

Determinants of Rural Women's Participation in Community Development Activities in Akoko South-West Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria

Olaniyan, Oluwafolakemi Ayo*¹ and Omotayo, Esther Oluwafunke²

¹Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, P.M. B. 001, Ondo State

²Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, P.M. B. 001, Ondo State

*Corresponding Author's

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ABSTRACT

In order to scale-up the economic, social, cultural and political development in the rural areas of Nigeria, Federal, State and Local governments have embarked on several poverty alleviation programmes and other social welfare schemes. However, in many countries, women are prevented from working for socio-cultural reasons. Women face inequalities and challenges that hinder their access to jobs, training, education, properties, land, financial and non-financial opportunities. This study therefore focused on rural women's participation in community development activities in Akoko South-West Local Government Area, Ondo state, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling procedures were adopted to select 120 respondents for the study. Five objectives and one hypothesis were formulated for the study. Well-structured questionnaire/interview schedule was used to elicit information from the respondents. Findings from the study revealed that there is low participation of rural women in community development activities which may result from the constraints the women faced in their participation such as poor community cooperation and dialogue, lack of sustainability of projects, inadequate access to credit and low-income base, poor infrastructures especially good road networks, poor monitoring and evaluation. The results of the hypothesis revealed that family size, years of experience, marital status and income at $p < 0.005$ had effect on the rural women's participation respectively. It was therefore recommended that efforts should be made to promote community cooperation and dialogue among rural women through the organisation of regular meetings and forums for women to discuss their concerns, needs and ideas.

Keywords: Rural women, Participation, Community development, activities

INTRODUCTION

Rural women are key agents for development. According to United Nations Women Report (2020) women played catalytic roles toward the achievement of transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development. Women are important in the growth of agriculture as well as related fields. As farmers, women plant, weed, harvest, process and market food crops and tend livestock. As caregivers, they look after children and relatives, prepare meals and manage the home. By conservative estimate, female farmers cultivate over 50% of every food grown in several regions of the earth most especially in underdeveloped countries (Institute of Development Studies, 2012). They make up 43% of the world's agricultural workforce, which extends to 70% in certain countries (FAO, 2011). Similarly, small scale farmers in African countries provide 80% of agricultural production and these are mainly rural women (Saquina, 2013). Rural women are involved in both farming and non-farming activities and they are the key

development actors, playing a significant role in the domestic and socio-economic life of the rural society by supporting their households and communities in achieving food and nutrition security, generating income, and improving rural livelihoods and overall well-being. However, despite the contributions of women to development, much attention has not been given to these rural women. Rural community development involves the conscious efforts of members of the community working individually or collectively to make the rural environment better for the people. Women as members of the community believe that they can also be involved in activities that can foster development of their rural areas. world's population and a visible majority of the poor Women, either solely or collectively, support an increasing number of families in rural areas. (IDS, 2012) The practice of community development is not new in Nigerian society. Ever before the advent of the colonial administration, various communities in Nigeria have employed communal efforts as the mechanism for mobilizing community resources and for providing physical improvement and functional facilities in their given localities to further their social, political and economic interest. It is common knowledge in development circles that rural communities have not been able to achieve meaningful development. Mobilizing and sensitizing rural communities for development purpose has not succeeded in transforming rural areas. People have come to realize that government resources are limited and that no government however benevolent can provide all the needs of her citizenry particularly in the third world countries such as Nigeria. Thus, this knowledge had brought the idea of community development through self-help project(s) as a way to supplement government's effort to provide the basic needs of the people. (Adisa, 2013). In this direction, the Federal, State and Local governments have done a lot to foster development in rural areas through poverty alleviation programmes and other social welfare schemes or programmes to scale up activities that will enhance economic, social, cultural and political development The participation of rural women in community development activities has been a major challenge in many developing countries. Several factors contribute to this problem, including social, cultural, economic, and political factors.

