# LINKING THE PARADIGMS IN PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT: ANALYSIS OF FADAMA III BENEFICIARY PARTICIPATION IN KADUNA AND SOKOTO STATES, NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*This study examines the level of beneficiaries' participation in anti-poverty programme. There is empirical evidence that the poorest of the poor, are hardly ever reached or left out in most of the intervention programmes. The major concerns of this study therefore, are to what extent has the implementation strategy adopted by NFDP III promoted the level of beneficiary participation in the reduction of rural poverty in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria? The study made use of questionnaire to generate primary data from 245 respondents. Results indicate that, the implementation strategy i.e. CDD approach adopted by NFDP III has significantly promoted the level of beneficiary participation in the reduction of rural poverty with r= 0.616, p=0.000. Participation in NFDP III offered the beneficiaries' opportunities to gain access to the project-supported activities which significantly reduced the extent and severity of human deprivations. Consequently, the magnitude of beneficiary participation was higher amongst beneficiaries from Kaduna State than those from Sokoto State. Kaduna State had (38, 321) number of beneficiaries whilst Sokoto State had (22, 883). The study recommended for the establishment of Farmers' Skill Acquisition Centres and inclusion of Credit Service Providers as mechanisms for sustaining the impacts of the project.*

***Keywords:*** *Participatory development, Beneficiary participation, Poverty reduction and Development Project*

## Introduction

In recent times, beneficiary participation has become an increasingly accepted development practice, the world over. Participatory development, has equally taken a variety of forms since it emerged in the 1970s, when it was introduced as an important part of the 'basic needs approach' to development. In the words of Cornwal (2002), community participation in development seek 'to give the poor a part in initiatives designed for their benefit' in the hopes that development projects will be more sustainable and successful if, local populations are engaged in the development process. It aims to facilitate action and social change that is led and shaped by the 'beneficiaries' themselves. This bottom-up approach, lends credence to the fact that projects are determined by actual beneficiaries' needs, grounded in the existing local realities.

The design and implementation of First National *Fadama* Development Project (NFDP I, 1993-1999), NFDP II (2004-2009) and NFDP III (2009-2013) targeted smallholder farmers who are extremely poor in terms of the poverty datum of $1.25 per day. The project initiatives of National *Fadama* Development Projects (NFDPs) were to improve the quality of life of the rural poor,

reduce the incidence of rural poverty and contribute to food security. Fundamentally, NFDP I used supply and demand-driven approaches as implementation strategies which did not allow beneficiaries to take charge of their own development. In view of this fundamental flaw, NFDP II adopted Community-driven development approach which was expected to target the poor and promote beneficiary participation in project activities. But as empirically provided by Abang (2015) and Idris (2018), the poorest of the poor, are hardly ever reached or left out in most of the intervention programmes. This was as a result of the overly technical, expert-driven, and top-down approach that failed to produce desired outcomes, over the years. Equally, the magnitude of peoples' participation in most of the anti-poverty programmes is largely insignificant. The major concerns of this study therefore, are to what extent has the implementation strategy adopted by NFDP III promoted the level of beneficiary participation in the reduction of rural poverty and is there any significant difference in the level of participation amongst NFDP III beneficiaries in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria?

The objectives of this study are, to:

i. determine the extent to which the implementation strategy adopted by NFDP III promotes the level of beneficiary participation in the reduction of rural poverty in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria, and
ii. ascertain whether there is any significant difference in the level of participation amongst NFDP III beneficiaries In Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis**

$H_o$: Implementation strategy adopted by NFDP III has not significantly promoted the level of beneficiary participation in the reduction of rural poverty in the beneficiary communities of Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria.

**Scope and Significance of the Study**

The study covered the period of eight (8) years (2009-2017) i.e. four (4) years of NFDP III implementation period (2009-2013) and Four (4) years after NFDP III implementation (2013-2017). This was to determine the level of impact of the project during and after implementation. Kaduna and Sokoto States were purposively selected from the same geo-political zone to establish whether significant difference exist in the level of provisions of the project amongst the project beneficiaries in the core (Sokoto) and facility (Kaduna) States. Sokoto State participated in NFDPs as one of the zones endowed with humidity favourable for irrigational activities classified as Core States, and Kaduna State participated among the Facility States for meeting certain requirements based on: (a) written proposed action plan for both up-stream and down-stream post-harvest activities; (b) written commitment for regular payment of counterpart funds deducted at source (at the Ministry of Finance); (c) evidence of viable and active FRUs or other economic groups; (d) evidence of the existence of conflict management committees, and (e) completion of a detailed assessment of existing *fadama* infrastructures.

