

IMPACT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (CDP) ON RURAL COMMUNITIES IN SOUTHERN NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This research was carried out to examine the impact of community development projects (CDP) on rural communities in Southern part of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to; determine the impact of CDP on rural development, establish the significant relationship between CDP and the wellbeing of the rural dweller and identify problems militating against CDP project in the study area. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized. The population of the study was 21,000 target groups. Using the proportional systematic random sampling technique, 5% of the population (1,050) from 5 project communities were selected and 1022 respondents participated in the study. Data were collected from the respondents using structured questionnaire and analyzed using frequency, percentage, while chi-square statistic tool was employed to test the hypotheses at 95% level of significance. After data presentation and analysis, the study found out that, Community Development Projects has a significant positive impact on rural communities in the study area. It was also revealed that communal crises and delay in payment of contribution funds by individual community members for project execution were the major problems militating against community development project (CDP) executed in the Study area. Based on these outcomes, the study recommended that the CDP management in the rural areas should expand its' community development projects to include the establishment of cottage industries and handicraft centres for training of skills in order to sustain the wealth creation mechanism. Lastly, Nasarawa State Government should bring lasting solutions to the communal crises in the study area as development can only thrive in a peaceful atmosphere.

Keywords: Impact, Rural, Community, Development, Projects, Southern Nasarawa State

INTRODUCTION

Community development has generated much concern in many quarters; Nasarawa State of Nigeria not an exception. This is due to the fact that people, especially in the developing world are perceived as backward looking, conservative and village centered. Community development is seen as the route to transform these people. Community development, therefore became a process where these local people can not only create more jobs, income and infrastructure, but also help their community become fundamentally better and able to manage change.

Community development is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Community development processes and practices entails the inclusion and participation of different interest groups, stakeholders and actors including the people whose livelihood projects are geared at improving, government and non-governmental bodies, funding organizations, project experts and executors (Akande, 2020; Nseabasi, 2022).

The wide acceptance of community development as a

strategy for rural development is evidenced in the number of projects initiated in the country by the rural communities in Nigeria. In the last few decades, there was hardly a week that passed by without the news media mentioning communities across the country that were initiating, completing or opening aided self-help projects. For instance, the number of community development projects completed in some rural communities in the then Northern state of Nigeria increased from 224 in 1970 to 2087 in 1975 of which the percentage increase was 93.12% (Onibokum, 2016). Adedayo (2015) also attested to this fact when he said that between 1978 and 1979, some rural communities in Kadanu state, Nigeria embarked on about 356 self-help projects at a cost of over 7.5 million naira. In addition, various voluntary organizations, religions bodies, non-governmental agencies, rural elite philanthropists that lives in the urban areas encouraging community and other development projects in the rural areas by initiating and financing projects in the rural communities. This approach, according to him has better the lots of the rural populace.

Hitherto the people of Southern Nasarawa State have also accepted the idea of community development as their development philosophy. Community development programmes are seen as programmes that contribute immensely to the growth and development of their immediate environment and the local government at large. Charity, as it is said, begins at home. For over two decades now, many communities in Southern Nasarawa State have embraced the concept of community development as a development strategy and philosophy. In this regard, successive administrators in the government have attempted to utilize the traditional labour for development in reawakening the people through community spirit of selfless contribution to the realization of the felt needs of the people. The government authority has become increasingly aware of the great contribution of the community-driven development to societal progress and starting from its creation, a prominent place has been given to the community development programmes in all the subsequent development plans and reforms of the government.

In positive response to community-driven development programmes, many communities across the local government area have responded to the need of higher quality of life and with government encouragement, they form themselves into different community development associations such as farmers' associations, religions organizations, social clubs, age grades, cultural groups and etc., charging

themselves with the task of community betterment. Most communities within the Southern Nasarawa State have undertaken several self-help projects that could value up to the tune of millions and billions of naira. Amongst these projects are construction of feeder roads, bridges, culverts, drainages and dams, building of hospitals, schools, post offices, market stalls, palaces, community banks and drilling of boreholes and pipe born water; undertaking of electricity schemes, environmental sanitation, adult education, and health-care services and etc. These multiple achievements have contributed to the boosting of commercial and economic activities in the area. What this great stride spells for the youth in the area is the arrest of rural-urban drift, idleness, indolence, and attendant social miasma.

Communalism was a key and community spirit of togetherness was simply exemplary in the people of Southern Nasarawa State. This Practice corroborated with the ideology of Allen (2010), who opined that "...in all human affairs, there are efforts and there are results, and the strength of the efforts is the measure of the result". It is this philosophy that was also aptly captured by the late princess of Whales, Lady Diana (1992) who posited that, "every one of us needs to show how much we care for each other, and, in the process, care for ourselves, for self-help is the best help".

It is against this background that this study seeks to assess the impact of community development projects (CDP) on the living condition of the rural dwellers in Southern part of Nasarawa State. Nasarawa state is located at the North Central part of Nigeria. It lies between 6° 25' North and between longitude 9° 30' and 11° 45' east of Greenwich meridian. The state shares boundaries with Kaduna and Plateau state to the North, Taraba state to the East and Benue State to the south. The state is bounded along its western side by Kogi and Niger State and Abuja the Federal Capital Territory. The state has land mass of 60, 291km², with a population of about 2.5 million people (projected from 2006 National Population Census). The state has 13 local government areas with Lafia as the state capital. The state has an average annual rainfall of 1766mm with a temperature of about 30°C – 40°C. It is characterized by dry and rainy season common to tropical region. The major occupation of the people of the state is Agriculture. Cash crops produce include sesame seed, melon, palm oil, groundnut, sugar cane and cotton. Crops such as maize, yam, rice, millet, sorghum, bean and cassava are also produced in commercial quantity. Farming, Fishing and hunting are some of the occupation of the people in the study Area. Major tribes are Alago, Eggon, Mada, Gbagi,

Gwandara, Tiv and Hausa among others.