Problem Statement

Despite women's crucial roles in the rural economy, women face inequalities and challenges that hinder their access to decent work opportunities and improvement to their productivity. In many countries, women are prevented from working for socio-cultural reasons. According to the World Bank, there are 104 economies with labour laws that restrict the types of jobs women can undertake as well as when and where they are permitted to work (World Economic Forum, 2018). Other challenges that women face in the rural economy include lack of information on job availability, discrimination based on social norms, disproportionate involvement in economic activities based on gender, unpaid work, unequal access to education and other services. Therefore, the main aim of this study was to examine rural women's participation in community development activities in Akoko South West Local Government Area, Ondo State by addressing the following objectives: i. ascertain the socio-economic characteristics of the selected rural women; ii. identify the rural development activities that the women participated in; iii. determine the level of the rural women participation in such activities; iv. determine the respondent's perception of the effect of their participation in promoting sustainable rural development; and indicate the constraints to their participation in such activities

The study hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and participation in community developmental activities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community development according to Ekong (2010) is a process of utilizing the people to develop themselves through self-initiative and motivation with minimum assistance from government. It stands for a conscious and deliberate attempt aimed at helping communities to recognize their needs and to assume

increasing responsibility for solving their problems; thereby increasing their capacities to participate fully in the life of a nation. Through community development initiatives, community members can become more empowered such that they can increasingly recognize and challenge conditions and structures which are leading to their dis-empowerment or negatively impacting their well-being (Ife, 2016). Rural women's participation in community developmental activities is essential for the development of rural communities. In Nigeria, women represent about 49 percent of the population with their productive and reproductive functions cutting across such activities as performing household chores, income earning activities, community participation and community management roles. There are things which only the women are expected to do in Nigeria. She alone may prepare the food, organize a dance group as well as sing to entertain a working party during community development activities. Although the man may give financial assistance, she alone selects the ingredients and prepares the meals suitable for the occasion (Otite, 2006). Women groups contribute to the development of their communities by raising funds for their churches and other community development projects. Money accruing from such fund raising activities is used for revival meetings, payment of stipends to teachers in the schools owned by these churches, furnishing and helping the poor, sick and the bereaved in the community. In their bid to contribute to the development of their communities, women groups embark on prayers for peace in times of wars. They refer to the fighting groups as "our children" hence the prayer for peace. Apart from praying for peaceful elections and quick resolution of crisis, there are instances where women have volunteered themselves as women of comfort to the soldiers. Little (2014) noted that prior to the development of formal social welfare system in West Africa, women voluntary organizations played extensive roles in catering for the sick, the poor and the disabled in Nigeria. Egboh (2007) narrated how women associations such as Umuade and the married wife association of various village groups in the Eastern part of Nigeria, organized various activities for the welfare of members of their natal and marital homes; apart from raising funds for community development. Similarly, Ojukwu (2013) explained why women in Igboland in Nigeria hold "August Meetings" every year. To him, it was a period of re-union for the home and abroad women who were married from outside the community to interact with and know more about their peoples, customs and traditions. The gatherings give the women the opportunities to be integrated into their community development projects as stakeholders which guaranteed their faith in the community and its activities. It is also an avenue for the women to discuss health matters, children welfare, marriages and family life. From the foregoing, the August gathering was put in place to enhance women's contribution to the development of their communities and has become the rallying point for women in the service to their communities. However, there are several constraints that limit rural women's participation in community development activities in Nigeria. Socio-economic constraints: Rural women often face economic and social barriers that limit their ability to participate in community development activities. Poverty, lack of education, and limited access to resources such as credit and land are some of the factors that prevent women from participating in community development projects (Adepoju, 2016; Adepoju & Salawu, 2016). Cultural constraints: Women's participation in community development activities is often restricted by cultural beliefs and norms that limit their mobility and participation in public spaces. Gender stereotypes that reinforce the notion that women should focus on household chores and child-rearing can also discourage women from participating in community development projects (Ojebisi & Afolabi, 2017; Chigbu, 2017). Political constraints: Women's participation in community development activities is often limited by political barriers, such as lack of representation in decision-making processes and unequal access to political power. This can prevent women from having a voice in community development projects and limit their ability to influence policy decisions that affect their lives (Adepoju & Salawu, 2016; Ojebisi & Afolabi, 2017). Infrastructure constraints: Rural areas in Nigeria often lack basic infrastructure such as roads, electricity, and water supply, which can limit women's access to educational and economic opportunities. This can prevent women from participating in community development activities that require them to travel to urban areas or attend training programs (Adepoju, 2016; Ogunbameru & Adenegan, 2016). In view of the foregoing, this study is hinged on the collective action theory that suggests that individuals under certain institutional arrangements and shared norms are capable of organising and sustaining cooperation that advances the common interest of the group in which they

belong (Ostrom, 1990). The theory is based on the premise that human beings can organise and govern themselves based on appropriate institutional arrangements and mutual agreements in a community of understanding. This is the fundamental of Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD).

