



JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT

**AN INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF
THE NIGERIAN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

VOLUME 1. NO. 1 JULY 2017

**JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT:
AN INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF THE
NIGERIAN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

Vol. 1. No. 1 July, 2017

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor

Prof. Ndukaeze Nwabueze University of Lagos, Nigeria

Chairman

Prof. C. Ewurdjakpor Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

Members

Prof. V. T. Jike Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

Prof. M. O. C. Anikpo University of Port Harcourt, Choba,
Nigeria

Prof. Etannibi E. O. Alemika University of Jos, Jos, Nigeria

Prof. K. Anele University of Port Harcourt, Choba,
Nigeria

Prof. W. S. Tile University of Abuja, FCT, Abuja

Prof. B. U. Omojinite Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria

Ass. Prof. Obaro Ogaga University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria

JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT

VOLUME 1. NO. 1 JULY 2017

**AN INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF
THE NIGERIAN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

Published by the Nigerian Sociological Society (NSS)

© July 2017 - Nigerian Sociological Society (NSS)

Journal of Contemporary Development: An Interdisciplinary Journal of
the Nigerian Sociological Society: VOLUME 1. NO. 1 JULY 2017

Published: July 2017

All Rights Reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means: electronic, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in Nigeria by:

Justice Jeco Printing and Publishing Global

56, 1st East Circular Road,

Benin City, Edo State

08035741247, 07037373718

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Articles	Page
1. * Self-help Initiatives as a Complementary Strategy for Rural Development in South East, Nigeria - Abonyi, Sunday Evaristus & Onwuka, Chukwujekwu Charles	1
2. An Examination of Auditing Orthodoxy Against the Subsisting Expectation Gap in Nigeria - Osazevbaru, Henry Osahon	19
3. Influence of Foreign Television Programmes on Lifestyle of Undergraduate Students of Delta State University, Abraka Nigeria - Ufuophu-Biri, Emmanuel & Ndidi, Winifred Okolue	37
4. Deforestation and Consequent Neutralization of the Values of Okpe Women - Ikenyei, Sandra N.	49
5. Influence of Gender on Optimism, Self-Efficacy and Self Monitoring Among Workers in Delta State, Nigeria - Nwanzu, Lucky Chiyem	69
6. Institutional Quality Impact on Firms' Performance and Economic Growth in Africa - Emudianohwo, Ochuko B. & Ejuvbekpokpo, Stephen Akpo	85

7.	Media Coverage of Political Activities: Between Objectivity and Partisanship - Nwanne, B. U.	109
8.	Politics of Gender Parity and Disparity: Who is at Risk? - Heoma, Nsirim Worlu	123
9.	Secondary School Students' Awareness and Knowledge of Environmental Communication Management in Oghara, Delta State - Akpoghiran, Idama Patrick & Arimitan, Omamurhirme Goodluck ...	139
10.	The Impact of Poverty and Inequality on the Nigerian Economy (1980-2009) - Ejubekpokpo, Stephen Akpo & Emudianohwo, Ochuko B. ...	157
11.	The Consequences of Rural Urban Migration on Soci-Economic Activities in Auchi and Environs - Sajini, Faith I.	169
12.	Patriarchy and Emergent Gender Equality in Nigeria - Akpotor, Julie...	179
13.	Recidivism Among Juvenile Delinquents in the Remand Home/Detention Centre, Sapele, Delta State - Omoyibo Kingsley Ufuoma & Iduemre, Ochuko ...	195
14.	Towards Harmonizing Accounting Measurement Models for Human Capital: A Theoretical Essay - Okoro, God'sday Edesiri & Jeroh, Edirin	207

SELF-HELP INITIATIVES AS A COMPLEMENTARY STRATEGY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

ABONYI, Sunday Evaristus

Department of Sociology
Caritas University, Amorji-Nike, Enugu
Seabonyi@gmail.com

&

ONWUKA, Chukwujekwu Charles

Department of Sociology
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University
Igbariam Campus, Anambra State
onlyceeJay@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Self help initiative have assumed a formidable or complementary strategy adopted by most countries in Africa (including Nigeria) in the development of its rural communities even before the era of independence. This involves the teaming up or coming together of residents of rural communities using the available resources to attain high socio-economic development. It is believed that aggregate growth which tend to concentrate in the few large urban centres could only filter to the majority of the rural poor through this process. This paper was aimed at examining the place of self-help initiatives as complementary strategy in rural development in South East Nigeria. Five research questions were formulated to guide the study in line with its objectives. Issues emerging from the literatures showed that most states/ communities in South East Nigeria (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo) tend to use the age grade system, social clubs, youth associations, association of daughters of the land (umuada), traders association, Christian women/men organizations, political elites and others in the provision of the basic needs of the rural society. However, it was revealed that corruption or financial embezzlement and power tussles have become serious bottlenecks toward this lofty goal. Finally, the paper recommends some measures which if taken will strengthen and encourage community members to participate more effectively in self-help project to improve the socio-economic conditions of the rural dwellers.