Statement of the Problem

Right from the onset, majority of Nigerians reside in rural communities. Unfortunately, these rural communities have suffered utter neglect and deprivations in the scheme of things for too long. They are in most cases denied basic amenities like electricity, water, good and motorable roads, access to healthcare services, formal education etc.

The challenges of transforming rural communities from this sorry state of affairs are quite enormous. Attempts by various governments to extend development to rural areas have not yielded much positive impacts. Infact, most rural development programmes, until recently, were geared towards agricultural development. This was borne out of the illusion that agricultural production will translate into rural development.

It is even more unfortunate that, even the local governments that are supposed to bring development to the grass-roots have failed in their responsibility to do so. At best, their efforts are concentrated in their Headquarters. Corroborating this assertion, scholars such as Omotosho (2018), Dahid (2019) & Okafor (2021), observed that the Nigerian rural development strategy lacked a philosophical, ideological and holistic foundation. It had a body (policy-makers and government functionaries) but had no soul to give it life and sense of direction. The usual practice has been to be in office propounding slogans and manifestations for the people below. This practice has left the rural communities to suffer pervasive and endemic poverty, manifested by widespread hunger, malnutrition, poor health, general lack of access to formal education, livable housing and various forms of social ills.

Given this scenario, rural communities are left to take the gauntlet of developing their areas. The ascendancy of Community Development Associations is borne out of this reality. Through community self-help approach, many communities are able to establish community banks, community schools, construct roads, build bridges, palaces, market stalls, and dwelling houses among many others. Indeed, we will be right to say that community development projects can excellently take place with or without government assistance or interventions.

The concern of this study is with what communities do to make their areas more habitable, how they do such

things and the impact felt. In almost all areas of the world, communities pre-date governments. Therefore, with or without governments, communities did and do organize themselves to improve their conditions of living. On this note therefore, the specific problem of this study is put in an interrogative form, thus; to what extent has community development project impacted on rural communities in Southern Nasarawa State?

Research Questions

Arising from the problem stated above, this study attempts to proffer answers to the following pertinent questions:

- i. What types of community development projects are provided in the study area?
- ii. To what extent has community development projects impact on the development of the rural communities in the study area?
- iii. What are the problems militating against CDP in the study area?

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to assess the impact of community development projects (CDP) on rural communities in Southern part of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. Ascertain the types of community development projects provided in the study area;
- ii. Determine the impact of CSDP on rural development on rural communities in the study area; and
- iii. Identify problems militating against CSDP in the study area.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses guide the study:

- i. **H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between community development projects provided and development of the rural area under study.
- ii. **H₀₂:** Community development projects executed have not significantly impacted on the wellbeing of the rural communities in the study area.
- iii. **H₀₃:** There is no significant problem militating against CDP in the study area

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

Community development is a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Community development processes and practices entails the inclusion and participation of different interest groups, stakeholders and actors including the people whose livelihood projects are geared at improving, government and non-governmental bodies, funding organizations, project experts and executors (Akande, 2010; Nseabasi, 2012).

Over the years the struggle to eradicate poverty and maintain a satisfying standard of living has been the plan of every government. This is because every government craves for a developed nation (Bonye, Asoglenang & Owusu, 2013; Amakye, 2017). Community development is a structured intervention that gives communities greater control over the conditions that affect their lives (Anam, 2014). Again, Eleberi et al. (2014) stated that community development is a legitimate process to foresee community advancement, improvement, and instructive strategy to tackle social activity and development. Community development seeks to improve the quality of life a group of people. It helps the community strengthen itself in order to improve people's lives and address issues that have been identified by the community and it builds upon existing skills and strengths within the community (Inkoom, 2011). Significantly, over the years there have been improved changes in what was known as community development a hundred years ago and what it is today. Political shifts, population growth and changes in cultural dynamics have often times played a vital role in how community development manifests. Some of the classic concerns of community development found expression in the early 1990s in the notion of capacity building. There was an interest in developing the ability of local groups and networks to function and to contribute to social and economic development.

Basically, community development entails the advancement of community involving a common sense of identity, values, belief, capability and rationale. People at all levels should have access to goods, services, opportunities, decision-making processes and information. Most often members of the community would choose to voluntarily carry-out development activities even without been paid just to see to the smooth running of the community. Community development emphasizes empowerment, equality, social justice, participation and representation.

Empirical Review

There are few empirical studies that have examined the impact of the community development projects on rural communities both in developed and developing countries, which necessitates the gaps for investigation in this study. For instance, the empirical research conducted by Ugoji (2018) on the impact of community development projects on the living condition of the rural dwellers. The study used secondary data. Four hypotheses were developed to see the impact of all the independent variables on the overall wellbeing of the rural dwellers. The results show that community development projects initiatives have positive significant effect on living condition of the rural dwellers. It also presented a report on the impact of community development programmes on peoples' wellbeing and other development indicators using a meta analysis. The study yields a clear result that investment in community development programmes have a positive and significant impact on the rural development indicators. This result confirms the key role attributed to the investment in community development in the European strategy for rural and urban growth and development, Europe 2020, and the initiative agenda for new development strategies (European Centre for Rural Development, 2021).

