs are not perceived as relevant (Ekong, 2003). However, community development has a lot of challenges as it relates to some developmental projects. While some succeed, others fail to succeed. The study was expected to assess the impact of community development on socio-economic wellbeing.

Against this backdrop this study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. How do communal self help of rural dwellers of Ikot Ekpene senatorial district aid community development activities in order to improve their standard of living?
2. How do community organizations lead to the socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers of Ikot Ekpene senatorial district?
3. How do the participants generate local development resources used in developing their communities?
4. How do skill acquisitions of rural dwellers of IkotEkpene senatorial district lead to their socio-economic wellbeing?

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the influence ofcommunity development on socio-economic wellbeing of the people of IkotEkpene Senatorial district in Akwa Ibom State
2. To examine the association between communal self help and socio economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition, finance and housing.
3. To examine community organizations and socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition, finance and housing.
4. To investigate the association between utilization of local development resources and socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition, finance and housing.
5. To examine the association between initializing vocations skill acquisition and socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition, finance and housing

Research Hypotheses

Based on the objectives and research questions put forth for the study, the following hypotheses were tested in the study.

1. Communal self-help has no significant relationship with socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition, finance and housing.
2. Involvement of community organization has no significant relationship with socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy nutrition, finance and housing.
3. Utilization of local development resources has no significant relationship with socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition, finance and housing.
4. Initializing vocational skill acquisition has no significant relationship with socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition, finance and housing.

Community development and socio-economic wellbeing

The rural areas of Nigeria are attributed to low level of socio-economic wellbeing, underdevelopment, low purchasing power, low per capita income, high level of poverty, high dependency ratio, bad road network, lack of infrastructure and social amenities (Abdulraham, 2009). Community development started with the efforts of colonial administrators with top-bottom approach which has been imbibed by the people that took over from them. Community development is initiated by the community itself which include the use of local resources, labour and local organizational or managerial ability. The provision of basic services for the community is uppermost in this aspect. It is a process by which the efforts of people are united with those of governments and Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to improve the social, economic and cultural conditions of the communities and integrating these communities into the life of the nation.

Community development can be achieved through provision of social services as well as community participation (Otalor, 2012). Also, development programs are meant to translate to socio- economic wellbeing through Improved income levels of the poor and non-poor Changes in household food security. Improved basic needs (shelter, health and nutrition) Changes in income and decrease in inequalities, diversification of income sources, changes in income security, improved human rights, increased access to public goods and services, increased yields, changes in consumption and diet, improved quality of life, development is lost in antiquity, but that it was used in the pre-colonial period by different communities for communal work and that during the colonial period it was used as a policy for local government.

However, Ihejiamaizu (2002) has brought to bear, the concept of community development in the developing countries which was defined at the Cambridge summer conference on Africa in 1948 as, a process designed to promote better living conditions to the community (Otalor, 2012).Development is not new in Nigeria. Such efforts have been as old as many rural communities themselves as village groups, Associations, age grades, women associations had existed and have always co-operated amongst themselves to provide labour and other resources for the construction of local roads, market stalls/squares, village schools, civic centres, cultivation of farm lands, skill acquisition centers, maintaining of village roads, gutters and pathways as well as offering of scholarship (Ekong, 2003), these indigenous community development was supported by forced and voluntary participation of all members of the community with severe or mild sanctions for defaulting members (Udoh, 2015).Gregory (2009) is of the view that, development as a concept has different definitions.

It is used in a holistic context of human development. According to Gilchrist (2004) development in health care means longer life expectancy, which is greater quality of life. It therefore encompasses foreign aid, governance, healthcare, education, gender equality and infrastructure. Talbot (2005) noted that, development comprised institutions and policies focus on alleviating poverty and improving living conditions in third world countries. Bamidele (2009) saw development projects as a single, transformative project to address a specific problem or a series of projects targeted at different angles of the society Promoted projects according to Barmidele, involves problem solving that reflects that reflects the unique culture, politics, geography, social and economy of a region. Igboeli (2002) opined that United Nations signed the United Nations Millennium Declaration which includes eight millennium development goals to be achieved by 202020.