Key words: Self-help, strategy, rural, development, rural development

1.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the major characteristics of the developing countries is the increasing disparity between the urban and rural areas. This gap according to Igboeli (1992) has its root in the neo-classical economic theories which presumed that development can be accelerated by concentrating investments in the cities and that rural poverty will be ameliorated by the trickle down of benefits from the urban industrial growth. The author noted that with the so-called growth-centred strategy, the developing countries have continued to witness imbalances in the living conditions between the urban and rural dwellers. Consequently, development theories over the years have been searching for other strategies that would not only accelerate growth but also spread the benefits of development to the rural areas. The situation has been worsened by the increasing inability of the state to respond effectively and adequately to the rural crisis.

Aboyade (1980) has specifically described the profound dualism between the urban and rural areas and the proportionate costs and consequences of rural infrastructural lag behind urban modernism. Similarly, Onimode (1982) has even gone much further to pinpoint the historical origin of the dualism in contemporary Nigeria between the rural and urban areas. According to the authors, about 80% of the population in rural areas either had no medical services or make do with rudimentary facilities scattered over wide distances. This unprecedented economic and social dislocation appears to have had an overwhelming impact on the vast rural population of Nigeria especially in the southeast and have been a notable feature of the crisis raging through most states/communities in Nigeria. This is because Nigeria development financing has been derived mainly from direct and indirect taxation of rural people who have benefited little or nothing from Nigeria's economic development activities.

Akpomuvie (2010) noted that the realization that a dangerous gap exists in the development levels of both the urban and rural areas, coupled with the stagnation and undiminished scale of poverty, numerous strategies and initiatives especially 'self-help' at the grassroot level have emerged to cope with the situation. As Gooneratne and Milinyi (1992:18) put it, "confronted with growing poverty and economic stagnation or depression in the 1980s and early 1990s, self-help has been advanced as a viable complementary strategy to "dependent development" and donor-led "structural adjustment" in developing countries".

Self-help initiatives in rural development in Nigeria is considered not merely a necessity but a matter of survival According to Ebong, Otu and Ogwumike (2013),

the self-help strategy connotes a programme of activities involving the concerted efforts of members of a given community aimed at providing some basic amenities in that community. In other words, it entails the development of the resources of the community by efforts of members of that community alone, instead of relying on outside initiatives or assistance. It is an inward looking approach to self or group improvement, which relies solely on own efforts and largely for own benefits. The self-help approach therefore presupposes the existence of like-minded people with initiatives, integrity, and foresightedness, apart from capital and a favourable investment environment. Apart from that, it takes peaceful co-existence as given, as well as the existence of a government that is readily responsive to the needs and aspiration of the governed.

Since it has been recognized that the dreams of effective rural development cannot be achieved without recognizing and integrating the self-help programmes initiated by various communities, it is against this backdrop that this paper was set out to examine the concept of self-help as complementary strategy for rural development in Nigeria with particular reference to the South East geo-political zone. The decay and worsening rural conditions in most communities in the South-East as a whole are evident in the long years of neglect of communities in this zone by the State and federal government. Since the government at both federal, state and local levels do not demonstrate interest in the wellbeing of the rural population in terms of infrastructural development and with the realization that government alone cannot provide all the needs of the rural dwellers, the people had to learn to 'do-it-themselves'. According to Akpomuvie (2010) where government is properly playing its expected role, self-help activities should complement rural development, not replacing it.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Before the era of colonialism, the developing nations or communities were known to be involved in experimentation with self-help initiatives. In fact, in the early days, self-help initiative was deeply rooted among the people. The colonial regime in Nigeria then see rural development to mean the construction of community halls, roads, market stalls and footpaths linking villages and farmlands. In other words, the administration appointed community development officers while the people contributed funds, free labour and land. According to Ijere (1992), in most parts of Eastern Nigeria, under a closely-knit social structure of the elders and age grades, these men and women shared defined roles, the community provided its needs and shared its benefits and problems.