In terms of significance, the study was prompted by the ever increasing incidence of poverty in the country despite the surfeit anti-poverty measures put in place to fight the menace, over decades. It was equally discovered by researchers that, there is dearth of scholarly investigation on assessing the level of beneficiary participation in anti-poverty programmes especially by comparing Kaduna and Sokoto States within the same geo-political zone (North-west). These amongst other reasons, spurred our interests to fill knowledge gap and to extend the frontier of knowledge. The findings of this study will help policy makers/development administrators to chart

a course of action that would help sustains and scale up the impact NFDP III in the promotion of agricultural growth and poverty reduction in Nigeria.

**Literature Review**

**Conceptualizing Poverty**

There is broad agreement amongst scholars that poverty is difficult to define largely due to its multi-dimensional nature. Nevertheless, several attempts have been made to understand poverty. In this way, poverty may be viewed by using three (3) different concepts: income, basic needs and capability. Of these, however, the most commonly used concept is income, according to which a person is considered poor if his or her income is below an established amount of money say for example, $1.25, $1.90 or $2 per day. This view of defining poverty fell short of other basic necessities of life. Therefore, this calls for the inclusion of basic needs concept which considers the material requirements for a minimally fulfilling life. These are normally understood to include factors such as food, basic health care, education, water, *etc*. Beside income measurement and basic needs, the poor lacks the capability to participate in other social activities. The capability perspective of defining poverty, therefore concentrates on basic needs such as adequate nutrition, clothing, and shelter, but also considers social aspects such as partaking in the life of a community.

In the participatory development parlance, the Community-driven Development (CDD) approach recognizes that the poor and even more, the poorest need special empowerment that enables them to understand what the issues are, and what are their rights. The group ability to tap 'latent' skills available at local level improves commitment and relevance to the local conditions. The CDD's main thrust is to increase the 'pie' for the benefit of the poor. When organizations such as Farmer groups (in this case, *Fadama* User Groups (FUGs)) are vehicles for beneficiary participation, group consciousness for collective action becomes necessary and vital criterion. Essentially, as participants gain more control over the project and their empowerment. However, Dasgupta and Beard (2007) write, one of the most significant threats to the success of community-based approaches is their vulnerability to capture by local elites. Elite capture, as expressed by Dasgupta and Beard (2007) is any instance in which elites are able to maneuver a project to their advantage. A common concern is that elites are found in the environment within which group of intended beneficiaries live and may capture a disproportionate share of a project's benefits. Elite capture is a common finding in participatory projects, even though beneficiary participation aims to make development more equitable (Mansuri and Rao, 2013).

There are empirical evidences that showed strong correlation between beneficiary participation and poverty reduction. For example, Narayan (1995) evaluates participation's influence on project effectiveness in 121 rural water supply projects. She finds that, beneficiary participation is the single most important factor contributing to project effectiveness and that beneficiary participation in all project stages is most effective. Narayan, Patel, Schafft, Rade-macher, and Koch-schulte (2000) study, "*Voices of the Poor*" interviewed 6,000 poor people in 60 countries and found that poor people who demanded for development process (CDD) by themselves had higher impacts on poverty reduction than those who received intervention through supply-driven. When asked to indicate what might make the greatest difference in their lives, they inter alia responded that, organization of their own so that they can negotiate with government, traders, and NGOs and direct assistance through community-driven programmes so that they can shape their own destinies. The study concludes that, beneficiary participation lies at the heart of development efforts without which, most development interventions will be ineffective.

Impact evaluation conducted by Isham and Kähkönen (2002) investigated effects of beneficiary participation in water supply projects. The study focused on water-quality improvement projects in forty-four (44) villages in Central Java. They investigated beneficiary participation in decision-making about project design (*e.g*. selecting a well versus a piped water connection) and participation in operation and maintenance (*e.g*. contributing money and labour to water supply construction). The study found that, although beneficiaries tended not to contribute to design decision-making and that they prefer private water connections and were more satisfied with project outcomes; and when households contributed resources (i.e. money or labour) to water supply construction, the water supplies functioned better.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study adopts Collective Action theory propounded by Olson (1965) as its guide. The idea of group consciousness for collective action emerged from dissatisfaction and failures of anti-poverty measures that failed to promote beneficiary participation in intervention programmes. Generally therefore, challenge of low-productivity agriculture, food insecurity and high incidence of rural poverty necessitated renewed attention for collective action (World Bank, 2014). Collective Action theory has three components. These are: *Participation*, *Empowerment,* and *Free-ride syndrome*. Olson, expressed that participation represents action, or being part of an action such as involvement of the people (project beneficiaries) in the various stages of the intervention. The appeal of CDD arose from recent efforts to empower local communities to participate in decision-making and implementation of development programmes. The NFDP III sought to empower beneficiary communities through Capacity building to take the leading role in analyzing their existing situations, develop Local Development Plans (LDPs), implement; monitor and evaluate sub-project activities; and gain control over projects, resources or services. Lastly, individuals have incentives to '*free-ride*' on the efforts of others in certain groups' works thereby benefiting from the public infrastructures without contributing to its provision. The concepts of open access and non-excludability applies to certain public goods such as road networks, bridges, culverts, drainages, cooling shades, Ventilated Improved Pit latrine, market water point borehole, *etc* are made available and are enjoyed by members of the community.