Anajo (2023) provides advance understanding of the impacts of community development projects on rural development outcomes by reviewing the results of previous studies that have investigated the relationship between community development and rural growth, development, and the general improvement in the quality of life at the grassroots. The results of meta-analysis from 67 studies suggest that community development programmes is positively related to rural growth and development of the rural areas but is only very weakly related to overall wellbeing of the rural population. Furthermore, community development appears to be more strongly related to national development when it is matched with key contextual factors such as the intensity of people participation in national development plans and other development strategies, in support of the contingency perspective. Further, community development is related independently to national development outcomes in support of the universalistic perspective of strategic national development rather than a configurationally perspective (Anajo, 2023).

Amuno (2018) collected data from each of the 9439 rural communities in China; where there are intensive community development initiatives to assess the impacts of community development projects on the living condition of the people via a government reimbursement programme. Investment in community development projects via government reimbursement has increase the capacity of the rural people to control all aspects of their

wellbeing – social, economic, cultural, and political and it has some inter-linkages with poverty alleviation.

Richard (2021) conducted a study to determine if improvement in the economic and social life of a specific group of people – rural poor is a driving force for investment in community development in the rural sector in Nigeria. The study relied on both qualitative and quantitative analysis of data, using descriptive and inferential statistics. The entire respondents of the 25 rural communities in Delta State as at 2007 in Nigeria were the population of the study and a total of 320 questionnaires were administered. The study found that improvement in the economic and social life of the rural poor is really one of the driving forces for investment in community development projects and/or programmes in the area.

Anyawu (2022) studied the impact of community self-help projects and rural development in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State. The paper provides a review of the current evidence of such a relationship and offers suggestions for further investigation. They reviewed extensive the literature in terms of research findings from studies that had attempted measuring and understood the impact that community self-help projects have on rural development in Ohafia Local Government. The focal point of their review was to ascertain the significant role community development projects play in the improvement of the quality of life of rural dwellers and the relationship with rural development. The outcome of their findings varied. While some studies reported a positive association between community self-help projects and the improvement of the quality of life of rural dwellers, some reported negative and some no association whatsoever.

Odonye (2018) conducted a study on the impact of community development projects on the well-being of rural dwellers in Obi Local Area of Nasarawa State. Data were collected through questionnaire instrument and subjected to descriptive statistics; the study revealed that community development projects brings greater confidence on rural poor, enriches their knowledge and increased their well-being, creates greater efficiency and effectiveness in project maintenance, increases their participation in development programme and promote higher quality of life. The study further revealed that there exist a direct relationship between community development and rural development.

The review of existing literature reveals two primary conclusions. First, construction-period impacts are often thought to be comparable for both community and government-owned projects. Second, operations-period economic impacts are observed to be greater for

community-owned projects. The majority of studies indicate that the range of increased operations-period impact of community development projects is greater than the operation impact of government projects.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the mobilisation theory of development. Mobilisation theory came to prominence in the early 1970s and 1980s. The perspective of the theory adopted is specifically based on the Frank's (1979) mobilisation framework for the analysis of modern development process. The theory offers an account of the common feature to the process of development, drawing on the analysis of Frank (1979), Owen (1983) and other scholars. The central proposition of mobilization theory is that development is the process of pooling together, harnessing, activating, actualizing and utilizing potential human and material resources for the purpose of development. It is a process where-by human beings are made aware of the resources at their disposal and also motivated and energized to collectively utilize such resources for the improvement of their spiritual and material well-being (Obanure, 1988). According to Goulbourne, (1979) cited in Ajayi (2009) the mobilization theory places strong emphasis on the importance of the community as an agent of mobilization, a dominant role is thus assigned to the stakeholders and the people in the formulation and implementation of development programmes. This model advocates the restriction of the role of public officials in designing and implementation of development projects for the rural communities. Where the people of the rural communities are involved in the provision of human and material resources to solve their pressing needs, their enthusiasm is aroused and sustainability of programmes guaranteed. The people equally have the benefit of improving in their traditional methods of getting things done.

Narrowing the analysis above to our study, community development projects in Nigeria is supposed to adopt the above approach which has been identified in development discourse. While the modernization model assigns a dominant role to the bureaucracy in the formulation and implementation of development programmes, the mobilization model emphasizes popular participation in the development process. This simply implies that community development policies are expected to be carefully designed and implemented by the people network with the people and for the people. Such projects as the construction of village roads and bridges, markets, dispensaries, schools and other amenities directed towards the instrument of their localities. As argued by Ujo (2008) who sees development to be meaningful only when it is "self-generating and self-penetrating". This suggests that

community development projects and programmes should emanate from within the people (with government support) to be sustained. Where the people of the rural communities are involved in the provision of human and material resources to solve their pressing needs, their enthusiasm is aroused and sustainability of programmes guaranteed. The people equally have the benefit of improving in their traditional methods of getting things done. This, indeed, is the crux of mobilization approach to community development.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of CDP communities was 21,000 target groups including CDP officials. A multi-stage random sampling technique was used for this study to select the sample size. In the first stage, all the five (5) local

government areas in the Southern Senatorial districts of Nasarawa State (i.e. Lafia, Doma, Obi, Awe and Keana) were included in the study. Second stage, fifty (50) respondents were randomly selected from each local government area using balloting method. The sample size of this study was two hundred and fifty (250) respondents. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using simple frequencies conversion of responses to percentages while the chi-square statistic technique was adopted in testing the hypothesis at 95% ($\alpha = 0.05$) level of significance. In addition, interviews and focus group discussion were also adopted to complement the data gathered through questionnaire. These methods were used to elicit information from some selected CDP officials, community heads, stakeholders and head of households to assess their perception on the impact of community development on rural communities in the study area.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