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Akoko South West Local Government Area, Ondo state, Nigeria. Having its headquarters at Oka Akoko. This is because the area is among the areas categorized as rural farming communities with the evidence of community development activities in Ondo State. There are fifteen (15) towns under Akoko South West, namely; Oka Akoko, Akungba Akoko, Supare Akoko, Ikun Akoko and Oba Akoko, Ikun, Okia, Korowa, Ikese, Iwonrin, Ebo, Owalusin, Ayepe, Okela and Bolorunduro. The area is characterized by rough topography with various heights of highlands and rocks. The soil of the study area is reddish brown in colour. Tropical hardwood such as mahogany, Iroko, Afara among others are found in the area, and the inhabitants engage predominantly in primary activities such as farming and exploitation of the forest resources. Precisely, a larger percentage of the population engage in farming as their major occupation, the inhabitants engaged mostly on root crops like yams, maize and cassava which has been through mere subsistence farming. Some farmers also combine cash crop such as cocoa, kola-nut while few engage in other activities like trading, teaching, artisans, carpentry and bricklaying, among others. They also involve in different festival such as egun festival, new yam festival, among others. The target population for this study comprised of all rural women in Akoko South West local government Area, Ondo state Nigeria.

Sampling Techniques

Multi- stage sampling procedures was adopted for this study. The first stage involved purposive selection of rural women in the study area because it was identified that women participated in community development activities. The second stage involved random selection of six communities, these communities were(Oka, Supare, Ishemerin, Akungba, Iworin and Oba) while the third stage involved systematic selection of 20 women each from the six communities making a total of 120 respondents in the study area.

Method of Data Collection and Source of Data

Primary source of information was used to collect data. The primary information was collected through the use of well-structured questionnaire/interview schedule. Information was also gathered from secondary sources to buttress the findings of the study.

Measurement of variables

Independent variables

The independent variables consist of selected socio-economic characteristics (age, sex, marital status, family size, level of education and years of experience.

Socio-economic characteristics

- **Age:** Respondents were asked to state their actual age(s) in years.
- **Sex:** Respondents were asked to state whether male or female and labels were assigned as; Male [1], Female [2]
- **Marital status:** These were categorized and label was assigned as; Single [1], Married [2], Widow [3], Divorce [4]
- **Religion:** Respondents were asked their religion and label was assigned as; Christianity [1], Islamic [2], Traditional [3], Others [4].

- **Family size:** Respondents were asked their total number of households.
- **Effect of Participation:** Questions were asked on the effect of rural women in participation in developmental activities. These variables were measured as strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly disagree (1)
- **Constraints to Participation in Developmental Activities:** Questions was asked on the constraints faced by rural women in participating in community developmental activities. These was measured on a four-point Likert scales which were major constraints (4), moderately (3), Rarely (2) and Not at all (1).

Dependent Variables: The dependent variables measured was respondent's participation in developmental activities and level of participation. These variables were measured as Yes (2) and No (1). Level of participation was measured as 1 for low 2 for Moderate and 3 for High

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for this study. The descriptive statistics used were frequency distributions, percentages, mean and standard deviation while the hypothesis was tested using Chi-square.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Age of the Respondents

Results on Table 1 showed that majority (24.2%) of the respondents were within the age bracket of 35-42 years. About 18.3% of the sample respondents age was within 25-34 years, about 17.5% of sampled respondents age was between 45-54years, about 15% of respondents were above 65years, about 13.3% of respondents were between 55-64 years of age while about 11.7% of respondents were between 15-24age. The mean age of respondents was 45.0. This result implied that the respondents were still in their active age to participate in development activities. This result was in line with Adisa (2013) whose results indicated the mean age of women participating in community development activities in Osun state to be 47.9

Marital Status of the Respondents

Results in Table 1 also showed that majority (65.8%) of respondents were married, while about 15.8% of respondents were single, about 10.8% of the respondent were widow, about 5.8% was divorce and about 1.7% were separated. The implication of the majority been married is that the decision in participating in developmental activities may be included by their husbands. This result corroborated the findings of Umeh, Mba,., Aghale, and Nwachukwu (2016) who conducted on related study on rural women's participation in the growth enhancement support scheme in Abia State.