The emergence of urbanization however, rather than vitiate the trend, capitalized on it, but laid greater emphasis on the urban areas to the neglect of the rural thus creating severe spatial imbalances and regional or state disparities in the distribution of limited available facilities such as roads, water, light, industries and reservation areas. This situation caused a 'pull' of the able bodied, educated manpower from the rural areas, leaving them with the very young, the aged and illiterates (Oyaide, 1989). For instance, most of the urban centres in the South East such as Enugu, Onitsha, Owerri, and Aba grew up as small towns to become the capital cities and centre of commerce after the independence harbouring more than half of the population who migrated from the villages or towns in each states. Rural development according to Ijere (1992) is geared at both getting the migrants back to the rural areas and preventing further streams of migrants from leaving the rural areas.

Self-help is one of the basic tools of effective rural development in Nigeria as it is in most Sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, the concept of self-help is located centrally within the discourse of rural development. Its widespread acceptance in the rural development planning of most African countries has the tendency to give greater stimulus and cohesiveness to rural development in these countries. That is to say that most communities in Nigeria especially in the South-East Nigeria seem to have used self-help efforts to effectively develop their communities. It seeks to optimally harness the resources (human and material) of the affected communities in order to improve the living standard of members of that community. It could also be seen as a movement to promote better living for the whole community, with or without external assistance. According to Ebong, Otu and Ogwumike (2013), self-help groups exists for credit, like the 'esusu' club, which work through the small-saver-borrower to make loans readily available. There are also self-help groups for agricultural production, construction of public facilities (roads, bridges, markets, schools, churches etc), provision of healthcare facilities, social welfare and mutual protection, such as Neighbourhood watch association (CBN, 1999).

However, scholars have attributed the inability of most rural communities especially in South East geo-political zone in Nigeria to evolve meaningful rural development projects using self-help attributable to scarce human and material resources (Onokerhoraye & Okafor, 1994) while some others have attributed the failure to the government that tend to abandon the rural communities to fend for themselves. Udoeye (1992) also attributed the situation to administrative bottlenecks. According to Ebong, Otu and Ogwumike (2013), one major problem of the self-help approach in rural development is that it is subject to changes in public modes and

opinions. It is also limited by the volatility of available investment funds and the challenges of private entrepreneurs. The authors also noted that besides, the existence of small isolated and scattered villages makes mobilization difficult and the provision of social service exorbitantly expensive. In addition, the interdependence and synergies among different projects are ignored in most cases. For instance, such pertinent questions as what happens if education is not healthy.

Based on the above premise, this paper therefore examined the place of self-help initiatives as a complementary strategy for rural development in Nigeria with particular reference to the South-East geo-political zone.

1.2.1 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. Does self-help approach play any significant role in the rural development of Nigeria especially in the South East geo-political zone?
2. What are the community based organizations involved in self-help in rural development of South East Nigeria?
3. What are the challenges or problems confronting self-help strategy in rural development in South East Nigeria?
4. What is the level of government support for self-help projects in South East Nigeria?
5. What are the ways or strategies that should be adopted to make self-help become more effective for rural development in South East Nigeria?

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature related to this work were reviewed in the following sequence.

1.3.1 The Concept of Self-help and Rural Development

Rural development according to Diejemaoh (1973) is a process of not only increasing the level of per capita income in the rural areas, but also the standard of living of the rural population; the standard of living depending on such factors as food and nutrition level, health, education, housing, recreation and security. Phillips (1992) on the other hand sees rural development as connoting the conditions and percentage of labour force in the agricultural sector, although he rightly argued that a programme of rural development goes beyond agriculture, and includes the sum total of the country's economic development efforts in the rural areas. Similarly, Adegboye (1973) defined rural development as the development of the rural people in such a continuous manner as to enable them to most effectively and efficiently utilize their intellect, technology and other resources for further development for

both themselves and their resources. From his study of the Chinese experience, Aziz (1978) defined rural development as the attempt to organize, develop and utilize the available resources of land, water and manpower in such a manner that the entire rural population dependent on these resources has an equal opportunity to meet as a minimum, their basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, with reasonable facilities for education and health and can live together in a positive and healthy social environment. This implies that rural development requires a massive effort at societal change that is broad based in scope and speedy in its execution.

The execution of rural development should involve the use of self-help to achieve a better socio-economic condition for the majority of Nigerian rural dwellers. This should guarantee the basic social amenities such as good roads, water, postal services, electricity, hospitals, schools and industries that would create rural employment thereby enhancing the quality of life and reducing the level of poverty which is presently alarming in Nigeria.

Self-help initiative according to Udoye (1992) should be both an object (what) and a process (how). As an object, it should be an induced change for the achievement of overall rural development. As a process, it should be a well articulated programme and effort to assist individuals to acquire attitudes, skills and concepts required for their democratic participation in the effective solution of a wide range of rural development problems as possible, in order of priority determined by their increasing level of competence. For the United Nations (1956), it is the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of the governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of the communities, to integrate these communities in the life of the nation and enable them to contribute fully to national progress.