Distribution of Respondents by Occupation		
Occupation	No of Respondents	% Distribution
Farming	126	50.5
Trading	42	16.8
Self-employed	40	15.8
Civil Servants	20	7.9
Others	22	8.9
Total	250	100
Distribution of Respondents' Average Income		
Income Monthly (Naira ₦)	No of Respondents	% Distribution
>6, 000	14	5.4
6,000 – 10,000	120	48.0
10,000 -15,000	72	28.7
15,000 – 20,000	28	11.3
20,000+	16	6.4
Total	250	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The role of the type of occupation of the inhabitants of the study area cannot be over emphasized. In fact, it has a positive correlation with any successful participation and execution of community development projects in the study area. In the course of the field survey, it was revealed that about eighty percent of the respondents are in the informal sector of the economy. The results as presented in table 1 above reveal that about 50.5% of the respondents are involved in farming, 16.8% are engaged in trading, 15.8% are self-employed work and 8.9% of the respondents find themselves into other business (like driving, security, blacksmithing etc.) while just about 7.9% were civil servants. This type of occupational structure affords people more time to participate in the self-help projects that the community earmarked and

embarked upon in terms of direct labour than the civil servants and the self-employed.

Income is another major determinant of development project(s) of any society. The higher the income of the people, the more they contribute to the development of their environment as this is revealed in the result of the administered questionnaire in the study area. The above table 1 indicated that about 48.0% of the respondents are earning between ₦6,000 and ₦10,000; those earning between ₦10,000 and ₦15,000 are 28.7%, those earning between ₦15,000 to ₦ 20,000 are 11.3% and those that are earning ₦20,000 and above are 6.4% while only 5.4% of the respondents are earning ₦6,000 and below. In a nutshell, the result indicated that on the average the

respondents' income distribution in the study area ranges between ₦6,000 and ₦20,000 and above per month and only but insignificant figures fall below ₦6,000. With this type of income distribution; it is likely that more people will be able to contribute financially to the community development project(s) that the community embarks upon.

Key informant interviews revealed that the percentage of male respondents with more than six years of formal education is higher compared to their female counterparts in the study area. The percentage of male respondents with more than 10 years of experience in primary occupation in the study area was higher compared with that of female respondents. The membership of associations is more or less same for both set of sexes in the communities selected. The percentage

of respondents who engaged in agricultural activities was slightly higher in some communities than others while some rural communities had a higher percentage of respondents with annual income of more than ₦350,000.00 on the minimum.

The focus group discussions result further confirmed that economically, majority of the inhabitants in the study area engaged in agricultural activities and small-scale industrial activities like black smiting, machine repairing, bicycle repairing, photography, block making, bread industries, 'garri' processing, among others. The area is socially provided with some few amenities like general and cottage hospitals, tourist centres, schools, recreational centers etc.

Table 2: Distribution of Community Development Projects Executed in the Study Area

CDP Projects	Frequency & Percentage		Frequency & Percentage		Total Frequency & Percentage
	SA	A	D	SD	
Health Care Centres	88 (35.4)	62 (24.9)	60 (23.8)	40 (15.9)	250 (100%)
Bore-hole Water	110 (44.0)	87 (34.9)	21 (8.5)	32 (12.6)	250 (100%)
Electricity	48 (19.1)	52 (20.6)	97 (38.8)	53 (21.5)	250 (100%)
Corpers Lodge	125 (49.8)	83 (33.0)	22 (9.1)	20 (8.1)	250 (100%)
Town Halls	36 (14.7)	101 (40.7)	72 (28.2)	41 (16.4)	250 (100%)
Culverts	72 (28.9)	78 (31.3)	39 (15.6)	61 (24.2)	250 (100%)
Walkways	76 (30.4)	85 (33.9)	48 (19.2)	41 (16.5)	250 (100%)
Bridges	73 (29.2)	75 (29.9)	40 (15.9)	62 (25)	250 (100%)
Drainage Construction	86 (34.4)	72 (28.8)	36 (14.5)	56 (22.3)	250 (100%)
Health Staff Quarters	96 (38.5)	64 (25.5)	44 (17.5)	46 (18.5)	250 (100%)
Commercial Centres	37 (15.7)	102 (40.7)	73 (28.2)	38 (15.4)	250 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The community development projects executed as identified in this study run across social and economic driven infrastructural facilities that all formed the quantum of community development activities in rural Southern Nasarawa State. Given the report as contained in table 2 above, CDP is to access poor people to social and natural resources infrastructure as the eligible micro-projects are classified as physical, social, economic infrastructure, environmental and natural resources management and safety net support. The menu of projects that are supported by CDP for it to have wide significant impact on the poor and interested communities includes, but not limited to the following: Feeder roads: construction and rehabilitation; culverts, bridges, drifts and stock routes; Boreholes(with or without pumps); deep open concrete cement well; and social infrastructure such as

healthfacilities; portable water supply facilities; rural electrification; construction and rehabilitation of primary and secondary schools, dormitory blocks, and classrooms, staff quarters, laboratories; ventilated improved pit (VIP) toilets; and television viewing centers.