Respondents' Level of Education

Results of the respondent's level of education indicated that about 4.2% of rural women do not have formal education, about 52.5% attended secondary school level of education, about 34.2% of the sample population attained tertiary education, while about 9.2% of the population attained primary as the level of their education. This result implies that women participating in rural development activities were educated. Women participating in rural development activities have at least some forms of education, which is a positive sign for their engagement and contribution to community development activities. Educated women are likely to have acquired the skills and knowledge necessary to participate actively in community development initiatives, and this could have a positive impact on the quality and effectiveness of these

initiatives This result was in tandem with Basie (2009) whose findings indicated majority of women were educated participating in community development

Respondents' Family Size

Household or family size of the respondents may influence the level of participation of women in developmental activities. Results on Table 1 showed that majority (55.0%) of the family had a family size within 4-6 persons, of which the mean of respondent's family size was 5.0. The mean family size of 5.0 is also relatively moderate and could indicate that there is a balanced number of family members, which may allow women to participate in developmental activities without being overwhelmed with family responsibilities.

Respondents' Primary Occupation

Results on Table 1 further revealed that the primary occupations of rural women involved in development activities in the study area were crop farming as their primary occupations (33.3%), artisans (25.8%) public servants (20.8%), private workers (15.8%) and livestock farmer (4.2%). The career or job of the women in the study area may influence the participation of the women in development activities. The results showed that rural women who engaged in community development activities have diverse skills and expertise, which can contribute to the overall effectiveness and sustainability of their participation in community

developmental activities. This result was tandem to the findings of Egwuonwu et al. (2018) whose results indicated to that the major occupation of women participating in developmental activity work was farming.

Respondents' Annual Income

Results on Table 1 also indicated that an average rural woman made an annual income of ₦684,250 of which about 58.3% of the respondents earned between ₦5,001,000 and 900,000. This result implied that rural women may participate in community developmental activities.

Respondents' Experience

Results on Table 1 showed that majority (37.0%) of women had within 8-14 and 15-21 years of experience in participating in developmental activities. The mean years of farming experience was 15.0 years. This result implies that women who had enough experience in participation in developmental activities will influence their level of participation. Rural women experience in developmental activities can influence their participation.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents Based on Their Selected Socio-Economic Characteristics.

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Dev
15-24	14	11.7		
25-34	22	18.3		
35-44	29	24.2		
45-54	21	17.5		
55-64	16	13.3	45.0	16.2
65 years and above	18	15.0		

Marital status				
Married	79	65.8		
Single	19	15.8		
Widow	13	10.8		
Divorce	7	5.8		
Separated	2	1.7		
Level of education				
No formal education	5	4.2		
Primary school education	11	9.2		
Secondary school education	63	52.5		
Tertiary education	41	34.2		
Family size				
1-3	40	33.3		
4-6	66	55.0		
7-9	9	7.5	5.0	2.19
10-12	5	4.2		
Primary occupation				
Livestock farming	3	2.5		
Crop farming	40	33.3		
Public sector salaried worker	25	20.8		
Private sector salaried worker	19	15.8		
Artisan	31	25.8		
Others	2	1.7		
Annual Income				
100000-500000	30	25.0		
500001-900000	70	58.3		
900001-1300000	14	11.7		
1300001-1700000	3	2.5	684,250.00	379,403.91
1700001-2100000	3	2.5		
Experience				
1-7	24	20.0		
8-14	37	30.8		
15-21	37	30.8		
22-28	18	15.0		
29-35	3	2.5	15.0	7.56
36-42	1	.8		

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Respondents' Participation in Community Developmental Activities

The highest mean score was 1.65, which was for the donations of beds to health centres, indicating that rural

women had high participation in this activity. The implication of the high participation of rural women in donations of beds to health centers is that they place a high value on the health and well-being of their communities. This also suggests that they may have a good understanding of the importance of access to healthcare facilities and resources in their communities. Kwaghe et al. (2017) whose study indicated that rural women participated in developmental activities relating to health. Other developmental activities that rural women participated in was building of skill acquisition centre in Iworin, building of skill acquisition centre in Ikanmu, construction of Solar power street light, construction of Solar power street light, construction of bore hole in Ishimerin, construction of bore holes in Agba, and construction of town hall in Oba.