Since development is an on-going process, there is probably no community in the world that would not benefit from further development (Sautoy, 1970). The initiative for the attainment of this process-goal equation could derive from several sources; the individual, the community, socio-cultural organizations, institutions, governments or the government acting in concert with any of these bodies. Self-help according to Akpomuvie (2010) should have its roots fully entrenched within the socio-cultural and economic milieu within which it is to be practiced. It is the internal dynamics of these socio-cultural and political praxis that galvanize and strengthen motivation to achieve developmental goals.

The self-help philosophy is related to self reliance. According to Ghari (1980) self

reliance through co-operation is now being promoted throughout the developing world for no egalitarian society should be chronically unable to meet a self-defined local need. Self-help also has to do with inducing change in the rural areas for the achievement of an enhanced welfare for rural dwellers.

According to Ebong, Otu and Ogwumike (2013) self-help initiatives are predicated on two major principles; the principle of individual and corporate survival and the principle of societal felt-need. These principles are responsible for both, that is, for galvanizing communities into pursuing self-help development projects where the individual and corporate survival hangs on the need for security and corporate co-existence. Since the instinct to survive is strong not only in the individual but also in the community, people therefore are bound to come together especially when societal existence/or survival is threatened. According to this principle, self-help effort is a way of bringing the people in a community together to think and act jointly for the common good of the individual and the community. The principle of felt-need, on the other hand, assumes that within every community there exist certain needs, which are generally recognized and agreed upon by members of that community as posing a problem and therefore needing a solution.

1.3.2 Evolution of Self-help Development Activities in Nigeria

That community participation or self-help in rural project development is an important element and a sure way to the speedy development of the rural areas in Nigeria is well attested to in development literature (Udoeye, 1986 & 1987, Muoghalu, 1986, Okafor 1984). The need to develop the rural areas and to a large extent, reduce the contrasting scenario of urban opulence and rural decadence has equally received ample documentation in literature (Hansen & Schulz, 1981).

The evolution of self-help covers the following periodic dimensions; the pre-colonial, the colonial up to 1939, the period from 1940 to the Nigerian civil war, the civil war years and the post civil war years to the present democratic settings (Akpomuvie, 2010). The author noted that before the onset of colonial administration, communities across Nigeria had employed communal efforts as the mechanism for mobilizing community resources to provide physical improvement and functional facilities in the social, political and economic aspects of their lives. Communal labour was employed in constructing homesteads, clearing farmlands, roads or pathways, construction of bridges and for the provision of other social infrastructural facilities required by the people. Some of the relevant institutions were the age grades and the village councils. Though, some of these institutions have persisted, the difference between self-help activities undertaken in the past and those

executed today are not hard to find. Differences exist in the scope of the operations, equipment utilized and the extent of government involvement.

As Idode (1989) observed, in the past, self-help efforts in Nigeria particularly in South East Nigeria or former East Central State mainly related to the construction of footpaths or roads, dredging of rivers and streams, clearing of public land and market places. The author further observed that later, the scope of operation expanded to include the building of schools and market stalls. Projects such as pipe-borne water, road tarring, dispensaries, cottage hospitals and so on, were not usually attempted. Moreover, equipment used were simple hoes, cutlasses, diggers and shovels. The construction of walls did not follow any standard measurements as the people used their imagination to plan and construct such projects. At this stage, there was little or no government involvement as the planning and execution of these self-help projects were the sole responsibility of the people. Where the government was involved at all, was for the purposes of taking over completed projects for operation or maintenance. But where neither the state government nor the local government councils were interested in such projects, the missionaries took over.

During the colonial period, rural development efforts took a compulsive and coercive turn. The alien governmental apparatus with its clientele (Warrant Chief) arrangement, extorted taxes and compulsory labour from the people. The contradiction in the new development effort, therefore, did not favour the corporate imagination of the people and this was given expression by the tax debacle of 1929, popularly known as the Aba Women riot. It questioned the whole essence of the tax laws as established then, the imposition of the roads and river ordinance and the apparent shirking of development responsibility by a government that had already extorted taxes for this purpose. Apart from the establishment of governmental exploitative infrastructural apparatus, linking the major seats of government through forced labour, no serious self-help programme eliciting popular participation was encouraged. Nonetheless, at very local levels, the family, interfamily and village settings, the pre-colonial trappings of mutual assistance through self-help persisted for the construction of homesteads, clearing farm lands, clearing water points and for providing other socially felt needs. Church organizations were also able to cooperate with members for the building of schools.