From the result of the interview conducted, it was confirmed that majority of the projects identified were solely executed by the communities, except few which were jointly initiated and executed by the communities and the Nasarawa State Agency for Community and Rural Development Project (NCSDP). The result also shows that in the study area, development projects are dominated by projects such as Town Hall, bridges/culverts, rural water supply, education, health care and civil centres and water projects. Mr. Ogbale

Ashefo (one of the stakeholders in Doma LGA) contends that “the projects reflected the felt needs of the people, hence the emphasis on them”. The pattern

that emerges from these is that, in terms of number, the community’s preferences are reflected on the projects they embarked on.

Table 3: Respondents Perceived Effect of Projects on Environment

Items	Freq.	%
Perceived effects of Education project on the environment		
Negative effect	0	0
No Change	20	8
Improved	60	24
Highly improved	170	68
Total	250	100
Perceived effects of Water project on the environment		
Negative effect	0	0
No Change	0	0
Improved	20	8
Highly improved	230	92
Total	250	100
Perceived effects of Health project on the environment		
Negative effect	0	0
No Change	11	4.2
Improved	12	4.8
Highly improved	227	91
Total	250	100
Perceived effects of Transport project on the environment		
Negative effect	0	0
No Change	0	0
Improved	36	14.2
Highly improved	214	85.7
Total	250	100
Perceived effects of Electricity project on the environment		
Negative effect	0	0
No Change	15	5.9
Improved	9	3.4
Highly improved	226	90.6
Total	250	100
Perceived effects of Commercial Oriented project on the environment		
Negative effect	54	21.6
No Change	15	5.9
Improved	15	5.9
Highly improved	166	66.6
Total	250	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The perceptions of respondents on the effect of specific projects executed in their communities on the environment were ascertained through household survey conducted in the selected communities. The results are presented in Table 3 above. The table revealed that an overwhelming majority of the households stated that the

projects have led to improvements in their environment conditions. Specifically, water projects have had the greatest effect as a result of improved personal hygiene and environmental cleanliness arising from water availability.

Table 4: Percentage of Respondents having Access to Social Services by Sector

Variables	Education		Water		Health		Transport		Electrification		Commercial	
Categories	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Men	16	6.4	32	12.8	38	15	88	35.2	50	20.1	45	18
Women	86	34.4	146	58.3	117	47	36	14.4	88	35	65	26
Youth	140	56	63	25	35	14	123	49.1	100	40	88	35
Vulnerable	8	3.2	9	3.9	60	24	3	1.2	12	4.8	52	21
Total	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The percentage of beneficiaries having access to social services is presented in Table 4 above. The figures show that all categories of beneficiaries have had access to one service or the other. Most importantly, access by youths and vulnerable persons to education is quite encouraging. Similarly, access of women to water, health and rural electricity are also showing signs of improvement.

Key informant interviews and focus group discussions revealed that community-driven development (CDD) principles were strictly followed in the selection and implementation of community projects by Community

Project Management Committee (CPMC) without prejudice to the Community Development Association members. The procedure followed in the engagement of service providers also revealed a satisfactory level of transparency and complaisance with procurement guidelines by the communities. Physical verification of CPMC records such as minute books, bank records and procurement records attest to the fact that community members are now gradually being empowered to take charge of their own development agenda.

Table 5.a: Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Opinion on the Impact of Pre-Community Development Projects Income Pattern (%)

S/N	Income pattern (₦)	Men (N=105)		Women (N=81)		Youth (N=107)		Grand total	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1	0 – 2, 100	128	51	200	80	170	68	165	66
2	2,101 – 4,200	60	24	37	15	42	17	47	19
3	4,201, - 6,300	37	15	13	5	18	7	23	9
4	6,301 and Above	25	10	0	0	20	8	15	6
	Total	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 5.b: Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Opinion on the Impact of Post-Community Development Projects Income Pattern (%)

S/N	Income Pattern (₦)	Men (N=105)		Women (N=81)		Youth (N=107)		Grand total	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1	0 – 2, 100	0	0	18	7	35	14	18	7
2	2,101 – 4,200	68	27	83	33	63	25	70	28
3	4,201, - 6,300	107	43	117	47	90	36	105	42
4	6,301 and Above	75	30	32	13	62	25	57	23
	Total	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The study shows that there is a considerable improvement in the income level of the people as a result of the community development projects embarked on by them, because, majority of the respondents, totally 131 (66%) as revealed in Table 5a above, who were living under zero income before the establishment of

self-help projects were embarked upon agreed that the level of their income before the establishment of community development projects in their communities is between N0 – ₦2,100 while in Table 5b only 7 percent of the respondents fall under this income level after the coming of community development projects in

their communities.

Also, in Table 5.a, 19 percent of the respondents agreed that the level of their income before the coming of community development projects in their communities is between ₦2,101.00 – ₦3,200.00 while in Table 5.b, 28 percent of the respondents fall under this income level after the establishment of community development projects in the area.

Furthermore, in Table 5.a, 9 percent of the respondents agreed that the level of their income before the establishment of community development projects in their communities is between ₦4,201.00 – ₦6,300.00 while in Table 5.b, 42 percent of the respondents fall under this income level after the establishment of community development projects in their communities.

Finally, in Table 5.a, 6 percent of the respondents interviewed agreed that the level of their income is between ₦6,301.00 and above while in Table 5.b, 23 percent of the respondents fall under this income level after the establishment of community development projects in their area.

From the above analysis, it is evident that the establishment of community development projects has brought an improvement in the income level of the people in Southern Nasarawa State Area. Those that were involved in direct labour such as site clearing and those that worked with the contractors in erecting the various buildings were paid and most of them started petty businesses with the money.