The low participation of women in developmental activities whose mean was below 1.50 were building of town hall in Oriri in Supare, building of 3 blocks of classrooms in Agbogbo grammar school, building of community town hall in Ibereku in Supare and construction of covet in Ilale Akungba. The low participation of women whose mean was below 1.50 in developmental activities may be attributed to several factors, including cultural and gender norms, lack of access to resources, and limited opportunities for women's involvement in decision-making processes. This study was in line with Adhikari (2021) whose study found out that women's participation in local governance was low due to gender-based discrimination and patriarchal attitudes, which limited their access to resources and decision-making processes. In general, there were much women participation in developmental activities.

Table 2 Distribution of Respondents Participation in Developmental Activities.

Developmental Activities	Yes		No		Mean
	F	%	F	%	
Building of town hall in Oriri in Supare	45	37.5	75	62.5	1.37
Building of 3 blocks of classrooms in Agbogbo grammar school	51	42.5	69	57.5	1.42
Building of community town hall in Ibereku in Supare	51	42.5	69	57.5	1.42
Building of skill acquisition centre in Iworin	64	53.3	56	46.7	1.53
Building of skill acquisition centre in Ikanmu	67	55.8	53	44.2	1.55
Construction of Solar power street light	68	56.7	52	43.3	1.56
Construction of solar water in Ishmerin	62	51.7	58	48.3	1.51
Construction of bore hole in Ishimerin	67	55.8	53	44.2	1.55
Construction of bore holes in Agba	67	55.8	53	44.2	1.55
Donations of bed to health centres	78	65.0	42	35.0	1.65
Construction of town hall in Oba	61	50.8	59	49.2	1.50
Construction of covet in ilale Akungba	44	36.7	76	63.3	1.36

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Mean cut off above 1.50=PDA and mean cut off point below 1.50=NPDA. PDA=participation in developmental activities and NPDA=Non participation in developmental activities.

Respondents' Level of Participation in Developmental Activities

Results in Table 3 showed respondents level of participation in developmental activities as: building of town hall in Oriri in Supare (Mean =1.75), classrooms in Agbogbo grammar school (Mean =1.93), building of community town hall in Ibereku in Supare (Mean =1.74), building of Skill acquisition center in Iworin

(Mean =1.64), building of Skill acquisition in Ikanmu (Mean = 1.68), Construction of Solar power street light (Mean =1.60), construction of solar water in Ishmerin (Mean =1.75), construction of borehole in Ishimerin (Mean =1.78), construction of bore holes in Agba (Mean = 1.53), donation of bed to health centres (Mean = 1.60), construction of town hall in Oba (Mean = 1.67) and construction of Covet in Ilale Akungba (Mean = 1.74) respectively. In all, the mean scores for most of the developmental activities suggest low participation by rural women. Their participation needs to be increased to ensure their needs and concerns are addressed in the development process, and they benefit from the development. This result is in tandem with Ukaegbue, Onyeneke and Obi (2019) whose findings indicated that there was low participation of women in Growth Enhancement support scheme in Abia state. The study by Akintoye and Adesina (2016) had earlier revealed a low level of participation of rural women in community development activities in Nigeria was generally low. Specifically, the study found that Only 29% of rural women participated in community development activities.

Table 3: Distribution of Level of Participation of Respondents in Development Activities

Level of Participation in Development Activities	High		Moderate		Low		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Building of town hall in Oriri in Supare	19	15.8	52	43.3	49	40.8	1.75
Classroom in agbogbo grammar school	31	25.8	50	41.7	39	32.5	1.93
Building of community town hall in Ibereku in Supare	19	15.8	51	42.5	50	41.6	1.74
Building of Skill acquisition center in iworin	24	20.0	29	24.2	67	55.8	1.64
Building of Skill acquisition in ikanmu	20	16.7	42	35.0	58	48.3	1.68
Construction of Solar power street light	13	10.8	47	39.1	60	50.0	1.60
Construction of solar water in Ishmerin	27	22.5	36	30.0	57	47.5	1.75
Construction of Borehole in ishimerin	28	23.3	38	31.7	54	45.0	1.78
Construction of bole holes in Agba	14	11.7	36	30.0	70	58.3	1.53
Donations of bed to health centres	20	16.7	33	27.5	67	55.8	1.60
Construction of town hall in Oba	17	14.2	46	38.3	57	47.5	1.67
Construction of Covet in ilale akungba	21	17.5	47	39.2	52	43.3	1.74

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Mean score above or equal to 2.0=high participation in developmental activities while mean score below 2.0 = low participation in developmental activities.