By the late 1940s however, an element of modern community concept in rural development was introduced in the form of mass mobilization for self-help activities. This was heralded by the abrogation in Britain of the Colonial Development Act which was replaced by the Development and Welfare Act in 1939.

As rightly noted by Arndt (1981), this gave a positive economic and social contents to the philosophy of colonial trusteeship by affirming the need for minimum standards of nutrition, health and education. At the local level, the earlier Native Authority Councils were replaced by the county council. This development led to the establishment of community development division at the local level and thus became an important organ of government charged with the responsibility of channeling and co-ordinating the efforts of the people towards promoting social and economic development (Onwuzuluike, 1987). The development and welfare fund provided for the colonies by the British government was thus able to permeate to the grassroots level through this third tier of government.

By the beginning of the war in 1967, the observation of Sir James Robertson, aptly typified the state of development needs and awareness and the immense role the governments expected self-help activities to play in order to compliment their efforts. After the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970), the need for mass reconstruction works further aroused the people, a revival of the spirit of self-help which is deeply rooted in their rich traditions. Most communities realized that the only way for immediate reconstruction of the war ravaged facilities was through self-help. This period also marked the evolution of multiplicity of social clubs with aims that were in consonance with social insurance and self-help. Further efforts by government to motivate development at the grassroots led to the enactment of the 1976 local government Reform to create new growth centres for further spatial spread of development. Thus, deliberate government support became necessary to increase the spate of development activities by the various communities.

The periods between 1973-2007 according to Akpomuvie (2010) marked a watershed in rural development efforts in Nigeria. In other words, the periods witnessed deliberate government efforts at mobilizing the people for rural development. A number of task forces and bodies were set up to oversee, organize and to direct partnership with the people on self-help activities. They include; Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), Rural Electrification Schemes, Credit Schemes to Small holders through various specialized institutions such as Peoples Banks, Community Banks, NERFUND, SME credit schemes, the Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), Universal Primary Education Schemes and low cost housing schemes, health schemes as the primary healthcare programme, National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Better Life for Rural Women Programme as well as the Family Support Programme (FSP).

More recent programmes according to Akpomuvic (2010) includes the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), as well as the SURE-P (Subsidy Re-investment Programme) the Small and Medium Industries Equity Investment Schemes (SMIEIS). The various state governments had also articulated blue-prints on rural development, adopting the integrated rural development strategy as their strategic option to carry development to the masses.

1.3.3 Re-orientation of Self-help Initiatives in Rural Development

Anyanwu (1992) contends that in most African countries, rural development has depended significantly on voluntary co-operative efforts. This explains the emerging trend in rural development, which sees it as an important point of take-off for better living. The emphasis is to involve groups of people in planned programmes from which they may gain skills that will enable them to cope more successfully with the problems of their everyday life. Self-help is thus 'development on the basis of a country's own resources, involving its population based on the potentials of its cultural values and traditions (Galtung, 1980). Communities and individuals define their own development according to their own needs, values and aspirations (Preiswerk, 1980).

Self-help initiatives enable the local people to exploit to their advantage, resources which would otherwise lie dormant and thereby perpetuate the ignorance and poverty of their community, by making use of the underutilized labour; the instance of self-help for rural development can increase the competence and confidence of a community in handling its affairs. It is a pre-requisite for survival in the modern world (Anyanwu, 1992). Furthermore, self-help enables the people to look inwards by rallying local resources and efforts. This is especially appropriate to the concept of rural development, which stresses the importance of people increasing their sense of responsibility and seeing assistance as just supplementary, but never replacing popular initiatives or local efforts. The emphasis is on democratizing, with reliance on what people can do for themselves. In other words, the principle of self-help incorporate into the rural development process; the means of offering ordinary citizens the opportunity to share in making important decision about their living conditions (Anyanwu, 1992). This approach echoes the people-centredness of rural development attempts at satisfying felt-needs. This entails rural participation at all levels of the project.

In the views of Ebong, Otu and Ogwumike (2013), self-help strategy plays the following roles in the rural development of a nation including communities in South East Nigeria.

Setting the limit to government intervening with the economic process in a constraining way.

Affording the opportunity to play down upon the primacy of private property rights, since society tends to ignore the negative externalities inherent in profit-motivated exploitation of property rights.

Encouraging enterprises, which is the backbone to industrial growth and development.

Fostering a sense of belonging. The feeling of relevance is a thing of pride. This happens when the age-grades compete and boast over the number, scale and relevance of the projects each group has executed in its area through self-help.