Table 8: Quantum of Community Development Projects Impact on Rural Dwellers

S/N	Quantum of CDP impact on Social & community development	Frequency & Percentage		Frequency & Percentage		Total (%)
		SA	A	D	SD	
1	The level of satisfactory services provided by CDP is more now than before CD projects were put in place.	90 (36%)	58 (23.2%)	51 (20.4%)	51 (20.4%)	250 (100)
2	There have been visible changes in community's response to development since the introduction of CD projects.	83 (33.2%)	84 (33.6%)	46 18.4%	37 14.8%	250 (100)
3	Quality social and economic development projects executed by the rural communities are evident in health care, water supply, sanitation, walkway job creation, and school rehabilitation aspect.	102 (40.8%)	80 (32%)	47 (18.8%)	21 (8.4%)	250 (100)
4	Members of community achieve support from community development projects.	95 (38%)	71 (28.4%)	46 (18.4%)	38 (15.2%)	250 (100)
5	Community development project promotes economic engagement, youth employment and community resource management	95 (38%)	92 (36.8%)	26 (10.4%)	37 (14.8%)	250 (100)

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 8 above shows how specific community development projects provision impact significantly on community and social development of the rural dwellers. There were five specific areas in which the quantum of such projects were evident. Among these five community development projects were health care, water supply, creation of wealth, job creation among youth all accounting for a positive response of 72.5% of

the total responses of the scale. Besides, community development projects promoted economic engagement, through youth employment, and effective and efficient community resource management (75%). Other areas of significances are evident in taste 3 that also represents the quantum of achievement by community development projects among rural dwellers.

Table 10: Problem Militating against CDP in the Study Area

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. Communal crises	110	44	1
2. Delay in payment of contribution funds by community members	95	38	2
3. Slow in decision making process	20	8	3
4. Poor maintenance culture	12	4.8	4
5. High cost of materials	8	3.2	5
6. Complex protocol	5	2	6
Total	250	100	21

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

The result from Table 10 shows the various problems associated with CDP in the study area; (44%) opined on communal crises, (38%) opined on delay in payment of contribution funds by individual community members to the communities, (8%) opined on slow in decision making process, (4.8%) opined on poor maintenance culture, (3.2%) opined on high cost of material while (2%) opined on complex protocol. This indicated that communal crises and delay in payment of contribution funds by individual community members to the communities were the major problems militating against Community Development project (CDP) in the Study area. This finding concorded with that of Sidi, et.al (2018) which stated that lack of payment of contribution funds by individual community members was one of the major challenges.

4.1 Hypotheses Testing

The study hypotheses were tested using the Chi-square statistics technique at 95level of significance, with a known value of degree of freedom which was determined from the contingency table. The three hypotheses are tested below:

Hypothesis testing using chi-square (X^2) statistics

Note: In chi-square model, the degree of freedom is generally determined by the use of the formula:

$$df = (R - 1) (C - 1)$$

Where: R = Number of rows in the contingency table

C = Number of columns in the contingency table

To calculate the chi-square statistics, the values of (R) and (C) must be determined as using the formula above. If the two values are known, then Chi-square statistics is defined as:

$$X^2 = \text{sum of } \frac{(O - e)^2}{e}$$

$$= \sum \frac{[(O - e)^2]}{e}$$

Where o = observed frequencies

e = calculated expected or theoretical frequencies

This formula applies:

Hypothesis one

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between community development projects provided and development of the rural area under study.

Table 17: Expected Frequency and Calculated X^2 value

S/N	O	E	(O - E)	(O - E) ²	(O - E) ² /E
1	20	15.5	4.5	20.25	1.3065
2	15	14.5	0.5	0.25	0.0172
3	11	13.5	-2.5	6.25	0.4630
4	15	15.9	-0.9	0.81	0.0509
5	12	16.4	-4.4	19.36	1.1805
6	15	14.5	1.5	2.25	0.1552
7	11	7.2	3.8	14.44	2.0056
8	5	7.8	-2.8	7.84	1.0051
9	7	7.3	-0.3	0.09	0.0123
10	10	6.8	3.2	10.24	1.5059
11	10	8.0	2.0	4.00	1.5059
12	8	8.3	-0.3	0.09	0.5000
13	7	7.3	-0.3	0.09	0.0108
14	3	3.7	-0.7	0.49	0.1233
15	4	3.7	0.3	0.09	0.1324
16	6	3.5	2.5	6.25	0.0243

17	4	3.3	0.7	0.49	1.7857
18	0	3.9	0.0	0.00	0.1485
19	7	4.0	3	9.00	0.0000
20	4	3.5	0.5	0.25	2.2500
21	1	1.8	-0.8	0.64	0.0714
22	3	2.5	0.5	0.25	0.3555
23	2	2.3	-0.3	0.09	0.1000
24	4	2.2	1.8	3.24	0.0391
25	3	2.6	0.4	0.16	1.4727
26	3	2.7	0.3	0.09	0.0615
27	2	2.3	-0.3	0.09	0.0333
28	2	1.2	0.08	0.14	0.0391
29	1	2.0	-1.0	1.00	0.5333
30	2	1.9	0.1	0.01	0.5000
31	2	1.8	0.2	0.04	0.0053
32	3	2.1	0.9	0.81	0.0222
33	3	2.2	0.8	0.64	0.2909
34	2	1.9	0.1	0.01	0.0053
35	1	1.0	0.0	0.00	0.0000
TOTAL					16.98

Source: Calculated Chi-square Output, 2025.

Applying the formula: $X^2 = (o-e)^2 / e$

X^2 calculated value = 16.98

From the observed frequency (O) in table, it is a 5 by 7 contingency table.