This represented, the first time that a holistic strategy to meet the development needs of the world has been established with measurable targets and defined indicators.In Nigeria in general and Akwa Ibom State in particular, the citizens had until recently believed that ‒it was the responsibility of government and it agencies to provide for the needs of the rural dwellers‖. Government was seen as the ‒great provider whose resources were unlimited ‒yet the government failed them (Udoh, 2015).

The government itself failed to understand that: (a) No nation can develop only it's urban centers and be able to carry it citizens along; (b) The development of rural areas can reduce urban population and bring an end to slum dwelling; (c) Agricultural sector which follows rural development can provide industrial raw materials and hasten the technological take-off and bring a balanced economy; (d) That community development is a process that involves the growth and modernization of both rural and urban sectors; (e) That community development is not one service but a composite of all the various services needed as Agricultural extension, health , education, small scale, industry, supervised credit scheme, self-help, housing and most importantly, good roads and essential amenities like pipe borne water and electricity; (f) That for a proper and balanced community development to take place , members of the local community must actively participate, consolidate with the expertise knowledge of professional community development workers (Ife, 2002). Thus, a community refers to a kind of group in which members is based on locality.

In this sense, a community can be seen as a local group which contains all the major social institutions (social structures and social organizations) which make social life possible and meaningful. Whenever human beings find themselves in an interactive setting, they are in kind of community. According to Websters dictionary, a community is a group of people with a common interest living together within a larger society or a body of persons nations having a common history or common social, economic, and political interest.

Warren (2001) found out that community included social interaction, common ties, and vocational criteria. Duncan (2013) views community development as effort to improve the condition of community lives. It features are as follows; community development is the involvement of the people through their participation in the process of improving the community by the implementation of projects. It is a planned programme aimed at changing the community for a better life. It is based on the needs of the community. (4) The participation of community members in effort to improve their general welfare and standard of living. (5) It requires community initiatives, self-reliance and self –help (6) The mobilization of community resources for it development. (7) Integration of community development effort into the direction of national development (7) Team work among various specialties such as engineers, educationist, planners, social and health workers to guide the community towards development (Ottong and Antigha 2009). For their well-being to improve, rural dwellers need all that it takes to transform it from rural to urban areas.

Rural areas should be provided with all the facilities and infrastructures like pipe borne water, electricity, hospital, telephone, school, banks, industries, food, clothing and shelter for the people. In the absence of these infrastructures living conditions of the rural people becomes sordid and unattractive**.**

Theoretical Framework

The Participatory development theory: This theory was propounded by Grandy in 1991. The Participatory theory emerged as a result of the inability of several development approaches to trickle down the benefits of development to the rural areas from the ‒top-down approach‖. It contends that the top-down approach was too inappropriate as it did not have room for the involvement of the rural dwellers in development policies and programs that affected them. This theory places emphasis on the local people's initiative to seek to improve their own conditions (Rahman, 2011). Participatory rural development according to Nyom (2014) is one which carries the rural dwellers along at every stage of the development process, which therefore implies that nothing should be hidden from the people. They are involved in the identification and prioritization of activities to be undertaken, decision making and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Methods and Materials

The design used in this study was survey. A survey was carried out through the administration of questionnaire and interview on community members in the study area. Survey is a research design that focused on a sample derived from the entire population of the study. A researcher, who uses this method, goes into the field and selects sample out of the entire population. What the researcher does in this case is to use a particular sampling technique to select samples from the entire unit of the population, study the sample and by extension, use the outcome of the sample studied to generalize on the population. Survey research therefore, works on the basis that a given population is too large for any researcher to question or observe all the elements in the population. Key Informant Interview (KII) was used. This method was also preferred in this study because the independent variables of community development such as communal self-help, involvement of community organization, utilization of local development resources and initiating vocations skill acquisition have exerted their effects on the dependent variable of socio- economic wellbeing. Also, some dependent variables like improved health, literacy, nutrition, finance and housing cannot be manipulated. The rational for observing event that has already taken place is for the purpose of evaluation. The cross sectional survey therefore would help the researcher to evaluate the relationship between community development variables and socio economic wellbeing.