Creating and enhancing the capacity of an area to absorb a growing number of employable persons.

Encouraging self reliance among the people, which enables them to deploy their own initiatives and resources in meeting their basic needs.

Permitting the mobilization of resources outside the government budget and the promotion of government programmes arising from closeness to the people and knowledge of local conditions.

Omoruyi (2001) also stressed on the essence of self-help initiatives as complementary strategy to rural development. According to the author, it gives some indications as the type of programmes and policies that are preferred or acceptable to the people. It also help to stimulate local initiatives. Apart from that, it helps to create self-confidence, co-operativeness and homogeneity among the people and can stop unpopular programme proposals. Omoruyi (2001) further emphasized that self-help initiatives can create healthy and cordial relations with community. In other words, a friendly relationship can emerge between the people and the change agent or the elected officials and it gives everyone a sense of belonging and prevent ignorance, frustration, dictatorship and chaos.

Ndubude (1995) also opined that self-help projects in particular bring community development officials directly into personal contact with the generality of the people. The variety of the projects embarked upon ensure the involvement of most members of the community at one time or the other. They include projects that enhance the economic prosperity of the community such as market stalls, access

roads, bridges and culverts. There are also projects that promotes good health in the community such as the building of dispensaries, maternity clinics, rural water and electrification schemes. Under these, communities are encouraged and mobilized through the provision of such facilities as transport, equipment and monetary grants to deserving cases by some philanthropists, non-governmental organizations and sometimes governmental agencies. Technical advice and supervision are also provided for on-going projects in this respect.

1.3.4 Community Based Organization Involved in Self-help in South East Nigeria

Self-help according to Omoruyi (2001), is the democratic, ultimate, total and massive involvement of the people in activities designed to bring about improvement in their own wellbeing. It is a broader and comprehensive conception of participation in which the local people are intimately involved in the identification of needs, into a scale of priority in the selection and cutting of projects, in the mobilization of the necessary resources for and in the identification of needs, and problems and in sharing of the benefit and burdens derivable from the project. However, Fonchingon and Fonjong (2003) emphasized that self-help development has proved its usefulness as an easy, all-on-board and result oriented approach to contemporary modes of translating boardroom ideas into meaningful development in most African countries.

In most communities in South East Nigeria (Enugu, Abia, Imo, Anambra and Ebonyi), the village development association, Age grades, Youth Association, Women groups (umuada), Town union, Traders Association, Christian Women/men organizations, social clubs and other interest groups have identified themselves with some developmental projects meant to compliment government efforts for the wellbeing of their communities or the local government council in general. These associations have democratic structures with its executives that work in collaboration with committees and sub-committees depending on the nature of the project. It is worthy to note that in most of these communities, congresses and mini-congresses are organized annually for inspection or appraisal of on-going projects and contributions requested for further injection into the on-going projects and new projects in the pipeline. During such grand foras, traditional dances and exhibitions are organized as a form of cultural inclusiveness and fund raising. In addition, members are levied when there is a project at hand and the elite because of their privileged positions are requested to contribute generously. These contributions are very vital to the overall implementation of identified projects in the country.

Self-help initiatives in liasing with Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs and some international organizations) are an added dimension of rural development programmes in most communities in South East Nigeria. Some international organizations and NGOs like the Water Aid, UNICEF, World Bank, DFID and others have been heralded as partners in self-help development in these communities. Their intervention in pipe borne water schemes, road rehabilitation and development of water catchments in collaboration with most communities in South East geo-political zone are remarkable. They work with different town unions, development associations and other grassroots structures in the maintenance of pipelines, digging of trenches, supplying sand, stones and laying of pipes for distribution of water to various towns. The water management committees that are an auxiliary of different town unions and development associations are very instrumental in handling problems that relate to distribution and maintenance of water points.

Moreso, the elites constitute a strong force in community development endeavours in South East geo-political zone as elsewhere in Nigeria. Since the game of politics is determined by the lobbying capacity of the state, its elites play a central role in canvassing for resources from the federal government. They also use existing town unions/development associations and committees as political base and back-up for their actions. Their support for community development initiatives is premised on the readiness of the community members to reciprocate when such illustrious sons or daughters need to gain political support especially during elections.

1.4.5 Challenges or Problems Confronting Self-help Initiatives

According to Omoruyi (2001), the constraints to self-help are legion and can be in many sources. The author noted that one of its major problems arises from the structure of government. Under military rule for instance, self-help initiatives is often suppressed. In other words, self-help in this circumstance do not thrive because of the suspicion it can attract. Corroborating this view, Ndiaye (1990) opined that the degree of people engaging in self-help initiatives is in indirect proportion to the degree of freedom that their country allows. Military administrations do not always allow self-help projects or initiatives since they are not the gun that put them in power. Besides, it is unusual to find (in most African countries) that decision - making is conducted at national or state and not at the local level. Government always takes the front seat in all development activities. The administrative set-up or the bureaucratic structure renders peoples eagerness to participate in self-help projects in the areas of decision making, evaluation and implementation impossible.