Therefore, by applying the formula $df = (r - 1) (c - 1)$

The degree of freedom $df = (5 - 1) (7 - 1)$

$df = 4 \times 6$

$df = 24$

To calculate the tabulated value $Dt = K - 1$

$Dt = 23 - 1 = 23$

23 at alpha level 0.05 of significance.

=12.81

X^2 tabulated = 12.81

Decision

Since the calculated X^2 value is 16.98 which is greater than tabulated value 12.81, we accept H_1 and reject H_0 . This signifies that there is a significant relationship between community development projects provided and

development of the rural area under study. The result implies that the establishment of community development projects has brought an improvement in the wellbeing of the rural people in the study Area.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: Community development projects executed have not significantly impacted on the wellbeing of the rural communities in the study area.

Table 18: Expected Frequency and Calculated X^2 value

S/N	O	E	(O - e)	(O - e) ²	(O - e) ² /e
1	18	15.1	2.9	8.41	0.5570
2	15	14.2	1.8	0.64	0.0451
3	11	13.2	-2.2	4.84	0.3667
4	15	15.6	-0.6	0.36	0.0231
5	12	16.1	-4.1	16.81	1.0441
6	15	14.2	0.8	0.64	0.0451
7	11	8.5	2.5	6.25	0.7353
8	5	7.3	-2.3	5.29	0.7247

9	7	6.9	0.1	0.01	0.0014
10	9	6.4	2.7	7.29	1.1391
11	8	7.6	0.4	0.16	0.0211
12	8	7.8	0.2	0.04	0.0051
13	7	6.9	0.1	0.01	0.0014
14	3	4.1	-1.1	1.21	0.2951
15	4	3.7	0.3	0.09	0.0243
16	6	3.5	2.5	6.25	1.7857
17	4	3.3	0.7	0.49	0.1485
18	0	3.9	0.0	0.00	0.0000
19	7	4.0	3.0	9.00	2.2500
20	4	3.5	0.5	0.25	0.0714
21	1	2.1	-1.1	1.21	0.5762
22	3	2.8	0.2	0.04	0.0143
23	2	2.6	-0.6	0.36	0.1385
24	4	2.5	1.5	2.25	0.9000
25	3	2.9	0.1	0.01	0.0034
26	3	3.0	0.0	0.00	0.0000
27	2	2.6	-0.6	0.36	0.1385
28	1	1.6	-0.6	0.36	0.2250
29	3	2.7	0.3	0.09	0.0333
30	2	2.5	-0.5	0.25	0.1000
31	3	2.3	0.7	0.49	0.2130
32	5	2.7	2.3	5.29	1.9593
33	3	2.8	0.2	0.04	0.0143
34	2	2.5	-0.5	0.25	0.1000
35	2	1.5	0.5	0.25	1.6667
TOTAL					15.37

Source: Calculated Chi-square Output, 2025.

Applying the formula: $X^2 = (o-e)^2 / e$

X^2 calculated value = 15.37

From the observed frequency (O) in table, it is a 5 by 7 contingency table.

Therefore, by applying the formula $df = (r - 1) (c - 1)$

The degree of freedom $df = (5 - 1) (7 - 1)$

$df = 4 \times 6$

$df = 24$

To calculate the tabulated value $Dt = K - 1$

$Dt = 24 - 1 = 23$

23 at alpha level 0.05 of significance.

=13.41

X^2 tabulated = 13.41

Decision

Since X^2 calculated value of is 15.37 which is greater than tabulated value of 13.41, then we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) which stated that CDP has no significant impact on rural communities and accept the Alternative (H_a) hypothesis which stated that CDP has significant impact on rural communities. This indicated that Community Development Project (CDP) have impacted

positively on rural development and their living standard had improved. This also implies that through CDP the rural communities have access to social infrastructure such as school facilities, health facilities, road network, water supply, market facilities etc. This findings concurred with that of Ochepo, et.al (2018) which stated that CDP projects had significantly affected the rural communities in North Central, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: There is no significant problem militating against CDP in the study area

Table 19: Expected Frequency and Calculated X² Value

S/N	O	E	(O – e)	(O – e) ²	(O – e) ² /e
1	15	13.7	1.3	1.69	0.1234
2	13	12.9	0.1	0.01	0.0008
3	14	12.0	2.0	4.00	0.3333
4	15	14.2	1.2	1.44	0.1014
5	10	14.6	-4.6	21.16	1.4493
6	13	12.9	0.1	0.01	0.0008
7	8	7.7	0.3	0.09	0.0117
8	12	11.1	0.9	0.81	0.0730
9	12	10.5	1.5	2.25	0.2143
10	10	9.8	0.2	0.04	0.0041
11	11	11.6	-0.6	0.36	0.0310
12	12	11.9	0.1	0.01	0.0008
13	9	10.5	-1.5	2.25	0.2143
14	6	6.3	-0.3	0.09	0.0143
15	2	2.0	0.0	0.00	0.0000
16	1	1.9	-0.9	0.81	0.4263
17	1	1.8	-0.8	0.64	0.3556
18	2	2.1	-0.1	0.01	0.0048
19	4	2.2	1.8	3.24	1.4727
20	3	1.9	1.1	1.21	0.6368
21	1	1.1	-0.1	0.01	0.0091
22	3	2.2	0.8	0.64	0.2909
23	3	2.0	1.0	1.00	0.5000
24	3	1.9	1.1	1.21	0.6368
25	2	2.3	-0.3	0.09	0.0391
26	3	2.3	0.7	0.49	0.2130
27	2	2.0	0.0	0.00	0.0000
28	2	1.2	0.8	0.64	0.5333
29	1	2.3	-1.3	1.69	0.7348
30	3	2.2	0.8	0.64	0.2909
31	2	2.0	0.0	0.00	0.0000
32	3	2.4	0.6	0.36	0.2625
33	2	2.5	-0.5	0.25	0.1000
34	2	2.2	-0.2	0.04	0.0182
35	1	1.3	-0.3	0.09	0.0692
TOTAL					16.55

Source: Calculated Chi-square Output, 2025.