Effect of Participation in Development Activities

Results in Table 4 showed the effect of participation of rural women participating in developmental activities. Women affirmed that participation in community developmental activities create more job opportunities for women which had a mean (3.6). Participation of women in developmental activities had made the respondent had access to primary health centers. (3.6) community developmental activities such as the construction of health centers or donations of beds to existing health centers may improve the quality and availability of healthcare services. Women who participate in such activities may also have greater awareness of available healthcare services, and may be more likely to seek out and utilize these services. The women in the study area also affirmed that participation in community developmental activities had helped them increase their farm profit (3.3). Participating in community development activities may provide women with access to farm inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers, farming equipment, and training on

modern agricultural techniques. These resources can improve their productivity and increase their yield, resulting in increased profits. Participation in community development have made women take responsibility of family expenditure (3.0). Women who participated in community development activities gain skills and knowledge that can translate into income-generating opportunities, which can then help them contribute to family expenditures. Women Participation in community development can have a positive impact on education (3.52) facilities, such as the construction of new classrooms, schools or libraries, and the provision of educational materials. This can lead to increased access to education for children in the community, which can have a direct impact on their academic performance and future prospects. Additionally, when women are actively involved in community development, they may have a stronger voice in advocating for the educational needs of their children and the community as a whole. This can lead to better decision-making and more equitable distribution of educational resources. This result agreed with the findings of Ajayi and Ojo (2015) as well as that of Ogunkoya, olowe and Olugasa. (2018)

Distribution of Respondents Effects of Participation in Developmental Activities

Effects of participation in development activities	SA		A		UD		D		SD		Mean	Decision
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Participation in community development has helped me increase my farm profit	27	22.5	34	28.3	41	34.2	4	3.3	14	11.7	3.37	EPDA
Participation in community development has not helped me increase my farm profit	2	1.7	7	5.8	67	55.8	25	20.8	19	15.9	2.47	DEPDA
Participation in community development have helped me to have access to primary health center	41	34.2	48	40.0	9	7.5	7	5.8	15	12.5	3.68	EPDA
Participation in community development has not helped me access primary health center in my community.	3	2.5	12	10.0	36	30.0	37	30.8	32	26.7	2.21	DEPDA
Participation in community development have made me take responsibility of family expenditure	9	7.5	41	34.2	43	35.8	10	8.3	28	23.4	3.03	EPDA
Participation in community development has made me not take responsibility of family expenditure	11	9.2	7	5.8	44	36.7	30	25.0	28	23.4	2.43	DEPDA
Participation in community development has created access to education facilities for my children	38	31.7	43	35.8	11	9.2	11	9.2	17	14.2	3.52	EPDA
Participation in community development has not created access to education facilities for my children	8	6.7	11	9.2	28	23.3	40	33.3	33	27.5	2.25	DEPDA

Participation in community development activities has Create more job opportunities	40	33.3	45	37.5	11	9.2	9	7.5	15	12.5	3.62	EPDA
Participation in community development activities do not create more job opportunities	6	5.0	4	3.3	33	27.5	28	23.3	49	31.7	1.99	DEPDA

Source: Field Survey, 2023

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, UD=Undecided, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly disagree

Mean above 3.0= Support the statement of the Effect Participation in Developmental Activities (EPDA) and mean score below 3.0 = (DEPDA) Do not support the statement of the effect in participation in developmental activities

Respondents Constraints to Participation in Development Activities

Results on Table 5 showed the frequency and percentage distribution of the constraints to women’s participation in development activities in the study area. The three most important constraints identified by the respondents were: poor community cooperation and dialogue (3.35), lack of sustainability of projects (3.23) and inadequate access to credit and a low-income base (3.17). This result supported the findings of Daramola and Adesope. (2021) whose findings also indicated same constraints of the participation of women in community development activities. When there is poor cooperation and dialogue among community members, it can be difficult to build consensus and mobilize resources to undertake development activities. This can create challenges for women who may have limited social networks and fewer opportunities to engage with decision-makers in the community.