Putting Collective Action theory into context, the theory ensures that local knowledge; skills and experiences are incorporated into the development process hence, each participating FUGs submit a proposal to *Fadama* Community Associations (FCAs) where most responsive projects are evaluated and prioritized for funding. Again, the theory enhances the chances of making development objectives and outputs relevant to the perceived needs of the people and lastly, participation leads to improvement in knowledge, skills and distribution of power across individuals and communities and, thus, improves equity. The FUGs needed access to inputs/resources for farming, marketing of their farm outputs, sharing a common property resource. Collective action helps FCAs/FUGs to own public infrastructures such as feeder roads, culverts, bridges *etc* which go on to enhance the people's living conditions, raising their incomes, and enabling them acquire the requisite productive assets.

**Methodology**

This study is a survey research. Grossman's (1994) reflexive comparison design was used. Reflexive design treats project participants to serve as both treatment and reference group. The strength of this methodology is that the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the group, previous experience, and the individual's predisposition and innate abilities which are considered both before and after the project. An analysis of the observed changes in living conditions of the beneficiaries (pre-project to post-project period) is made to determine whether

changes can be attributed to the programme. However, the focused group of this study is the FCAs and their constituent units, the FUGs. The parent population of the 6 FCAs consisted of 375 per State. This gave the study a sum of 750 target project beneficiaries. The study used Krejcie and Morgans (1970) Population and sample size Table to draw the sample size. Based on the Table values, 254 (34%) project beneficiaries were drawn for questionnaires administration. The questionnaire was structured using Likert (1932) scaling method of high, very high, average, low and very low.

Out of the 254 questionnaire distributed to the direct project beneficiaries, 245 copies of questionnaire was duly filled and returned (128 Kaduna State, 117 Sokoto State). Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics was used to test the veracity of the formulated hypothesis. Equally, an independent sample *t*-test was used to test significant differences in the level of beneficiary participation in the project activities. The decision is "accept $H_o$ if the p-value is less than or equal to the alpha value. Conversely, the $H_o$ will be rejected if the p-value is above or equal to the preset threshold value (0.05)." The sampled FUGs were clustered according to their respective FCAs. On the whole, multi-stage sampling method involving 3 stages was used, thus: purposive selection of States and LGAs; purposive selection of 3 LGAs per State was based on intensity of *fadama* activities and random selection of FCAs and FUGs in the selected LGAs.

**Results and Discussions**

**Table 1: Analysis of Respondents by State**

| | State | |
|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | Percent |
| Kaduna | 128 | 52.2 |
| Sokoto | 117 | 47.8 |
| Total | 245 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2018

A total of 128 of the respondents representing 52.2% are from Kaduna State whilst the remaining 117 representing 47.8% are from Sokoto State.

**Table 2: Beneficiary Category**

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Crop farmers | 152 | 62.0 |
| Livestock Rearers | 93 | 38.0 |
| Total | 245 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The NFDP III beneficiaries selected from Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria were categorized into Crop farmers and Livestock Rearers. Table 2 shows that 152 or 62.0% of the respondents are Crop farmers and the remaining 93 representing 38.0% are Livestock Rearers.

**Table 3: Analysis of Mean Distribution on NFDP III's Implementation Strategy and Level of Beneficiary Participation**

| s/n | Items | Response categories | | | | | Mean | Std.dev | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *VH* | *H* | *Av* | *Low* | *VL* | | | |
| 1 | Group consciousness for collective action, | ***2*** | ***173*** | ***61*** | ***6*** | ***3*** | 3.6735 | .0894 | ***Positive*** |
| 2 | Involvement of local knowledge | ***8*** | ***127*** | ***105*** | ***4*** | ***1*** | 3.5592 | .0711 | ***Positive*** |
| 3 | Group ownership and control | ***50*** | ***152*** | ***37*** | ***4*** | ***2*** | 3.9959 | 1.0121 | ***Positive*** |
| 4 | Group participation in decision-making | ***9*** | ***181*** | ***52*** | ***1*** | ***2*** | 3.7918 | 0.813 | ***Positive*** |
| 5 | Involvement of community leaders | ***4*** | ***35*** | ***126*** | ***78*** | ***2*** | 2.8408 | 0.6416 | ***Negative*** |
| 6 | Participation of women, youth and vulnerable groups | ***41*** | ***148*** | ***51*** | ***3*** | ***2*** | 3.9102 | 0.877 | ***Positive*** |
| 7 | Participation of CBOs | ***1*** | ***22*** | ***75*** | ***112*** | ***35*** | 2.3551 | 0.646 | ***Negative*** |
| | ***Cumulative mean*** | | | | | | ***3.447*** | | ***Positive*** |