The sample size used in this study is one thousand and sixty- six (1,060) respondents. It was done at 95 percent confidence level and 3% margin of error. The sample was chosen from the ten local government areas that made up Ikot Ekpene senatorial district. The purposive sampling and Systematic Random techniques were used for this study. Purposive sampling selects areas or elements from a given population which meets the criteria the researcher had established. The choice of selection depends on the judgment of the researcher. The choice of Akwa Ibom State out of the existing 36 states itself is purposive. In Akwa Ibom State, there are 31 Local Government Areas but the researcher purposively selected 10 (Ten) Local Government Areas which make up Ikot Ekpene senatorial district. The systematic random sampling technique was used by picking a respondent after every five (5) compounds in each of the villages of the ten Local Government Areas of Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District. Using this procedure the researcher selected 106 respondents from each of the Local Government Area. The total number of respondents who participated in the study areas was one thousand and sixty (1060).

Data for this study was obtained from (2) main sources: The primary and secondary sources. The Primary source comprised the data directly obtained by researcher herself in the course of the fieldwork. Data obtained from this source was used for the analysis. In this study, the questionnaire was administered to the participant and focus group discussion (FGD) was carried out among village heads and members of the village council in the ten Local Government Area headquarters. Key informant interview was held with selected members of the community in the study areas. The secondary source comprised those data obtained from both published and unpublished works such as textbooks, academic journals, magazines/newspapers, databases and internet materials. Data obtained from these sources provided the basis for the review of the literature and theoretical framework.

Instrumentation

To obtain the data needed for this study, the questionnaire schedule was the instrument used for the data collection. The researcher with the help of her supervisors developed reliable questionnaire. The questionnaire is entitled Community Development and Socio economic Wellbeing. Forty one questions contained in the questionnaire schedule were administered to one thousand and sixty- six (1,066) respondents in ten (10) local government areas that constitute Ikot Ekpene Senatorial district to ascertain the workability of the instrument but six(6)

were discarded due to non-compliance by the respondents. These, gave us a total of one thousand, and sixty respondents (1,060).

Focus group discussion

The researcher also used focus group discussion (FGD) for data collection. The men and women were involved in this discussion. In each session, the minimum number of people involved was eight (8) while the maximum was ten (10). The discussants were arranged in a rectangular pattern in some cases and semi-circular in others. These discussants who were men and women were not involved in the questionnaire study. The discussion guide was made up of three sections: A, B and C. The first section addressed the introduction of the participants to the study purpose and soliciting their participation. Also included in this section is affirmation of confidentiality on the part of the researcher. The second section addressed the aspect of community development and socio economic wellbeing where communities are involved in project formulation design and execution, the projects are likely to be sustained, more cost efficient, there's more impartial of benefits and it leads to better planned projects. However, for the sustainability to be achieved there must be some form of government and institutional support, leaders must be accountable and transparent. It is worthy to mention that an examination of government policies and programs showed that they have failed to tackle the issues of poverty and under-development. The development of the rural communities in Ikot Ekpene Senatorial district of AkwaIbom State and indeed Nigeria, as a matter of intentional strategy for the entire societal development, remains the bone of intention to policy makers.

A review of these past and present policies to community development showed that they are bedeviled with a number of problems (as contained in this study). Apart from the issues of human factors being relegated to the backdrop in the process of development, government good intentions are through the processes of self-enrichment, corruption and embezzlement, thwarted thus negating development programs and actions. It becomes imperative to conclude that for a change-oriented development engineering to take place in the communities there is the need to reshuffle the various community development programs, institutions and agencies to include the community based development association/unions to bring the much needed improvements. There is the need for more obligation on the parts of the private sector, the community and the government, backed up with financial commitment as recommended in this study, the rural communities of Ikot Ekpene Senatorial district in Akwa Iborn State will be transformed.

4.1 Hypothesis 1

Communal self-help has no significant relationship with socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition and housing.