Applying the formula: $X^2 = (o-e)^2 / e$

X² calculated value = 16.55

From the observed frequency (O) in table, it is a 5 by 7 contingency table.

Therefore, by applying the formula $df = (r - 1) (c - 1)$

The degree of freedom $df = (5 - 1) (7 - 1)$

$$df = 4 \times 6$$

$$df = 24$$

To calculate the tabulated value $Dt = K - 1$

$$Dt = 24 - 1 = 23$$

23 at alpha level 0.05 of significance.

$$=11.88$$

$$X^2 \text{ tabulated} = 11.88$$

Decision

Since the calculated value of X^2 is 16.55 which is greater than tabulated value 11.88, we accept H_1 and reject H_0 . This signifies that there is a significant problems militating against Community Development Projects executed in the study area. This indicated that communal crises, delay in payment of contribution funds by individual community members to the communities and other related issues possess a great threat to the success of community development project (CDP) in the Study area. This finding concurred with that of Sidi, et.al (2018) which stated that lack of payment of contribution funds by individual community members was one of the major challenges.

Summary of Findings

After data presentation, analysis and discussion, the findings of this study shown that community development project (CDP) had impacted positively on rural development and their living standard had improved. This also implies that through CDP the rural communities have access to social infrastructure such as school facilities, health facilities, road network, water supply, market facilities and so on. But the major problems militating against community development project (CDP) in the Study area include but limited to communal crises, and delay in payment of contribution funds by individual community members to the communities for development programmes.

The results from this study has once again justified the capacity of community development projects assistant to exclude rural dweller from poverty and get them included into the mainstream of economic and social development. This is because, it was reported that an overwhelming majority of the respondents were satisfied with the degree of access to services being provided by the community development projects. It was also observed that access by youths and vulnerable persons to education was quite encouraging. Similarly, access of women to water, health and rural electricity showed signs of improvement. In addition, an overwhelming majority of the respondents stated that the projects have led to improvements in their environment's conditions.

The finding further shows that to an extent, community development projects have reduced unemployment in Southern Nasarawa State. This does not mean that majority are employed, high rate of unemployment still persists in the area. The implication of the finding is that the establishment of community development projects has contributed to the employment of the rural people

both within the community and outside the community and not that unemployment does not exist in the area.

It was also evident from the findings that majority of the rural dwellers were living near zero income in Southern Nasarawa State, but there is a considerable improvement in the income level of the people as a result of the community development projects embarked upon by them. This proves that self-help projects have led to the improvement of the living condition of rural dwellers, which is the essence of rural development.

The above findings confirm the position of Okpala (2020) that rural communities have different perceptions from that of the government as to what constitutes their development and as such, they do not share government's enthusiasm for agricultural development. The communities undertake other types of projects that they think are more relevant to their felt needs and aspirations.

The respondents also gave reasons for the success of community development projects embarked upon in the area. First that the development projects were an expression of the people's preference to which they want to spend their money and energies on. Such decisions were largely influenced by the prevailing local environment and what the people consider to be their pressing needs. Secondly, the people derived special satisfaction from projects which they plan and execute through communal labour. They see themselves as being part and parcel of the community and actively contributing to its development. They are also delighted to see the practical fruits of their collective endeavour. Thirdly, the high rate of embezzlement of public funds, which usually characterized the failure of governments' projects in Nigeria, is avoided in community development activities because the publicity given to the projects and the collective nature of the contributions reduce the chances of misappropriation. These views are similar to those of Idode (2019) on his reasons for the success in community development projects in the then Benue-Plateau State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, a conclusion could be reached that community development is an important tool aimed at improving the lives of people in the study area. Since community development aims at getting individuals involved in measures through which they can solve their problems, it is apparent that extensive study on the type of problems they are faced with is

carried out by social and community workers, government and all a sundry to ensure that people enjoy and appreciate the kind of help they receive from themselves. For self-help, is the best help; apparently, in the next few years other studies will go a long way in evaluating the state of Nigeria community development practices.

Recommendations

Recommendations were made based on the findings of this study include;

The community development Project management in the rural areas should expand its' community development projects to include the establishment of cottage industries, handicraft centres for training of skills in order to sustain the wealth creation mechanism.

The Nasarawa State Government should consider funding of community development efforts at the rural sector instead of starving it of financial resources. At least 28% of the local government budget should be allocated to support community development projects and ensure implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the process. This is because investing in local development efforts represents a means of long-term national capacity-building and national development.

Insecurity and threats to the operations of CDP activities especially in very remote communities must be checked by the local and state governments. This will enhance the monitoring exercise of CDP official in order to replicate projects where applicable.

The sustainability of community-based projects depends crucially on an enabling institutional environment, which requires community leader's commitment and on the accountability of leaders to their communities and their involvement right from the commencement of projects in their area to successful completion.

Lastly, the government should bring lasting solutions to the communal crises in the study area. Also, the people should accept dialogue and forgive one another for peace to reign.

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