***Decision mean =3.000***

Table 3 above shows that overall/cumulative mean response of 3.447 was found to be higher than the 3.000 benchmark. Specifically, the respondents strongly believed that NFDP III has created sense of group ownership and control. This had the highest item mean of 3.9959, as 152 and 50 of the respondents rated it as very high and high, respectively. 37 of the respondents rated it average as against 4 that rated it low whilst the remaining 2 rated it as very low. In the same vein, they believed that NFDP III led to an increase in the participation of women, youth and vulnerable groups as this item attracted the second highest mean response of 3.9102. Group participation in decision-making attracted a mean of 3.7918 as 181 of the respondents rated it high. Nevertheless, involvement of community leaders was rated average and low by 126 and 78, participation of Community-based Organizations was equally rated average and low by 75 and 112 of the respondents. To broaden the analysis, an independent sample *t*-test was run. Table 4 aggregated the views of the respondents.

**Table 4: *t*-test Distribution on the Difference in the Extent of Promotion of Beneficiary Participation in NFDP III in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria**

| Variable | States | N | Mean | Std.dev | Std.err | df | *T* | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Difference in the extent of promotion of Beneficiary Participation amongst NFDP III beneficiaries | Kaduna | 128 | 25.0938 | 1.94991 | .17235 | 243 | 6.249 | 0.000 |
| | Sokoto | 117 | 23.3761 | 2.34788 | .21706 | | | |

Results of the independent *t*-test showed that a significant difference exists in the extent of promoting the magnitude of beneficiary participation in the two (2) States under study. This is because the computed means of the magnitude of beneficiary participation slightly differs 25.0938 and 23.3761 for Kaduna and Sokoto States, respectively. Therefore, the magnitude of beneficiary participation is higher from Kaduna State.

**Hypothesis Testing**

*Implementation strategy adopted by NFDP III has not significantly promoted the level of beneficiary participation in the reduction of rural poverty in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria.*

**Table 5: NFDP III Implementation Strategy and Promotion of Beneficiary Participation**

| Variable | N | Mean | Std.dev | Correlation index | Df | P |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Poverty Reduction | 245 | 19.35 | 2.88 | | | |
| | | | | 0.616** | 243 | 0.000 |
| Beneficiary Participation | 245 | 24.27 | 2.31 | | | |

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Results of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics showed that the implementation strategy adopted by NFDP III has promoted, significantly the level of beneficiary participation in the reduction of rural poverty in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria. This is because the calculated p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 alpha levels of significance at a correlation index r level of 0.616 at df 243. This shows that a strong and positive correlation exist between the level of beneficiary participation and poverty reduction. Thus, the level of beneficiary participation depends to a large extent on the soundness of the implementation strategy adopted by NFDP III. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that implementation strategy adopted by NFDP III has not significantly promoted the level of beneficiary participation in the reduction of rural poverty in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria, was not accepted.

**Summary, Conclusion and Policy Implications**

The study found out that the implementation strategy i.e. CDD approach adopted by NFDP III has significantly promoted the level of beneficiary participation in the reduction of rural poverty in the beneficiary communities of Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria. r= 0.616, p=0.000. Participation in NFDP III offered the beneficiaries' opportunities to gain access to the project-supported activities which significantly reduced the extent and severity of human deprivations. Consequently, the magnitude of beneficiary participation was higher amongst beneficiaries from Kaduna State than those from Sokoto State. Kaduna State had (38, 321) number of beneficiaries whilst Sokoto State had (22, 883).

From the results obtained in this study, there is evidence that the implementation strategy adopted by NFDP III has significantly promoted the level of beneficiary participation. The study recommended for the establishment of Farmers' Skill Acquisition Centres and inclusion of Credit Service Providers as mechanisms for sustaining the impacts of the project. Therefore, results of this study have implications on governments' efforts towards achieving sustainable poverty reduction in Nigeria. More importantly, high level of participation of the potential beneficiaries is necessary and vital criterion; hence without active involvement of the beneficiaries, the impact of the project would not be felt, so greatly. The poor, should be given the opportunity to identify their priority needs to decide what projects that could best benefit them.

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