When development projects are not sustainable, it can lead to a cycle of dependency and disengagement among community members, including women. For example, if a project provides short-term assistance without addressing the root causes of poverty or social exclusion, it may not lead to lasting improvements in the lives of women and their families. This can discourage women from participating in future development activities, particularly if they feel that their efforts will not lead to meaningful change. Inadequate access to credit and a low-income base, limited access to credit and low levels of income can make it difficult for women to invest in their own businesses or participate in income-generating activities. This can limit their ability to contribute to community development efforts and can reinforce gender-based inequalities.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents Constraints to Participation in Development Activities.

Constraints	A major constraint		Moderately		Rarely		Not at all		Mean	Rank
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Poor community cooperation and dialogue	58	48.3	48	40.0	13	10.8	1	.8	3.35	1 st
Lack of sustainability of the projects	54	45.0	42	35.0	22	18.3	2	1.7	3.23	2 nd
Inadequate access to credit and low-income base	64	53.3	24	20.0	22	18.3	10	8.3	3.18	3 rd
Poor infrastructure	64	53.3	29	24.2	11	9.2	16	13.3	3.17	4 th
Lack of resources	59	49.2	34	28.3	15	12.5	12	10.0	3.16	5 th
Poor monitoring and Evaluation	56	46.7	38	31.7	14	11.7	12	10.0	3.15	6 th

Poor road network	33	27.5	36	30.0	16	13.3	35	29.2	2.55	7 th
Illiteracy level	30	25.0	22	18.3	36	30.0	32	26.7	2.41	8 th
Preferences are given to the women involved in politics	22	18.3	21	17.5	47	39.2	30	25.0	2.29	9 th
Restrictions from the husband	16	13.3	24	20.0	50	41.7	30	25.0	2.21	10 th
Lack of technical know how	20	16.7	27	22.5	31	25.8	42	35.0	2.20	11 th
Gender discrimination	17	14.2	24	20.0	35	29.2	44	36.7	2.11	12 th
Discriminatory customs and laws	16	13.3	24	20.0	27	22.5	53	44.2	2.02	13 th
Religion crises differences	10	8.3	23	19.2	26	21.7	61	50.8	1.85	14 th

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Results of Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁. There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and participation in community developmental activities.

Results from the above analysis showed that there is significant relationship between some of the respondents' socio-economic characteristics and their participation in community development activities. Family size, years of experience and marital status were significant with (P<0.00) for years of experience in developmental activities and marital status while family size was significant at (P > 0.05) among the socio-economic variables. This result implies that these variables were the socio-economic characteristics of women that affect the women participation in developmental activities. This result further affirmed the findings of Adisa et al. (2013) whose findings indicated that marital status, and year of experience were the factors influencing the participation of women in development activities.

Table 7: Results of Chi-square analysis showing relationship between socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents and participation in community development activities

Socio-economic variables	Chi-square	P-Value	Decision
Age (X1)	481.4	0.150	NS
Family size (X2)	142.9	0.019**	S
Years of Experience(X3)	455.3	0.000***	S
Marital status(X4)	35.8	0.000***	S
Level of Education (X5)	2.333	0.993	NS
Income	339.7	0.001***	S

Source: Field Survey, 2023 ***< 0.01-1% ** 0.01-0.05= 5%

CONCLUSION

It is evident from the study that the mean scores of women's participation for most of the developmental activities were low. Their participation needs to be increased to ensure their needs and concerns are addressed in the development process so as to benefit from the development. The study therefore concluded that there is low participation of rural women in community development activities which may be the consequence of the constraints the women faced in participating in such projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made: efforts should be made by all the stakeholders concerned with community development to promote community cooperation and dialogue, particularly among women, in rural areas; measures should be put in place by the community development agencies and community members to ensure that community developmental projects are sustainable and can be maintained over time; and governments and non governmental organisations should provide financial support to rural women in the form of loans, grants, and subsidies.

Research limitations, Ethics and Areas for Future Studies

The major limitation to this study is that some women refrained themselves from the study based on cultural beliefs, norms and gender stereotype. The principles of voluntary participation, consent, anonymity and confidentiality were taken into consideration while conducting the research. This study can be replicated to cover sub-Saharan African countries in the nearest future.

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