Table 1:

Respondents	**Responses**		**Total**
	Positive	**Negative**	
Male	(a) 680	(b) 70	750
Female	(c) 250	(d) 60	310
Total	**930**	**130**	**1,060**

(a) $\frac{930 \times 750}{1,060} = 658.02$

(b) $\frac{130 \times 750}{1,060} = 91.98$

© $\frac{930 \times 310}{1,060} = 271.98$

(d) $\frac{130 \times 310}{1,060}$ = 38.02

Table 2:

	O	E	0-E	$(O-E)^2$	$\chi(-)^2$
A	680	658.02	21.98	483.12	0.73
B	70	91.98	-21.98	483.12	5.25
C	250	271.98	-21.98	483.12	1.78
D	60	38.02	21.98	483.12	12.71
					$\chi(-)^2 =$ **20.47**

The calculated value = 20.47

The degree of freedom = (R – 1) (C – 1)

= (2 – 1) (2 – 1)

= 1 x 1

= 1

While the table value = $x^2 = 0.05.1 = 3.841$

Decision: since the calculated value of 20.47 is greater than the critical value of 3.841 we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate which showed that communal self-help has significant relationship with socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy and nutrition.

4.2 pothesis 2

Involvement of community organization has no significant relationship with socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition and housing.

Table 3

Respondents	**Responses**		**Total**
	Positive	**Negative**	
Male	(a) 600	(b) 250	850
Female	(c) 100	(d) 110	210
Total	**700**	**360**	**1,060**

(a) $\frac{700 \times 850}{1,060}$ = 561.32

(b) $\frac{360 \times 850}{1,060}$ = 288.7

(c) $\frac{700 \times 210}{1,060}$ = 138.68

(d) $\frac{360 \times 210}{1,060}$ = 71.32

TABLE 4:

	O	E	0 – E	$(O-E)^2$	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
A	600	561.32	38.68	1,496.14	2.67
B	250	288.7	38.68	1,496.14	5.18
C	100	138.68	38.68	1,496.14	10.79
D	110	71.32	38.68	1,496.14	20.9[10]
					$\sum\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$ = **39.54**

The calculated value = 39.54 while

The degree of freedom = (R – 1) (C – 1)

= (2 – 1) X (2 – 1)

= 1 x 1

= 1

While the table value is 3.841 at 0.05 level of significance.

Decision: The calculated value of 39.54 is greater than the critical value of 3.841 at 0.05 level of significance. We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate that involvements of community organizations have a significant relationship with the socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition and housing.

4.3 pothesis 3

Utilization of local development resources has no significant relationship with socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition and housing.

Table 5

Respondents	**Responses**		**Total**
	Positive	**Negative**	
Male	(a) 500	(b) 140	640
Female	(c) 400	(d) 20	420
Total	**900**	**160**	**1,060**

(a) $\frac{900 \times 640}{1,060}$ = 545.4

(b) $\frac{160 \times 640}{1,060}$ = 96.6

(c) $\frac{900 \times 420}{1,060} = 356.6$

(d) $\frac{160 \times 420}{1,060} = 63.4$

Table 6:

	O	E	0 – E	$(O-E)^2$	$\chi(-)^2$
A	500	543.4	-43.4	1,883.56	3.47
B	140	96.6	43.4	1,883.56	19.5
C	400	356.6	43.4	1,883.56	5.3
D	20	63.4	-43.4	1,883.56	29.7
					$\chi(-)^2 =$ **57.97**

The calculated value = 57.97

The table value x^2 at 0.05 level of significance = 3.841

Decision:

Taking the level of significance to be 0.05 at 1 degree of freedom, the calculated value is 57.97 which is greater than the table value of 3.841. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

44 pothesis 4

Table 7

Respondents	**Responses**		**Total**
	Positive	**Negative**	
Male	(a) 530	(b) 150	680
Female	(c) 200	(d) 180	380
Total	**730**	**330**	**1,060**