Another potent factor to the problems of self-help approach in rural development in Nigeria especially in South East geo-political zone is traceable to the people themselves. Some of these obstacles according to Oduaran (1993) include, ignorance, illiteracy, poverty, inadequate mobilization and apathy or indifference on the part of the people. Illiteracy for instance inhibits in many aspects of the ability to engage people in self-help projects. This is because people who are illiterate are very difficult to mobilize since they do not see any reason why they should be involved in the development process. Similarly, poverty is capable of completely stifling peoples participation in self-help projects. According to Adedeji (1990), the poverty level of our people is rising at a terrific rate to the extent that people ravaged by the social menace are always on the course of searching for minimum basic human needs all the time and tend to forget any need for participation in development activities.

Ebong, Otu and Ogwumike (2013) in the same vein opined that the self-help approach in rural development is constrained by the volatility of available investment funds and challenges of private entrepreneurs. Besides, the existence of small isolated and scattered villages make mobilization difficult and the provision of social services expensive.

Finally, the failure of self-help approach in rural development in Nigeria may be attributed to corruption and politicization of these programmes or power tussle. Since the poverty level in the rural areas is very high stakeholders and participants in these projects resort to siphoning the little contributions or money meant for the projects into their private pockets. In addition, the issue of who will take the glory when the project is completed may result to politics and power tussle capable of tearing the people apart and frustrate the entire projects.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework suitable for the study is the Integrated Rural Development (IRD) model. According to Ijere (1992) the model involves development in which urban and rural areas are considered as an integral part of the same planning object. In other words, better health, education, infrastructure and better living standards, which had been the preserves of urban areas should form part and parcel of the stock in-trade in the development process of rural areas as well. It is anchored on the premise that vast resources exist virtually in every developing country which, if properly harnessed are capable of meeting impressive developmental ends. However, Ekpo (1991) noted that the poor do not benefit from economic growth which results from undivided attention to the maximization of employment opportunities, promotion of rural development and equitable distribution of wealth and income.

Self-help initiatives have been considered as a veritable and complementary tool towards this laudable goal. In other words, the yearnings and aspirations of the rural people can be achieved through self-help which aims at improving the quality of life of the rural people as well as removing the forces within the system that were creating and sustaining poverty through participation and mobilization of the rural dwellers. In some situations where the projects or programmes were designed by the government, the use of self-help will ensure its sustainability even when the development agents are no more available. This is done through the various community based organizations such as the age grades, town unions and community development association, women groups, social clubs, elite clubs, youth association, and others.

1.5 CONCLUSION

The paper has endeavoured to establish the place of self-help as a complementary strategy to rural development in Nigeria using the South East geo-political zone as a reference point. It is deducible from the concept of rural development that the participation of the people themselves in efforts to improve their standard of living with much reliance on their own initiatives and little or no incentives from the government is crucial in encouraging self-help initiatives as communities tend to build on their local capabilities. This fosters a spirit of attachment, value and respect to projects, which constitutes the goal, need, yearning and aspiration of the community.

The government and other development agencies or non-governmental organizations and international organization such as the UNICEF, World Bank and others can continue to reach out to rural communities by offering technical expertise and financial assistance. This can be done with the objective to instill the spirit of self-help in the individual and community members towards the improvement of their standard of living.

1.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government and other development partners should devise strategies to support self-help initiatives at the community and state level.
2. The assistance of the international agencies with technical expertise and the necessary financial resources is necessary for existing community improvement endeavour.
3. Community members should make effort in determining the priority projects that touch on their livelihood.

4. Corruption or financial embezzlement and power tussles should be shunned so as to attain greater height in the area of rural development. This is because the rural elite may sometimes use self-help project as avenue for self enrichment and political gains.
5. Government should demonstrate serious commitment and actions in the efforts to eradicate the scourge of illiteracy among the people through adult education and evening programmes. This will liberate the people from the captivity of ignorance and enhance their development capacity.
6. Finally, there is the need to emphasize more on the issue of gender mainstreaming to encourage women to participate actively in self-help projects

REFERENCES

- Aboyade, O. (1980). Nigerian public enterprises as an organizational dilemma. In Coolins, P. (ed.) *Administration for development in Nigeria*: Lagos: Africa Education Press.
- Adedeji, A. (1990). The role of popular participation in meeting the challenges of recovery and development in Africa, Democratization of development process. *Journal of African Association for Literary and Adult Education*, 5, 1-3.
- Adegboye, R. O. (1973). Redemption of pledged property through rural credit. *Proceedings of the 1972 Annual Conference of Economic Society of Nigeria*.
- Akpomuvie, O. B. (2010). Self-help as a strategy for rural development in Nigeria: A bottom-up approach. *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in Social Sciences*, 2(10) 88-111.
- Anyanwu, C. (1992). *Community development: The Nigerian perspectives*. Ibadan: Gabesther Education Publishers.
- Arndt, H. W. (1981). Economic development: A semantic history. *Journal of Economic Development & Culture Change*, 29(3) 457 - 466.
- Aziz, S. (1978), *Rural development: Learning from China*: London: Macmillian Press.
- CBN (1999). *Nigerian's development prospects, poverty assessment and alleviation study*. Abuja: CBN Research Dept.

- Diejemaoh, V. P. (1973). Rural development in Nigeria: The role of fiscal policy. Proceedings of the 1972 Annual Conference of Economic Society of Nigeria.
- Ekpo, A. H. (1991). The dialectics of rural development. Theory and evidence. In Ebong, M. O. (ed), Mobilization of resources for rural development in Nigeria. Calabar: Wusen Press.
- Fonchingong, C. C. & Fonjong, L. N. (2003). The concept of self reliance in community development initiatives in the Cameroon Grassfields. *Nordic Journal of African studies*, 12(2), 196-219.
- Galtung, J. (1980). Self-reliance: A strategy for development: London: Bogle L. Ouverture publishers.
- Ghari, D. (1980). The basic need approach to development, some issues regarding concepts and methodology. Geneva: ILO Publication.
- Hansen, W. & Schulz, B. (1981). Imperialism, dependency and social class. *Africa today*, 29(3), 25-36.
- Idode, J. B. (1989). Rural development and bureaucracy in Nigeria. Ibadan: Longman.
- Igboeli, M. O. (1992). Self-help as a strategy for rural development: A critique. In Olisa M. S. & Obiukwu J. I. (eds.), *Rural development in Nigeria: Dynamics and strategy*. Awka: Mekslink Publishers.
- Ijere, M. O. (1992). *Leading Issues in rural development*. Enugu: Acena publishers.
- Muoghalu, L. N. (1986). Rural development in Nigeria: A review of previous initiatives. In Olisa M. O. S., & Obiukwu J. I. (eds.) opcit.
- Ndiaye, M. (1990). Domestic impediments to popular participation in Africa economic and social recovery and development process. *Journal of African Association for Literary and Adult Education*, 4(1), 45-56.
- Ndubude, R. K. (1995). Community mobilization as an instrument or rural development in Anambra State. In Nwanunobi C. O., Ukegbu, C. C. & Igbo, E. U. M. (eds.), *Initiative approaches to rural development in Nigeria*. Nsukka: Auto Century publishing coy.
- Oduaran A. B. (1993). Peoples participation and access to development resources and services. *Nigerian Journal of Administration and Science*, 4(1), 118-135.

- Okafor, F. C. (1984). Dimensions of community development projects in Bendel State, Nigeria. *Journal of public administration and development*, 4(1), 249-258.
- Omoruyi, F. E. O. (2001). *The dynamics of community development: The Nigerian approach*. Benin City: New Era publishers.
- Onimode, B. (1982). *Imperialism and underdevelopment in Nigeria: The dialectics of mass poverty*. London: Zed press.
- Onokerhoraye, A. G. & Okafor, F. C. (1994). *Rural development and planning for Africa*. Benin City: University of Benin Press.
- Onwuzulike, P. N. (1987). *Community development in Adazi-Nnukwu*. Unpublished B.Sc Project.
- Oyaide, O. F. M. (1989). "Rural development in Nigeria: The role of government" Second February lecture on rural development held at Centre for Rural Development and Co-operatives: UNN.
- Phillips, A. O. (1973). Fiscal policy and rural development in Nigeria. *Proceedings of the 1972 Annual Conference of the Economic Society of Nigeria*.
- Preiswerk, R. (1980). Sources of resisting to local self-reliance. In Galtung, J. (Ed.) *Opcit.* U. N. O., (1956). 20th report of the administrative Committee on co-ordination to the economic and social council. United Nations.
- Udoeye, E. E. (1992). Grassroots involvement in rural development in Olisa. M. S. O. & Obuiuku, J. I. (eds.) *Opcit.*