(a) $\frac{930 \times 680}{1,060} = 468.3$

(b) $\frac{330 \times 680}{1,060} = 211.7$

(c) $\frac{730 \times 380}{1,060} = 261.7$

(d) $\frac{330 \times 380}{1,060} = 118.3$

Table 8

	O	E	0 – E	$(O-E)^2$	$\chi(-)^2$
A	530	468.3	61.7	3,806.89	8.13
B	150	211.7	-61.7	3,806.89	19.517.9
C	200	261.7	-61.7	3,806.89	5.314.5
D	180	118.3	61.7	3,806.89	29.732.2
					$\chi(-)^2 =$ **72.73**

The calculated value is 72.73.

The critical value x^2 at 0.05 level of significance = 3.841

Decision: At the level of significance of 0.05 and the degree of freedom of 1, the calculated value (72.73) is greater than the table value (3.841). The result showed that the null hypothesis Ho is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This means initializing vocational skill acquisition has significant relationship with socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers in terms of improved health, literacy, nutrition, finance and housing.

Conclusion

The statistical analyses have affirmed the arguments in the body of the work that community development correlates with socio-economic wellbeing of the people in Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District. Nigeria was divided into two different socio-economic sectors: the urban and the rural. The urban sector gave rise to decade of rural neglect because government programs from rural development never succeeded. The main reason for program‘s failure was lack of involvement of benefitting communities in the planning and execution process. This study has established that community involvement is an important organ of community development programs which has contributed to improvement in the living standard of our rural communities. The study also established that mobilization of both human and material resources within themselves call for the actualization of felts needs. It also serves as a major method for sustainable development and improvement in the standard of living as well as the socio-economic wellbeing of rural dwellers. If communities are involved in project formulation design and executive, the projects are likely to be sustained, more cost efficient, there‘s more impartial distribution of benefits and it leads to be sustained, more cost efficient, there‘s more impartial distribution of benefits and it leads to better planned projects. However, for the sustainability to be achieved there must be some form of government and institutional support, leaders must be accountable and transparent. It is worthy to mention that an examination of government policies and programs showed that they have failed to tackle the issues of poverty and under-development.

The development of the rural communities in Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District of Akwa Ibom State and indeed Nigeria, as a matter of intentional strategy for the entire societal development, remains the bone of intention to policy makers. A review of these past and present policies to community development showed that they are bedeviled with a number of problems (as contained in this study). Apart from the issues of human factors being relegated to the backdrop in the process of development, government good intentions are through the processes of self-enrichment, corruption and embezzlement, thwarted thus negative development programs and actions. It becomes imperative to conclude that for a change-oriented development engineering to take place in the communities there is the need to reshuffle the various community development programs, institutions and agencies to include the community based development association/unions to bring the much needs improvements. There is the need for more obligations on the parts of the private sector, the community and the government backed

up with financial commitment as recommended in this study, the rural communities of Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District in Akwa Ibom State will be transformed.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following suggestions and recommendations are put forward that would encourage sustainable community development and socio-economic wellbeing.

1. The study recommends that opportunities should be created for rural people to be involved in profitable economic activities that would enhance their livelihood. This could be achieved through encouraging rural people through the loans and training on the usage of such loans to enhance their economic endeavours.
2. Communities should endeavour to form more development associations to assist in mobilizing the local people in development.
3. Youths should be mobilized through economic empowerment programes in order to position them for participation in development projects.
4. Rural areas should be encouraged to establish and utilize self-help initiatives (through their respective community development association such as youth groups, women groups etc.), in initiating and implementing rural projects. This will further gear up confidence and strengthen their efforts.
5. Government community development policies should incorporate the philosophies of self-help development. This implies that while formulating community development programmes, government or its agencies should involve the local self-help organization.
6. Concrete and sustained development in the study area would not be achieved if the well-being of the rural people are not met in the aspect of food, clothing, shelter, water, employment, school, electricity, health facilities, markets, and good roads.
7. Those who have no jobs should be encouraged so that they can be self-employed.
8. Skill acquisition training should be introduced in our society.
9. Universities should make it mandatory in the aspect skill acquisition to all students.

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